SUPPRESSION OF WORKER MILITANCY DURING THE NEP:
THE WORKER, THE UNIONS,
THE PARTY AND
THE SECRET POLICE,
1921 - 1928

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Abstract

This thesis examines state-labour relations during the NEP (1921-1928). Through an examination of working and living conditions this thesis argues that workers' agenda of full employment, improved conditions, and a sharing of the responsibilities of their enterprises, which motivated industrial unrest in 1905, 1917 and 1921, remained unfulfilled at the end of the NEP. During the NEP, the leadership attached low priority to workers' interests, concentrating instead on 'intensification' and 'rationalisation' to maximize productivity and minimize costs.

The various campaigns of 'intensification' and 'rationalisation' ended, however, in failure, for which the leadership itself was to blame. By assigning leadership of the campaigns to party, rather than economic organs, the campaigns were politicised, which had disastrous consequences for the efficiency of the Soviet economy and exacerbated the economic hardships faced by workers.

This thesis then examines why workers, by the end of the NEP, were unable to launch coordinated and effective action to promote their agenda. This thesis argues that worker group behaviour disintegrated as workers increasingly turned to individual responses such as: despondency, downing tools in frustration, decreasing quality of production, maliciously damaging machinery or product, absenteeism, job-flitting, or seeking escape off the factory floor through promotion. This was the result of several factors. Firstly, economic hardship and the repressive nature of the Soviet regime increased the cost of public opposition. Secondly, the opportunities offered to obedient workers for promotion into the growing state, union and party bureaucracy, deprived the workforce of its natural vanguard. Finally, the regime's drive to assert
total control over communications and every aspect of factory life made organised collective action increasingly difficult to sustain. While the leadership was successful in mitigating worker militancy, it failed to narrow the 'gulf' between itself and the worker masses. This, combined with the failure of the 'intensification' and 'rationalisation' campaigns, sealed the fate of the NEP.
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Note on Translation and Transliteration:

All translations are the author's, unless otherwise indicated. In transliterating Russian words and names, the following table was used.

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Abbreviations:

Gomza - Gosudarstvennoe ob'edinnennie metallicheskikh zavodov - State Union of Metal Factories trust
GSPS - Gubernskii sovet profsoiuizov - Provincial Council of Trade Unions
GUVP - Gosudarstvennoe upravleniye voennoi promishlennosti - State Directorate of Military Industry
Iugostal' - Southern Steel trust
IuMT - Southern Metal Trust
Left-SR - Left Socialist-Revolutionaries
MGSPS - Moskovskii gubernskii sovet profsoiuizov - Moscow Provincial Council of Trade Unions
NKPS - Narodnyi komissariat putei soobshcheniya - People's Commissariat for [railway] Transport
NKTruda - Narodnyi komissariat truda - People's Commissariat for Labour
NOT - Nauchnaya organizatsiia truda - Scientific organisation of labour
OGPU - Ob'edinnennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie - Unified State Political Directorate
RKK - Ratsenochno-konfliktnaya komissiya - Ratings-Conflict Commissions
SRs - Socialist Revolutionaries
SNK - Sovet narodnykh komissarov - Council of People's Commissars
SNKha - Sovet narodnogo khozyaistva - Council of the National Economy
SPS - Sovet profsoiuizov - Trade Union Council
STO - Sovet truda i oborony - Council of Labour and Defence
TNB - Tarifno-normirovnoe biuro / Tekhnicheskoe-normirovnoe biuro - Tariff and norm-setting bureau / Technical norm-setting bureau
TsIT - Tsentral'nyi institut truda - Central Institute of Labour
VeCheKa - Vserossiiskaya chrezvychainaya komissiya po bor'be s kontrrevoliutsiei, sabotazhem i spekulatsiei - All-Russian Special Commission for Combating Counter-revolution, Sabotage and Speculation
VSRM - Vserossiiskii (Vsesoiuznyi) soiuz metallistov - All-Russian (All-Soviet) Union of Metal Workers
VSNKha - Vysshii sovet narodnogo khozyaistva - Supreme Council of the National Economy
VTsSPS - Vserossiiskii (Vsesoiuznyi) Tsentrals'nyi Soiuz Professional'nykh Soiuzev - All-Russian (All-Soviet) Central Council of Trade Unions
Introduction

Workers' aspirations played a central role in the revolutions of 1917. Industrial unrest delivered the final blows to Tsarist government in February, and the Bolsheviks justified their seizure of power in October in terms of defending worker interests. Workers' aspirations for revolution had initially been minimal. In the first years of the twentieth century the workers' agenda focused on improving working and living conditions. As worker expectations for improvements were repeatedly frustrated, workers began to see the realisation of their goals within a context of changing the social order and gaining greater control over the workplace so as to radically alter the distribution of wealth. Their acquiescence to Bolshevik rule in the months following October 1917 was a result of a convergence of proclaimed agendas, with the new Bolshevik regime endorsing workers' control. During the Civil War this agenda was displaced by the requirements of war. But the need to preserve the revolution against the threat from the right united the left and limited worker opposition to Bolshevik rule.

By 1921 the Civil War had been won and the revolution 'preserved'. Workers now anticipated a future of full employment, dramatically improved conditions, higher wages, and a sharing of the responsibilities of their enterprises and the wealth which they generated. Yet workers, examining their lot at the dawn of this new age, did not recognise the slogans they had fought for. To facilitate the war effort, workers had given up control over production to individual managers who ruled with 'iron discipline'. Labour was conscripted, mobilised, and deployed like soldiers and the rewards were hunger and cold. This had largely been endured in the midst of Civil War and the struggle to preserve the revolution. But with the defeat of the White armies workers expected change.
Worker discontent, which had been building up during the Civil War, now erupted, threatening Bolshevik domination of political power. In February 1921 open calls for an end to the policies of War Communism provoked clashes in Moscow. Strikes and demonstrations followed. The momentum in Moscow was picked up in Petrograd. At spontaneous meetings, disgruntled workers voiced grievances over food shortages, privileged rationing and grain requisitioning (many workers had direct family links to the countryside), and demanded to be allowed to purchase food directly from the peasants. On 24 February the Trubochny factory workers, among Petrograd's elite metal workers, took to the streets. They were joined by others before being dispersed by force. Martial law, a curfew and a ban on gatherings was imposed, yet workers continued to take to the streets. This period witnessed strikes in some 77% of the nation's medium and large scale enterprises.

This wave of strikes, combined with rural unrest and mutiny in Kronstadt, precipitated a radical realignment of state economic management and the introduction of the New Economic Policy. But by the end of the decade the agenda which had motivated worker militancy in 1905, 1917 and 1921 still remained unfulfilled. The aim of the Bolshevik leadership, during the 1920s at least, had not been the implementation of their professed labour slogans of 1917, but the consolidation of their political power and rapid economic reconstruction and expansion. For the pursuit of these aims the Bolshevik leadership demanded cheap production by a suppressed workforce. It launched successive experiments of rationalisation which were repeatedly reduced to compelling workers to intensify the physical burden of their labour. Workers did not regain control over the administration of their workplace and working conditions during the later years of the NEP, for much of the workforce, actually deteriorated. Yet, by the end of the NEP, workers were unable to launch coordinated
and effective action to promote their agenda. Workers, as an independent political power, had been subjugated to the state's authority and had little direct involvement in the national political decision making process.

The subjugation of worker interests to the agenda pursued by the leadership of the Bolshevik party did not happen overnight - strikes and stoppages occurred regularly throughout the NEP era. This work is a study of this process of subjugation. It is an examination of worker militancy during the NEP. This study will also attempt to explain the inability of workers to regain control over the management of their workplace or openly renew the pursuit of the agenda which had contributed to the revolutions of 1917.

The NEP era has been the subject of much study. The course of economic recovery has been charted in the works of Alec Nove, E.H. Carr and R.W. Davies. While Nove in his *Economic History of the USSR: 1917-1991* provides an analysis of Bolshevik economic policy, his examination of labour policy and state labour relations is minimal.

Carr and Davies' multi-volume *A History of Soviet Russia* provides thorough coverage of the politics and national economics of the NEP, but little insight into their impact on the factory shop-floor. Furthermore, this study fails to appreciate the degree of hostility and extent of coercion levelled by the state against its proletariat, and underestimates the involvement and interference of central authorities in factory affairs. To cite one example, Carr and Davies assert that until 1926, wages were determined "between employer and worker without state intervention", and that state intervention in conditions of employment "was limited to the now almost entirely nugatory prescription of a statutory minimum wage". "The first example of wage regulation (fortunately in this case a wage
increase) by the central authority on a planned basis”, according to Carr and Davies, occurred only in the autumn of 1926. This is shown throughout this study clearly not to be the case and state intervention in the running of the nation's factories and coercion against workers form central themes of this work.

Davies has also contributed to and edited two more recent volumes which provide coverage of the NEP. These works provide more depth on economic recovery during the NEP and on such issues as income and unemployment. Both works, however, still focus on macro-economics and provide limited insight into the impact of the NEP on workers and on worker militancy.

Official Bolshevik labour legislation and policy during the NEP is charted by Margaret Dewar in Labour Policy in the USSR, 1917-1928, while the subjugation of the trade unions to the party is chronicled by J.B. Sorenson in The Life and Death of Soviet Trade Unionism, 1917-1928. But both these works were hampered by a lack of access to archival sources, limiting their examinations of the NEP's impact upon workers.

The period of the NEP has also been examined by Soviet historians such as A.A. Matiugin, and V.P. Miliutin, and in Soviet micro-studies of individual factory histories. But these works present only the 'heroic struggle' of reconstruction and provide little insight into factory life and worker-management relations in the 1920s.

Insight into workers' living conditions during the NEP can be obtained from Elena Osipovna Kabo's Pitanie russkogo rabochego do i posle voiny: po statisticheskim materialam, 1908-24 and Ocherki rabochego byta. The earlier work, as the title states, is limited in its thematic and periodic coverage. The later work is the compilation of a
study conducted in 1924, where 62 households, representing a cross section of Moscow society, were asked to keep weekly budget records (35 complete sets were obtained). But this study, although very detailed and enlightening - listing even the households' reading material, furnishings, and what posters or icons were on display, presents only a static snapshot of a small group of citizens of one city and for just one year of the NEP.

More recent historiography, pioneered by such historians as Sheila Fitzpatrick, has made a greater attempt at examining the impact upon state policy of processes taking place among the populace of the nation. While Fitzpatrick does try to assess workers' input upon the policy choices made at the centre, her studies still provide little insight into life on the factory shop floor.

This challenge has, in the last decade, been taken up by scholars such as William J. Chase and Chris Ward, who have embarked upon fuller examinations of the impact of the NEP upon workers. Chase, in *Workers, Society, and the Soviet State - Labor and life in Moscow, 1918-1929*, analyses the demographic composition of the population of Moscow, its work force, and the trade unions; presents a picture of the daily lives of Moscow's workers - examining their living standards, diet and wages (drawn heavily from Kabo's studies); and uncovers the official structures for worker-management relations. He details how these structures developed through the decade, with particular attention to tensions caused by demographic changes in Moscow's workforce.

Ward, in *Russia's cotton workers and the New Economic Policy - Shop-floor culture and state policy, 1921-1929*, is the first and only study that provides an in-depth examination of the actual consequences of the experiments at forcibly accelerating economic growth on workers. Ward
traces the impact of the government's campaigns of Intensification, Rationalisation, the Regime of Economy, brigade specialisation, transfer to 7 hour/3 shift working, communal brigade operation and shock work on the traditional organisation of labour in Russia's cotton mills. He also identifies the worker and administrative structures within the mills in which the power struggles were fought, and many of the tensions running through the mills in the 1920s. Ward details workers' reactions to the pressures upon them and identifies strike waves in the cotton mills.

Both Ward and Chase also offer explanations of why strike action was as limited as they believed it to have been, particularly in the latter years of the NEP. Chase explains the abundance of strike action in the early NEP era and its tailing off in the second half of the 1920s in terms of worker alienation from the party. At the same time he attributes the ineffectiveness of worker militancy in the 1920s to the loss of working class consciousness and solidarity. The upheaval, destruction, hunger and misery of the Civil War, Chase argues, had resulted in the qualitative and quantitative disintegration of the working class and in the erosion of working class consciousness and revolutionary solidarity. The reintroduction of one-man management, loss of worker influence over production, the strengthening of labour discipline, the failure to achieve improvements in working and living conditions, and the decline in Bolshevik representation among shop-floor workers resulted in a breach in the alliance between workers and the party. The unrest that erupted early in 1921, illustrated that "a profound breach separated the former allies and a deep alienation replaced the precocious class consciousness of 1917-1918". According to Chase, the
unorganised and uncoordinated action of 1921 showed that "... gone was the ability manifested just a few years earlier to articulate clearly their broad demands and to organize themselves to achieve them".  

Chase recognizes that the breach between the party and workers continued to grow until 1924, contributing to waves of "wildcat strikes" during the first half of the NEP. But Chase believes that this was followed by a reunification of the workers and the party in the second half of the NEP, resulting in the demise of worker militancy and strikes. In his concluding chapter Chase claims that workers' ... alienation from the party was lessening. The simple fact was that things had improved, and substantially so since 1921. ... For its part, the party had weathered the storm. The menacing unrest of early 1921 had evaporated in the economic warming that followed the adoption of the NEP.

Chase writes that from 1925 onwards, the policies of 'democratization' and expansion of worker representation and participation in party and union structures narrowed the breach between workers and the party leadership. He believes that the workforce and the party was finally reunited at the end of the NEP in the joint targeting of "society's 'bourgeois' elements - specialists, nepmen, and kulaks".

Chase, however, fails to examine how the leadership dealt with and survived strikes and industrial unrest. He suggests that workers simply "increasingly used union-established appeals procedures to seek redress of their grievances" - the role of the CheKa/OGPU, and repressive measures against the nation's workforce simply do not figure in his study.

Ward attaches far greater significance to strikes in the 1920s and notes the role played in the suppression of strikes by repressive measures such as dismissals, arrests,
the threat of closure of factories, and expulsion of striking party members. However, Ward also attributes the demise of strike action to demographic changes in the workforce during the NEP. The influx of new peasant workers, and changes to traditional shop-floor worker hierarchies brought about by rationalisation campaigns, according to Ward, resulted in the break-down of worker solidarity, inhibiting coordinated action. But unlike Chase, Ward suggests that worker dissatisfaction had not evaporated.

These works, however, still leave much ground untilled. Chase's geographic focus upon Moscow and Ward's limiting his sphere of study to one industry (textile) in one region (the Central Industrial Region), make it difficult to support general conclusions on processes taking place on the shop-floors of the nation's industry as a whole.

The close proximity of industry in Moscow to central party, union, and economic organs subjected them to a disproportionate level of central attention and interference. This raises questions over the extent to which they can be regarded as being representative of Soviet industry as a whole. Similar doubts can be applied to the cotton mills of the Central Industrial Region. As a highly mechanised and large-scale industry with a predominantly rural workforce, the cotton sector was atypical of Soviet industry. Ward himself, on the basis of details of strike activity that he has found, concludes that the behaviour of textile workers was not typical of the nation's workers as a whole. Tempered by his limited access to archival primary material, Ward was unable to find evidence of comparable levels of unrest in other industries, and was forced to conclude that the militancy of the textile workers was exceptional, which he struggles to explain.
Restrictions on access to Soviet archives has also limited the scope of previous scholarly study of the NEP, particularly in such areas as worker militancy and unrest. This has fundamental implications for our assessment of such basic issues as the attitudes of the nation's workers towards the party and state, and the level and nature of support enjoyed by the regime.

Strike figures have appeared in various studies. Unfortunately, they tend to be haphazard, inconsistent and compiled from odd references which places their reliability in doubt. In addition, the data is too general to be of great use (see chapter 2). Ward was able to provide some detail on strikes in the first half of the 1920s, but the progressive increase in state control over the nation during the decade, is reflected by a corresponding decline in detail on strike activity which Ward is able to uncover. In researching the strike wave in the cotton industry of the spring and summer of 1925, Ward was able to find only vague references in official Soviet sources. Even opposition sources were beginning to dry up by 1925, and Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik, the Berlin-based Menshevik journal, provided Ward with just a few additional details and names of several mills affected. Ward was able to conclude that a major strike wave had swept through the textile mills of the CIR in 1925 in response to intensification drives, greatly worrying the nation's leadership, and resulting in a relaxation of the intensification campaign, but found it difficult to support any more specific conclusions.

As Ward tackles later years, information becomes increasingly scant. He writes that in 1926, "Some secondary tremors were felt in February: strikes in Moscow province against three-loom working and collective agreements, but it remains the case that by and large the
strike movement faded away in summer 1925"^{13}. Ward finds references to stoppages in 1928, "which may or may not refer to a strike", and a couple of strikes in 1929, but concludes that "in 1928 the press, Menshevik or Bolshevik, carried no reports of anything like the events in the CIR three years previously"^{24}.

With the easing of access to Russian archives, it is now possible to embark on a more comprehensive analysis of the subject of worker militancy, strikes and unrest, although information still remains scarce. Not only was the central party leadership guilty of suppressing information from the nation, but union, management, and party bodies at every level - from the factory to the centre - were similarly embarrassed by such manifestations taking place within their own jurisdictions, and were rarely eager to inform their superiors. When their regular reports admitted to incidents having taken place, they tended towards understatement or obfuscation of the true causes.

The central and provincial leadership of both the party and unions were aware of these tendencies and regularly dispatched instructors or special commissions to investigate incidents first hand. The reports they produced provide the fullest accounts of individual strikes and are the basis for much of the detail of this study. These reports, however, present only a random collection of case studies on the basis of which accurate assessments of the extent of unrest are difficult to make.

Naturally the Politburo was as interested as we are in obtaining an understanding of industrial strife, and the VeCheKa/OGPU were charged with regular monitoring of industrial unrest. Their daily and monthly summaries, compiled exclusively for the central leadership and classified as top-secret, form the basis for this study's quantitative assessments, as well as providing an
additional source for detail on individual incidents. From April 1924 onwards, these were complemented by reports of the Informational Department of the Secretariat of the Central Committee (under the authority of J.V. Stalin), which in themselves were summaries primarily of central and provincial GPU reports, as well as party, union, and state reports. As with the VeCheKa/OGPU summaries the circulation list for these reports was highly restricted and limited to senior figures in the central leadership.

While even the original reports from which the figures are drawn sometimes admit that many of the figures presented are incomplete, I am confident that they do provide an accurate picture of the general situation. The very limited and high ranking circulation of these reports and their general consistency adds credence to the data they contain. The VeCheKa/OGPU, finding itself under fiscal and political pressure to justify its existence, was unlikely to coverup strikes. However, caution still needs to be exercised when reading VeCheKa/OGPU analyses of actual strikes and worker moods: as it was eager to portray itself as being able to contain dissent, a tendency to understate mass 'political' opposition to the Bolshevik leadership and favour 'economic' explanations is evident, particularly in local reports. As the decade unfolded, local reports were also guilty of increasingly echoing the phraseology of whatever official explanations and arguments for discontent were being proffered from Moscow.

The minutes of the Politburo and documentation prepared for it by the Secretariat of the Central Committee have also been used extensively in researching this study. In addition, a broad range of material from the archives of the Central Committee has been examined which is too varied to categorise, but includes minutes of the Presidium of the VTsSPS and the Bureau of the party fraction of the VTsSPS.
Selected Soviet periodicals have also been surveyed, particularly *Voprosy Truda* - the monthly journal of NKTruda, and *Vestnik Truda* - the monthly journal of the VTsSPS. The relatively small circulation of both journals and their specialised and sophisticated content reveal the narrow circle of the intended readership. Both journals were used primarily by the respective central organs to convey central policy to full-time local officials.

This study will start by providing a background of the conditions which governed the lives of workers, illustrating the failure of the Bolshevik regime to fulfil worker expectations. Evidence will then be presented of strike activity and worker discontent throughout the NEP era refuting Chase's claim of a narrowing of the breach between workers and the party, and Ward's belief in the dominance of textile worker militancy. Similarly this will also refute the belief that strike action and militancy reached a peak in 1925. This forces a reassessment of worker attitudes towards the party during the NEP, their influence on state and economic policy and extent of their power as a class or group. This is the challenge that the bulk of this study will attempt to meet. By a closer examination of strike action and expressions of worker discontent during the NEP, this study will attempt to analyze: 1) the changing nature of such action; 2) the strategy and tactics employed in suppressing and controlling worker militancy; 3) the growth of the network of organizations and institutions to provide centralized control over the shop-floor; and 4) relations between the workforce and the party, state, and management.

As Chase and Ward have already provided geographically limited and industry-specific case studies, this study will attempt to reach general conclusions on the processes taking place on the factory shop-floors of the nation as a whole during the NEP. Therefore this study will not limit
itself to one industry or a specific geographic area as such, and will try to focus on the similarities and differences in the behaviour of workers and party, state, union, and management institutions across all industries and across the Soviet Union. Such a study cannot expect to cover every industrial sector or region and it does not reject the need for further micro-studies. However, it is hoped that this work will provide a new platform for the reassessment of the NEP and for the launch of further studies.

Because of the scope of this work it has been necessary to make two crude generalisations: one is to refer to those who made up the labour force as a single body, the other is to apply the term of 'strikes' to all worker industrial action that resulted in a halt in production. The 'working class' of the new Soviet state, as has been extensively detailed in both Chase's and Ward's studies, was not a homogeneous body. It was composed of many strata each with varying combinations of industrial and rural heritage, and diverse attitudes and commitments to the factory. Furthermore, the influx of rural workers, bureaucratic promotion of experienced workers, party domination of factory life, state repressions, and high unemployment all acted to break down worker class behaviour. During the course of the NEP, workers increasingly responded to the pressures placed upon them individually, whether it was by downing tools in frustration, decreasing quality of production, maliciously damaging machinery or product, absenteeism, job flitting, or seeking escape from the factory floor through promotion into the bureaucratic hierarchy. In this study, the varying response of workers can be seen in the diverse motives that led to strike action, and the manner in which specific issues provoked responses among some workers and not others.
Similarly, this study has made no attempt to categorise or differentiate between 'strikes', particularly in the presentation of statistical data. In part, this is because the nature of the data currently available makes any more specific break-downs untenable. Admittedly, as will be shown, the majority of 'strikes' at the end of the NEP bore little resemblance to those at the start of the era and may, perhaps, be better described as 'work stoppages' or 'wildcat' strikes. But in the context of the authoritarianism of the Soviet state of the latter half of the 1920s, where there could be no question of workers formally organising or openly agitating among their colleagues in favour of taking strike action, 'work stoppages' at the end of the NEP must be treated as comparable to 'strikes' at the start of the era in terms of reflecting worker attitudes.

Finally it must be emphasised that the period of the NEP, roughly from 1921 to the end of 1928, has been chosen to ease the task of examining how the interests of workers, in the name of which the revolution was fought, were subjugated to those of the party. While traditional Western historiography strongly periodizes Soviet history, depicting the NEP as a radical departure from War Communism and offering the USSR an alternative destiny to the Stalinist industrialisation of the Five-Year Plans, this study will attempt to challenge such an approach. The revolutionary fervour and urgency, which drove the Bolshevik leadership to aspire to mobilise all of society for the building of communism, underlined the policies of the NEP as much as those of War Communism and the Stalinist Five-Year Plans. This drive manifested itself in fervent ideological proselytization, centralism, authoritarianism, and coercion which determined much of the course of Soviet history. The distinguishing features of the NEP were shaped more by the limits of the ability of the Bolshevik leadership to impose its ambitions upon the nation than by
any commitments to the laissez-faire principles upon which the NEP was supposedly based. This study has concentrated on the NEP, firstly, as the works of J. Aves, G. Shkliarevsky and J.B. Sorenson have already provided comprehensive coverage of the subjugation of worker interests to those of the party during War Communism, and secondly, in order to avoid the complications of the Civil War and be able to focus on the conflict between worker and party interests.
Notes: Introduction


8. Matiugin, Moskva v period vosstanovlenia narodnogo khoziastva, 1921-1925 (Moscow, 1947); Matiugin, Rabochii klass SSSR v god i vosstanovlenia narodnogo khoziaistva (Moscow, 1962); Miliutin, Istoria Ekonomicheskogo Razvitia SSSR, 1917-1927qq (Moscow, 1928).

9. See, for example: A.M. Panfilova Istoriia zavoda Krasnyi bogatyr', 1887-1925 (Moscow, 1958); A.E. Suknaivalov Zavod Elektrik (Leningrad, 1967); and Zavod Imeni Rabochego Yegorova (Leningrad, 1962).

10. (Moscow, 1926).

11. (Moscow, 1928).


17. Ibid., pp 228-232.
18. Ibid., p. 296.
20. Ibid., p. 260.
22. Ibid., pp. 177-185, 196-197.
23. Ibid., p. 189.
24. Ibid., pp. 218-220, 256-258.

25. Aves, Industrial Unrest in Soviet Russia During War Communism and the Transition to the New Economic Policy: 1918-1921 (PhD dissertation, SSEES, 1989); Aves Workers Against Lenin... - while this constitutes the published version of the former, the PhD dissertation retains its value in its more thorough coverage of the period prior to 1920, which has been omitted in the published version; G. Shkliarevsky, Labor in the Russian Revolution: Factory Committees and Trade Unions: 1917-1918 (New York, 1992); Sorenson, op. cit.
Chapter 1: Survey of Working and Living Conditions During the NEP

(i) Living Conditions

As this study began with the premise that the stimulus for worker militancy at the start of the century had been the desire to improve working and living conditions, the achievement of significant improvements could explain a corresponding decline in worker militancy. Hence, while it is beyond the scope of this study to provide a definitive socio-economic analysis of the 1920s, some appraisal of working and living conditions needs to be undertaken to provide a context for the examination of worker militancy.

The Bolsheviks rode into power on promises of fulfilling workers' agenda for improved living and working conditions. The first official Bolshevik labour programme, presented at the Second Party Congress of the RSDRP in 1903, incorporated demands for improvements in working conditions, an eight-hour day, adequate rest periods, prohibition of child labour, protective restrictions on the employment of women and children, and social insurance. The nation's workers, however, were not in need of Bolshevik prompting and, after the February revolution of 1917, unilaterally introduced an eight-hour day, set up factory committees and initiated 'workers' control', exceeding the Bolshevik labour programme. The Bolsheviks, in danger of being outflanked by workers, embraced workers' control and backed up their promises with speedily introduced legislation upon achieving power. Their first piece of labour legislation, a decree of 29 October 1917, legally established the eight-hour working day and mandatory holidays, banned night, underground and overtime work for women and juveniles, introduced restrictions on overtime for all workers, and promised reduced working hours in hazardous occupations. A decree of 14 November
1917, endorsed workers' control, to be exercised through factory committees, control councils, and an All-Russian Council of Workers' Control. Decrees in December introduced unemployment and health insurance, to be financed by contributions from employers. These decrees were reaffirmed in the first Labour Code published in December 1918.

The fulfilment of workers' agenda must be judged, however, not on the basis of promises and legislation but on the basis of working and living conditions. Almost as soon as the decrees were pronounced the Bolshevik leadership began to limit workers' control. At the First Trade Unions Congress in January 1918, factory committees were subjugated to the trade unions, centralizing workers' control and taking away local worker independence. By May 1918, at the Second All-Russian Congress of Labour Commissars, Lenin was already publicly calling for "iron discipline" and maximisation of productivity. The crisis of the Civil War allowed for all aspects of progressive Bolshevik legislation to be suspended in the name of increasing productivity. One-man management replaced workers' control, labour discipline was enforced 'from above', and coercion and labour conscription were used to force workers to take jobs, relocate, work long hours, and remain at their stations. In 1918 holiday entitlements were curtailed or suspended. In 1919 and 1920 official limits on overtime work, including bans on night and overtime work for women, were lifted. In January 1920, new decrees required all able-bodied men and women to register for work in addition to their normal employment, and allowed the state to allocate labour as it saw fit, including reallocation of military personnel to civilian or industrial needs.
With the resolution of the Civil War, workers expected the reactivation of Bolshevik labour legislation and reintroduction of workers' control. V. Miliutin, a member of the VSNKhA presidium, in the opening speeches of the IV Trade Unions Congress in May 1921, declared that the reconstruction of the economy would be dependent upon the resurrection of the nation's exhausted work force. To encourage the economy to bloom, Miliutin promised improvements in working and living conditions.

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### Table 1.1: Real average wages for workers as a percentage of wages in 1913.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-21</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-22</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-23</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-26</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>105%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>115%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Income levels are the most obvious measure in trying to assess gains made by workers during the NEP. Soviet sources claim a general growth in real wages from a fraction of 1913 levels at the start of the NEP (33-40%), to 115-125% of 1913 levels by 1928. While these figures are also repeated by some Western scholars (see table above), the more one examines the issue of wages during the NEP, the more difficult it becomes to offer figures with any degree of confidence. One can find evidence of figures proffered by the VTsSPS or VSNKhA being manipulated to illustrate growth or hide declines in income (compounded by pressure on local bodies to 'produce' the figures desired by the centre). Similarly, the basis of calculation was
constantly being altered making it very difficult to compare figures from year to year with any degree of accuracy. It is also evident that the state authorities at times had great difficulty in determining movements in wages themselves.

Paul Gregory's examination of national income shows how Soviet calculations exaggerate real income levels. As well as understating income levels in 1913, Gregory highlights how Soviet calculations failed to take into full consideration the impact of other factors that affect real income, such as: inflation, especially when combined with delays in the payment of wages; availability of goods in state shops and cooperatives (lack of availability of a specific good in state shops would force workers to purchase the given item on the open market at a higher price, effectively reducing real income); and deterioration in the quality of manufactured goods. To this list one should also add the impact on real wages of compulsory purchases of state loan bonds and subscriptions, and payment in goods or undesirable currencies. Finally, the complexity of the wage system itself, which was made up of base salaries, piece-rate payments, bonuses, and overtime (the extent of which was often disguised from the centre as local employers were forced to pay higher incomes to the skilled labour that they wished to retain), further confuses the task of establishing average real wages.

Upon the introduction of the NEP, workers' wages were made up predominantly by the rations and free services (housing, transport, etc.) that they received. This amounted to little more than subsistence, or even near-starvation levels. While the introduction of the NEP envisaged a transition to monetary wages, the dire state of the economy meant that workers continued to receive sizable portions of their wages in rations or goods. In 1921 85% of wages were paid in kind, the following year the figure had declined to
69%, falling rapidly thereafter to some 7% by mid 1924, with the practice generally halted by the end of the year. Problems in supplying such produce or overvaluations of goods supplied in lieu of wages thus periodically reduced income levels for many workers.

While it became highly unusual to pay workers in kind in the second half of the NEP, many workers continued to receive sizable portions of their wages in credit notes valid only at the enterprises' cooperative. The overpricing, poor quality or unavailability of goods in the cooperative thus also affected real income levels.

The introduction of monetary wages at the end of 1921 and start of 1922 did not entail an immediate increase in wages. Payment tariffs were calculated at minimal subsistence levels, and even then were subject to further reductions. The province of Kursk provides an example of the latter (as well as an early example of central state intervention in wages). The VeCheKa summary for 24 January reported that after tariffs in the province had been "calculated truly on the basis of the subsistence minimum, they were, upon receipt of an STO order, lowered."

State industry also had great difficulty in maintaining real wages on par with inflation. A report on the state of the metalworking industry compiled for the Politburo by the VSRM, dated 3 May 1922, related that, with the exception of Moscow and Petrograd, where wages had remained relatively stable, real wages were falling across the industry from month to month since January. In the Urals real wages in April had fallen to 60% of January levels; in Nizhnii-Novgorod to 40%; and in Tula to 42%. The report adds that these figures had been calculated optimistically.
Currency shortages led to widespread delays in the payment of the monetary portion of wages almost as soon as these were introduced (see chapter 2). Within a context of hyper-inflation, delays in payments which then either made no allowances for, or under-estimated inflation, significantly reduced income levels. Such delays continued to affect large numbers of workers through the early years of the NEP until the end of 1924 (see chapter 2).

While wage debts became less common by the end of 1924, workers were now faced with periodic chaotic and dramatic reductions in real income with the launches of intensification and rationalisation drives, and revisions of wage-tariff tables. With the launch of the first intensification campaign in the autumn of 1924, average real wages fell by over 10%, from 42.21 Chervony Roubles per month in October 1924, to 37.53 in November, and did not recover to their previous levels until well into the second half of 1925. As these are national averages, the fall in income for many workers was more dramatic17. Tight fiscal controls during the Regime of Economy, launched in 1926 (see chapter 4), led to the reemergence of delays in the payment of wages, which became commonplace once again by the winter of 1927-28. 1928 also saw a sharp decline in real wages as the grain crises sent prices soaring18.

Closer examination of income levels, while confirming an overall gradual rise in incomes from the near starvation levels of 1921, questions whether a full recovery of wages to pre-war levels was ever achieved during the NEP19. In addition growth in wages was not continuous or uniform and was subject to significant periodic setbacks.

Real wages, however, form only one aspect in determining changes in workers' standards of living. Housing, health care, diet, and provision of other social and leisure
services are of equal importance. It is here that Soviet scholars claim the greatest advances were made.\(^\text{20}\)

The poor quality and high cost of worker housing had been a leading worker grievance before the revolution. In the first years of the Soviet regime the housing situation for workers actually improved with the average living area per worker increasing and the closure of many factory barracks. This was achieved by the reallocation of living space occupied by members of the 'bourgeoisie' among hundreds of thousands of workers and their families, and was assisted by the depopulation of the cities that occurred during the Civil War. But these gains were short-lived as the influx of population back into the cities (Moscow grew from 1 million in 1921 to over 2 million by 1926) was not matched by new construction or refurbishment. Average living areas fell, communal factory barracks reopened, large numbers of new workers found themselves sleeping in unsuitable accommodation, hovels, or in the open, and housing regained its prominence as a worker grievance.\(^\text{21}\)

In Moscow, living space fell from an average of 9.3 square meters per person in 1920, to 5.5 square meters by 1927. By the end of 1924 average living space per person in the cities of the RSFSR had fallen to just over 6 square meters per person. In the Ukraine, Caucasus and Turkistan, the situation was reported to be significantly worse. This was all far below the official minimum sanitary norm, which was, at the time, just over 8 square meters per person. These figures, however, were national or regional averages for all citizens - among workers the situation was even worse, with an average of just over 4.5 square meters per person, and falling to as low as 3 square meters per person in some areas. While Leningrad was able to report an exceptionally high average of 12 square meters per person, in working class neighbourhoods the figure was close to the national average. Reallocation was not feasible as the
housing "surpluses" were in the city centre, while the
shortages were in the outskirts where the factories were
located, an hour away from the centre.

The actual state of the housing stock negated much of the
benefit that the brief increase in the average size of
workers' accommodation had brought. While workers moved
into confiscated residences of the upper and middle classes
the absence of responsible ownership combined with the
economic collapse of the Civil War meant that these
properties were neglected and quickly fell into disrepair.
The deterioration of properties was accelerated by the
residents themselves. With fuel in scarce supply, central
heating systems were abandoned, without being drained. In
the winter pipes burst, leading to problems of damp. Holes
were knocked through walls and windows to conduct the ducts
for individual stoves which now supplied heat. When coal
and firewood were scarce, residents first burned fences,
then furniture, then doors, then floor boards and anything
else combustible. In Moscow, between 1917 and 1920 the
number of officially uninhabitable flats increased by
10,000. In the winter of 1919-20, the Moscow authorities
officially sanctioned the dismantling of 5,000 wooden
houses to provide firewood.

Living conditions in seasonal industries were particularly
harsh, as the following examples drawn from 1926
illustrate. On the construction sites of the Kokchetav and
Linin-Termez-Dar-Kurgan railway, workers were not provided
with any shelter and slept in hovels or in the open,
despite poor weather. Potable water was supplied
irregularly or not at all. In the logging sector workers
lived in the open, or in shacks with no windows or no
roofs. In the timber forests of Leningrad province, 10-20
workers lived in each log cabin with bark roofs. The
cabins had no beds or floors and workers slept on straw
spread over the ground. An open fire was kept lit in the
middle of the cabins, which had no windows and only a hole in the roof for allowing the smoke to escape”.

The replenishment and refurbishment of the housing stock thus became an extremely pressing issue. But the Bolshevik state, through its actions, had deprived the nation of the private sector as a source for financing housing development. Similarly, the state lacked the resources of its own to allocate to this task. Responsibility for construction and repair of worker housing was hence passed on to workers' employers — the factories themselves. This was to be financed by the fund for "Improving Living Conditions", which was to be established in each enterprise, based on a levy on the profits of the enterprise (the actual level to be set by negotiation between unions and management as part of collective agreements, but envisaged to constitute a minimum of 10%). However, as few enterprises were profitable in the first years of the NEP, the scope of its activities was very limited. In addition many managers were unwilling to take on new areas of responsibility, or responded to calls for economy by cutting expenditure on housing. To give one example, by September 1923, one-third of the work force (800 out of a total of 2400) of the Moscow factory Krasnyi Bogatyrr was homeless, half of the factory's housing stock was in need of total repairs, and over a quarter was in danger of collapse, yet the Rubber Trust's "Living Conditions" fund remained largely unused. The trust even refused to accept cottages offered by the Moscow City Committee, as these were in need of some repair and would be an extra burden upon the management16. Despite VTsSPS resolutions stipulating that 75% of funds for "Improving Living Conditions" should be spent on housing, in many cases management found it much less bothersome to allow all of the fund to be spent on clubs or theatres17.
The first major housing construction since the revolution was initiated only in 1924. Even then it was woefully inadequate. The proposal to raise average living space for everyone in the USSR to just over 8 square meters per person, or the official minimum sanitary norm, over a period of ten years was quickly rejected. Instead the government opted for a target which, over 10 years, beginning in 1925, would raise only workers' housing from the current average of just over 4 square meters per person to match the national average of just over 6 square meters. This required the construction of some 900,000 square meters of housing per year, or an annual expenditure of 129m roubles (without making any allowances for natural deterioration of the current housing stock or for the growing urban population). The official budget for new housing construction for 1925, at 60m roubles was well below even this target. These sums were increased in later years, with 250m roubles budgeted on new housing, and 71m roubles on repair in the 1927-28 budget. To place this in perspective, pre-war annual construction averaged 4,680,000 square meters, or an annual expenditure of 700-750m roubles at 1925 levels. It is hardly surprising then that housing remained a central worker grievance.

The issue of workers' diet is even more complex than that of wages, complicated by the dearth of reliable data. Within the context of this study, one can only draw the most general of conclusions. Workers' diet certainly improved over the decade from the near starvation levels at the start of the NEP. The nutritional quality and the percentages made up by meat, fish and dairy products increased from year to year for most of the NEP. But, again, it is doubtful if the quality of the diet of urban workers ever exceeded pre-war levels, especially after the deteriorating quality, selection and availability of foodstuffs produced by the state-run food-processing sector is taken into consideration. At the end of the NEP,
however, the grain crisis of 1928 sent produce prices soaring and workers, once again, faced long queues and shortages of bread and the most basic of foodstuffs.

Much propaganda focused on provision of workers with holidays and free or subsidised places in Houses of Rest, spas and sanatoriums. The labour code of November 1922, guaranteed workers a 42-hour rest period weekly, up to 16 days of public holidays, and two weeks annual holiday (with an additional two weeks for workers in hazardous occupations)^1. These minimums were, however, undermined by overtime clocked up by workers (see below).

The general establishment of houses of rest was begun in 1921, initiated by a decree of 13 May. They were organized by the trade unions and by the end of 1924, based on incomplete reports, at least 330 were functioning across 65 provinces and regions, benefitting 221,654 people over the course of the year. By 1925, the total had risen to 543, offering respite to 320,000 individuals. Although, without question, the existence of such facilities is admirable, it must be kept in mind that, for most workers, respite to the Houses of Rest were benefits that had been won in negotiation of collective agreements and formed part of the total remuneration package, or was issued as compensation for hazardous working conditions. Additionally, the numbers benefitting annually formed only a small percentage of the total workforce (around 5%). Criticism must also be levelled at the disproportionate percentage of management and 'employees' (white-collar and office staff) benefitting. While places were meant to be allocated by unions and the medical profession, giving priority to workers in hazardous occupations or to those whose jobs had physically exhausted them, in 1924 only 70% of those benefitting were classified as workers, while 26.5% were classified as 'employees' (the remaining 3.5% being made up by military and 'other' personnel). This disproportion was
recognized by the VTsSPS and its presidium passed a resolution on 24 February 1925 demanding that workers constitute at least 75% of those benefitting. Of the 70% classified as workers it must also be asked how many of those were union or party officials; indeed complaints were received from the locales of "all the places being taken up by communist officials, with nothing being left for workers".

(ii) Working Conditions

While the verdict on improvements in living conditions must be a mixed one, with regard to working conditions the evidence is more clear cut. Again, there certainly were improvements in the first years of the NEP over the situation at the end of War Communism when, as a result of fuel shortages, workers endured freezing conditions in mainly unheated factories, often exposed to the elements as broken windows and leaking roofs remained unrepaired. But the nature of the economic recovery, the state's lack of commitment to improving working conditions, and the weakness of workers led to a deterioration of working conditions through the second half of the NEP. The best indication and gauge of this is the issue of labour safety and accident rates.

Safer working conditions were a central element in both the workers' vision and the state's promises of life in a workers' state. From its first days in power, the Bolshevik regime promoted itself as the true protector of workers' health and safety. As highlighted above, this encompassed early decrees limiting the length of the work day and the use of female and juvenile labour, but also included early endorsement of the Tsarist Factory and Mining inspectorates. These were reorganised as the
Department for the Protection of Labour (1 Dec 1917) and the Labour Inspectorate (18 May 1918), under the NKTruda

After losing its prominence during the Civil War, the improvement of labour safety was given wide coverage in the press throughout the NEP. The Labour Code of November 1922 required every enterprise, prior to initiating production, to be inspected by the Technical, and Labour Safety and Hygiene inspectorates. Every enterprise was legally obligated to take all necessary measures for the protection of labour, including provision of special clothing, food and tools. Regrettably the state's will for implementation did not match its legislative zeal.

In 1921, due to the economic crisis, major safety projects were rejected in favour of an official policy of emphasising minor, low-cost improvements. Typically these included isolation of toxic procedures, improvements in ventilation and lighting, and installation of safety barriers, wash basins, and changing rooms. Voprosv Truda, the journal of the NKTruda, announced that during the 1924/25 financial year, 64,000 safety barriers had been erected on machines, generators, and motors in the RSFSR. Concurrently it was admitted that little progress was being made in such heavy industrial sectors as metallurgical and mining where improvements required major expenditures.

In industries where improvements required major capital investment, official policy advocated compensating workers with extra holidays, goods or rations, and shorter work days. Those who were exposed to toxic chemicals or fumes were to receive extra rations of milk or butter as an antidote (frequently workers were forced to consume these immediately upon distribution, so as to ensure that the milk or butter was not being smuggled out of the enterprise and the benefit 'wasted' on workers' families). In practice, however, industries which were subject to
shortened work days as compensation for hazards, registered the highest levels of overtime, bringing the average length of the work day to the same levels as the industrial average (see below). The distribution of extra goods, rations, and dairy products as compensation for industrial hazards was frequently hampered by poor supplies. In the spring of 1926 S. Kaplun (head of labour safety within NKTruda and author of many of the regulations dealing with labour safety) reported that this area had been generating the most "confusion" and "discontent", and "demands for significant increases in the norms set by NKTruda". It was also openly admitted, as early as 1922, that milk or butter were almost useless in neutralising the poisons for which they were being issued. Similarly, Kaplun reported that the distribution of work and safety clothing and equipment "did not satisfy even the most humble of demands and labour inspectors are forced to use all means at their disposal to release necessary funds".

Official voices accused management of attaching little importance to safety works and responding to demands for economy by cutting expenditure on safety or spending funds allocated for such works on other purposes. The root of the dilemma, however, was not so much managerial resistance, but the state's constant demands for economy, and the decline in the authority and powers of both workers and the labour safety inspectorates.

In the first years of NEP the work of the Technical, and Labour Safety and Hygiene inspectorates was severely hampered while they were volleyed by the government between the NKTruda and the VTsSPS. In 1918 the inspectorates were organised under the NKTruda. A decree on 12 May 1921 transferred all central and local bodies of the inspectorate, together with its personnel and assets to the VTsSPS. Less than a year later, on 3 April 1922, the inspectorates were returned to the NKTruda.

The
transfers were accompanied by long lasting disputes over spheres of responsibility, assets, and funding. To confuse matters further on 28 December 1921, prior to the last transfer, responsibility for provision and allocation of work and safety clothing was split between the VTsSPS and VSNKh.

The effectiveness of the inspectorates was then limited by conflicting instructions, leading to confusion within its ranks over their role. The introduction of the NEP was interpreted within the inspectorates as a retreat from the socialist goal of attaching prime importance to working conditions. The confusion over aims, combined with the organisational turmoil following the inspectorates' transfer to the VTsSPS was reflected in the sharp drop in the number of inspections - from 8.5 per inspector per month in the first half of 1920, to 4.1 by October 1921.

At the Second All-Russian Conference on Labour Safety, in November 1921, the inspectorates were instructed to concentrate on the private sector and in 1922 50% of all inspections were of private enterprises, while this sector employed less than 10% of the total workforce. State enterprises were treated with greater leniency at every level. The percentage of inspections that resulted in court action was two times higher for private enterprise than for state in 1922 (16.3% versus 7.5%), and five times higher in 1923 (34.0% versus 6.0%) and 1924 (34.5% versus 6.4%). Similarly 61% of all convictions in 1922, were against private enterprises versus 28.4% against state, rising to 80% versus 15% in 1923 and 1924.

Despite the conviction rate labour safety was not actually as problematic in the private sector as it was in the state sector, particularly in large-scale heavy industry (see below). This was indirectly admitted by a policy change in
1923 and at the First All-Russian Congress on Labour Hygiene and Safety in November 1924.

In 1923 the inspectorates were ordered to pay greater attention to state enterprises. While at the First All-Russian Congress on Labour Hygiene and Safety, the inspectorates were told that labour safety and hygiene in general was not a problem in small enterprises - the vast majority of private enterprises fell into this category. The inspectorates were again instructed to concentrate on the major industries of their areas, inspecting only those small enterprises that were especially hazardous by nature.

In response to the change in policy, the total number of inspections of state-run enterprises began to exceed the number of inspections of private enterprises in 1923 (48.5% vs 43.5% of the total). This, however, still constituted a disproportionate level of attention being devoted to the private sector which was compounded by the continued lenient treatment of the state sector. The imbalance of convictions in the private sector (accounting for 80.5% of all convictions in the first half of 1924) in comparison with the state sector (accounting for 15.1% of all convictions) increased. When examining state enterprises the inspectorates were encouraged to bear in mind current economic hardships, to take into consideration the economic state of each individual enterprise, to be "conciliatory", and to "accept the distribution of inferior safety articles and clothing".

Such undermining of the inspectorates continued throughout the NEP. From the start, the inspectorates complained of their lack of authority and the failure of local government bodies to support their work. The inclusion of safety measures in the official plan of the Labour Safety department did not guarantee that economic planning bodies
would release the necessary funds. By law, all plans for industrial construction required approval by the inspectorates, but such approval was rarely even sought. In a 10-month period in 1926, only 24 projects were submitted to the NKTruda for approval. When approval was refused, the verdict was ignored. A new dough mixing shop was built in the Yaroslavl "Red Bakery". The Labour Inspectorate was called in only after the project was completed, it declared the shop to be a fire hazard and refused to grant permission for it to open. The order was ignored, and the shop burned down within months.

At the First All-Russian Congress of Professional Hygiene and Safety, following expressions of opposition to the intensification drive, the powers of the inspectorates were curtailed. Kaplun reported in Vestnik Truda that during the debate which followed his opening address to the Congress "some participants expressed the opinion that it was impossible to even speak about further intensification of labour - declaring themselves against the current party and trade union campaign". While the "Congress did not allow itself to be dragged down this slippery path" and formally condemn intensification, it still passed a resolution which called for "the waging of a decisive struggle against the tendency that exists in various places of reversing practical efforts in the area of professional hygiene and safety, even if only temporary, in favour of raising labour productivity".

After such criticism of intensification, the inspectorates were told that in future all sanitary/technical improvements or enforcement of injunctions would require the approval of the NKTruda of the relevant republic. This transferred power away from the inspectorates and added to the administrative chain involved, complicating the enforcement of labour safety and limiting its effectiveness. Furthermore, under the pretext that
industrial hazards must be combatted and not compensated, the inspectorates lost their powers to demand the issue of safety clothing, extra rations, shortened work periods, or extra holidays. These could now only be extended as part of collective or special agreements between unions and management - safety clothing and compensation for industrial hazards now became benefits for which workers and unions had to bargain.

Cuts in compensation for industrial hazards actually began in 1923 with the NKTruda introducing "significant reductions in all compensations in all industries, without exception". Lists of those who qualified for free issue of work and safety clothing "were subjected to extremely strong reductions in 1923". Labour Safety inspectors continued to "flood the NKTruda with recommendations for additions to existing lists for compensation" but the NKTruda and the VTsSPS "firmly continued to stick to [its] policy ... of no further additions to existing lists".

The shift away from low-cost safety measures to investing in major, capital-intensive improvements, particularly in heavy industries, may have been officially declared at the First All-Russian Congress of Professional Hygiene and Safety in November 1924, and reductions in compensation of workers for industrial hazards may have begun in 1923, but the actual launch of an official programme of large-scale, capital-intensive safety works was not announced until the IV All-Soviet Conference on Labour Safety in 1926. Even then the programme was undermined by the VSNKha. At an All-Soviet meeting on labour safety in February 1928 it was revealed that the VSNKha had reduced allocations for safety in heavy industry (where safety/sanitary conditions were most grave) from the levels recommended by the NKTruda and VTsSPS, in favour of increasing the budget for improvements in light industry (where improvements came cheaper) in the budgets for the 1926-27 and 1927-28 financial years.
VSNKha also acted against the recommendations of the NKTruda and VTsSPS, by tending to allocate more to wealthier trusts, where safety improvements could be achieved more easily, even if conditions within them were not particularly problematic.

The nature of economic growth also acted against the interests of labour safety. The advances in the economy, particularly from 1921 to 1926, were based on recovery - on placing into production pre-revolutionary factories and machinery of progressively poorer quality and of more hazardous nature, with minimal investment in new equipment or construction. When combined with intensification and the significant growth in the size of the workforce, this meant that workers were subjected to rising overcrowding and worsening air quality, while having to work with increasingly worn tools and machinery. A. Kats, a leading writer on labour safety, admitted that this could only reflect negatively on sanitary-safety levels.

As workers and the inspectorates were denied any involvement in the introduction of increases in norms, reductions in payment rates, rationalisations, and transitions to maximum use of piece-rate payment, thought was given only to pushing output levels higher (see chapter 4) and labour safety suffered. As has already been shown above, many inspectors were openly opposed to the intensification campaigns on the grounds of labour safety.

The Regime of Economy campaign and the transition to Three-shift work in 1927, led to further deterioration in labour safety. Three-shift work meant that there was little opportunity for shops and machinery to cool, for the air to clear and the dust to settle. Kaplun reported to the IV All-Soviet Conference on Labour Safety, in 1926, that in response to the Regime of Economy, budgets for improvements in working conditions, professional hygiene, sanitary and
technical safety were cut far more often than other budgets. Many cases were noted where distributed funds remained unused, or were spent for other purposes. The Gomza trust attempted to cut all credits for labour safety. The Iugostal' trust managed to spend only 35,000 of the 450,000 roubles that had been allocated to it for safety technology for the 1925-26 financial year. The situation did not improve even when the economy did: by the end of 1928, 19% of the total sum allocated for labour safety for the 1926-27 financial year (37m R) - over one year after the financial year had ended, still remained unspent.

Accident figures provide the most revealing quantitative illustration of the effects of the processes described above. Although it is difficult to find a complete set of figures covering the entire period of the NEP, all figures one encounters indicate a continual increase from year to year. Some increase in accident figures can be attributed to improved record keeping, but the scale of the year-on-year growth must be regarded as irrefutable evidence of worsening working conditions. Articles in Soviet periodicals of the time admit that "labour safety had not kept up with the tempo of expansion", and that "very sharp" increases in the number of registered accidents, from year to year, indicate a continuing decline in labour safety and hygiene.

In 1925 an average of 12 accidents per 1000 workers per year was reported (an accident being recorded in cases where this resulted in the loss of a workers' working capacity for a minimum of one day). In the chemical sector the figure was 18.2 and approached 20 in the mining and metal sectors. In the Iugostal' trust the figure was 25 accidents per 1,000 workers. More worrying, by the end of the year the figure had risen to a rate of 26 accidents per thousand workers per year, with the metal sector now reporting a rate of 27 accidents, and mining 29.6. The
rate continued to grow through 1926 with NKTruda reporting an overall increase in the number of accidents from the first to the fourth quarter of the 1925-26 financial year of 42.5%. By the last quarter of 1927 the accident rate had risen to 44.3 per thousand workers across all industry. During the last years of the Tsarist regime, from 1914 to 1917, when factories were straining under the demands of war production which had swelled the workforce by a third, the accident rate had averaged 15 per thousand workers per year.

Chase suggests that the influx of new workers and the lack of care exercised by workers themselves, including alcohol-related accidents, were partially responsible for the increase in the figures. He cites the large number of accidents where workers were officially registered as being at fault. Kats, however, casts doubts over such inferences. Summarising the conclusions of the February 1928 All-Soviet meeting on labour safety, Kats reported that there was a tendency among management to attribute all accidents to worker negligence and lack of care, thereby avoiding personal responsibility for accidents, removing the need to have accidents investigated, and not requiring the adoption of any actions to prevent future accidents.

(iii) Overtime

Overtime was identified as an area where significant improvements in workers' lives could be made without the need for capital investment. Much promotion was devoted to the decree of 29 October 1917, and labour codes of 10 December 1918, and 9 November 1922, banning overtime unless authorized by the labour inspectorate. The Labour Code of November 1922 included a limit on sanctioned overtime of 120 hours per year per worker, and a four hour limit on any
two consecutive days. These bans, however, were not enforced.

Table 1.2: Summary of officially reported and sanctioned overtime.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Avg daily o/t*</th>
<th>Daily average % working o/t&quot;</th>
<th>Avg actual o/t***</th>
<th>Avg mnthly o/t</th>
<th>Monthly avg % working o/t\</th>
<th>Avg actual o/t\</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921-2</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-3</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Average daily overtime, hours per worker.
- Average percentage of all workers engaged in overtime on any given day.
- Average actual daily overtime for those workers undertaking overtime work.
- Average percentage of all workers undertaking overtime work in any given month.
- Average actual monthly overtime for those workers undertaking overtime work in any given month.

Note: Figures for 1921-2 and 1922-3 are for the financial year. Figures for 1924 are averages of the first three quarters of the year as no data was found for the last quarter of 1924. Figures for 1925 are for the first half of the year only. These figures are only for overtime that was officially sanctioned by the NKTruda and reported, actual overtime rates are certain to be significantly higher.


At first glance, one may conclude from table 1.2 that the government was successful in keeping sanctioned overtime under the maximum legal limit of 120 hours per worker, obtaining figures from 42 to 79 hours per worker per year for the period covered by the table. But these are average
figures for the entire work-force. In actual fact only part of the workforce engaged in overtime work and the relatively small difference between the percentages of workers engaged in overtime on any given day, and the percentage of workers working overtime in the course of one month indicates that official overtime was concentrated among 1/6-1/4 of the nation's workforce. For this fraction overtime tended to be a daily extension of the workday of over an hour and double the legal limit.

Industries which were subject to shortened work days as compensation for industrial hazards, such as coal mining and the oil industry, had among the highest rates of officially sanctioned overtime. In the oil industry, during the 1925-26 financial year, 55.4% of the workforce was officially engaged in overtime work in any given month, averaging 38.3 hours per month each. During the 1923/24 financial year, an average of 27.2% of coal miners undertook overtime work in any given month, tallying up an average of 25 hours per month each - again more than double the legal limit. As a result the official average length of the work-day in the coal mining sector of 7.8 hours, was exactly the same as the official national average for all sectors. These figures were exceeded in specific regions. In 1925-26, officially an average of one third of the work force in the Donbass coal basin was engaged in overtime, averaging 26.2 hours per month each. In some pits the percentage of the work force engaged in overtime reached 50%, averaging 48-50 hours per month each.

The above figures are only for overtime officially sanctioned by the NKTruda - unauthorized overtime was widespread and substantial, commonly obscured by piece-work payments, and 'bonuses'. In the Podmoskovskii Basin, a special Commission of the NKTruda investigating two separate mining administrations in June 1926, determined that 37% of the total salaries being paid out were for
overtime not approved by the Labour Inspectorate, disguised as "piece-work". In Pskov, an inspection of the factory Znamya Truda in 1925, revealed 3,000 hours of unauthorized overtime.

(iv) Working Conditions in the Private Sector

The leasing of enterprises, which began in the autumn of 1921, and the return of the 'capitalist' factory owner was certainly greeted with little enthusiasm by workers and was perceived as a betrayal of socialist principles. The continued presence of 'capitalists' and 'Nepmen' in Soviet society and their displays of opulent wealth were certainly a cause of worker dissatisfaction. But levels of 'exploitation' were not necessarily higher in the private sector than in the state sector.

While Chase has interpreted the large number of convictions for breaches in labour safety in the private sector (see above), and the amount of press coverage devoted to poor working conditions in private enterprises as an indication of the superiority of conditions in the state sector, such a conclusion should be questioned. In addition to the inspectorates and the press focusing their attention on the private sector, workers in private industry enjoyed the support not only of the trade unions, but even of the CheKa. The trade unions conducted "energetic battles" for improving conditions in this sector, which included supporting strikes. While local organs of the CheKa, when being instructed in September 1921 on what their new duties should be under the NEP, were ordered to "ensure that laws on labour safety are fully observed in leased enterprises and to give workers of these enterprises full co-operation and attentive hearings of their declarations". This was to be regarded as "one of the core assignments of the CheKa" during the NEP.
With all this attention managers of private enterprises had to tread carefully and offer better terms of employment to attract workers away from state enterprises to work for the "class enemy". Private enterprise also had an advantage in being concentrated in consumer industries where working hazards were inherently lower while demand and profits were higher, making it possible for managers to finance superior terms of employment. This was admitted by the shift in official policy of the inspectorates in 1923 when the inspectorate were ordered to pay greater attention to state enterprises (see above).

Further indication of the relatively non-hazardous working environment in private enterprise can be seen in the breakdown of court actions taken against them in 1922. We are told that 85% of all cases brought against private enterprise in this year were for breaches regulating working hours and the employment of youths and minors, and that the remainder were dominated by cases of payments below tariff levels. Thus, despite stringent observation, the vast majority of actions against private enterprise were for overtime violations - which was endemic in the state sector (see above); and for employing juveniles - who must have been grateful for the opportunities being offered against a backdrop of critical juvenile unemployment. Only a few percent of all legal actions were for actual violations of regulations governing safety and working conditions.

Final confirmation of the preferable conditions in the private sector comes from workers themselves. Unwilling to make sacrifices which they had endured in the nationalised sector, workers demanded higher wages and better conditions from new owners in the private sector. Here they found support from trade unions and state regulatory bodies, prepared to endorse strike action and prosecute for breaches in labour and safety regulations.
surprisingly, it was not long before wages and working conditions were superior in private industry, as confirmed by VeCheKa daily summaries which reported the migration of workers, especially skilled, from the state to the private sector. A Central Labour Statistical Bureau report confirms the low contribution the private sector was making to overall industrial unrest, with only 1,050 workers out of the 56,163 involved in strikes in the first half of 1923, employed in this sector.

(v) Unemployment

The demobilization of much of the Red Army in 1921, after the end of the Civil War, contributed to the rebirth of mass unemployment by the summer. The situation was further exacerbated by the policies of the NEP. With the introduction of the NEP, managers of both private and state enterprises were given powers to regulate the size of the workforce they employed. In July 1921, the state began to transfer money and goods to enterprises not on the basis of the number employed by the enterprise, but on the basis of its output. This was followed by the introduction of khozraschet ('self-financing') in December 1921, forcing state enterprises to cover their own costs. The impact of these measures was immediate and extensive dismissals, particularly in heavy industry, and large-scale unemployment now became a basic feature of the NEP.

Arriving at precise calculations of the extent of unemployment during the NEP is a complex task, and again beyond the scope of this study. The figures presented in Table 1.3 must be treated with great caution. The state's embarrassment over the extent of unemployment and its desire to limit the cost of benefits being paid out, led to frequent manipulation of the qualifications required to be registered as unemployed or to receive benefits, and
'cleansings' (chistki) or 're-registrations' of unemployed. In August 1924, for example, skilled labour with no work experience, unskilled labour with less than three years of work experience, and employees with less than five years experience were disqualified from registering as unemployed. Calculations of the number of unemployed by the trade unions always gave higher figures: on 1 January 1927, for example, the trade unions believed 1,667,000 of their members were unemployed versus the official state figure of around 1,250,000.

In addition to the national 're-registrations' which were undertaken over the last 6 months of 1924 and again from September to October 1925, many local re-registrations were also carried out. These operations were justified under the pretext that record keeping was inefficient (with many individuals remaining on lists long after they had found employment, migrated, or even died), and to combat benefit fraud. While such assessments certainly had some validity, the scale of the sweeps indicate that their main aim was to forcibly reduce official unemployment figures and the amount being paid out in benefits. The national 'cleansing' of the labour exchanges conducted in 1924 resulted in the removal of 55.5% of those registered with 50 provincial and 50 urban labour exchanges across the USSR. In some exchanges 70-90% of those registered were disqualified - in Yaroslavl 97.6% were removed.

The steady expansion of the numbers registered which occurred after each such review, provides further evidence of the 'cleansing' being overenthusiastic. Vestnik Truda openly admitted that the 're-registrations' were overeager, reporting that the purge in 1924 left 16,000 on the registers of Leningrad's labour exchanges while "we know that there are far more" and while there were 35,000 registered with trade union labour bureaus.
Table 1.3: Numbers officially registered as unemployed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total unemployed</th>
<th>Avg receiving benefits in any given month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1922</td>
<td>175,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1922</td>
<td>436,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1923</td>
<td>625,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1923</td>
<td>1,000,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1924</td>
<td>1,240,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 1924</td>
<td>1,369,000(^b)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1924</td>
<td>1,340,000(^c,d)</td>
<td>290,000(^i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 1924</td>
<td>725,000(^e,d)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1925</td>
<td>857,550(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 1925</td>
<td>875,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1925</td>
<td>1,000,000(^c) (approximately)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 1925</td>
<td>915,650(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-26</td>
<td>1,017,200(^j)</td>
<td>330,000(^i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1925</td>
<td>920,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1926</td>
<td>1,065,500(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>1,241,500(^j)</td>
<td>475,000(^i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1926</td>
<td>1,070,000(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1926</td>
<td>1,250,000(^kh)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1927</td>
<td>1,216,906(^a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>1,289,800(^j)</td>
<td>650,000(^j) (projected)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 1928</td>
<td>1,571,000(^j)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 1929</td>
<td>1,633,000(^j)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The numbers given for receiving benefits are the average number receiving benefit in any given month over the course of the financial year for which the figure is given.

Sources:

- "Zakrytuy pis'mo TsK RKP(b) No. 16 (iun'-avgust 1924)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 655, l. 14;
- "Materialy o nastroeniyakh i protsessakh, proishodshchikh v rabochikh massakh (Nedovol' stva, brozheniya, konflikty, zabastovki iikh prichiny) Za period mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g)", produced by the Informotdel, circa 13 June 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 907, l. 10;
- L. Rabinovich, "K predstoyashchemu pereuchetu bezrabotnykh chlenov soiuzov", pp. 36-42 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, pp. 36-37;
To put the above figures into perspective, the non-agricultural labour force of the USSR, numbered some 6.8 million in 1924-25, and 7.5 million by the end of 1926. Unemployment thus fluctuated between 15-20% for most of the NEP. This was also higher than during the last pre-war years when unemployment is estimated to have fluctuated at around 400-500,000 or well under 10%.

While the extent of unemployment was an embarrassment for the regime, it was still boastful of the benefits that were extended to the unemployed. But, as can be seen in table 1.3, less than half of even those officially recognised as unemployed ever received benefits, which were also far from generous. By the decree of 11 December 1917, all workers temporarily unemployed were meant to receive benefits equal to average local earnings. But this liberal provision proved unattainable and the decree of 3 October 1921, reduced this for skilled workers to equal the local minimum wage (irrespective of length of service), and one-third to one-half of the local minimum wage for unskilled workers and employees (but only after three years of service). The decree specified that only those who became unemployed as a result of reductions in workforces or closure of enterprises were eligible to receive benefits, and if workers turned down any employment offered to them by the NKTruda they immediately lost their entitlement.
was modified by a decree of 13 July 1923, which pegged benefits for unemployed skilled and demobilised workers at half of the grade six value on the local wage scale (irrespective of length of service), and to one third of this value for unskilled workers (after two years of service) and employees (after three years of service). Benefits were also now limited to six months and only to those who registered within two to four weeks and had no other means of support. In addition to the limits on eligibility and low levels of benefits, dissatisfaction among unemployed would have been further compounded by the frequent cases where employers failed to pay them all the wages owed upon being made unemployed.

(vi) Conclusion

While it is not the aim of this study to provide a definitive socio-economic analysis of the NEP, this chapter has attempted to provide the basis for a minimal assessment of living and working conditions. Although it is clear that working and living conditions improved from the starvation or subsistence levels endured by workers at the start of 1921, more positive conclusions become difficult to support. The gains made in real income and diet over pre-revolutionary levels, especially considering the length of time that had passed, were minimal or non-existent. The housing crisis remained as critical as ever.

On the factory floor itself, the prime concern of the party and state was the achievement of maximum economic growth, irrespective of the costs to labour safety and working conditions. The government was prepared to exploit the issue of labour safety and progressive labour legislation in the press for purposes of propaganda, but it constantly failed to take measures to achieve the enforcement of official policy. This was reflected in the erosion of the
powers and the undermining of the Technical, and Labour Safety and Hygiene Inspectorates who would have been natural allies of shop-floor workers.

The constant emphasis of the party and state on raising quotas, reducing rates, intensifying labour, and making economies impacted negatively on working conditions. The nature of economic growth during the NEP, based predominantly on recovery, exacerbated the situation. As the workforce continuously expanded, shop-floors became more overcrowded and hazardous. The bringing back into production of ever older and worn out machinery, and increasingly unsuitable premises added to the dangers. In the later years of the decade, this was compounded by the introduction of two and three shift systems in many industries, giving little opportunity for shops to cool or for dust to settle. Rising accident rates and falls in labour safety standards vividly reflect the deterioration in working conditions. Finally the dreaded spectre of unemployment continued to hang over the nation's workforce and was a continuous source of worker displeasure.

What is clear from this brief assessment is that in no way can the achievements in working and living conditions during the NEP be described as the fulfilment of workers' agenda. Workers' vision of a future of full employment, dramatically improved conditions, higher wages, and a sharing of the responsibilities for their enterprises and the wealth which they generated must have seemed to them as distant at the end of the NEP as in 1917. Hence a decline in worker militancy, in the ability of workers to organise and effectively advance their interests, cannot be explained in terms of improvements in working and living conditions.
(vii) Notes: Chapter 1


2. Ibid., pp. 43-45, 174-177.

3. Ibid., pp. 32-35.


5. Ibid., pp. 41-43, 45-60 - In 1918 railway workers, technicians and medical staff were mobilised. The new Labour Code of December 1918 specified that those who had jobs had to stay in them and those who were unemployed had to report to the Department for the Allocation of the Labour Force to be assigned jobs. During 1919-1920 coal miners, metal workers, workers in the wool industry, electricians, post and telegraph workers, and workers in the fuel and military supply sectors were mobilised - for details of the various decrees see Ibid., pp. 173, 174, 178, 180, 182, 183, 187, 188.

6. Ibid., pp. 169, 177, 179, 184, 185, 186.

7. Ibid., pp. 187-188.

8. Biulleten' IV Vserossiiskogo so"ezda professional'nykh Soiuzov - polnii stenograficheskii otchet, No. 1, 18 May 1921, p. 3.


12. In February 1922 the Donbass region, for example, received less than half of the goods that were assigned to be distributed in lieu of wages. By the end of the first quarter of 1922, the "goods portion
of wages (had become) practically non-existent, minimal and irregular. When goods reached workers they were often inappropriate or overvalued: "We need boots - we are given hats, accordions, dolls ..." - B. Kozelev, "Mesyats v tsentre Donetskoi metallurgii" pp. 87-106 in Vestnik Truda, No. 5, May 1922, pp. 87, 91-93, see also chapter 2.

13. Carr notes that in 1924, in some places up to 60% of wages were being paid in credit notes valid only in the enterprise's cooperatives, where workers could exchange them for only a limited range of goods, often at inflated prices - Socialism ... Vol. I, pp. 373-374.

14. See the daily summaries of the Informational department of the VeCheKa for January and February 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627-2628.

15. "Gosinfsvodka Informatsionnogo otdela VeCheKa za 24/1 No 19 (257)" 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, 1. 119.

16. RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 377, l. 49.

17. "Zarabotnaya plata promyshlennykh rabochikh SSSR v 1924 godu", Vestnik Truda, No. 7, July 1925; "Politika zarplaty v 1925-26 g", Vestnik Truda, No. 11, November 1925; see also chapters 4 & 5.


21. For a vivid account of the housing crisis see Chase, pp. 183-196; and E.O. Kabo Ocherki rabochego byta (Moscow, 1928).

22. Chase, p. 185.


24. A. Matiugin, Moskva v period vosstanovleniya narodnogo khozyaistva (1921-1925) (Moscow, 1947), p. 9; see also Chase, pp. 183-184, 188; and Kabo.
25. "Dokladnaya zapiska o polozenii sezonných rabochikh (po materialam za 1926g)", circa March 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 207, 210-211.


27. Peznikov, p. 35.


29. See, for example, Chase, p. 190.

30. See Kabo Pitanie russkogo rabochego do i posle voiny: po statisticheskim materialam, 1908-24 (Moscow, 1926); Kabo Ocherki...; Chase, pp. 178-180; Harrison, pp. 51-53; and Davies, From Tsarism ....

31. Dewar, pp. 176, 231 - the two weeks' holiday guaranteed by the 1922 Labour Code was a reduction on the one month's holiday guaranteed by the 1918 Labour code.


33. "Zakrytoe pis'mo sekretarya nikolaeyskogo okruzhkoma KP(b) Uk za aprel-iiul' 1925g", RTsKhIDNI, F 17, op. 84, d. 754, l. 204.

34. Dewar, pp. 160, 163, 166, 168.

35. Ibid., p. 232.


39. See, for example, "III Vserossiiskaya konferentsiya professional'nogo soiuza rabochikh tabachnogo proizvodstva", pp. 104-107 in Vestnik Truda, No. 4-5, May-June 1921, pp. 105-106.

42. Kaplun, p. 62.
43. Zaromski, pp. 64-65; Kats, "Okhrana truda v period rekonstruktsii khozyaistva", pp. 60-65 in Vestnik Truda, No. 4, April 1927, pp. 63-64; Kats, "Itogi vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniya po okhrane truda", pp. 82-89 in Vestnik Truda, No. 3-4, March-April 1928, pp. 82-83.
44. Dewar, pp. 207, 220.
46. Dewar, p. 216.
49. Ibid., p. 70; Vinnikov, pp. 46-49.
50. Ibid., pp. 46-49; Belkin, pp. 79-80.
52. "Na II Vsesoiuznoi konferentsii Okhranii Truda", Trud, 23 November, 1921.
54. There is some evidence to suggest that the Bolshevik leadership was expecting such a condemnation and had taken preemptive action to limit its extent. The Congress was not subsidised by the NKTruda and the delegates were forced to pay their own expenses or find financing among local bodies. This allowed the Congress to be dominated by delegates from the province of Moscow who accounted for a third of the 340 total. Many of these were not inspectors, but representatives of institutions conducting research into labour productivity and factory organisation whose interests lay in maximizing output. This may have been intentional so as to limit the size of
delegations from distant provinces, which were likely to be more independent and might have increased the volume of criticism of government policy. As it was, only 14.1% of the delegates were Communist Party members (subject to party discipline), which was the lowest Communist Party representation at a national congress known to this author - Kaplun, "K voprosam ...", pp. 174-175.

55. The Technical Inspectorate was also severely reproached for encompassing "within its ranks significant numbers of pre-revolutionary factory inspectors who still harboured the habits and traditions of pre-revolutionary work", although it is unclear if this was connected to the criticism of intensification - Ibid., pp. 174, 182.


58. Kats, "Itogi ...", p. 82; Zaromski, pp. 64-65.


61. Kats, "Okhrana ...", pp. 63-64; Zaromski, pp. 64-65.

62. Dewar, p. 130.

63. Zaromski, pp. 64-65.

64. Kats, "Okhrana ...", p. 62.

65. Ibid., pp. 62-63; Zaromski, pp. 67-68; Carr and Davies, Foundations ... Vol I, p. 610-612.


67. Ibid., pp. 221, 227, 243.

68. Kats, "Itogi ...", p. 85.


70. M. Katel', "Rabochee vremya promyshlenykh rabochikh SSSR (1923/24g)", pp. 102-115 in Vestnik Truda, No. 5, May 1925, pp. 112-113.


72. Ibid., pp. 87-88.

74. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa za 25 avgusta No. 68 (124)" 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, l. 63; "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa za 6 sentyabrya No. 78 (134)" 1921, Ibid., l. 111.


76. Chase, p. 226.

77. Belkin, p. 71.

78. Circular from the Presidium of the CheKa to all CheKa Provincial Cells, dated September 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 227, l. 55.


80. RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, l. 111-112.

81. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa za 16 fevralya No. 39 (257)" 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2628, l. 85; "Gosinfsvodka ... GPU za 7 marta No. 7 (272)" 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2629, l. 52; "Gosinfsvodka ... GPU za 5 iiunya No. 79 (353)" 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2634, l. 6 - which reported that in the Tatar Republic "... state industries are threatened with being left without skilled labour"; "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za period s 15-go maya po 15-e avgusta 1924 g (po dannym Ob"edinennogo Gospolitupravleniya SSSR)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, l. 90 - which reported that in the Ukraine workers were leaving the metal industry in response to low rates. In the Kharkov Locomotive works an entire brigade which had worked in the factory for 15-20 years left. In the Artem metalworks, casters and foundry workers left.

82. Materialy k zakrytomy pis'mu Tsentral'nogo Komiteta RKP(b) No. 15 1923", RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 468, l. 137.

83. The Cheka summary for 11 October 1921, for example, reported that the Bryansk factory was reducing its work force by 1,127 workers - RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2624, l. 44. Some examples reported by summaries in January 1922 include: 11,173 workers unemployed in Orlovsk; the lay-off of 2,172 workers in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, 7,412 in Smolensk, and 3,000 miners in the Novorossiisk Factory-pit of Izogostal' Trust in Donetsk province -RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 25, 102.

84. Dewar, p. 249.
85. Carr and Davies, *Foundations ... Vol I*, p. 457. J.C. Shapiro argues that the real figure for 1 January 1927 was 1.4 million unemployed - "Unemployment", pp. 66-75 in Davies, ed., *From Tsarism ...*, p. 72.

86. A. Bakhutov, "Praktika birzh truda", pp. 49-54 in *Vestnik Truda*, No. 4, April 1925, p. 49.

87. L. Rabinovich, "K predstoyashchemu pereuchetu bezrabotnykh chlenov soiuzov", pp. 36-42 in *Vestnik Truda*, No. 8-9 August-September 1925, pp. 36-37.

88. Bakhutov, pp. 50-51.


90. Shapiro, p. 66.

91. Dewar, p. 163.

92. Ibid., p. 212.

93. Ibid., p. 241.

94. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa za 23 i 24 iiulya No. 41 (97)" 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2622, 1. 65 - which reported that in the Kharkov Locomotive works many workers were sacked, as undesirable elements, without being paid wages owed; Ibid, 8 November No. 136 (191) 1921, d. 2625, 1. 14 - which reported that in Moscow, at the No 1 Artillery-Repair works, workers sacked after a 5 day strike (workers had not been paid for two months) were paid half of what they were owed; "Gosinfsvodka ... GPU za 5 yanvarya No. 5 (243)" 1922, d. 2627, 1. 28-29 - which reported that in Ufim and Stavropol' laid-off workers were not issued wages and produce owed.

95. See, for example, "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya Respubliki za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya" 1923, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 468, 1. 18, or almost any of the GPU monthly summaries. See also chapter 5.
Chapter 2 : Strikes and Industrial Unrest, 1921-1924

(i) The Launch of the NEP

As the last operations of the Civil War were being concluded, the new republic's workforce anticipated the dawning of the promised age. After two decades during which their aspirations had been persistently postponed, the last perceived hurdle to the birth of the worker state, the counter-attack from the right, was overcome. As the months passed, however, the realization of worker aspirations seemed as distant as ever. As Jonathan Aves documents in his study, instead of a relaxation and reversal of the policies that constituted War Communism, the conclusion of the Civil War was accompanied by an intensification of these policies. The militarization of the work-force and grain requisitioning were stepped up and the state monopoly on trade was tightened. At the Third Trade Unions Congress in April 1920, Lenin told workers that "all private interest must be sacrificed", and announced that "Our basic slogan is more and closer to one-man management, more labour discipline". Workers had to "work with military decisiveness, resolution and self-sacrifice, putting aside the interests of the group and shop". The satisfaction of workers' basic needs was given low priority in comparison with laying the foundations for communism, and little was done to tackle the chronic food supply crisis.

As Aves observes, tensions between workers and the party had been building up during War Communism. Although a general decline in the scale of industrial unrest did occur after 1917, as workers responded to the Bolsheviks' call for unity to preserve the revolution against the threat from the right, strikes continued and steadily gained momentum from 1918 to 1920. Soviet figures cited by Aves reported a total of 146 strikes with 135,442 participants
across 26 provinces during 1920. The high average of 928 participants per strike illustrates the large scale of unrest. This momentum of discontent culminated in the well-documented wave of strikes that swept across the Soviet Republic in February and March of 1921.

The strike wave was a climax of worker opposition, which had been building up since 1918, to the 'productionist' policies of the Bolshevik leadership. Despite physical exhaustion after years of war and hunger, the workforce mounted a substantial challenge to the Bolshevik regime, demanding fundamental changes to the existing political order. Workers were certainly aware that the economy lay in ruins around them, and prosperity was not an immediate prospect, but they balked at the continuation of what they believed to be politically exacerbated hunger, at privileged rations, at the limits on their freedom of movement and pursuit of food, and at the denial of worker rights and powers over production won in the revolution.

In Petrograd, when the strike movement reached its climax in February 1921, workers' demands centred on the lifting of the recently strengthened trade pickets. These prevented both workers foraging in neighbouring villages in search of food, and peasants and traders bringing in produce to sell in the private markets. But it was not just the shortages of food that aggravated workers - the state's control of food supply was perceived as being corrupt and unfairly benefitting individuals deemed privileged by the party. Workers' demands, however, went beyond food issues, reflecting the hostility that had built up towards the regime and openly challenging the power of the Bolshevik leadership. These demands included the "abolition of the dictatorship of the Communist Party and the establishment of the authority of freely elected Soviets", and demands for freedom of movement, freedom of speech in the workers' press, abolition of privileges, and
abolition of communist party cells in factories. The latter were now popularly viewed as policing bodies for the enforcement of factory discipline.

Outside Petrograd the paucity of details, including in VeCheKa reports of strikes, makes it more difficult to piece together worker demands. Aves provides descriptions of worker demands and actions in Moscow, Saratov and Donbass which echo those of the Petrograd workers. In Odessa, the VeCheKa reported that workers attempted to "stage a general strike and a demonstration against Soviet power", and held meetings in the factories which featured "open counter-revolutionary speeches". In order to pacify the population the authorities were forced to release all arrested workers.

Elsewhere, in the few instances where a cause is given, it is invariably associated with food supply. While the VeCheKa categorised these strikes as 'economic', the validity of distinguishing between 'economic' and 'political' strikes in 1921 must be questioned. Within the context of 1921, both in the provinces as well as in Petrograd, a strike over food challenged the fundamental basis of Bolshevik policy - the monopoly of control over food requisition and allocation. This can be seen in the strike at the Bromlei metal-works, described below, which easily transcended from 'economic' (increases in wages) to 'political' issues (supporting the Kronstadt mutiny). The fact that workers elected to strike indicates that they believed that increases in rations were possible, and hence reduced rations were a result of the state's mismanagement of food allocation, corruption in its distribution, and privileges enjoyed and awarded by the party.

The Bolshevik leadership was highly reluctant to make fundamental concessions to workers' demands and their standard response to strikes was to attempt to appease
workers with promises of increases in rations and/or appeals to 'proletarian and revolutionary solidarity', while arresting suspected instigators and organisers as anti-revolutionary elements. In Petrograd, for example, on 24 February, an extra distribution of rations was announced. A VeCheKa report on the Kronstadt uprising and the events leading up to it, states that: "The only thing that prevented the Petrograd movement from taking on an organized character was the speedy liquidation [i.e. arrest - AP] of Petrograd Menshevik, SR, Left-SR, and anarchist organizations, which immediately deprived the movement of an organized leadership". Another VeCheKa summary reports the arrest of an SR strike instigator in the Sormovo works in Nizhni Novgorod, and the arrest of "active counter-revolutionary elements among workers" in the province of Kostroma (see also below for the descriptions of the strikes in the Bromlei works, and in Samara and Ufa).

If strikes continued despite these measures, a 're-registration' of the workforce would be announced, entailing the registration of only those who were willing to end the strike and return to work, and dismissal of 'undesirable' individuals by declining to re-employ them. Unable to resolve long-running strikes at the Arsenal, Putilov and Obukhovsk works and at the Artur Koppel' and Nobel factories in Petrograd, a "re-registration of all workers at all striking factories" was begun on 9 March. This "broke the back of the mood of those striking" and by 10 March work had restarted. Alternatively factories would simply be shut, effectively dismissing the entire workforce, to be reopened at a later date with a 'new' workforce.

In the spring of 1921 're-registrations' proved so successful in breaking strikes thanks to the central control over food distribution, which was probably the most
powerful weapon in the state's arsenal. With workers reliant on rations distributed through the workplace for the bulk of their diet, 'de-registration' meant workers were left to starve. After a decade of hunger and suffering the workforce were simply too weak to sustain high levels of industrial action for any length of time. The anarchist activist Emma Goldman recorded her thoughts on the unrest in Petrograd:

The workers were determined, but it was apparent that they would soon be starved into submission. There were no means by which the public could aid the strikers even if they had anything to give. All avenues of approach to the industrial districts of the city were cut off by massed troops. Moreover, the population was in dreadful want. ... We all realised that the odds between the dictatorship and the workers were too uneven to permit the strikers to hold out much longer.

Events at the massive Bromlei works in Moscow illustrate the levels of worker militancy during this period. A strike began on 23 March 1921 demanding increases in wages. An official sent by the Metal Workers' Trade Union, was shouted down as a "lackey of the Bolsheviks". At a general meeting, the reportedly 'anarchist' Ivanov-Semenov, who was leading the meeting, proposed a resolution greeting the leaders of the Kronstadt uprising and calling upon the workers to rebel (the Vecheka summary does not state whether the resolution was adopted). He was later arrested with other workers. On 25 March, workers arriving at the works found the gates locked and a notice displayed declaring the works closed. A meeting of 1,500 workers outside the gates resolved to halt work at neighbouring factories, agreeing to use force if required. They succeeded in calling out a further 1,875 workers into the streets before returning to the Bromlei works and electing a commission to petition the central offices of the Metal Workers' Trade Union. On 28 March the factory re-opened, but workers refused to start production, demanding the release of those arrested. A representative of the Metal
Workers' Trade Union, sent to the works, was rebuffed and the workers refused to negotiate with him. Representatives were elected from the various shops to coordinate their demands. The VeCheKa was unable to report on the proceedings of this meeting as no outsiders were permitted to attend. On March 29 work had still not re-started. The VeCheKa summary for 2 April, reported that the "mood" in Bromlei was still "bad", with further strikes being planned to demand the release of arrested workers.

VeCheKa reports on a series of strikes in Samara at the start of May 1921 provides a further illustration of the levels of worker militancy during this period, as well as methods used to combat strikes:

At the start of May 1921, workers of the Trubochnyi works and the depot and main repair shops of the Samara-Zlatoust railway went on strike demanding increases in rations. The strike then spread to the railway line workers, workers of the railway's Electrical-Technical shops, and the employees of the railway's administration. On 6 May the depot and workshops were closed and the hiring of a new workforce was announced. 250 workers signed up in addition to "party members, cadets and workers sent by the union". During the day a group of railway workers succeeded in temporarily halting work among the city's water-transport workers. A large group of railway, Trubochnyi works, water-transport workers and the workers of other small enterprises held a meeting where it was resolved to convene a general meeting of all workers of the above named enterprises for 7 May, to which representatives of local authorities would be called. The VeCheka reported that "negotiations do not give positive results" and that "it has been decided to use repressive measures in the future". On 7 May 5,000 workers gathered in a park for the general meeting, but were dispersed by troops. The VeCheKa reported that these measures as well as the arrest of "only a total of 100 railway workers", whose cases were now being examined by the Revolutionary Tribunal courts, had succeeded in breaking the strikes.

The organisational ability of workers in 1921 is revealed by the fact that railway workers in Ufa, some 400km away, were coordinating their protests with the workers in Samara. The VeCheKa reported that disturbances had begun
among Ufa's railway workers on 5 May, and they had also resolved to convene a general meeting of the city's workers on 7 May. In Ufa, it was also "decided to use the most decisive measures to liquidate the potential strike" and "during the night of 6-7 May the provincial CheKa arrested the instigators and ring-leaders of the planned strike".

The wave of unrest that was sweeping the country in the first months of 1921 threatened Bolshevik rule. In addition to industrial discontent, the leadership now faced rebellion in Kronstadt, peasant uprisings across the country, as well as division within its own ranks. Aside from the well-documented Antonov rebellion, peasant and "bandit" armies roamed much of the republic's hinterland. In attempting to quell the mutiny in Kronstadt, the leadership found entire corps refusing to subordinate themselves to the Revolutionary Committee, and other units too unreliable to call upon. Workers were staging strikes in support of and voting to join the Kronstadt rebellion. The VeCheKa reported on similar agitation among military and naval units. The country was exploding in unrest against the Bolshevik leadership and rumours of its impending fall were rife.

The leadership required an interlude to consolidate its power. But its labour policies had led to escalations in tensions. Concessions had to be made. In Petrograd, on 27 February it was announced that grain requisitioning was to be replaced, followed by the lifting of trade pickets on 1 March. Food supply was now given greater priority and stocks were released from warehouses. On 7 April the SNK passed a decree permitting enterprises to pay their workers bonuses in the form of the enterprise's output. This also had the effect of introducing 'market forces' into workers' wages as well as legitimising and encouraging the growth of the free market by officially providing workers with goods to trade.
These concessions marked the regime's break with the policies of War Communism and formed the basis of the NEP. Combined with arrests, re-registrations, halting of rations, closures of factories, and the physical exhaustion of workers, they broke the back of the workers' challenge to Bolshevik rule and ensured the survival of the regime. They acted to relieve sufficient built-up pressure for the leadership to survive this apex of industrial turmoil, and the spring and summer months saw a steady decline in strikes and unrest (see below). But, as was shown in the previous chapter, workers continued to have cause for dissatisfaction and strikes remained a feature of the new era of the young Soviet state.

(ii) Strike Figures, 1921-1924

As mentioned in the introduction, strike figures have previously appeared in various studies. A lack of access to Soviet archives, however, meant that data on strikes has been haphazard, inconsistent and compiled from odd references which places their reliability in doubt. Even so, the data tends to be too general to be of great use. Access to VeCheKa and OGPU reports, recently made available, makes it now possible to compile credible strike tables (see table 2.1 and graph 2.1). The fact that these reports were produced by the VeCheKa/OGPU, which was also under fiscal and political pressure to justify its existence, makes it unlikely that the reports were trying to cover up strikes, and adds credence to the data. This is reinforced by the very limited and high ranking circulation of the reports from which these tables were compiled and by the general consistency of the information they contain. The reports were produced strictly for a select few among the Bolshevik top leadership (many of the reports examined were the copies specifically marked for Lenin or for Stalin), were distributed by special couriers and had to be
personally signed for, and all were marked "Secret" or "Top Secret".

Despite this relative wealth of information, the data offered here should not be interpreted too literally and it should be regarded as providing a valid overview only of general trends in strike activity. The chaos of command and communications in the 1920s, particularly in the immediate post-Civil War period, limits the extent of comparative statistical data available. The local organs of the VeCheKa/OGPU were charged with forwarding full details of each strike, including cause and duration of strikes, numbers involved, identity of ring-leaders, involvement by party/Komsomol members, demands of strikers, and how strikes were resolved. But such complete data rarely reached the centre: in its summary for April-May 1923 the OGPU presented a breakdown of strikes by method of resolution, but the table was able to offer details on only 25 out of the 66 strikes recorded - in 41 instances the central offices of the OGPU did not know how the strikes were resolved. Even by the end of the NEP the OGPU was frequently unable to give figures for the number of participants in a strike let alone full details of the cause or how it was resolved.

The VeCheKa daily summaries for 1921 and 1922 are notorious for lack of detail, with virtually no follow-up accounts of incidents and irregular reporting from distant provinces. The reporting on a strike by 650 workers in the province of Orel is typical - it is unable even to name the affected factory. In the last years of the NEP, it still often took over a month for full details on a strike to reach Moscow, and the figure for the total number of strikes in the last month given in each report would always be raised upwards by later summaries. The first case of the OGPU even attempting to give a total figure for the number of strikes was in their monthly report for December 1922, thus
reliable figures are not yet available for 1921 and 1922. Similarly, the VeCheKa/OGPU frequently admitted that its figures were incomplete and conflicts between various sets of figures are encountered. Hence gaps remain and are reflected in the tables offered here.

Table 2.1: Number of strikes, June 1922 - December 1924, based on OGPU data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nationally</th>
<th>Moscow only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1923</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Apr</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Jun</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Jul</td>
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<td>Aug</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Jun</td>
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<td>Jul</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources: (OGPU summaries and strike tables) - RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 296, 1. 84, 97; d. 468, 1. 6, 15, 41, 72; d. 588, 1. 6; d. 904, 1. 69; d. 922, 1. 55; op. 87, d. 177, 1. 69, 94, 137, 163; d. 178, 1. 6, 8, 20, 59, 85, 121.
Graph 2.1: Number of strikes per month, June 1922 - December 1924

For sources see Table 2.1
While reliable strike figures for 1921 and 1922 may not yet be available, the VeCheKa/OGPU daily summaries provide a vivid picture of the general situation, complementing the research already conducted into this period, notably by Aves.

After the defeat of the strike wave in the spring of 1921, the number and scale of strikes steadily declined through the summer. Many factors in addition to government counter-measures contributed to this decline. Some factories shut down temporarily to conserve fuel and raw materials, others released workers to return to villages to tend crops, help in the harvests, or simply to search the countryside for food. Drought and famine in southern Russia focused workers' attention on sheer physical survival. The rebirth of mass unemployment also encouraged workers to think twice before resorting to strikes, knowing that they could easily be dismissed and replaced from the ranks of unemployed.

Underlying extreme dissatisfaction among the workforce remained, however, and once the impact of the introduction of the NEP began to be felt the frequency of reports of strikes in the daily summaries increased. The growth in the number of strikes continued through the autumn of 1921 and winter of 1921-22. The VeCheKa daily summaries for January contain references to a total of 34 strikes, and the summaries for February to over 50 (exact numbers were certainly higher as reports from most provinces were irregular). Similar levels of listed strikes can be found in the months that followed, extending to every corner of the republic. The OGPU monthly summary for March 1922 admitted to a "worsening in the mood of workers" during February and escalating in March, which "encompassed the entire territory of the republic". In the autumn, Donbass was identified as the "worst affected area" with a strike movement on a "scale not seen in recent years", "at
times affecting entire branches of industry and spreading into neighbouring raiony”.

As can be seen from table 2.1 and graph 2.1, the frequency of strikes then declined over the winter of 1922-23, leading to a rough cycle of increasing and decreasing strike activity during the years of 1923 and 1924. Contrary to Chase's assertion, strikes in August and September of 1923 did not constitute an extraordinary strike wave as such, being part of a general escalation of strike activity that took place from March to November of that year, mostly associated with delays in the payment of wages (see below).

The tendency for strike activity to ebb in the winter months can be partially attributed to seasonal factors. Annual harvests would have brought improvements in produce supplies in the autumn, while during the cold winter months that followed workers' thoughts were likely to have been concentrated on survival. In addition, the prospect of being sacked in the aftermath of a strike was not as daunting in the summer, when subsistence required fewer resources and there were greater opportunities for alternative employment in the agricultural and seasonal sectors.

Other factors, however, also contributed to the ebbs in strike activity. A concerted effort to reduce the wage debt, massive reductions of work-forces, and Lenin's death in January 1924, which brought a swing in empathy among workers towards the party”, all contributed to the decline in the frequency of strikes during the winter of 1923-24. The spring and early summer of 1924 again witnessed a steady rise in strike figures, followed by a sharp drop in July, with a relatively low level of strikes maintained for the rest of the year. These peaks and troughs were primarily reflections of the extent of the wage debt (see
below), as well as such factors as the sobering effect of large-scale redundancies and widespread temporary closures of enterprises for 'summer-holidays'.

Even without exact figures, it is possible to conclude that there appears to have been a year-on-year reduction in the total number of strikes during the period of 1921-1924: as was detailed above, the majority of state enterprises were affected by strikes in 1921; the figures that are available indicate a lower frequency of strikes in 1922; falling to a total of 430 strikes in 1923; and 327 in 1924.

While the VeCheKa and OGPU summaries fail to provide sufficient consistent data to compile tables of strike figures by regions or industrial sector for the first years of the NEP, readings of the summaries reveal that strikes afflicted all industries and all regions of the USSR. After November 1923, the OGPU began to provide breakdowns of strike figures by industrial sector, which have been compiled in table 2.2. Again, this table must be used with caution and only as a general guide, for the figures vary and conflict with those reported elsewhere. This table shows a distribution of strikes roughly comparable to the size of each industrial sector (once allowances for the months where no data is available are made), with the exception of the Metalworking sector, which claimed a disproportionately large number of strikes. This can be attributed to the slower recovery of heavy industry during the first years of the NEP, with wages and working conditions falling behind those in the light and consumer industrial sectors and wage debts being especially widespread in that sector.
### Table 2.2: Number of strikes by industrial sector November 1923 - December 1924, based on OGPU data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Sector</th>
<th>Nov 1923</th>
<th>Dec 1923</th>
<th>Jan 1924</th>
<th>Feb 1924</th>
<th>Mar 1924</th>
<th>Apr 1924</th>
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<th>Jul 1924</th>
<th>Aug 1924</th>
<th>Sep 1924</th>
<th>Oct 1924</th>
<th>Nov 1924</th>
<th>Dec 1924</th>
<th>Total No of strikes</th>
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<th>Total for 1924 only No of strikes</th>
<th>as % of total</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Mining</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>10.50%</td>
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<td>11.96%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** There are some inconsistencies between these figures and those given in table 2.1, although these figures do conform roughly to the same pattern.

While the figures in table 2.1 are more reliable, the figures in this table are also presented as they are the only ones that provide a breakdown by industrial sector. Where no figures are given (as opposed to a figure of '0'), this indicates that data for that month did not provide a breakdown of strikes for the relevant industrial sector - strikes in this sector would have been included under 'Other'.

For November - December 1923, the sector 'Transport' includes strikes both in the 'Water-transport' and 'Railway' sectors.

Sources: RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, l. 8-9, 59-60 (November-December 1923); d. 181, l. 43 (1924); F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, l. 56 (1924).
(iii) Causes of Strikes

After the demise of the strike wave in the spring of 1921, the vast majority of strikes during the rest of the year were over food shortages. Other demands of strikers commonly included the re-establishment of an eight-hour day, abolition of searches upon exit from the factory, supply of work-clothes, and permission to leave factories to obtain food. The launch of the NEP may have been, in part, a response to worker unrest, especially in the permitting of free movement for workers and in the introduction of policies aimed at improving food supplies in the cities, but beyond that workers found much that was not to their liking. Many of the policies pursued during the NEP were widely perceived as a betrayal of socialist principles and concessions to capitalism, provoking deep dissatisfaction among the industrial proletariat. Grumbling about NEP policies began to be recorded in CheKa reports in the late summer and autumn of 1921, building up through the winter of 1921-22, as industries transferred to self-financing and reduced workforces, or were shut or taken out of the state sector.

The first cause of disputes associated with this transition to the NEP was the introduction of charges and deductions for goods and services (such as transport and housing) previously supplied free. The distribution of rations or produce in part payment of wages lingered on in much of the country (see chapter 1) and problems in food supply continued to be a cause of strikes in the first years of the NEP, as did the distribution of work-clothes and searches upon exit from factories. More unusual grievances and factors contributing to work stoppages during the first years of the NEP included lack of heating, dissatisfaction with and demands for the sacking of factory directors, and the celebration of unsanctioned holidays: on 14 January 1922 (New-Year’s Day by the Julian
calendar), factories with a total workforce of 4,500 were
idle in Moscow because of unauthorized absences^®; on 19
January 1922, work in the Nikol'sk cotton mill (Orekhovo-
Zuevo district, Moscow province) failed to start until
1:00pm as workers celebrated the church holiday of the
Epiphany^®.

Even the intensification of anti-religious campaigns in
1922 won little favour for the Bolsheviks among the
nation's workers. At best, the campaigns were tolerated,
but reports of open opposition were not uncommon. In the
Abrikosov State Confectionary factory in Moscow, workers
downed tools after the administration issued a decree to
remove all icons from the factory - the workers returned to
work only after the administration revoked the decree^®.
In Petrograd, in the No 6 Prozodezhda clothing factory it
was reported that "agitation is being conducted against the
confiscation of church valuables" (purportedly to fund
famine relief)^®. The street battles in Smolensk against
the confiscation of church valuables included the
participation of Smolensk railway workers^®. It may be
tempting to attribute such protests to the dominance of
women in the workforces of the examples cited, or to their
provincial location, but the Berts i Mak-Gil' iron foundry
in Moscow, with as 'proletarian' and male a work-force as
one could imagine, contradicts such conclusions. On 31
March 1922, a general meeting was convened at the foundry
for workers to endorse the party's campaign of confiscating
church valuables. The meeting instead adopted a resolution
to "confiscate gold first from communists, their wives, and
traders, and then from the church"^®.

The most common cause of strikes, however, quickly became
delays in the payment of wages. As monetary wages replaced
food rations, the inefficiency and weakness of the economy,
hyper-inflation and shortages of currency resulted in
widespread and regular delays in the payment of wages. By
January 1922 strikes on this basis were being reported across the country daily, and over half of all strikes in that year were over delays in the payment of wages. During the second half of 1923, delays in payment of wages averaged 1-2 weeks in Moscow and Petrograd, 1-2 months in the provinces, and up to 3 months in some regions. By November, miners in the provinces of Amur and Tomsk had not been paid in over 4 months.

The regime recognised that workers were justifiably aggrieved by delays in payments and focused on tackling this problem. As the economy stabilised wage debts were reduced and the proportion of strikes caused by delays declined over the course of 1923 and 1924, from roughly half to one-third of all strikes, and contributed to the general decline of strikes during this period. But delays in the payment of wages still remained the leading cause of strikes (see table 2.3). During the months of November 1922 to February 1923, out of the 90-100 strikes where the cause was known to the OGPU, 69 were reportedly over delays in the payment of wages. The Central Labour Statistical Bureau reported that during the first six months of 1923 delays in payments caused 84 and contributing to an additional 7 strikes out of 196 strikes for which details were received. While table 2.3 indicates that from April to December 1923, 169 out of 331 strikes for which details were known, and in 1924, 120 out of 300 strikes were over delays in payment of wages.

The introduction of monetary wages was also accompanied by disputes over payment rates and output norms, as well as over loss of earnings where the workers were not at fault (halts in production caused by breakdown of machinery or shortages of materials). These issues became the second most common cause of strikes, accounting for a fifth to a quarter of all strikes up to the mid-summer of 1924 (see table 2.3). The OGPU report covering the period of
### Table 2.3: Causes of strikes in 1923-1924, based on OGPU data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Causes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>High output norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reductions in wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-payment bonus &amp; o/t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refusal of col agrmnt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abnormalities in payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other causes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- The original sources admit that the figures given for April to August 1923, are incomplete. The figures for April and May do not include strikes in the provinces of Petrograd and Vitebsk, for which data was not received, although it was reported that strikes did take place in these provinces.
- Similarly the figures for August exclude a 'number' of strikes in Petrograd.

Sources:
- RTsKhidni, F. 17, op. 87, d. 177, l. 163 (April-May 1923), 137 (June 1923), 130 (July-August 1923), 112 (September-October 1923); d. 178, l. 8-9 (November 1923), 59-60 (December 1923), d. 181, 1-43 (January-December 1924).
November 1922 to February 1923 attributed 15 strikes, out of the 90-100 strikes where details were known, to low wages. The Central Labour Statistical Bureau reported that during the first 6 months of 1923, 57 strikes were solely over low wages, and 7 were over a combination of low wages and delays in payment, out of the 196 strikes for which details were received.

The Central Labour Statistical Bureau confirmed that delays in payments and disputes over payment levels caused the overwhelming majority of strikes, reporting that during the first half of 1923, 53,335 out of a total of 56,163 participants in strikes for which details were received were involved in strikes over these two issues. Such strikes were also larger, involving an average of 335 workers per strike versus an average of 76 workers per strike involved in strikes over all other reasons. The report also confirms the low contribution the private sector was making to industrial unrest, with only 1,050 workers, out of the 56,163 involved in strikes, employed in private industry.

Dissatisfaction over delays in the payment of wages was compounded by irregularities in the form in which wages were paid. Facing a shortage of currency, workers were often paid significant percentages of their wages in variations of loan bonds or credit notes. In June 1923, workers of the Motovilikha works in Perm, for example, received 90% of their wages in bread credit notes, the following month the figure was 50%. In August 1923, the payment of 10% of wages in gold loan bonds was officially introduced across all industries. This rate was also frequently exceeded. Other forms of irregularities in payments causing worker discontent included: payment in coupons valid only in the factory store; payment in overvalued or unwanted goods; and payment in large
denominations of chervontsy, which workers could only exchange with speculators at reduced rates.

(iv) The State's Response to Strikes

After the launch of the NEP, the state's strategy in dealing with strikes in the nationalised sector remained fairly uniform throughout the 1920s. While the Bolshevik leadership was, in principle, opposed to workers exercising their still legal right to strike in state-owned industry, the leadership feared a repeat of the escalation and politicisation of worker discontent that had marked the end of War Communism. Furthermore, it could not deny workers' basic rights to receive rations or wages. Hence the general strategy employed by the state to resolve strikes was first to attempt to pacify the bulk of striking workers, while seeking to 'isolate' or eliminate instigators and organisers. The state's priority, however, remained to compel workers to return to their jobs as quickly as possible and where 'pacification' was not achievable or deemed too costly then the full force of management, party, unions and state would be mobilised as required to end strikes. The tactics employed to achieve this evolved during the NEP.

Arrest was the easiest way to eliminate strike organisers and was, initially, employed frequently. The VeCheKa/OGPU had no qualms over arresting workers even before strikes broke out. The summary for 6 July 1922, reported that a large strike planned for 30 June in Votsk province, was prevented by the arrest of 4 leading worker-activists. The VeCheKa could be quite convincing, judging by the following account: in Ufa in October 1921, 8 technicians of the No. 5 railway yards refused to journey out to repair a telegraph line, demanding an increase in their rations. They were arrested, but after 4 hours,
during which they were made to "understand the issue", they agreed to set out to work immediately. They even agreed to make-up the 4 hours they spent under arrest by working overtime!

Arrests of workers, however, did have a tendency to escalate and consolidate mass hostility towards the Bolshevik leadership, and there were many cases where arrests sparked further unrest with workers now demanding the release of their brethren. The summary for 10 May 1921, for example, reported "disturbances" among workers of the Paveletsk railway station in Moscow, with "workers demanding the release of arrested comrades". On 28 September 1921 in the No. 16 State Typography in Moscow, two workers (Malakhov and Ivanov) were arrested "for repeatedly inciting workers to take strike action"; the 550 workers of the print-shop responded by "walking out and declaring that they would not return until those arrested were released". In Donbass, a strike in the Paromonov pit of Shakhty district in November 1923 culminated in a march by 5,000 workers on the town of Shakhty, with the intention of freeing the arrested initiators of a strike in the previous month.

It seems that the Bolshevik leadership was aware of this tendency and feared a repeat of the escalation of hostility that had taken place in the first months of 1921. As the immediate threat to the survival of the Bolshevik leadership receded, open arrest for instigating strikes declined, and by the middle of 1922, reports of such instances become rare. It is, however, likely that leading shop floor organisers continued to be arrested in the general round-ups of 'anti-Soviet' elements, SRs, Mensheviks, and 'members' of other 'political parties'. More significantly, workers continued to fear arrest and the mere threat of such a possibility appears to have also
been effective in ending strikes (see the account of the strike in the Krindachev district pits below).

A simpler option, and one which became widely used in the first half of the NEP, was to dismiss 'trouble-makers' (even where strikes had not actually taken place), or decline to 're-employ' them when re-registrations were conducted, or earmark them for inclusion in the next round of redundancies. The summary for 9-10 July 1921, for example, provides evidence of 'selective' redundancies: it reported that in the Yaroslavl railway workshops "workers are enraged by the administration of the workshops which, in laying off workers, made references to the political unreliability of those being made redundant". The summary for 23-24 July 1921 reported that at the Locomotive works in Khar'kov many workers had been sacked as "undesirable elements". Out of 677 workers who were dismissed following a strike in the Oboznyi shops in Moscow in December 1921, 75 were not permitted to rejoin. The OGPU summary for 12 May 1922 reported that 5 workers who had been "involved" in a strike in the Penza railway depot and workshops on 16 March 1922 had been sacked. The same fate befall the initiators of a strike at the Zavprudnovarsk glass factory in May 1922. Following strikes in several shops of the Putilov works in Petrograd, the closure of the black-smith shop, where the strike had begun, was announced in May 1922. The OGPU summary reported that "In the near future, the filtration of the workforce is expected" (emphasis - AP). Following a general meeting on 8 September 1923 at the Mekhanik factory (Tiumen' province) at which workers, prompted by "anti-Soviet" speeches by "a few" individuals, resolved to refuse payment in bonds in lieu of wages, the provincial party committee created a commission to conduct a "cleansing" ("chistka") of the work-force. Following a strike in the steel-rolling shop of the Petrovski works in Kaidaksk district in the spring of 1924, 24 workers
employed in the shop were "cleansed-out", and 12 further workers were expelled from the union".

Initially, when 'pacification' failed, or where workers' demands were deemed unacceptable, a re-registration of the workforce, closure of the factory, or mass dismissals would be announced. A strike at the depot of the Liublino railway and Kursk station in Moscow which began on 28 February 1922 provides one example. The workers went on strike after rations owed to them for January failed to be distributed. The strikers were promised 20 Russian pounds (8.16kg) of flour per person in "the near future", to end their strike. "As a result of the categorical refusal by workers to return to work on these conditions, representatives of the administration decided to close the shops and to begin a new registration of workers from 2 March, those not willing to work to be sacked". But, as with arrests, resort to re-registration or dismissal of workforces also abated during the years of 1922-24, as less confrontational methods were sought to end strikes. However, as with arrests, the threat of dismissal or closure was often sufficient to end strikes and these methods had a longer lifespan.

In the first years of the NEP, the state was more readily prepared to offer direct concessions in order to pacify the bulk of strikers. Direct concessions to end strikes, however, gradually gave way to promises of submitting worker grievances for examination to Ratings-Conflict Commissions, Conciliation Chambers, Third-Party Courts, or special inter-organisational commissions. The latter would be created in response to a strike and would include representatives of the party, management, unions and workers. At the same time, union and party officials would appeal to 'revolutionary' solidarity, indicating that it was unacceptable to resort to strike action when proper channels and organs existed for conflict-resolution. The
state was most willing to concede to worker demands when these centred on the issue of rations or wages to which workers were entitled, but had not received\(^{9}\). Nonetheless, there are also some cases (admittedly infrequent) where the state conceded increases in wages; for example, a strike by deputy-foremen weavers at the Glukhovskaya Manufaktura in February 1922 ended when they were given a 25% wage increase\(^{10}\); a strike at the No. 1 State Furniture factory in Moscow in February 1922 was ended by a 50% increase in wages\(^{11}\).

The search for less confrontational methods of ending strikes was motivated by fear of escalating worker hostility. The Bolshevik leadership continued to have no moral reservations about sanctioning whatever means were believed to be necessary against striking workers. As shown earlier in this chapter the VeCheKa/OGPU played a leading role in eradicating strikes from the start of the NEP, making arrests, bringing in its special troops to deal with unrest, and using its intelligence network to monitor the shop floor and identify activists. The resources of the party, state, management, military and unions were all used to erect a united front against worker aspirations. In combating a strike over the supply of work-clothes at the Dam factory, Donets province, in the summer of 1921, a state of martial law was declared with all meetings banned, and it was resolved to "adopt repressive measures for failure to turn up for work"\(^{12}\). The regime used party and Komsomol members and cadets as strike-breakers. During a strike by dockers in Tsaritsyn in June 1924, Communists, Komsomols, and unemployed were drafted in\(^{13}\). When workers who serviced the railway line in Samara went on strike in February 1922, demanding to be paid for January, the initiator of the strike was arrested, the strikers dismissed, and local peasants were forcibly mobilised to undertake the servicing of the line\(^{14}\).
Even the unions were expected to assist in breaking strikes, sending 'loyal' workers as strike-breakers and helping to identify activists. After the No 4 State Machine-Construction (former Gustav List) factory in Moscow was shut to allow for the re-registration of the workforce following a strike in May 1922, the OGPU reported that the "union had identified 50 individuals for sacking". This was in excess of even the management's wishes, as all but 30 workers were rehired.

(v) Character of Strikes and Strikers

Despite the persistence of strike activity through the years of 1921 to 1924, changes in the character of strikes occurred. The strike wave of 1921 was the last climax of pro-active, offensive militancy, with workers demanding fundamental changes to the existing order. Across the nation, workers were able to mount strikes that encompassed not only the entire workforces of factories, but of industrial districts. They succeeded in spreading strikes to neighbouring works and towns, and leading street demonstrations, providing evidence of independent organisation and communication.

Arrests, and the party's tightening rein over communications and media, made independent organisational activity increasingly difficult to sustain. Similarly, repressive measures and high unemployment had increased the costs of participation in strikes. This was reflected by a gradual shift towards more limited and shorter strikes, rarely affecting more than one enterprise, and usually restricted to a part of an enterprise's workforce. In 1921 and 1922 strikes usually lasted between one and several days, by which time the state would either concede to worker demands or employ 'counter-measures' to 'liquidate' the strike. By 1923, strikes lasting longer than 2 days
were becoming rare and by the autumn the length of a typical strike had fallen to between 1 hour and 1 working day. The OGPU summary for November-December 1923 reported that the majority of strikes were lasting several hours, with only 1 strike exceeding 2 days.

The organisational heritage that had been built up over two decades of industrial strife was not, however, lost overnight and cases of large-scale and longer-lasting strikes persisted:

Workers of the Gustav List factory, in Moscow, spent most of June 1921, on strike;

The No 4 Fogsen Chemical works in Moscow was hit by an eleven day strike in September 1921;

In January 1922, all the dockers in Omsk united in taking strike action;

A strike, begun on 2 January 1922, by coopers of all enterprises in Forpostanovsk district in Astrakhan spread to all coopers of all enterprises in Selensk district on the following day;

A strike, begun by the 400 workers of the spinning department of the Bol'shaya Serpukhovskaya Manufaktura cotton mill in Moscow, on the morning of 4 April 1922, by 2:00 pm had spread to all the other departments of the mill, encompassing 3,000 workers;

The Alekseevskaya worsted mill in Moscow, was hit by a nine-day strike in October 1922;

In August 1923 the OGPU reported on a nine-day strike affecting the entire timber industry of Kostroma province, and on two strikes at the Sormovo works involving 6,000 workers;

In September 1923, the Prokhorovskaya Manufaktura was hit by a four-day strike, involving 7,000 workers, demanding increases in tariffs and the firing of several Communist workers. The workers of the former Tsindel' mill resolved to deduct one day's wages to support workers at Prokhorovskaya, and submitted a notice of their intent to join the strike;

The workers of all the enterprises in the Vyachsk district belonging to the Vladimir Metal Trust staged a two-week strike in October 1923 over reductions in wages and increases in output norms;
In early June 1924, three shops of the Liudinovskii metal-works of the Mal'tsevskii kombinat staged a seven-day strike over delays in the payment of wages.

By staying out on strike for longer periods, workers ran the risk of harsher repressive measures. A safer tactic, more commonly resorted to by workers, thus became the staging of repeated short strikes. The No. 1 Typography of Moscow (the former Sytin printworks), provides a typical example:

On 17 January 1922, the 300 workers of the binding department went on strike demanding payment for December, they were joined by workers of the collating department on 18 January. The strike ended on 20 January when a commission was elected to examine the delays in payments and high output norms. On 20 February all departments were out on strike again over non-payment of wages for the first half of February. The strike ended on 22 February after workers accepted payment at January levels, with the difference between January and February rates to be paid by 25 February (the economy was experiencing hyper-inflation). The offer was backed by threats of dismissal if workers failed to end their strike, while the workers themselves threatened to resume the strike if the payments were not made. On 21 March the workforce again staged a one-day strike in protest over redundancies.

In light of the lack of support workers received from their official trade unions, it is hardly surprising that almost all strikes in the nationalised sector occurred without seeking trade union sanction or notifying the relevant trade union in advance. A report by the Informational Department of the Central Committee claimed that in 1923 96% and in 1924 98.5% of all strikes were taking place "against union instructions, without union sanction, or without advance notification of unions". In the first years of the NEP, however, there were still individual cases where local union organisations spurned central interests and defended workers:

In May 1922, the Bryansk Provincial Council of Trade Unions and the provincial department of the Metal
Workers' Trade Union refused to accept the announced tariff rates set for May, demanding that they be increased. Strikes took place at the Mekhart factory and disturbances hit all metal industries in the province encompassing 15,000 workers. A month later, in the same province, the Mal'tsev Factory Regional Sub-district Committee of the Metal Workers' Trade Union requested the district party committee to sanction the announcement of a strike for 6 July 1922 across the whole region over non-payment of wages and failure to issue rations in full.

In Siberia, in June 1922, the Tiumen' Provincial Council of Trade Unions submitted a demand to the GubSovNarKhoz to issue wages and rations owed to lumber-yard workers, threatening to launch an organised strike - the demands were met.

The OGPU summary for 11 July 1922 reported that workers of the Geofizik factory in Moscow had ended their strike after they were promised that wages would be paid by 11 July, but that the trade union had agreed to sanction a further strike if the promise was not kept. Several days later it was reported that the workers were paid and further strikes thus averted.

The summaries continued to report occasionally the organisation of strike committees, the distribution of leaflets, and of workers establishing contact with workers of neighbouring factories. But, without question, workers' ability to launch and sustain organised and united action was eroding.

Strike activity and unrest at the start of the NEP was commonly blamed on instigation by 'political enemies', on 'anti-revolutionaries' and 'anti-Soviets' - SRs and Mensheviks were included in these categories. Although the VeCheKa/OGPU summaries rarely provided details of who the instigators, organisers, or leaders of strikes and unrest actually were, in cases where details were provided it becomes clear that the individuals concerned were not 'natural' enemies of a 'socialist' or 'worker' state, and more often were skilled or senior workers. This should hardly be surprising as such workers had the least to fear.
in being dismissed as there was an extreme shortage of highly-skilled labour even though unemployment was high.

A strike in the steel-rolling shop of the Petrov works in the Kaidaks district in the spring of 1924 provides a vivid example. The report by the district secretary to the Central Committee blames the strike on "individual elements that landed in the works during the revolution", implying that the strike was instigated by some sort of outsiders who were hostile to the interests of the works and the republic. A personal (and "top secret") letter from the provincial party secretary to Molotov (secretary of the Central Committee), however, reveals that the majority of the 24 workers "cleansed" from the shop as instigators of the strike were the shop's most senior workers, each with 18-20 years of service. One of the 24 had been employed in the works for 28 years.

Workers at the forefront of strikes were frequently reported to be current or former members of factory committees, the Communist Party, or even the VeCheKa. (At this early stage of the NEP, unskilled workers had a low level of representation in these bodies.) To give some examples:

An extensive strike in the shops of the South-West Railway in the province of Voronezh in March 1921 was, we are told, instigated by two "SRs". But we are also told that they "claimed to be 'non-partyist' and were members of the factory committee";

Among the initiators of strikes at the Nos. 1, 6, and 9 Railway yards of the Nikolaev Railway in the province of Petrograd in May 1921, five members of the Cheka or former members of the Communist Party were found;

In October 1921, unrest was reported among the railway workers of the Osnova station in Khar'kov, caused by "agitation" by former Communists who had been expelled from the party;
The instigator of a strike by 329 workers in the Lugansk railway workshops, Donets province, in October 1921, was a former member of the party.\(^{iii}\)

The leaders of a strike by the deputy-foremen weavers at the Glukhovskaya Manufaktura, Moscow province, in February 1922 included current members of the party.\(^{ii}\)

(vi) Other Forms of Expression of Worker Dissatisfaction and Unrest Among the Unemployed

The general survey of strike activity and strike figures offered in this chapter falls short of providing a complete picture of the mood of workers during these first years of the NEP. A detailed report on a strike in the pits of Krindachevsk district (Bakhmutsk region) in October 1923 by G. Varels, a party official sent to investigate the strike by the provincial party committee, helps complete this picture and illustrate many of the processes described above.

Worker dissatisfaction over lengthy delays in the payment of wages and a variety of other reasons was noted for several weeks prior to 6 October 1923. On this day, workers were told that they would be paid 80% in cash and 20% in vouchers, but they were actually paid only 60% in cash, and 40% in state loan bonds and vouchers. A crowd of 300 workers gathered, and the Chairman of the local department of the Union of Miners, Biriukov, appeared, and tried to pacify the crowd. A general meeting was convened in the open air and chaired by a 'non-party' worker. The meeting elected a strike committee and resolved to halt work until their demands were met. Biriukov and the director of the pit, Vlasov, were ignored and shouted down. Then the striking workers halted production at neighbouring mine shafts by, according to Varels' report, the use of threats and resorting to violence (although the use of intimidation by strikers was common, it is likely that
party reports emphasised and exaggerated the levels of 'forced' participation - it should also be noted that Varels himself did not arrive on the scene until 10 October, thus he is reporting what he was told by local officials).

The strike itself, according to Varels, was led by a group of skilled workers and a group of workers who had been expelled from the party and dismissed from the mine.

The following day (7 October), another general meeting was held at which demands for full cash payment of wages owed (including reimbursement of bonds and vouchers) and full implementation of the collective agreement (including supply of water, work-clothing, coal to workers' hostels, and improvements to lighting) were approved.

Biriukov managed to get himself appointed to head the strike committee and he succeeded in softening the demands prior to presenting them to the management. The pit management agreed to the demands although it was not in a position to fulfil them. That evening a worker delegate meeting attended by 36 non-party workers and 8 Communists voted to consider the conflict resolved and to dissolve the strike committee. On the next morning (8 October), a general meeting was again convened. Workers were angered by the compromises of the strike committee and rejected the decisions of the delegate meeting. A Komsomol member who called upon workers to return to the mines was punched and had to be carried away from the meeting.

During the following two days, workers roamed the mines in gangs, halting work wherever they encountered it (again, it must be noted that Varels did not witness this himself). During the night of 9-10 October, a large explosion occurred (heard over a distance of 4-5 km) in the courtyard of the building where Biriukov had his flat.
On 10 October Varels and a union official arrived to investigate the strike, at the behest of the provincial party committee. They addressed a general meeting of over 1,000 workers, telling them that there was no money, and that there would not be any money until workers started loading coal. They detailed the financial difficulties of the mine and spoke of the possibility of 'enemies' taking advantage of the strike (equating strike instigation with 'anti-Soviet' activity, which was then liable to criminal prosecution). But workers rejected their call to end the strike. Varels, in his report, again emphasises that the most disruptive element were former party members and several "suspicious individuals".

When the meeting ended the leaders of the strike confronted Varels and demanded that a telegram be sent to Moscow requesting the despatch of a special commission. Varels refused their request and told them that each one of them would be individually held accountable for the force used against those who had wanted to continue working - i.e. blatantly threatening the strike organisers with criminal prosecution.

Varels and his companion then toured the workers' barracks:

We mainly toured the barracks for single male workers and here we must admit that the living conditions for workers are horrible. In a filthy barrack built for 15-20 people, up to 60 miners live. Cots occupy almost all the floor space and 2 people sleep in each cot. Filthy, half-naked, parasite-infested miners sleep on bare boards. The picture was so awful that when workers turned to us and appealed 'Comrades, see how we live', I had to admit that living conditions were truly awful.

Varels writes that the discussions were restrained, almost comradely. Older skilled workers were ready to work but begged him to normalise payment. The following morning, builders, loaders and some of the underground workers turned up for work but they were dispersed by a group of young workers egged on by "certain individuals". However
the strike was faltering - Varels writes that 40 out of the group of workers who had initiated the strike had already disappeared (most likely fearful of arrest). On 11 October a general meeting condemned the violence and agreed to pass the conflict to the trade union for resolution and to return to work.

Varels ended his report with the following conclusions:

1) That the main cause of the strike was the "hard material state of workers, which is taken advantage of by anti-Soviet individuals";
2) and that insufficient attention to a whole series of issues complicates the situation, these being:
   a) insufficient Trade Union influence,
   b) no control over labour hiring (this refers to previously sacked 'trouble-makers' being rehired);
   c) mismanagement of the wage fund, resources, and holiday allocations (this suggests that workers may have possibly been complaining of places in houses of rest etc. being unfairly allocated).
   d) the pits' isolation from the regional centre and thus insufficient attention by the Regional Party Committee;
   e) poor quality of worker co-operatives (with prices for goods frequently higher than in the markets)\textsuperscript{103}.

One of the many facets upon which the above description casts light is the sense of despondency afflicting workers. Workers were aware of the weakness of their position, facing threats of unemployment or repression without any support from their unions for voicing opposition. Increasingly worker dissatisfaction took the form of frustration, despondency and defeatism rather than militancy\textsuperscript{104}. This found expression through resignations from and disillusionment with the party, unions, and the ideals of the new 'worker' state (see chapter 6), and deteriorations in labour discipline and quality and quantity of output. Frustrated by the lack of support they received from the unions, workers became increasingly uninterested in the activities of all trade union and state
bodies, and the supposed benefits of state ownership of industry (see chapter 6). Many factors contributed to worker dissatisfaction. OGPU summaries continually reported worker anger over such aspects as: benefits and privileges enjoyed by members of the administration, specialists, and party; squandering and mismanagement of funds, both by management and unions; shortages of basic produce in cooperatives and long queues for essential items such as bread; mandatory deductions of union dues; imposition of 'voluntary' wage deductions for famine relief, purchases of state loan bonds, aid to agriculture, etc. Attendance at union meetings declined, and elections to state and union bodies became increasingly stilted (see chapter 6). Disillusionment among skilled workers was also reflected by their departure from state or heavy industries for private or light industries (see chapter 1).

Occasionally worker frustration burst into the open with workers ganging up and beating up their foremen, factory directors, or party officials. The summary for 20 July 1921 reported that in Ekaterinoslav province, workers at the No. 1 Timber-mill "beat up the administration" and went on strike. The summary for 18 April 1922 reported that workers of the Metal and Woodworking factory in Odessa had injured the Communist factory director.

The armies of unemployed presented the regime with an additional problem. The lack of formal structures, with no 'factory committees', 'assemblies', or 'meetings', made it difficult for the state and party to monitor and influence their behaviour. No longer constrained by fear of job loss, the unemployed were potentially an extremely volatile group. While details for the early years of the NEP are extremely difficult to find, demonstrations by unemployed did take place. An OGPU report covering the months of May-August 1924 reported on a demonstration by unemployed
workers in Odessa in May, featuring "anti-Soviet public speeches by Menshevik and SR agitators". In the same month, unemployed construction workers in Kiev, again with the supposed involvement of Menshevik and SR agitators, "attempted to organise a demonstration". The same report also told of unemployed workers joining "bandit gangs" in Stavropol', Vologda and Kursk.

(vii) Conclusion

The strategy and tactics used by the state in dealing with strikes described in this chapter constitute only a part of the regime's efforts in neutralising worker militancy. On their own, anti-strike measures, were successful in ensuring the immediate survival of the regime, but they did little to neutralise the long-term threat posed to the regime by worker dissatisfaction. The protests against the confiscation of church valuables, described earlier, were not isolated incidents, and provide just one example of the growing disillusionment with the party. It was not that workers placed greater importance on saving church treasures than on aiding the victims of famine, they had simply lost their faith in the Communist leadership and did not believe that the starving would benefit. Some workers, who were not supporters of the Russian Orthodox Church as such, even began to perceive the Bolshevik regime as a 'Jewish' assault against Russia and Russian culture. Rumours that confiscated valuables were only lining the pockets of party officials and Jews circulated widely. This was particularly worrying for a regime which claimed to be building a 'workers' state' and regarded the industrial proletariat as the source of its legitimacy and authority.

Opposition to the regime's industrial policies among the nation's workers was explained in terms of the dominance of
'peasant consciousness' and 'individual' or 'shop' 'interests' among the workforce. The solution to these problems was envisaged in organisational terms. Through the development of shop-floor, local, regional, and national organisational structures, under the full guidance of the party, it was hoped that the evolution of a 'mature' fully 'conscious' industrial proletariat could be accelerated. It was the development of this centrally controlled organisational structure, the subjugation of all aspects of factory life to the supervision of the party, and the elimination of all forms of independent organisational activity, that was of equal importance to anti-strike measures in neutralising the threat posed by worker militancy.
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(viii) Notes: Chapter 2


3. As Aves comments, the high average also suggests that strikes in smaller enterprises may have escaped official recording - Workers ..., p. 69.


5. To cite the demands of the Skorokhod workers, for example: "1) Exert all efforts to improve the food supply situation and better organise the Petrokommuna. 2) Petition for free passage in a 150 verst radius and in the near future start up the largest number of suburban trains. 3) Review the composition of the trade pickets and petition that foodstuffs are not taken away from workers when it has been established that they have the right to transport goods. Apart from that increase the amount of foodstuffs that can be transported!". The demands of workers at the Arsenal included the "abolition of privileged rations for specialists and soviet officials and their equalisation to the level of the workers". The workers of the Novyi Lesner works, on 25 February, passed resolutions demanding that peasants be permitted to freely transport and trade their produce, and the creation of a worker commission to oversee food distribution - Aves, Workers ..., pp. 119-123.

6. Ibid., pp. 123-124. The prominence of the demand for the "abolition of the dictatorship of the Communist Party and the establishment of the authority of freely elected Soviets" among the demands of the Petrograd strike movement has always been debated. The VeCheKa report on the Kronstadt uprising and the events leading up to it, which was presented to the Central Committee, however, clearly states that this and increases in rations were the two main demands of the strike movement. This still may not necessarily be conclusive, but it does at least indicate the importance the Bolshevik leadership attached to this demand - Ya. Agranov, "Doklad o rezul'tatakh rassledovaniya po delu myatezha v gor. Kronstadtte", 5 April 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 229, 1. 2.
A strike, begun on 1 March 1921, by the 850 workers of the spinning department of the Sin'kov mill in Vladimir province provides a case in point. The cause of the strike is given as mistrust of local authorities who were suspected of stealing 10 pood (160kg.) of meat from a store-house - "Operinfsvodka ...", 10 March 1921, 1. 18.

Agranov, 1. 2; the "Operinfsvodka ..." for 11 March 1921 reported that in the previous 24 hours the Petrograd Provincial CheKa had arrested 54 individuals "agitating for joining the Kronstadt rebellion" - RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619, 1, 21.

"Operinfsvodka ...", 7 March 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619, 1, 7, 11; for additional examples of arrests of striking workers see: RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619, 1, 58, 69; d. 2620, 1, 75, 139.

See, for example: "Operinfsvodka ...", for 9, 11, & 15 March 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op, 1, d. 2619, 1, 12, 20, 31; and "Operinfsvodka ...", 9 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op, 1, d. 2620, 1, 34.

As cited by Aves, Workers ..., p. 121.

"Operinfsvodka ...", 25, 28, 29 March, & 2 April 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op, 1, d. 2619, 1, 51, 56, 62, 79.

"Operinfsvodka ...", 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 & 20 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2620, 1, 22, 29-30, 42, 50, 89.

"Operinfsvodka ...", 7 & 8 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2620, 1, 30-31.

The VeCheKa summary for 9 March 1921, for example, reports that widespread peasant uprisings were disrupting the sowing campaign. In Samara province, Pugachev district and part of Samara district were taken by peasant rebels and two units were disarmed near Obsharovki. The summary for 8 March 1921, records a "rebellion" erupting in Dmitriev (Kursk province), on the night of 2 March, with the flat of
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the head of the local politburo attacked - RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619, l. 9, 15. The summaries also feature frequent reports of 'banditry', and of whole areas being under the control of 'bandit gangs' - these labels often hid peasant uprisings as such categorization was politically less embarrassing - see any of the daily summaries for this period, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619. For a study of the Antonov rebellion see O. Radkey, The Unknown Civil War in South Russia. A Study of the Green Movement in the Tambov Region, 1920-21 (Stanford, 1976).

20. Petrograd's Arsenal workers on 7 March downed tools and voted to join the Kronstadt rebellion and elected a 3 member delegation to establish contact with Kronstadt, which was promptly arrested by the VeCheKa - "Operinfsvodka ...", 8 March 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op 1, d. 2619, l. 7-8; see also the description of the Bromlei strike above.

21. The VeCheKa summary for 30 March 1921 reports from Novgorod: "In association with the Kronstadt uprising and the strike movement in various cities, calls to help the rebelling sailors in Kronstadt have appeared across the province, in which it states that Soviet power will last only until 7 April." - RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619, l. 63.


23. Ibid., p. 296.

24. In his footnotes, Chase provides a table of strike figures from 1922 to the first half of 1928, which he draws from M. McAuley, Labour Disputes in Soviet Russia: 1917-1928 (Oxford, 1969), p. 15. This table was not a fundamental part of McAuley's research, and was based on a variety of sources including figures presented by M. Dewar in Labour Policy in the USSR: 1917-1928 (London, 1956), which in turn were those reported by Schmidt and Dogadov to the VI and VIII Trade Unions Congresses and thus must be suspected. Chase's omission of this data from the body of his work suggests he shares this suspicion.

Number of strikes and participants as reported by Chase, p. 251, n. 54:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of strikes</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Private</td>
<td>State Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>446 99</td>
<td>192,000 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>381 135</td>
<td>165,000 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>151 111</td>
<td>42,800 6,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>99 94</td>
<td>34,000 3,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>200 120</td>
<td>32,000 8,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st half of 1928</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
25. "Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za aprel'-mai 1923 goda. Po dannym Gosudarstvennogo Politicheskogo Upravleniya", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 177, l. 163.

26. "Operinfsvodka...", 14 & 15 April 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op 1, d. 2619, l. 128, 133.

27. "Kratkii obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya RSFSR za dekabr' 1922 goda po dannym Gospolitupravleniya", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 588, l. 23.

28. see Aves, Workers ..., pp. 171-184.

29. See, for example: "Obzor vnutrennego politicheskogo polozheniya RSFSR za avgust 1921", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 165, l. 2.

30. See, for example: "Operinfsvodka ...", 25 March 1921, l. 51; "Gosinfsvodka Informatsionnogo Otdela VeCheKa", 10 June 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2621, l. 24. The winter of 1921-22, brought further reports of widespread temporary closures of factories because of shortages of raw materials and fuel, see, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 14-15 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 68; "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 24 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 118.

31. See, for example: "Operinfsvodka ...", 25 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2620, l. 110; "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 23-24 July 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2622, l. 65.

32. In Donbass, by early June 1921 hunger and famine had brought production to a virtual standstill. Saratov reported escalating labour desertion, reaching 70% of the workforce of the railways in Pokrovo and 90% in Ershovo. Under such circumstances, strikes were a low priority - RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2621, l. 49, 57, 128.

33. RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627 & 2628.

34. RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2632-33.

35. "V TsK RKP - Obzor vnutrennego politicheskogo polozheniya RSFSR po dannym Gospolitupravleniya za mart 1922 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 296, l. 1.

36. RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 296, l. 25, 71.

37. "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za yanvar' 1924 goda (po dannym Ob"edinennogo Gospolitupravleniya SSSR)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87,
38. "Obzor ...", 15 May - 15 August 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, l. 88. In the metalworking sector, for example, the wage debt in all enterprises of the massive Gomza trust (which included the Sormovo works in Nizhni Novgorod, and Profintern works in Bryansk) were eliminated by December 1924, and, for the first time in years, wages were paid on time. In the mining sector, although most workers were still owed at least one month's wages by the end of the year, massive redundancies were taking place - in December the workforce in Donbass was reduced by 22,000, and in Andzhero-Sudzhensk district (Siberia) by 1,167 - "Obzor ...", December 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 181, l. 3.

39. To give one example, some of the monthly totals for the number of strikes conflict with those in table 2.1 (particularly for the first half of 1924). Another example is provided by the OGPU summary for May-August 1924, which explicitly states that in May 9 strikes were recorded among dockers (in the 'Water-transport' sector), and 5 in June, while the figures from which the table has been compiled gives figures of 6 for both months - "Obzor ...", 15 May - 15 August 1924, l. 94.

40. See: RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2620-2622.

41. See, for example: "Operinfsvodka ...", 26 April 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 2619, l. 156; "Operinfsvodka ...", 7-8, 25 & 30 May 1921, l. 29, 113, 130; "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 4 & 6 July 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2621, l. 127, 136.

42. See for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 12, & 25 August 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, l. 14, 63; "Gosinfsvodka Informatsionnogo otdela OGPU", 15 May 1922, d. 2632, l. 152; Ibid., 18 May 1922, d. 2633, l. 13.

43. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 23 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 112; Ibid., 2 February 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2628, l. 14; "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 2 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2629, l. 2; "V TsK RCP - Obzor ... za mart 1922 goda", l. 1.

44. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 12 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 56; Ibid., 4-5 February 1922, d. 2628, l. 24.

45. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 23 & 24 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2630, l. 56, 72; Ibid., 2 May 1922, d2632, l. 12.
46. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 16 & 17 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 76, 85.

47. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 21 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 105.

48. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 15 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2630, l. 10.

49. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 29 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2630, l. 101.

50. The OGPU summary, specifically names railway workers as being involved in the 'unrest'. It reported that on 28 March, large crowds gathered near the cathedral in expectation of the arrival of the Commission for the Confiscation of Church Valuables. When it arrived at the Cathedral, accompanied by cadets, the bells began to ring and people ran up to form a large crowd. The crowd threw itself at the members of the commission and cadets and beat them up. Troops were called in and opened fire. According to the report, protesters fired back from balconies and windows and there were wounded and dead - "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 31 March 1922 RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2631, l. 4. The summaries contain several reports of similar incidents in other towns and cities, but this is the only case where participants are specifically identified as workers.

51. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 1-2 April 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2631, l. 17. For further examples, see also: "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 25-26 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2630, l. 75; "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 5 April 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2631, l. 36.

52. See RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623-2636, especially from d. 2627 onwards. One of the earliest such references was in the CheKa summary for 10 August 1921, which reported that strikes were expected at the Electrical Generating station and at the No. 2 and No. 3 Soviet Typography in Ekaterinoslav, as a result of a shortage of monetary notes - "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 10 August 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, l. 7. By the autumn such references were more common and by January 1922, almost every summary was reporting strikes over delays in payments.

53. "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za iul' 1923 goda po dannym Gosudarstvennogo Politicheskogo Upravleniya", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 468, l. 75; "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya Respubliki za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya" 1923, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 468, l. 17.
54. "Spetsial'naya svodka o zabostovochnom dvizhenii po RSFSR za noyabr'-fevral' 1922-23 goda", addressed to Stalin, signed by Unshlikht, Deputy Chairman of the OGPU, March 1923, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 296, l. 97-101.

55. "Materialy k zakrytomy pis'mu Tsentral'nogo Komiteta RKP(b) No 15 1923", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 468, l. 137.

56. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 2 September 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, l. 95; Ibid., 23, 26, 28-29 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, l. 113, 124, 136; "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 5 June 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2634, l. 3.

57. "Spetsial'naya svodka ... za noyabr'-fevral' 1922-23 goda", l. 97-101.

58. "Materialy k ... No 15 1923", l. 137.

59. Ibid., l. 137. "Obzor politnastroeniya rabochikh za noyabr' mesyats 1923 g. po materialam informatsionnogo otilda ob"edinennogo Gosudarstvenogo Politicheskogo Upravleniya", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, l. 6 - reported that out of 60 strikes that took place in November 1923, only 3 were in the private sector.

60. "Vypiska iz zakrytogo pis'ma sekretarya Permskogo Gubkoma RKP tov. Naneishvili", circa July 1923, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 468, l. 125. For conflicts over this issue see for example: "Vypiska iz vnutrennikh gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otilda GPU za period s 13/VIII po 19/IX sg.", 1923, d. 587, l. 158; "Vypiska iz spetspolitsvodki informotdela GPU za 15 i 16 sentyabrya 1923, No. 212/415", l. 159; "Vypiska iz vnutrennei gosinfsvodki informatsionnogo otilda GPU za 19 sentyabrya, No. 214/271", 1923, l. 160; "Kratkii obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya respubliki po dannym Gospolitupravleniya za 1 iuulya - 15 sentyabrya 1923 goda", d. 468, l. 57-58; "Dopolnitel'nyi obzor po dannym Gosinformatsii Informatsionnogo Otdela GPU za sentyabr' 1923g.", l. 43; "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya Respubliki za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya" 1923, l. 18.

61. "Obzor ... za yanvar' 1924 ...", l. 66. In October 1923, dissatisfaction over payment in large denominations of chervontsy was reported in Moscow and 18 other provinces. In Gorrespublika, workers received only 2,000 roubles per chervonets instead of the official rate of 3,400 at which wages had been calculated. In Tsarytsin workers were losing approximately 20% of the chervonets' face value.
Another problem associated with paying wages in large denominations of chervontsy was that workers frequently went to bars to change them, where they "often ended up leaving their entire pay packet and returning to work drunk" - "Obzor ... za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya" 1923, 1. 17-18.

62. Such an approach is confirmed by an OGPU order to local OGPU heads, on the "new format" that their daily reports should take. Among the information that was meant to be included on each strike were details of the "measures adopted for the isolation of politically-unreliable individuals [i.e. strike instigators - AP] and how this was reflected upon the masses" - "Prikaz Gosudarstvennogo Politicheskogo Upravleniya No. 72", 10 May 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 175, 1. 9.

63. See, for example: RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, 1. 155; d. 2625, 1. 5; d. 2632, 1. 62; d. 2636, 1. 56.

64. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 6 July 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2636, 1. 56.

65. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 29-30 October 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2624, 1. 131.

66. "Operinfsvodka...", 10 May 1921, 1. 39.

67. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 29 September 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, 1. 155.

68. Unfortunately the report does not state whether those arrested were released - "Obzor ... za noyabr' mesyats 1923", 1. 6. For further examples see: RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2619, 1. 58, 59, 60, 62; d. 2620, 1. 139, 149; d. 2634, 1. 14.

69. The summary for 28 October 1921, for example, reported that in Khar'kov 114 individuals were arrested during an "operation to arrest members of anti-soviet parties" - in light of the authorities preference to blame worker unrest on SR and Menshevik agitation, it is quite likely that being involved in the organization of strikes was sufficient to be included in the above categories and subjected to arrest - "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 28 October 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2624, 1. 112.

70. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 9-10 July 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2622, 1. 1.

71. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 23-24 July 1921, 1. 65.

72. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 27 & 28 December 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2622, 1. 118, 123.
73. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 12 May 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2632, l. 121.

74. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 19 May 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2633, l. 26.

75. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 15, 18 & 19 May 1922, l. 152, 13, 26.

76. "Vypiska ... za 15 i 16 sentyabrya 1923", l. 159.

77. "Polipis'mo sekretarya Kaidakskogo Raikoma za mart i aprel' mesyatsy 1924 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 752, l. 2; "Lichnoe pis'mo Vrid Sekretarya Ekaterinoslavskogo Gubkoma KP(b)Uk t. Bychanko za mart-iuul' 1924 g.", addressed to V.M. Molotov (Secretary of the Central Committee RCP), 28 July 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 752, l. 7. For further examples see also: "Lichnoe pis'mo sekretarya Ekaterinoslavskogo Gubkoma KP(b)Uk za iiul'—avgust mesyatsy 1924 g.", 8 September 1924, Ibid., l. 23; "Doklad", addressed to com. Rumyantsev (Secretary of the Regional Party Committee), produced by the Organisational-Instructional Department of the Zlatoust Regional Party Committee, June 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 7; "Protokol No. 24 — zasedaniya prezidiuma Ust'-Katavskogo zavkoma ot 24 maya 1924 goda", Ibid., l. 17.

78. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 2 March 1922, l. 2. For further examples of strikes ended by the re-registration of the workforce, or closure of the enterprise and rehiring of the workforce see: "Operinfsvodka ...", 5 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2620, l. 22; "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 6 June 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2621, l. 7; Ibid., 8 November 1921, d. 2625, l. 14; Ibid., 6-8 & 13 January 1922, d. 2627, l. 31; Ibid., 18-19 February 1922, d. 2628, l. 97.

79. "Obzor ... za aprel'—mai 1923", l. 163, for example, reported that 7 out of 25 strikes in the months of April and May 1923 where the method of resolution was known, were ended by threats of dismissal of strikers or closure of enterprises.

80. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 8 November 1921, l. 17.

81. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 16 February 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2628, l. 84.

82. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 18-19 February 1922, l. 96.
83. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 4-5 June 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2621, 1. 3-4.

84. "Obzor ... za period s 15-go maya po 15-e avgusta 1924 g", 1. 91. In another example, when stokers of the Yakhromsk factory in Dmitrovsk district (Moscow province), walked out in August 1921, party members stepped in to perform their work - "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 3 August 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2622, 1. 117.

85. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 20 February 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2628, 1. 105.

86. The workers had initially halted production after large deductions were made from their wages for food rations which they had received. They then demanded a general reduction of the deductions for rations, and to be supplied with hot rations and footwear - "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 17, 18, 19, & 20-21 May 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2633, 1. 2, 12, 26, 35.

87. "Spetsial'naya svodka ... za noyabr'-fevral' 1922-23 goda", 1. 97-101; "Obzor ... za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya", 1923, 1. 16.

88. "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya Respubliki za noyabr'-dekabr' m-tsy 1923 g po dannym informatsionnogo, Sekretnogo, Vostochnogo i Kontr-Razvedyvatel'nogo otdelov Gospolitupravleniya", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, 1. 22 - the exceptional strike was at the Serp i Molot works (former Guzhon), which persisted, albeit with interruptions, for over 1 month.

89. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 6 July 1921, 1. 136.

90. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 21 September 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, 1. 128.

91. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 4 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, 1. 24.

92. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 11 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, 1. 51.

93. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 5 April 1922, 1. 36.

94. "V TsK RKP - Obzor vnutrennego politicheskogo polozheniya RSFSR po dannym Gospolitupravleniya za oktyabr' 1922 goda", RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 296, 1. 24.

95. "Kratkii obzor ... za 1 iiulya - 15 sentyabrya 1923 goda", 1. 58.
96. "Dopolnitel'nyi obzor ... za sentyabr' 1923g", 1. 45.
97. "Obzor ... za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya" 1923, 1. 16.
98. "Obzor ... za period s 15-go maya po 15-e avgusta 1924 g", 1. 93.
99. "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 18-19, 20 & 21 January 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2627, 1. 92, 99, 105; Ibid., 21, 22, & 23 February, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2628, 1. 110, 116, 122; "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 8 & 9 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2629, 1. 55, 63; Ibid., 16, 20, 21 & 22 March 1922, d. 2630, 1. 11, 28, 36, 45.
100. "O rabote profsoiuzov (po materialam mestnykh partorganov)", marked for Stalin and "Secret", 10 August 1925, RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 907, 1. 48.
101. Memo from the Chairman of the Central Committee, addressed to Stalin, May 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 348, 1. 3.
102. No further details are provided - the summary for 10 July simply reports that the "strike movement" had "ended" - RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2636, 1. 70, 99.
103. RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2635, 1. 119.
104. "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 11 & 13 July 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2636, 1. 115, 131.
105. See, for example: "Operinfsvodka ...", 10 May 1921, 1. 42; "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 15, 17 & 30 March 1922, 1. 10, 28, 106; Ibid, 3 May 1922, d. 2632, 1. 23 - which reported that "Anarchic-underground proclamations are being distributed among workers in the Zamoskvoretsk district (Moscow), calling for the organisation of underground battle unions"; Ibid, 20-21 May 1922, 1. 38; "Lichnoe pis'mo ... za mart-iiun' 1924 g.", 1. 8; G. Varels, "Doklad o poezdke v Krindachevskii Raion - Istoriya Vozniknoeniya Stachki", 19 Oct 1923, addressed "To all members of the Central Committee and Secretaries of Provincial Committees - informational material", 19 Oct 1923, RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 500, 1. 24.
106. See, for example: "V TsK RKP - Obzor ... za oktyabr' 1922 goda", 1. 24; "Doklad", addressed to com. Rumyantsev, 1. 7.
107. "Politpis'mo sekretarya Kaidakskogo ... za mart i aprel' mesyatsy 1924 goda", 1. 2; "Lichnoe pis'mo ... za mart-iiun' 1924 g.", 1. 7.

109. "Operinfsvodka . . .", 17 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2620, l. 70.

110. "Gosinfsvodka . . . VeCheKa", 11 October 1921, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2624, l. 44.

111. "Gosinfsvodka . . . VeCheKa", 29-30 October 1921, l. 117.

112. "Gosinfsvodka . . . VeCheKa", 13 February 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2628, l. 64; for further examples see also: RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 7, 17.

113. The report gives a figure of 15,000 workers as being involved in the strike, this seems to be a typographical error in the document. A figure of 1,500 would be more consistent with the rest of the report's details - Varels, l. 24-27.

114. See, for example: "Obzor . . . za noyabr'-dekabr' m-tsy 1923 g.", l. 12, 22; "Obzor . . . za yanvar' 1924", l. 63.

115. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka . . . OGPU", 7 March 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2629, l. 47; Ibid., 25 April 1922, d2631, l. 164; "Obzor . . . za period s poloviny sentyabrya po 1-e noyabrya", 1923, l. 20-22; "Obzor . . . za yanvar' 1924", l. 63, 67; "Obzor . . . za period s 15-go maya po 15-e avgusta 1924 g", l. 88.


117. "Gosinfsvodka . . . OGPU", 18 April 1922, RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2631, l. 112.

118. "Obzor . . . za period s 15-go maya po 15-e avgusta 1924 g", l. 95.

119. RTsKhIDNI F. 5, op. 1, d. 2630, l. 75, 85; d. 2631, l. 19, 22, 36.
(i) Introduction

The structure of industrial and labour force management and organisation, as developed under the socialist-capitalism of the NEP, was uniquely complex. There was no precedent, either in Russia or the West, for the sheer numerical weight of organisations and institutions that were created or developed in the 1920s for the management of industry and its labour force. This was a direct product of the political culture of the Bolshevik leadership and its aims.

This organisational network may, initially, appear to be highly democratic and enlightened, with all power emanating from the citizenry of the nation and providing workers with a direct channel from the factory floor to the highest levels of government through which to express their concerns and interests. But this organisational network must be examined within the context of the one-party hierarchial and centralised state to appreciate how misguided such a view would be.

Having itself rocketed to power from a numerically humble core, partially as a result of its fanatical devotion to organisation, the Bolshevik leadership was paranoiac about all forms of independent organisation - however harmless or apolitical they might have seemed. By the end of 1922 the Bolshevik leadership had succeeded in suppressing all organised competitors for a share of power outside its own party. But, fully aware of the extent of dissatisfaction in the factories, the leadership continued to fear the possibility of even the most innocent worker club or hobby circle acting as a springboard for the transition of worker dissatisfaction into organised opposition.
The Bolshevik leadership thus demanded that every aspect of factory life be enveloped by its supervision: from management of the factory, to the 'defence' of workers' interests; from the technical, political, and cultural development of the workforce to their recreational and leisure pursuits. Through organisational control the leadership sought to disarm worker militancy - to eliminate workers' ability to effectively oppose central authority.

The aims of the party leadership, however, extended beyond authoritarian domination of the workforce. An examination of state-labour relations solely in terms of the imposition and maintenance of central control is to ignore entirely the very essence of the Bolshevik regime. Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership had no delusions over the backwardness of the Soviet Republic and its labour force. They were aware that by 1921 they may have succeeded in securing a 'socialist' political framework, but a 'socialist' society still remained as distant as ever. The transformation of the Soviet Republic into a 'socialist' and then 'communist society' required, not only the creation of the economic basis to support such a society, but also the cultural transformation of its citizens. The most urgent task in this process was the cultural transformation of as wide a stratum of the industrial workforce as was possible, so as to perpetuate and expand the 'vanguard' that would implement this transformation across the entire nation. This entailed the awakening of 'proletarian consciousness' among the industrial 'working class' - to educate workers to think in terms of what would benefit society as a whole, rather than in terms of what would be of greatest benefit to this month's wage packet. Without such a transformation the Bolshevik leadership believed that 'communism' was unattainable and the Revolution doomed.

The creation and expansion of institutional and organisational structures during the NEP were hence driven
by two fundamental aims: not just by the desire to extend central control, but also to accelerate the evolution of 'proletarian consciousness'. Through the organisational network, the regime sought to mould and dictate the outlook and thoughts of the nation's workforce, not only to eliminate worker dissatisfaction and alienation, but also to create a labour force which would freely and independently identify its interest as being in harmony with the goals of the party leadership. The leadership wanted to create a selfless labour force that would produce at its maximum physical capability, with minimal consideration of personal needs, for the long-term benefit of society. The party leadership expected workers to make this sacrifice purely on the basis of their total dedication to, and unquestioning acceptance of the regime as representing the interests of the entire working class.

The party leadership continued to believe itself to be the vanguard of the 'proletariat' and representative of workers' 'true' interests. It continued to regard the working class as the spring from which the lifeblood of the party would flow. Through the organisational network the party believed it was nurturing this spring, helping it to evolve into the source for the party's future regeneration and expansion. The authoritarianism of the party was driven by the recognition that great care was required to 'protect' this spring from 'competing' forces, and ensure the evolution of 'proletarian' consciousness as opposed to egoism, 'localism', or syndicalism.

Unsurprisingly, the party encountered resistance from below in attempting to assert hierarchical and central control over the organisational network. This resistance originated not just from non-party officials, but especially from party members themselves, and extended into the highest levels of the trade union hierarchy. It is no coincidence that the bulk of such resistance and objections
can be found at the start of the NEP. For in the early 1920s union, state and party organs operating in the industrial sector still featured many individuals, including party members, who had rightfully gained their leading positions through their active roles in the worker movement and revolution, as opposed to the patronage of the party. For these activists the decline of worker and union influence over the operation of the national economy was a betrayal of the revolution. Resistance to central party domination, however, was not solely ideologically motivated. Within each stratum of the organisational hierarchy, be it union, management, or party, officials resented loss of their independence to higher organs, and manoeuvred so as to maximise personal power and authority.

The party's efforts to impose central control were further undermined by such factors as poor communication and misinterpretation of policy, and shortages of suitably motivated and qualified party personnel combined with the lethargy inherent in any organisational structure. A closer examination of such resistance and undermining also provides further insight into the extent of party and central domination and how it was achieved in practice.

As both the party and trade unions have already been subjected to extensive scholarly study, this chapter will attempt to provide the briefest of overviews of their organisation and operation. Where this study hopes to make a unique contribution is in offering insight into the operation of this organisational network on the factory floor and its interrelationship with higher organs of power.
(ii) Summary of Organisational Structures

The three main organisational strands running through the nation's economy were the party, the trade unions, and the organs of state economic management. The party and trade unions were organised along similar lines. In the case of the trade unions the core body from which all power emanated was the general meeting of the factory's workforce. At the general meeting the workforce elected a factory committee to pursue the day-to-day interests of the workforce, issued instructions to the factory committee and ratified its work. Factory committees were responsible for all union work in the factory, including the organisation of Audit, Ratings Conflict, and Safety commissions, and supervision of the Worker Club, Worker-Correspondent circles (rabkory) and special interest leisure circles.

General meetings also elected delegates to represent the workforce at factory delegate meetings (usually held in larger enterprises), local, regional and national congresses and conferences. District, provincial, republican, and national union bodies were elected by the corresponding congresses. At both congresses and conferences the delegate assemblies ratified the work of their elected organs and outlined future policy and goals. (Conferences were, strictly speaking, only advisory bodies which passed 'recommendations', without powers of election and were not required to be fully 'representational'. This distinction was, however, frequently ignored.) Every factory committee fell under the jurisdiction of one single trade union (corresponding with the dominant economic activity of the relevant industry - i.e. a tool and die maker in a cotton mill would fall under the jurisdiction of the Textile Trade Union) as well as the local organ of the VTsSPS (Vserossiiskii [Vsesoiuznyi] Tsentral'nyi Soviet Professional'nykh Soiuzov - All-Russian [renamed 'All-Soviet' at the VIth Trade Unions Congress, in November
1924] Central Council of Trade Unions) which united all the unions of all trades.

The party operated in a similar vein, with cell meetings of all the factories' party members electing the cell bureau, chairman, and secretary, and delegates to local/regional/national congresses and conferences. As with the trade unions, party congresses and conferences at each level elected the relevant party leadership organs and approved party policy.

The organisation of state economic management, as it existed during the NEP, evolved out of the Revolution and Civil War. Following the 1917 February Revolution, factory committees, formed and elected upon the initiative of the workers themselves, asserted effective co-management of their enterprises, successfully demanding ratification rights over management decisions through the threat of withholding their labour. On a national level, in the wake of the October Revolution, the VSNKha was established on 15 December 1917, for the purposes of organising the economy and state finance: to "elaborate general norms and the plan for regulating the economic life of the country, reconciling and uniting the activities of central and local regulating agencies ...". In the following months VSNKha created individual departments for coordinating individual industrial sectors, and regional councils or Sovnarkhozy (SNKha) for coordinating the economy locally.

By the start of 1918, management of the nation's industry was threatening to slide into anarchic chaos. Just as the peasantry had begun seizing land in the summer of 1917, industrial property was being expropriated upon local initiative. Factory committees were forcibly taking complete control over the management and product of their enterprises, or stepping in to preserve their own employment, as owners abandoned or attempted to shut down
factories. Alarmed by such a chaotic situation, the Bolshevik leadership in January 1918 allocated VSNKha exclusive authority for expropriating and nationalizing enterprises, making it officially responsible for the nation's industrial economy.

Conflict between the factory committees and orders placed by the VSNKha and its subsidiary bodies was inevitable. The demands of the Civil War provided the justification for resolving this conflict by subordinating much of the economy directly to the needs and orders of the military, restoring 'one man management', introducing 'military discipline', and curtailing or suspending many of the powers of the factory committees. In the majority of instances the 'new' directors of the enterprises were simply the former Chief Engineers, if not the actual former Directors, Deputy Directors, or even owners themselves. Where the loyalty to the Revolution of these directors was suspect and where it was not possible to appoint a 'Red Director' (a member of the Communist party), a party member was attached to the director, to monitor his activities and decisions (additionally family members of the directors were often designated as 'hostages', providing insurance for the state against 'sabotage' by the directors).

With the launch of the NEP, enterprises required greater freedom to be able to operate as 'self-financing' units and adjust and modify output according to 'market demand'. Furthermore, the state bureaucracy was simply too underdeveloped to cope with centrally managing the nation's industry now that the single aim of maximum military output had been replaced by the infinitely more complex demands of recovery and the 'market'. In the autumn of 1921 and through the winter of 1921-22, the state divested itself of all non-profitable enterprises of non-national importance (predominantly small and medium scale enterprises), by either closing them or leasing them to co-operatives or
private entrepreneurs. The remaining enterprises were organised into local, regional and national trusts or syndicates, depending on the importance of the relevant enterprise, based on the industrial sector in which the enterprise operated. These trusts grew out of the Departments and local Sovnarkhozy of the VSNKh and remained under their jurisdiction, and the members of the trusts' boards of directors were appointed by and reported to them. The boards of directors, in turn, appointed and oversaw the directors and senior personnel of individual enterprises.

Service sectors of the economy, such as transport, were similarly managed and administered by dedicated People's Commissariats (NKPS — Narodnyi Komissariat Putei Soobshcheniya, for example, administered the nation's railway network, associated workshops, and its workforce).

'One-man management' thus returned as did the continued use of 'bourgeois' directors and 'specialists', but their activities were subject to monitoring by the state, party, trade unions, factory committee, and party cell. The management of factories and trusts regularly reported to general meetings, the factory committee, the factory party cell, and union and party organs. The factory committee co-signed, and with the management was jointly responsible for the factory's accounts, appointing an Audit Commission to review all financial transactions. Similarly, local and national trade union organs appointed and attached full-time three-man Audit Commissions to each trust to monitor the activities of the trust and its correct implementation of all applicable directives on a day-to-day basis.

This structure was meant to ensure that the operation of the economy was now guided by the interests of the state, which, in turn, represented the interests of the working class, and that worker interests were defended both within
the factory and on regional/national levels. It was not, however, assumed or expected that this organisational structure would function flawlessly, and procedures and organs for the hearing of worker grievances or the resolution of conflicts were established.

Initially, in the immediate post-Revolutionary era, conflict-resolution procedures were haphazard and varied. Within the factory itself, Rastsenochnye komissii (Ratings-Commissions) were the first venue for the resolution of conflicts between workers and management. Consisting roughly of equal numbers representing workers and management, the prime function of these bodies was to set output levels that had to be met in order to qualify for full payment of wages (rations). Where no agreement could be reached within the factory, or to resolve wider-ranging disputes involving workers from more than one factory, mediation or arbitration would be sought from a superior organ. This could include the regional or national committees of individual unions or inter-union councils, regional or national People's Commissariats, local Soviets, or special joint commissions appointed by the above organisations.

These procedures later became formalised in the bodies of the Rastsenochno-konfliktnye komissii (Ratings-Conflict Commissions - RKK), Primiritel'nye kamery (Conciliation Chambers), and Treteiskie sudy (Third-Party Courts). RKKs were compulsory bodies in all state and private enterprises and institutions employing over 30 persons (in those employing fewer the functions of the RKK were performed by trade union delegates), and consisted of equal numbers of representatives of the factory committee and management. The RKK resolved disputes, set factory regulations, and ensured compliance of collective agreements. This included checking and approving the wage-scale classification of jobs and functions; monitoring output norms and piece
rates; setting dates of holidays; and investigating complaints of breach of collective agreements. Its decisions (reached by majority votes) were binding, and not open to appeal. Conflicts arising from the negotiation of collective agreements, or cases where the RKK was unable to reach a majority decision were submitted either to Conciliation Chambers or to Third-Party Courts, both of which operated under the authority of NKTruda. The Conciliation Chambers involved mediation by NKTruda representatives, while Third-Party Courts were presided over by a 'Super-arbitrator' whose decision was binding if an agreement between both parties could not be reached.

(iii) The Sinews of Party and Central Domination

The organisational structure described above may, at first glance, seem democratic and enlightened. In theory, all power emanated from below, from general meetings of all workers, or cell meetings of all party members, with decisions by the leadership subject to the approval or rejection of assemblies of elected workers' deputies. To resolve grievances workers had recourse to a network of arbitration and conflict-resolution organs, and worker interests were defended by a trade union structure that extended directly into the highest levels of the state and party. But the bureaucratic structure must be evaluated within the context of the one-party hierarchial and centralised state. General meetings, delegate meetings, congresses and conferences were not convened with sufficient frequency to act as an effective check on the decisions being passed by their representative organs. Even union and party committees were too detached from day-to-day work and were convened too infrequently to control their own presidiums and executive organs, where real power was concentrated.
This, in itself, is not an unusual state of affairs in organisational structures. In the Soviet republic, however, union and party discipline were added to the formula, binding lower organs to obey the instructions of their superior organs. This was rationalised in terms of subjugating local interests to the interests of the entire working class, which were represented by the superior organs. Finally, all non-party organs, including the unions, were subjugated to the party itself. This was achieved through: a) the conscious 'packing' of all organs with party members; b) the official presence of party fractions within each organisational organ, be it union, state or economic; c) the banning of 'factionalism' at the X Party Congress in 1921; and d) the holding of multiple posts by individual party members. Thus, instead of being organs to channel worker interests from below, the trade union and party organisational networks became instruments for the subjugation of workers to the directives and instructions of the party leadership at the centre.

The Presidium of the VTsSPS, the presidiums of individual unions, and their departments, were supposedly the pinnacle of an organisation dedicated to conveying worker interests from the factory floor to the highest levels of state. In reality there was little democratic input and influence from the grassroots. The frequency of congresses, conferences and plenums was not prescribed, being convened upon the decision of the presidiums, and were too irregular to act as an effective check on the presidiums. Through the course of the 1920s their frequency declined, while the extent of their orchestration by union presidiums increased. Agendas were set by the presidiums before congresses, conferences and plenums were publicly announced, and resolutions were drafted and approved prior to their opening'.
Union presidiums claimed that the authority of the congresses/plenums that elected them was vested in them. Representing the 'interests' of all union members as opposed to only the 'interests' of a single shop, enterprise, industry or region, they demanded the fulfilment of their instructions even if opposed by a majority within the relevant shop/enterprise/region or industry. Following the same principle, each union organ demanded the total obedience of organs and formations that were hierarchically below it.

The organisational principle of the superiority of the VTsSPS over the trade union movement was set out soon after the Revolution: "... in the interests of unity in action ... unity in the construction of all trade unions ... all resolutions of the All-Russian Congresses, Conferences, and VTsSPS are obligatory both for all unions ... and for each member of the unions". Similarly, local Councils of Trade Unions (SPS) were "the empowered representatives of all local trade union organisations" - they spoke and acted in their behalf and their decisions were also binding for all local union bodies and their members. "The non-submission to and breach of resolutions thus invokes expulsion from the family of proletarian unions" - whether it be individual members or entire organs'.

The VTsSPS set charters and regulations on working practices and discipline for all unions', supervised the work of all union central committees and all provincial unions of trade unions (GSPS). Even a cursory reading of the minutes of meetings of the VTsSPS Presidium quickly reveals the limitless authority of the Presidium in trade union matters. It regularly sent out its representatives and instructors to inspect the work of individual trade union central committees and other union bodies, and summoned officials of these organs to report on their activities and receive detailed instructions'. It oversaw
all national trade union congresses and conferences (usually by appointing a supervising commission or individual), approving all theses and resolutions in advance. It even reviewed and altered decisions already passed legally and democratically by national union congresses.

The central committees of individual unions and provincial unions of trade unions operated in a similar fashion with respect to their own subordinate regional and local union departments.

Inspections and the issue of direct instructions to subordinate bodies by superior organs were but some of the methods used to instil hierarchial leadership over the trade union membership. The major channel for conveying general union policy, particularly instructions on the organisation of practical, work was via the trade union press. Additional instruction of union organs was conducted via circulars, decrees, monthly informational letters (from late 1922 onwards), and the convening of special meetings (usually to explain a specific issue or new campaign). Similarly, all union organs, from factory committees to union central committees, were obligated to forward regular reports of their work (generally on a monthly basis), reports of any 'incidents' (particularly strikes), and copies of minutes of meetings and resolutions passed, to their superior organ. These were reviewed by the superior organ, which could then issue corrective instructions (this was especially widely practised at the local level with regard to the decisions adopted by factory committees and RKKs).

The financial structure reinforced the downward flow of authority within the hierarchy. All union membership dues went directly to provincial union departments, which ratified the budgets of all lower union organs (e.g.
district union departments), and thus had effective control over all union expenditure within their province (including benefit and 'strike' funds)\(^1\).

The party's domination of all aspects of industrial life was, however, far more significant for the nation's workforce than the centralised and hierarchial reality of union organisation. At the summit, the struggle over how the management of the economy should be divided between the party and the unions was resolved in the party and state's favour at the launch of the NEP. The debate, which has been well documented, most recently by Robert Service and Aves, was opened at the IX Party Congress in March 1920. Aleksandr Shlyapnikov, at the head of what came to be known as the Workers' Opposition, advocated placing all control over production and distribution in the hands of the trade unions. Trotskii argued for the continued militarisation of labour, contending that as the state now represented workers' interests, there was no longer any requirement for unions to defend workers, and unions should now concern themselves only with increasing productivity. The state should take command of the workers and deploy them as it saw fit for the task of economic reconstruction. Bukharin proposed transforming the trade unions into agencies of the state for the purposes of transmitting the instructions of the party to workers on the factory floor. The debate raged through 1920 and formally ended with the adoption of the Platform of the Ten at the X Party Congress in March 1921\(^1\).

The Platform of the Ten defined the unions as 'schools' of Communism whose primary task was the education of the masses so that its representatives could then, in future, take up managerial functions within the economy, state, party or unions. According to the Platform, the unions were to have a dual loyalty: they were to act as a 'transmission belt' to help implement state policy; and
they were also to defend workers against excesses of 'centralism' and 'bureaucratism' in the operation of the economy. While the Platform called upon the unions to help devise economic policy and assist in the management of enterprises, the unions were denied all rights in these areas, allocating them a clearly subservient role to the state in the management of the economy. The Platform reaffirmed the subordination of the unions to the party, with the unions acting as 'transmission belts' also between the party and non-party workers, helping to cultivate 'proletarian consciousness' as defined by the party. The party reserved for itself the right to ratify and make appointments to all trade union posts, while unions were only given the right to nominate candidates to economic-managerial posts.

Although the unions retained direct access to the highest levels of state and party, and the Platform of the Ten, at the very least, reaffirmed the unions' role in proposing policy and candidates for economic posts, it was not long before unions were being excluded from participation in the management of the economy. A memo from the Fraction Bureau of the Central Committee of the Allied Union of Railway and Water Transport Workers to the Politburo, dated 22 March 1922, provides an illustration. The memo protested that the membership of the new collegium of the NKPS had been decided without any union input and without any opportunity being given for the unions even to nominate candidates, despite Dzerzhinskii's promises to the contrary.

Union functions that were potentially influential on the course of the economy were eroded. In April 1922, only a year after the VTsSPS had gained control over the labour safety inspectorates (possibly as consolation for their loss of direct involvement in the management of the economy), they were returned to the domain of the NKTruda (see chapter 1). The formal establishment of Conciliation
Chambers and Third-Party Courts under the authority of NKTruda in July 1922 ended union rights of arbitration and mediation of labour disputes.

The curtailing of the role of permanent full-time union audit commissions attached to trusts - the last remnant of workers' control, can be seen in a similar light. As VSNKh took over responsibility for the nation's economy, and 'one-man' management was restored in industry, union participation in economic management was reduced to auditing and monitoring functions encompassed within the audit commissions. As industrial trusts were created, beginning in the later half of 1921, the unions allocated full-time audit commissions to each trust (usually consisting of three members). They were charged with monitoring on a daily basis the activities of the trust and its administration, and their correct implementation of applicable directives. Although the exact powers of the audit commissions remained undefined, their constant shadowing of economic management organs gave the unions the potential to exert influence on the course of the economy. But in the spring of 1923, audit commissions were downgraded to part-time organs. They were instructed not to operate on a daily basis and to limit themselves only to "periodic reviews" of the trusts, passing verdicts on budgets, plans, and annual reports. This ended the unions' potential for direct day-to-day participation in the economic decision-making process.

The party ensured the subjugation of non-party organs and their fulfilment of party instructions by 'packing' them with party members, and through the formal presence of Communist party fractions within all organs - including from the factory committee to the Presidium of the VTsSPS. The party fraction consisted of all the party members within the relevant organ, led by its own bureau or presidium of several senior members (where this was
warranted by the size of the fraction). The bureau or presidium was, in turn, directly accountable to its supervising party body for the implementation of the party's instructions within the relevant organ.

The mandatory formation of party fractions at all congresses, meetings, and organs of the unions, soviets and all social organisations, where there were 3 or more party members, was specified at the VIII Party Congress (Resolution on the Organisational Question, 22 March 1919) and in the charters of the Communist Party that followed. The fractions were assigned the task of strengthening the party's influence and control over the work of all institutions and organisations, and implementing the party's policies among non-party circles. The fractions were "entirely subordinate to the party" and were obligated to adhere to the decisions of the party "strictly and undeviatingly". The relevant party committee had "the right to introduce any member into the fraction" to instruct or supervise the fraction, and similarly could "recall" individual members from the fraction to hold them accountable for their actions. All issues that were to be decided by the relevant non-party organisation were first to be discussed by the bureau or at a meeting of the fraction. The party fraction or bureau would thus meet prior to the meeting/plenum/session of the relevant organ to pre-decide what the party's position should be and/or to receive instruction from their supervising party organ on how they should vote on each issue. Once the fraction had reached a decision, all party members were bound by party discipline to "vote unanimously" in favour of this decision, under threat that "Persons violating this rule are subject to the usual disciplinary procedures". The relevant meeting/plenum/session would thus be confronted by a united front of all members of the party (usually the majority of members in higher organs in any case) who then,
effectively, steam-rollered the party's decisions through the meeting.

By 1921 the party fraction of the Presidium of the VTsSPS was meeting regularly, on average once or twice per week, separately from the Presidium of the VTsSPS and pre-deciding all VTsSPS rulings. This can be seen by even a cursory glance through the minutes of these meetings. The VTsSPS Fraction Bureau, in addition to the VTsSPS Presidium itself, also demanded reports from the fractions of subordinate union organs and issued instructions accordingly.

While individual party members were permitted to argue against instructions or policy emanating from above within meetings of the fractions, the ban on 'factionalism' made the rejection of such instructions difficult and perilous. The ban effectively forbade party members from lobbying each other or campaigning against an instruction or policy originating from above. If several individual party members did vote against an official instruction or policy on whatever basis, they would immediately be liable to accusations of factionalism and subject to possible disciplinary measures. Furthermore party fractions were forbidden from communicating with other fractions, including those of their subordinate or superior organs, limiting opportunities for corporate loyalties to unite and override the interests of the party.

Even in those organs where party members were not in a majority, defeat of party-sponsored resolutions or verdicts by non-party majorities were difficult to secure and were not to be executed lightly. The effective ban on all opposing organisations, backed up by the party's monopoly of control over communications, press, judicial and police services, made it very difficult to offer coordinated resistance or develop alternative policies. Similarly,
within the context of the party's hostility towards all forms of opposition, non-party members would certainly have thought twice before publicly identifying themselves as being against the 'party line', let alone being seen to lobby or 'agitate' others to follow the same line.

The introduction of party policy via party fractions also had the advantage of disguising the source of policy from members of lower organs and the nation as a whole. A party instruction, after its introduction into the VTsSPS by the party fraction, would appear to lower union organs as policy originating from the VTsSPS, further discouraging union resistance. A clear example is provided by the Politburo's decision to publish the circulars launching the campaign for raising labour productivity, at the end of 1924, "over the signatures of the VSNKha, the VTsSPS and the NKTruda" - making it appear as if the impetus for the campaign did not originate with the party^2. By disguising the source of policy decisions, the party leadership also retained the option of denying responsibility for any defects or any policies that proved to be problematic, foisting culpability onto the organ through which the party's decision was implemented. This came into particular play during the successive campaigns aimed at raising productivity that were launched from 1924 onwards, which will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

The party fractions were also mobilised to 'pack' all organs, from the leadership of the workers' club, to the factory committee, to the Presidium of the VTsSPS, with party vetted individuals and perpetuate party domination. Prior to elections or appointments the fraction, "together with the appropriate party organization", was required to approve a list of candidates for presentation, in the name of the party, to the relevant body or electorate^3. At election meetings all party members were obligated by party
discipline to support the party's candidates. This process was not left to chance and formal lists were compiled of all elected and appointed posts requiring party approval at each level of the party hierarchy. The Central Committee's list, by 1924, specified a total of over 33,392 positions which required its approval (this number excludes military and all foreign postings, which also required Central Committee approval, but for which figures were not given).

According to this list, elected organs whose composition had to be agreed with the Central Committee included:

- all members and candidate members of the VTsSPS Central Committee;
- all members of presidiums of union central committees (national);
- the chairmen of nine provincial VTsSPS bureaus;
- and 207 plenipotentiaries of union central committees attached to provincial bureaus of the VTsSPS.

Appointments made by decree of the Central Committee included:

- 12 posts within NKTruda;
- 121 posts within NKPS;
- the Chairman and members of the Presidium of VSNKh;
- the heads and members of the collegiums of the main VSNKh directorships;
- the chairmen and members of the boards of directors of trusts of national importance;
- 500 directors of major enterprises;
- the ten editors of the main Moscow newspapers (including Pravda, Izvestiya, Rabochaya Gazeta, Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn', Bednota, and Trud);
- and the ten editors of major periodicals.

Similar lists were compiled for each level of the party hierarchy - members of provincial bureaus, for example, were agreed with the provincial party committee and were referred to the Central Committee for ratification in cases of disagreement.

Already by the XI Party Congress in March 1922, party members were accounting for over 80% of all elected members of union central committees and provincial unions of trade unions. By 1924 party members (including members of the Komsomol) accounted for over half of all the membership of
factory committees and almost three-quarters of those freed from their employment duties for the purposes of fulfilling union functions. It is worth noting the magnitude of the latter figure as the members freed from work would have been those entrusted with greater authority and principal responsibilities. It is also worth noting that freed factory committee party members held, on average, longer periods of party seniority than ordinary factory committee party members.

A study of the party cells of the Dinamo and 1st Sittse-Nabivnaia (formerly Tsindel') factories, and the Ryazan' Tram Depot (all in Moscow), conducted in January 1925, provides an illustration of party domination of factory life. It must, however, be noted that the large scale of these enterprises and their central location in the national capital would have probably encouraged above-average levels of party domination (compare with table 3.1 below). The study includes a list for each of the three cells of all the organisations and bodies in which the cell is represented. For the Dinamo factory (with 126 full and 80 candidate party members), the list names 63 separate organs and includes:

- the factory committee;
- the shop delegate assembly;
- the ratings conflict, audit, cultural, library, housing, labour safety, and sanitary commissions;
- the bureaus of the Komsomol Cell, the 'Bezbozhnik' cell, and the 'Down with Illiteracy' cell;
- the editorial collegium of the factory wall-paper;
- the directorships of the workers' club, the various club sections, the mutual assistance fund, and the co-operative;
- the plenipotentiary collegiate of the co-operative;
- the bureaus of the Engineering and the Production-Technical Sections (bodies for specialists and engineers to discuss production issues, under the authority of the factory committee).

Across the two factories and tram depots there was a total of 1,485 such responsible posts to be filled, 914 of which were held by party members.
The last vital ingredient in asserting party control was the holding of multiple posts by the senior party members within each stratum of the organisational hierarchy. This enabled the party leadership to maintain direct party supervision and easily inject party policy, without the need for recourse to formal channels of communication and instruction. An illustration of this at the very top of the union hierarchy is provided by Tomskii himself. As a member of the Politburo while also the Chairman of the VTsSPS, Tomskii was in a position to keep the Politburo informed of union activity and introduce the Politburo's decisions directly into the Fraction and Presidium of the VTsSPS. This was replicated on every level. In the provinces a senior member of the provincial party committee, if not the chairman or secretary himself, would usually occupy the chair of the fraction bureau of the provincial union of trade unions.

In the factories the chairman or secretary of the party cell were the power-brokers, directing rank-and-file party members into packing and dominating all organisations within the factory. The post of chairman of the fraction bureau of the factory committee was commonly held by a senior member of the factory's party cell, frequently by the cell chairman or secretary. This gave the party cell direct supervision and leadership over the factory committee.\footnote{19}

The extent of the holding of multiple posts is illustrated by a breakdown of the number of posts held by each party member in the above cited study of the party cells of the Dinamo and First Calico-printing factories, and the Ryazan' Tram Depot. According to this breakdown, 210 of the 1,485 posts were held by only 32 party members, with five party members holding as many as 45 posts or 9 posts each.\footnote{20}
Party influence and domination, however, extended beyond the party fraction in each organ or body. As indicated by table 3.1, the party did not have sufficient members to fill all appointed and elected posts (neither did it actually wish to do so – see chapter 6) and when lists of nominees were approved by party fractions they would usually include sufficient non-party individuals that were acceptable to the party to fill the majority if not all of the posts. The list was then commonly presented to the electorate as a complete list of nominees who had the party's backing, with the electorate being given simply the choice of accepting the list or rejecting it in its entirety (and hence being seen as standing up in 'opposition' to the party). Even in those rare instances where the party-proposed list encountered difficulty the usual response was to add a few extra 'populist' names until the meeting accepted the list - the party cell could tolerate the presence of the odd 'independent' individual as long as it maintained general control. Thus the 'non-party' element was also, effectively, vetted by the cell bureau and the party could be confident of obtaining collegiates that would uphold party policy, even in those instances where party members were in a minority in the relevant collegiate (which was common at the lower rungs of the organisational hierarchy – as illustrated in the table 3.1).

To ensure that 'local' or 'professional' interests, even if expressed by party members, did not override 'national' and 'party' interests, the activities of fractions in union organs were subjected to close monitoring by their corresponding party bodies. At the lowest level, in the factories, this supervision was maintained, in the first instance, by the party cell (which in turn reported on the factory to its local party committee). Through the placement of its members at the head of factory organs, especially that of the factory committee, and the effective
vetting of the non-party element, the party cell bureau was in a position to influence all activities in the factory. Via the party fractions of the factory committee, the factory administration, and other organs, "issues are studied in advance by the bureau of the party collective". Party members who were 'placed' in various organs, were obligated to report periodically to the bureau and receive instructions".

Table 3.1: Party representation in various factory commissions, based on incomplete data for 30 provinces, as of 1 January 1925.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commissions</th>
<th>Total no of members</th>
<th>Party members</th>
<th>Komsomol members</th>
<th>Total communist membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RKK</td>
<td>13,577</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour safety</td>
<td>16,938</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Educational</td>
<td>25,019</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>2,227</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>1,568</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: L. Magaziner, "Sostav nizovykh yacheek profsoiuzov (na 1 yanvarya 1925 g.)", pp. 43-56 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, p. 56.

At higher levels, party fractions were obliged to file regular reports (generally monthly) and copies of their minutes with their supervising party organ, and inform them immediately of any 'incidents' (e.g. fractions of provincial union organs reported to provincial party committees, fractions of central union organs to the Central Committee of the party)\textsuperscript{32}. In addition, party committees at every level regularly sent party instructors or commissions to inspect and investigate individual industries, trusts and factories, particularly in response to 'incidents'\textsuperscript{33}.

All issues of political significance discussed by party fractions had to be examined in the presence of a
representative of the relevant superior party committee^.
Union congresses and conferences had to be conducted under
the supervision of the superior party organ. The relevant
organ would assign one or more of its members to review the
lists of nominees for the various elected posts, the
proposed agenda, the proposed speakers, the text of their
speeches, and even the proposed resolutions. Amendments,
if required, could be introduced via the party fraction.
Speakers who were also members of the party had to accept
editing of their texts on the basis of party discipline -
even if they refused the corresponding party organ could
easily orchestrate a change in speakers. The appointed
party members would also attend meetings of the fraction,
to provide instruction and ensure implementation of the
party's decisions^.

At whatever point the superior party organ deemed necessary
it could interfere in union matters, overrule union
decisions, implement its own policies via union organs, and
issue specific instructions to the party fractions. To
cite a couple of examples:

On 4 May 1921, the fraction of the VTsSPS Presidium
was informed that the Politburo of the party
"recommended" that the speakers nominated by the
Presidium of the VTsSPS for the IV Trade Unions
Congress be changed^;

On 3 August 1923, the bureau of the Secretariat of the
party issued a note to the bureau of the fraction of the
VTsSPS, instructing them that "the Central
Committee of the RKP considers the strike by the
workers of the courts of Gorrespublika impermissible".
Rudzutak, the Secretary of the bureau of the fraction of the
VTsSPS, wrote back: "In response to your
memorandum No. 2960/s the bureau of the fraction of the
VTsSPS informs, that ... the central committee of
their union, upon examination, will adopt measures for
the liquidation of the conflict in the Gorsky Otdel of
the union^.

A strike in the steel-rolling shop of the Petrovsk
factory in Ekaterinoslav province, in the spring of
1924, ended when the shop was closed and the workers
dismissed as instructed "by a Directive of the bureau
of the Provincial [party] Committee, [issued] via the fraction of the Raion Committee of the VSRM™.

On 13 November 1924, the Politburo rejected the appointment of the new Chairman of MGSPS™.

Party control over the processes of conflict resolution was as important as control over the factory committees in ensuring the enforcement of central industrial policy. The Conciliation Chambers and Third-Party Courts were directly under the jurisdiction of provincial and national departments of the NKTruda. Hence central instruction of conciliators and 'super-arbitrators' was easily achieved. A NKTruda circular of 29 September 1924 provides direct evidence of the non-impartiality of these organs. The circular reported that wages were growing faster than output, threatening the nation's economic future. The circular emphasised the increasing importance of NKTruda's role in implementing directives on regulation of wages particularly in "arbitrating conflicts and registering collective agreements"™. Similarly, in October 1925 the Politburo instructed the "VSNKha to issue a secret memorandum to economic organs that conclude general agreements with trade unions, that in instances where they cannot come to an agreement over wages, they should ask the NKTruda to arrange a Third Party Court", while at the same time instructing the NKTruda to ensure wage increases did not exceed the limits set by the Central Committee™.

Party and union control of the membership of the RKKs was crucial for subjugating labour to central interests. While the chart for party representation in various commissions (see table 3.1, above) gives a seemingly low figure of 32% party representation in RKKs this needs to be qualified. The figure is for the entire membership of the RKKs - i.e. both the worker and management fractions. As the policy interests of management and party generally coincided in labour disputes, local party organisations would not have been as concerned to ensure strong representation in the
management fraction as in the worker fraction. Furthermore, as the management fraction was required to uphold the orders of the factory directorship, party instruction could easily be implemented via this channel. For these reasons, party representation was lower in the management fraction and would have reduced the total figure for party representation in the RKKs. Hence party representation in the worker fraction was significantly higher than the cited figure.

The membership of RKKs was also not elected but appointed directly by the factory committee (in the case of the worker fraction) and factory management (in the case of the management fraction). As, in general, the party cell controlled the factory committee, it was able to dictate the composition of the worker fraction of the RKK and provide either direct instruction to party members of the RKK, or indirect instruction via the factory committee. Finally, all the decisions of the RKKs were forwarded to the relevant provincial union departments by the factory committee for review and could be overturned.

Party supervision embraced all activities within the factory. All leisure pursuits had to be conducted within the union organisational network, so as to allow for party supervision. Where there was sufficient interest for a specific activity (such as choral music, accordion playing, chess, hiking, etc.) a dedicated circle would be formed under the umbrella of the workers' club, with the circle's leadership reporting to, and instructed by the club's directorship. The club's directorship, in turn, reported to and was instructed by the factory committee. While the club's directorship was elected by the membership of the club, the party cell, as usual, sought to 'pack' its membership with suitable, vetted personnel. The impact of this was that there was no pretext for any sort of independent grouping within the factory - even for such
innocent purposes as stamp collecting or accordion playing. All activity had to be conducted within the union/party infrastructure and was subject to union and party observation, supervision and leadership.

The quest for control over the 'thoughts and minds' of workers reached almost farcical extremes as central organs debated and sought means by which it could steer even 'tea circles' - the groupings of 3-4 workers that formed during tea and lunch-breaks. It was argued that influence over such groupings was of great importance as this was where workers formed their first opinions and attitudes to issues that affected them. This was "the true laboratory of the moods and opinions of workers. Here there [was] no party organisation, no union group, no professional propagandists or agitators". Yet each 'tea group' had its own focal character - be it a joker, a factory elder or a cynic. But taking over the leadership of these 'tea groups' was not a simple matter and could not be 'engineered' as the leaders were not elected or appointed. Vestnik Truda thus instructed union activists to devote a "consistent and systematic struggle to ... attract the ring leaders themselves to the cause of the party" and "to win over the authority of the group through individuals capable of conducting agitational propaganda work".

As has already been noted, the party leadership's intentions for the organisational hierarchy and for the party's role within it were actually far more sophisticated than sheer domination. The leadership looked to the working class as the spring from which the lifeblood of the party would flow. Through the organisational network the party believed it was nurturing this spring, helping it evolve into the source for the party's future regeneration and expansion. This was a prime consideration in the nomination by party fractions of acceptable non-party members to official posts.
Party cells were specifically instructed to promote 'suitable' non-party workers into official positions. This was seen as a means of fostering a growing 'aktiv' ('active core') of workers in the factory, which would provide the party with potential new members and class-correct recruits for the growing number of managerial and party/state/union posts*. By constantly expanding the organisational network the party aimed to involve an increasingly larger proportion of the working masses in officially-sanctioned socio-political activity". This, the party hoped, would help minimise 'un-sanctioned' socio-political activity, outside the supervision of the party, and limit the opportunities for negative sentiments among workers to congeal and surface as organised opposition.

(iv) Resistance to Party and Central Domination

Workers' control had been a rallying call for industrial workers during the revolution. While workers' influence over production reached its zenith in 1917-1918, before one-man management and central authority were reinstated during the Civil War, workers did not forget their appetite for increased participation in the running of their enterprises. The collapse of the strike wave in the spring of 1921, signalled the defeat of the renewed mass demand for increasing workers' role in the management of production that greeted the end of the Civil War. Aspirations for maximising worker influence and resisting central party domination, however, remained within each stratum of the nation's workforce. The attempts by rank-and-file workers to elevate their interests to the top of economic and political agendas have been detailed in chapter 2, but resistance to central party control extended into the union hierarchy itself. Furthermore, it was party members of the union hierarchy themselves who led this
resistance, struggling for greater union influence and against external party domination.

While the dominant position of party fractions within higher union and economic management organs had already largely been secured by the start of the NEP, it took longer for the party to achieve similar levels of domination at the lower rungs of the organisational ladder. Although it is hardly surprising that there was resistance from below to the assertion of central party dominance, there was also considerable resistance from within the party fractions themselves, even at the highest levels of the union hierarchy, against external party domination. It is no coincidence that the bulk of such resistance and objections can be found at the start of the NEP. For in the early 1920s union organs still featured many party members who had rightfully gained their leading positions in the unions through their active roles in the worker movement and revolution, as opposed to the patronage of the party.

At the summit of the trade union movement resistance to external party domination manifested itself through the Workers' Opposition. While the Workers' Opposition was officially defeated at the X Party Congress (see above), its supporters continued to resist external party domination. The party leadership responded by simply displacing sympathizers of the Workers' Opposition and steam-rollering its own appointees into the trade union organisational hierarchy. Numerous examples can be cited, but the IV Congress of the Metal Workers' Union (VSRM), held in May 1921, provides a vivid illustration of this process in operation.

The Metal Workers' Union was a stronghold of support for the Workers' Opposition and at the IV Congress of the union the party leadership set about sweeping those who had
expressed sympathy or support for the Workers' Opposition out of the union's central committee and asserting party domination over the union. The Politburo appointed a five-member Central Committee Commission to oversee the Congress, with the Metal Workers' Union represented by the lone voice of Shlyapnikov. The Commission then easily outvoted Shlyapnikov by a majority vote of three against one (one member of the Commission being absent at the relevant session) to reject 'democratically' the VSRM's Fraction Bureau's nominees to the union's central committee, and impose its own list.

The modified list of nominees was then forced through the party fraction of the Congress - but not without further resistance. Initially, at its second meeting, the party fraction rejected the list by a vote of 120 to 40 and the Central Committee Commission agreed to 're-examine' its list. The following day, at the third meeting of the party fraction, Bukharin announced on behalf of the Commission that they had re-examined the list and "confirmed their previous decision". Tarasov, a member of the party fraction bureau was the first to attack Bukharin and the Commission:

The nominees ... were nominated by delegates from the locales; the basic principles for compiling the list were the efficiency [delovitost] [of the nominees and their] links with the locales. The Fraction Bureau ... found it impossible to accept the list recommended by the Central Committee Commission, because the categorization [of the rejected nominees] as having belonged to the Workers' Opposition is unacceptable to the Fraction Bureau, and bears a clear stamp of discredit and mistrust by the Central Committee of old party workers; also such selection and assignment [of individuals] to leading posts in the Metal Workers' Union, bypassing the will of the locales and suppressing the majority of the Fraction, disrupts both union and party work among metal workers...

Pavlov spoke next:

Look at the list, recommended by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. There you will find - representing Khar'kov, com. Ivanov, whom nobody knows ... The opinion of the fraction is clear ... if
the Central Committee list is carried through as a party directive, then party directives are not subject to discussions. In the name of the Moscow delegates, I declare that in the arising conditions, when mistrust is expressed of the core mass of the communist proletariat - the metal workers, who carry all the work, all the weight [of the communist movement], there is no point in wasting one's time in the Fraction and the list should not be subjected to discussion.

Bukharin recommended that the fraction discuss the list, stating that he thought that "in the course of the discussion it will be possible to persuade the fraction". The fraction voted against discussing the list by 106 to 56, and Bukharin announced that:

In light of the fraction's refusal to discuss the recommended list of nominees, the Central Committee Commission is forced to implement it as a party Directive.

This obligated the party members to accept the list or face disciplinary action.

In protest at such steam-rollering tactics, five of the twenty-five nominees, including Shlyapnikov, requested to have their names removed from the list. Many other members of the fraction also requested to be freed of their official party responsibilities, but Bukharin announced that the Central Committee had resolved that it would not accept any resignations. Shlyapnikov and his colleagues thus only had the choice of either totally subordinating themselves to the will of the party leadership or resigning and severing all association with the party.

The disgust of party members in the union with the heavy-handedness of the Central Committee was clearly evident. Bel'deev, on behalf of the Khar'kov delegation, announced that:

... the Commission's list names Ivanov to represent Khar'kov. He does not work in the Khar'kov Raikom of Metal Workers, but works in the provincial [party] committee and is totally unknown to the worker masses; in light of this I declare that upon our return to
Khar'kov the entire fraction of the Raikom will resign.

Tolokontsev declared:

I think that one needs to clearly and openly state that the central organ of the VSRM is not elected, but is appointed. Thus the XI Party Congress, in my opinion, must officially state that such organs, including the Central Committee of VSRM, are not elected but are appointed by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party; and for our V Congress we will no longer gather regional delegations for the nomination of candidates...

Vladimirov, however, provided perhaps the most moving pronouncement:

I am one of those whose names appear first on the Commission's list, I am an old Communist and I am obligated to fulfill the will of the higher organisation. I am deeply sorry, that our organisation, to which I gave all my strength, as did many others, is now to decay [razlozhit'sya] and die...

Sobbing and weeping, the minutes state, prevented him from continuing".

On the next day the fourth meeting of the fraction, by a vote of 132 to 53 with 3 abstentions, condemned the Commission and the Politburo, adopting the following resolution:

That the fraction complain against the Commission's and Politburo's violations of the resolutions of the X Communist Party Congress at the next Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; and, if its complaint is rejected by the Politburo, to raise the matter at the XI Communist Party Congress. (The fraction regards the attitude of the Commission and the Politburo towards the fraction as being in clear breach of the resolution of the X Communist Party Congress which obligated party organisations to observe normal methods of proletarian democracy, especially in the trade unions where, more than anywhere else, the selection of leaders must be made by the organised masses themselves).

V. Shmidt, speaking on behalf of the Commission, refused to recognize such an overwhelming critique of the party leadership, and demanded a recorded, individual and named vote, declaring this to be a directive of the Central Committee". This undoubtedly would have placed additional
pressure on those voting in favour of the resolution, knowing that their party records would forever record their 'personal' attack on the actions of the Politburo.

The party fraction bowed to party discipline and backed the Commission's list at the actual plenum of the Congress and it was duly approved by the Congress. The official minutes of this plenum offer no hint of the controversy that had been associated with these 'elections' and it appears that the composition of the new union central committee was the 'democratic choice' of the majority of the delegates, rather than the choice of the majority of a Politburo-appointed party commission (who were not even members of the Metal Workers' Union).

The hypocrisy of the party was blatant: the IV Congress still featured a significant number of non-Bolshevik delegates - a total of 98 out of 360, and at the Congress they petitioned for a proportional representation on the VSRM's Central Committee. Their request was, however, rejected, with the party fraction resolving "to inform the non-party group that it is inexpedient to form the Central Committee of the VSRM on the basis of the nominees' party affiliations".

While the Workers' Opposition were defeated and disbanded at the X Party Congress in March 1921, extensive opposition to external party domination continued to extend into the highest ranks of the trade union leadership, including among those who were also members of the party. Tomskii, in his report to the party fraction of the IV Trade Unions Congress on 16 May 1921, admitted that he had had to face much criticism over the lack of union influence over the Central Committee of the party. Tomskii, however, refused to accept this criticism, demanding that the trade unions
subjugate themselves to the leadership of the party. He told the party fraction that it...

...must not influence the policy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party... The Central Committee must influence, must lead, every bureau of the fractions of the VTsSPS, every fraction in the VTsSPS... We argue but we always subordinate ourselves to the will of the Party Central Committee. Is this correct or incorrect? ... despite errors by the Central Committee, this is correct. The Party leads, and not the opposite... It is correct that the Party Central Committee leads the fraction of the VTsSPS, and in the first instance the bureau of the fraction of the VTsSPS. This is correct and cannot be any other way..."

D. Ryazanov, responding to Tomskii's report, attacked such union subservience to the Central Committee:

Tomskii has sufficiently listed the facts which show that the Trade Union movement gave its last strengths to the party and loyally served it. Because of this, in my opinion, these workers, and the union movement have the right to participate in decisions over all issues which are of interest to the toiling proletariat... and we have a right to demand this... (applause). At the last Trade Unions Congress, the Communist fraction, by a huge majority of votes, adopted my resolution, ... that the entire Trade Unions movement and our Communist Party believes that it is essential to hand over all functions of the NKTruda to the VTsSPS... you adopted this resolution by a huge majority. And how did the Central Committee respond to this? The Central Committee responded by expelling com. Ryazanov, who supposedly forced the fraction to adopt this resolution, from trade union work. Comrade Tomskii and the entire Presidium [of the VTsSPS] did not oppose this"

Criticism was similarly levelled over the VTsSPS being permitted to debate issues only after the party had reached its own decision, and over the lack of accountability of the VTsSPS Presidium before the VTsSPS as a whole. Borovskii (representing the Communal Workers' Union Central Committee) attacked the leadership of the VTsSPS for excluding the VTsSPS membership from all practical work. He claimed that over the past year plenums of the VTsSPS were convened only "for parade speeches by Englishmen,
Americans and others, but practical issues, which should be examined by the VTsSPS, were not addressed by us". Ryazanov's and Borovskii's charges were supported by a majority of the party fraction of the Congress. The fraction clearly censured the behaviour of the Party Central Committee by adopting an amendment (by a vote of 150 to 30), moved by Ryazanov, which reaffirmed that the trade union leadership was elected by its members and that trade unions were to reflect the interests of their members. Lenin was infuriated by the fraction's impudence and held Tomskii personally accountable for failing to prevent the fraction from adopting the amendment, even though Tomskii had faithfully advanced the party's official policy on trade unions and voted against Ryazanov's motion. Tomskii was suspended from the Central Council of the Trade Unions and Lenin, together with Stalin and Bukharin, took personal charge over the fraction to compel it to repeal Ryazanov's amendment. Lenin even went so far as to demand Tomskii's expulsion from the Central Committee and the party, but this proved to be too harsh even for the Central Committee to accept and Lenin backed down.

Through the summer and autumn of 1921 the party leadership assaulted the independence of trade unionists. 'Rebels' such as Shlyapnikov were attacked and neutralised, while party discipline and party control over union appointments were tightened. The XI Party Conference in December 1921 specified that only "experienced" party members, who had joined the party prior to 1917 and had not belonged to any other party, could be appointed to the posts of chairmen and secretaries of union central committees. The Conference also demanded a minimum of three years' party membership for secretaries of provincial trade union councils. The remnants of the Workers' Opposition, in a last, desperate bid, took their grievances to the Communist
International in February 1922, but failed to achieve any redress".

Sterner action was, however, still required to subjugate the unions and in the first months of 1922 the final steps in imposing the dominance of the Party Central Committee were executed. In January 1922 the Politburo, upon Lenin's initiative, appointed a special commission "for reviewing and renovating the top leadership of the trade union movement, from the point of view of strengthening the struggle against petty-bourgeois, SR, Menshevik, and anarchist influences and tendencies". The XI Party Congress in March 1922, again overruling the remnants of the Workers' Opposition, granted this commission and the party the right to impose their nominees without even recourse to 'elections'. "Democratic procedures" would only need to be implemented after the party-appointed individuals had worked in the relevant union organ for a "certain" amount of time, and had had the opportunity to make themselves known among the union membership. These measures gave the Central Committee and Politburo a free hand in clearing out of the union leadership anyone who dared raise their voice against them. This was officially justified on the basis that this would "strengthen the link between the party and the non-party masses", but in practice these measures were implemented to facilitate the subjugation of union organs to the party hierarchy.

Despite failing to prevent the onset of external party domination, the union bureaucracy continued to have some leeway in resisting the implementation of central instructions that were not to its liking. The transition from automatic deduction of union dues from wages, to individual collection provides one clear example. Beginning in 1921, this transition was heavily promoted from Moscow as a means of bringing the rank-and-file membership of the trade unions and its organisational
hierarchy closer together. Yet after 3 years of countless decrees and instructions on the matter, the direct transfer of union dues to higher union organs from factory administrations, which in turn deducted them directly from the wages paid to workers, was still widespread. For 1924, many unions reported individual collection rates of 95-100%, but when the unions were inspected rates of 60-70% were revealed - and then only if the definition of individual collection was "applied loosely". Typically individual collection was conducted under the guise of "voluntary coercion", or notes were "obtained" from workers requesting the administration to make deductions centrally.

The financing of factory committees and their activities provides further illustration of bureaucratic leeway in the implementation of central directives. Such expenditures were meant to be covered by the factory management as a production cost (with amounts specified by collective agreements) - all union dues were officially designated for financing higher union organs. Yet a VTsSPS audit of 196 provincial union departments across 14 unions, conducted between July and September 1922, discovered that the practice of transferring funds for union work in the factories directly from the management of trusts to provincial union departments, instead of to the factory committees, was widespread. Once the funds fell into the grasp of provincial union departments, they were reluctant to allow all of them to slip back to the factory committees for whom they were meant.

At the local level, resistance to the pursuit of central interests was widespread. Some of the forms which resistance among shop-floor workers took have already been described in chapter 2. Resistance also manifested itself in rejection of party-nominated candidates or resolutions. In the first years of the NEP, it was not
unusual for local interests to prevail in the lower rungs of the union organisation. Cases of local union organs supporting strike actions have already been cited in chapter 2. In addition to open insubordination, the ambiguity and complexity of Bolshevik industrial and labour management (see below) provided plenty of scope for workers to manipulate various organisational structures within the factories to assist in this task. In such cases, there were few limitations placed on superior organs in their attempts to 'restore' obedience.

On 8 September 1923, for example, workers of the Mekhanik factory in Tiumen' province, supported by the local branch of the Metal Workers' Union, voted at a general meeting not to accept bonds in lieu of wages. The provincial party committee promptly resolved to create a commission to enact a "cleansing" (chistka) of the work-force, point out to the GSPS that the local branch of the Metal Workers' Union was "proceeding under the reins of the demoralized masses", and request the Urals branch of the Metal Workers' Union to send officials to the factory to bring order to the local branch63.

If higher party organs were displeased with the membership of, or policies pursued by a union organ, new elections within the union organ would be orchestrated. In the autumn of 1921, a split occurred between members of the Moscow Provincial Department of the Chemical Workers' Union and the central leadership of the union. The party fraction of the VTsSPS ruled this split to be "inopportune" ("nesvoevremennyi"), appointed a triumvirate to investigate the activities of 'Mensheviks' in the union, and assigned "the bureau of the fraction of the Moscow GSPS to prepare, within a period of several months, a Provincial Congress of Chemical Workers to elect a new leadership for the Provincial Department of Chemical Workers"64.
When a general meeting of the workers of the former Butikov woodworking factory in Moskvoretsk (Moscow) succeeded in electing a factory committee on the basis of a list of candidates proposed by the "non-partyists", the Moscow GSPS simply pronounced the elections invalid.

Other examples of open insubordination include the Metal Workers' Union in the province of Votsk in the summer of 1925. An Informotdel report, sent to Stalin, declared that "squabbles" and "localism" were rampant in the province, with the core union of the region - the Metal Workers' Union - openly opposing the GSPS and "leading a struggle against it".

In November 1921, when an district trade unions bureau in the province of Ryazan' was deemed to be placing local worker interests ahead of national interests and opposing the district party committee, the district party committee simply "cleansed" the membership of the union bureau.

Factory committees and RKKs provided the most obvious routes for workers to increase their influence over management of production. By interpreting the duties of the RKKs in the broadest possible way, factory committees muscled into the administration of enterprises. Cases are commonly noted of RKKs: overturning and altering collective agreements; changing norms set by collective agreements or labour laws; disciplining, transferring and dismissing workers and employees; approving and rejecting or even making individual appointments to administrative posts; requiring their approval prior to the levying of all disciplinary measures; and examining "questions which do not concern it at all". It must be re-emphasised that this was not, by any means, the state's intended role for the RKKs, as was reflected in repeated condemnations of such manifestations and calls to "struggle decisively against
attempts by the RKKs to expand into the administration of enterprises.\textsuperscript{68}

Interference in the management of production, defence of worker interests and disobedience of central aims by worker correspondent circles (rabkor) and factory wall-papers, in defiance of party supervision, caused great concern for the party leadership. In August 1926, the Central Committee issued a decree "On the immediate tasks of the party in the sphere of the rabsel'kor [worker and peasant correspondent] movement" which began by addressing the "individual cases of rabsel'kor organisations drifting away from party leadership" and stipulating that it was "essential to strengthen party leadership.\textsuperscript{69} Redkollegiya stennoi gazety i kruzhok rabkorov - ikh organizatsiya i rabota, an instructional text for correspondent circles published two years later in 1928, begins by addressing "instances" where rabkor circles have "declared their total independence, including independence from the party.\textsuperscript{70} That this should be such a dominant issue as late as 1928 is indicative of the extent of the problem. The subject was similarly central at the III All-Soviet Rabsel'kor Conference in 1928. A resolution passed by the conference stated that all organisations must "decisively resist attempts to break rabkor circles away from party leadership ... The work of rabkors will only be fruitful and of value when and if it is carried out under the leadership of the Communist Party" (emphasis in original).\textsuperscript{71}

Unsurprisingly, union organs were not the only ones guilty of exceeding the limits placed on their activities. Examples abound of management and particularly local party organs seeking to interpret instructions and policy in such a way as to carve out for themselves the greatest slice of authority and to maximise their independence.
An Informotdel report on party cells in enterprises, sent to Stalin in February 1925, presented the Trubochnyi factory in Leningrad as a typical example of relations between management, the party cell and the factory committee. The report concluded that "not a single [party/factory committee] resolution was implemented [by management] without threats and pestering, and even if it was implemented, then this was done with great difficulty". The report complained that the administration failed to invite party and union representatives to relevant administrative meetings and attempted to bypass social organisations when hiring and promoting workers.

Similarly, management did not appear to be very keen on listening to advice proffered by worker-correspondent investigations and, even more worrying, frequently discriminated against or 'persecuted' worker-correspondents. The Redkollegiya stennoi gazeti (cited above) records that "in all rabkor journals, in issue after issue, complaints are published of management hostility towards the wall-papers, of management disregard for the criticisms raised in the wall-papers and of persecution and repression of correspondents".

A Central Committee commission, appointed to investigate the Perm Armaments Works at the start of 1925, found that the management was dispensing orders without consulting party or union organs, and that all three institutions were guilty of making declarations on matters that fell outside their own competency. Instructions issued by one body, reversed by another, would be reversed yet again by the originating body. The commission concluded that there was a total absence of communication between the administration and local union and party organisations, and uncertainty over the delimitation of responsibilities, leading workers to believe that the factory had no master."
In 1927, the OGPU reported that in the Engels No. 2 Metalworks in Khortitsa (Zaporozh region), the Director had lowered rates without the sanction of the union and repeatedly prevented the chairman of the factory committee from holding meetings, addressing the workforce, or visiting shops. The Director even told one worker that he did not recognise any factory committees.

While the central party leadership fully endorsed the guidance and supervision of all non-party work by party organisations it did not want party cells to replace all non-party organisations. In the factories, however, party cells exceeding their spheres of authority and striving to take over all official functions tended to be the norm. The previously-cited Informotdel report of February 1925 on lower party organisations concluded that:

It was not so long ago that in Moscow (and in some provinces even today) some industrial party cells were striving to replace union collectives in the enterprises. The majority of the principal cells in the Zamoskvoretskii district [Moscow] and other raions, regarded the factory committee as an adjunctive organisation to the bureau of the factory cell, for the technical implementation of its decisions. Such purely union issues as the granting of extra holidays, grades, etc., were, in practice, being decided by the bureau of the party cell.

A few months later another Informotdel report on trade union work, stated that in addition to widespread cases of cells taking over factory committee functions, some party cells had even created "party cell union commissions which, in practice, had replaced the factory committees". Other examples of party cells exceeding their official powers cited in the report include:

The party fraction of a Kostroma provincial union department, which passed a resolution in December 1924 to transfer 15,000R from the Fund for Improving Workers' Living and Working Conditions (which was meant primarily for improving workers' housing, and was financed as an industrial overhead cost, as set by negotiation in collective agreements) to the district party committee for the upkeep of its party cells;
Cases in Leningrad of new factory committee elections taking place upon the demand of party-organisations without the knowledge of provincial union departments;

A party organiser in the Nogin factory in Moscow, who declared after the report of the director on the work of the factory: "We are the masters of the trust and that the directors are our clerks [prikazchiki]. We direct production, with a few members of the party, and not they".

(v) Passive Implementation and Misinterpretation of Policy

The party's efforts to achieve central control were further undermined by such factors as poor communication and misinterpretation of policy, and shortages of suitably qualified party personnel combined with the lethargy inherent in any organisational structure. These were exacerbated by the party's political culture and organisational structure.

While the introduction of party policy via party fractions had many advantages such as disguising the source of policies, allowing the maintenance of a facade of 'democracy', and giving the party the opportunity to deny responsibility for any defects (see above), it also had certain disadvantages. A fundamental weakness of this structure was the cumbersome and indirect nature of the party's chain of command. Once the Politburo or any party organ had reached a decision, in most cases, it could not be implemented simply by a single direct order to the relevant executive organ. Instead, the party fraction of the relevant organ had to be instructed to orchestrate the adoption of the decision by the organ. This was straightforward within the main central and national organs, simplified by overlapping membership of central party and non-party bodies. But at local levels the process was complicated by the need to communicate instructions down both party and non-party chains of command. This created the potential for conflict between
instructions emanating from an organ's superior non-party body and instructions being introduced into the organ by its party fraction. In the case of the trade unions, this was further complicated by the parallel lines of authority descending down both individual trade unions and the Union of Trade Unions (SPS). All this had the effect of obfuscating central party policy, making it susceptible to confusion, erosion and distortion.

Consideration must also be given to the political culture which evolved and was fostered by the new regime. Having achieved and retained power while apparently teetering on the edge of defeat, during the first years of the Soviet regime Lenin and the overstretched Bolshevik party had little time to debate or consider in detail the full implications of decisions. The demands of revolutionary struggle and civil war had required instantaneous resolutions, and encouragement of local initiative to resolve problems of implementation. The seemingly miraculous Bolshevik victory had added credence to the leadership's confidence in its own judgement and the importance of 'organisation'. Its contempt for bourgeois legality and 'proper' governmental procedures was reflected in its casual demarcation of institutions. The party was interested in action and not too concerned with who took it as long as the desired result was achieved. When faced by problems the party sought 'immediate', 'decisive', 'cataclysmic', and 'organisational' 'solutions'.

Resolutions passed by the party leadership, especially in the first years of the NEP, were characteristically ambivalent in practical detail. Habitually campaigns were launched or new organisational structures were created with minimal thought or guidance on their actual operation, or incorporation into the existing organisational network, or the additional strain this placed on the party's limited man-power and resources. The tendency was to deal with
problems and conflicts only after they arose (see chapter 4).

The often ambiguous and contradictory nature of instructions was further exacerbated by the basic problems associated with the expanse, primitiveness and dilapidation of communications in the new state as well as the complexity of the organisational structure. The result was constant conflict and confusion over where the precise boundaries of responsibility between union, management, state and party organisations lay and deviation from official policy.

A typical example of deviation from official policy was the election of the worker fractions of the RKK at general meetings of the workforce. Usually it was loyal party and union officials, responding to the party's calls for an increase in participation by rank and file workers in union work, who were responsible for this deviation. This was contrary to central policy which specifically dictated that the worker fraction be appointed by the factory committee, in order to ensure enforcement of central industrial policy in this crucial body, and was strongly condemned.

Finally, the impact of the general exhaustion and numeric shortages of party members must also be considered. After years of revolution and civil war the party membership was in a state of physical exhaustion. The growing bureaucratic and organisational web that was being spun from the centre placed increasingly greater demands upon the limited membership of the party and its 'active' core. Purges of the party membership conducted in 1921-22, as well as the widespread resignation of disillusioned members, only added to the shortages of personnel.

Party reports reaching Moscow regularly complained of the overburdening of members. The Informotdel report of
February 1925 on party work in enterprises, cited earlier, concluded that all party organisations suffered from the overloading of leading party members, especially the cell secretary and deputy, with 5-8 functions commonly performed by one individual. A meeting of the heads of regional and provincial party organisational departments in May 1925 concluded that the average working day of party officials had reached 13-16 hours, and that the majority had no time to read newspapers regularly, let alone party literature. The meeting noted that shortages of suitable personnel, superfluous tasks, and the extremely large number of commissions, meetings, etc., through which each important issue had to pass were contributing to the rapid physical exhaustion and frequent illness of party officials. This was a major factor contributing to the half-hearted implementation or non-implementation of instructions from above.

Half-hearted implementation or non-implementation of instructions acted as a major hindrance to the central leadership's aspiration to maximise hierarchical control. The shortage of suitable personnel and the overburdening of party and union officials with organisational and reporting demands meant that they often could not physically fulfil all their obligations. Officials were forced to make choices over which reports to delay or omit, which organisational groups not to convene or create, and the work of which bodies to allow to stagnate. It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find that not all of the organisational bodies mentioned existed in every enterprise, and that many bodies existed only in name, or operated at below prescribed levels.

Factory committees, being the main union organ at the enterprise level, at least existed in the vast majority of enterprises. One distortion, however, was for 'united' committees to serve several enterprises of sufficient size
to warrant their own committees. This made it difficult for factory committees to organise properly and orchestrate the activities of their constituents. Usually, this was a result of a combination of the desire to "ease the work of provincial union departments" and the tendency to establish union structures in parallel with those of management.

The Tver' textile combine Proletarka provides one such example. In 1924 it employed 14,000 workers in four mills of 3,000-5,000 workers each, yet it was served by one factory committee*. The Alapaevsk Factory Committee in the Urals represented workers not only of the Alapaevsk Metalworks, but also those employed by the Alapaevsk pit and narrow-gauge railway, and lumber-jacks who worked forests great distances away (all of which supplied the Alapaevsk Metalworks)*. In the Nemrespublika in 1925, four 'united' factory committees served several tens of enterprises which should have had factory committees of their own*.

The record for lower organs was less favourable, particularly in the case of factory committee commissions. Frequently these were found to be barely functioning or existing only in name. Vestnik Truda reported on an investigation of trade unions in Stalingrad in 1925, which concluded that in many of the smaller enterprises commissions existed only "on paper", while even in the city's biggest enterprises - Krasnii Oktyabr', Elektroles, Zarya and Krasnaya Zastava, not a single commission had reported on its activities to their factory committee in the 3 month period (Dec 1924 - Feb 1925) covered by the report. In the timber mill Elshanke the factory committee had simply disbanded the cultural-educational commission, believing that it was duplicating the workers' club*.

Irregular convening and minimal activity were the criticisms most frequently levied at the bottom branches of
union organisations, from specialist circles to factory committees. In 1925 Vestnik Truda reported that in the Nemrespublika Textile Union the frequency of convening factory committees ranged from once per month to once every six months; in the Metal Workers' Union and "other unions" factory committees met on average only once every 3 months. In Astrakhan province Vestnik Truda reported that the convening of delegate meetings averaged at just over one per enterprise for the year.

The previously-cited report on lower party organisations complained that the shortages of suitable party personnel resulted in 'inadequate' leadership and supervision over non-party bodies, and lack of coordination between party cells, factory committees, and management. The party barely had enough members to deal with and cultivate the influx of new members in 1924, with reports of shop cells consisting of 3-7 full members for 60-80 candidate members, let alone to lead or supervise the work of all non-party bodies. According to the report party members were being appointed to commissions mechanically, without any consideration given to the will of those being appointed, resulting in a total absence of party leadership over the work of commissions.

A report on party work in Ekaterinburg guberniya for April 1922 stated that the only link between the provincial party committee and the provincial union of trade unions was via one individual who was a member of both organisations. The fraction of the GSPS had not been convened either in April or in February, and the provincial party committee had received no reports or information at all on the work of party fractions in the province's industries or unions.
(vi) Conclusion

While this chapter has sought to contrast the aspirations for totalitarian control of the central party over the life of the nation's enterprises, with illustrations of resistance to and limits of this control, no attempt has been made at a final assessment of the actual distribution of power between various organs. The final formula becomes dependant on many unquantifiable variables as consideration must be given to factors such as: the relative strengths and activism of individual personalities, cliques and organisations; the actual and perceived importance of the factory or industry; the extent of local and central union, party, and state attention being devoted to the factory or industry; and the quality of communications between the factory or industry and its superior union, party, and state organs. The result was great local variations and one can find cases where workers were able to exert significant influence over the shop floor, other instances where management ignored not only unions but even party cells, as well as examples of party chairmen or organisations ruling over their domains as if they were their personal fiefdoms.

The manifestations described above reappeared in different guises throughout the 1920s and will be addressed in further detail in the remainder of this study. What these manifestations do suggest is that already by the first years of the NEP, the most significant threat to the centralising authority of the Bolshevik leadership was not posed by organised 'opposition' or 'enemy' elements, but by resistance within the party membership itself and from grassroot insubordination within the constituency the party claimed to represent.

The examples associated with union finances (failure to implement the transition to individual union dues
collection etc.) illustrate that the union bureaucracy was capable of resisting central instructions when it suited it, and when there was unity. It illustrates the weakness of central authority when opposed by its own organisational structure and, conversely, indicates that the new state's centralised authoritarianism was dependent upon and required the endorsement of the majority of the membership of the organisational hierarchy. Certainly many officials who were party members resisted their own subordination to external party organs within the confines of their party fraction. But when faced with a choice of resigning from the party, ending all involvement with the party of power and charting the future course of the nation, or bowing to party discipline, the majority chose the latter (although many individuals did resign from the party). The very same officials who objected to their own subjugation to central authority then not only accepted but also enforced party and hierarchical domination of organs that were subordinate to themselves. This was not simply the result of coercion - the same officials that resisted their external domination rarely championed the cause of independence of organs and individuals subordinate to themselves. A political system had evolved where party and hierarchical domination, allocation of posts by party fractions, total subordination of lower organs to higher organs, all benefited the membership of each stratum of the organisational hierarchy in its dealings with the membership of the stratum directly below it. The membership of each stratum in this organisational hierarchy thus developed an inherent interest in preserving and consolidating this political system.
(vii) Notes: Chapter 3


3. See, for example: "Informatsionnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 2 - vsem TsK, GSPS, vsem Proforganizatsyyam", 25 November 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 376, l. 144; "Protokol No. 47 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTsSPS ot 19-go noyabrya 1925 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 789, l. 177, - at which the Presidium appointed a commission from among its own members to examine and approve the draft resolutions (as drafted by the authors of the accompanying speeches/presentations) of the plenum of the VTsSPS, which was to open on 26 November. By the eve of the plenum, the commission and Presidium had approved the resolutions on all but three items on the agenda. It agreed to re-examine one item (the resolution on the Central Institute of Labour [TsIT]) after the TsIT had made its presentation, and to allow the actual plenum to decide two of the items (whether to continue the publication of Rabochaya Nedelya and Buzoter, and the resolution on worker co-operatives) - "Protokol No. 48 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTsSPS ot 25-go noyabrya 1925 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 789, l. 178.

4. "Organizatsionnyi vopros VTsSPS", February 1919, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 2, d. 349, l. 4-5.

5. In February 1919 the VTsSPS was assigned the task of developing a model charter which would be obligatory for all trade unions who were members of the VTsSPS - Ibid., 1. 7. For a related example see "Protokol No. 42 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTsSPS ot 23-go sentyabrya 1925 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 789, l. 165, item 335 - where the VTsSPS Presidium amended and ratified the Trade Union Charter of the VSRM. All trade unions were obligated to adopt regulations governing working practices and discipline based on the VTsSPS's "Exemplary Regulations on Internal Order" ("Primernye pravila vnutrennego rasporyadka") - "Rezoliutsiya prinyataya na zasedanii Vserossiiskogo Soveta Professional'nykh Soiuzov, spetsial'no sozvannom po voprosu o trudovoi distsipline", circa early 1919, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 2, d. 349, l. 10-11.

6. See, for example, "Protokoly zasedanii biuro fraktsii RKP(b) i prezidiuma VTsSPS s materialami - iiun' 1924 g. - dekabr' 1925 g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 789.
7. At its session of 12 November 1926, for example, the Presidium of the VTsSPS appointed a commission to examine the theses and resolutions of the VII Trade Unions Congress in advance of the Congress. Individuals presenting reports to the Congress were obligated to submit their resolutions to the Secretariat of the Presidium of the VTsSPS no later than 17 November 1926 (the Congress was to open on 6 December 1926). The Presidium also resolved to convene a plenum of the VTsSPS on the eve of the Congress, on 4 December, for final ratification of the agenda, theses and resolutions of the Congress - "Protokol No. 90 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTsSPS ot 12-go noyabrya 1926 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 82, items 718, 719. In addition to national congresses and conferences, the VTsSPS Presidium sometimes sent officials to supervise regional congresses and conferences as well, see, for example: F. Seniushkin (member of the VTsSPS Presidium), "Kratkii otchet po provedeniui III-go Ural'skogo Oblastnogo S"ezda Profsoiuzov", June 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 787, l. 143.

8. See, for example, "Protokol No. 50 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTsSPS ot 19-go noyabrya 1925 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 789, l. 185, item 383.

9. As was stated at the VI Trade Unions Congress it "is the leader for lower trade union cells - it is through the trade union press that the central organs of the trade unions ... lead the life of the factory committee, keeping them informed in all union matters and giving them timely directives and explanations as required" - as cited by S. Levman in "Professional'naya pechat' v resheniyakh VI S"ezda Soiuzov", pp. 211-217 in Vestnik Truda, No. 1, January 1925, p. 212.


13. RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 377, l. 5.


15. "Protokol soveshchaniya OTE VTsSPS s OTE TsK-soiuozv po voprosu o zadachakh i poryadka deyatel'nosti revizionnykh komissii pri trestakh ot 17/VII 1923g", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 554, l. 39; "Rezoliutsiya soveshchaniya predstavitelei TsK proizvodstvennykh soiuazov o revizionnykh komissiyakh pri trestakh sostoinshykh 17/VII 23g", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 554, l. 40 - the resolutions adopted at these meetings followed the publication of VSNKha's order No. 268 on 19 May 1923 on the matter.


17. Chapter XII of the 1920 Charter. The 1925 Charter added further precision to this relationship, specifying that "Fractions, regardless of their importance, are entirely subordinate to the corresponding party organizations. In all matters with respect to which there exist legal decisions of the corresponding party organization fractions must adhere to these decisions strictly and undeviatingly" - Chapter XV - Ibid., pp. 97-98, 282-283.

18. Ibid.

19. See: "Protokoly zasedanii biuro sekretariata fraktsii VTSPPS, 22 aprelia 1921 - 2 fevralia 1922", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 219; "Protokoly zasedanii biuro fraktsii VTSPPS, marta 1923 - aprelia 1924", d. 556; "Protokoly zasedanii biuro fraktsii RCP(b) i prezidiuma VTSPPS s materialami - iiun' 1924 g. - dekabr' 1925 g.", d. 789. To cite a couple of examples: On 2 June 1921, the VTSPPS Bureau Fraction decided not to expel a union member from the union, but to harshly criticise him for his breach of union discipline, providing an illustration of the party passing judgement on union discipline - "Protokol zasedaniya biuro fraktsii VTSPPS, No. 2", 2 June 1921, d. 219, l. 8; Kutuzov's report on the Central Committee of the Textile Workers Trade Union was heard and dealt with by the VTSPPS Fraction Bureau on 6 June 1925, and by the VTSPPS Presidium 3 days later, on 9 June 1925 - "Protokol No. 29 - zasedaniya biuro fraktsii VTSPPS ot 6-go iunya 1925 goda", d. 789, l. 39, item 4; "Protokol No. 27 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTSPPS ot 9-go iunya 1925 goda", d. 789, l. 41, item 122.
20. See, for example: "Protokol biuro fraktsii VTsSPS No. 42, 16 noyabrya 1923", and "... No. 44, 27 noyabrya 1923", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 556, l. 27, 31.

21. If a case arose where the fractions had to bypass their immediate organ in order to have a decision introduced into a lower union organ by the lower union organ's party fraction (i.e. - if the fraction could not force its own organ to adopt its 'recommendation'), such instruction had to take place through party committees, who would then issue separate directives or circulars to the relevant fraction - "O svyazi fraktsii VTsSPS i kooperativnykh tsentrov s profsoiuznymi i kooperativnymi fraktsiyami na mestakh (prin. na zasedanii Orgbiuro ot 18/VI (1923) tekst postanovleniya Orgbiuro)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 554, l. 17.

22. "Protokol No. 41 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 18 dekabrya 1924g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 481, l. 3, item 8; "Protokol No. 43 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 3 yanvarya 1925g.", d. 483, l. 4, item 22.

23. Gregor, pp. 98, 283.

24. "Spisok dolzhnostei tsentral'nykh uchrezhdenii i ikh mestnykh organov, po kotorym naznacheniya i smeshcheniya rabotnikov proizvodyatsya postanovleniem TsK RKP(b)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 668, l. 106-114. In practice, Central Committee approval meant the approval of the Politburo, Secretariat, or of one of its departments. Vetting by the Politburo of all foreign postings included all members of union delegations travelling abroad - see, for example, "Protokol No. 47 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 4 fevralya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 487 and "Protokol No. 52 ... ot 13 marta 1925g.", d. 492, item 19. For examples of Politburo appointments see "Protokol No. 73 ... ot 27 oktyabrya 1921g", d. 223, item 14 and "Protokol No. 75 ... ot 8 noyabrya 1921g.", d. 227, item 8. For a discussion of this issue, see D. Volkogonov, trans. by H. Shukman, Lenin: Life and Legacy (London, 1994) pp. 309-310.

25. "Otkhchet komissii TsK RKP(b) po proverke i obnovleniiu rukovodyashchikh organizatsii profsoiuzov s prilozeniem tablits, svodok i drugikh .. ", circa May 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 86, d. 16, l. 3-9.
26. Party representation in factory committees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CP members Jul-24</th>
<th>Komsomol Jul-24</th>
<th>Total Jul-24</th>
<th>CP members Jan-25</th>
<th>Komsomol Jan-25</th>
<th>Total Jan-25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All fc members</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>those freed</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures for July 1924 are from a study of 19 provinces, while the figures for January 1925 are from a study covering most of the USSR - L. Magaziner, "Sostav nizovykh yacheek soiuzov (na 1 iiulya 1924 goda)", pp. 21-30 in Vestnik Truda, No. 2, February 1925, pp. 25-26; Magaziner, "Sostav nizovykh yacheek profsoiuzov (na 1 yanvarya 1925 g.)", pp. 43-56 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, pp. 49-52.

27. Breakdown of factory committee members belonging to the party according to when they joined the party, as of 1 July 1924:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Oct 1917</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
<td>4.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1917-Dec 1923</td>
<td>59.40%</td>
<td>70.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1924 &amp; after</td>
<td>36.50%</td>
<td>25.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average party seniority of communist factory committee members was 3.7 years and of those freed from work was 4.3 years (i.e. they joined the party during War Communism) - Magaziner, "... (na 1 iiulya 1924 goda)", pp. 27, 30.

28. "Rezul'taty obsledovaniya nekotorykh proizvodstvennykh yacheek Moskovskoi organizatsii po vyyasneniiu stepeni vovlecheniya shirokikh partiinykh kadrov v prakticheskuiu obschestvennuuiu rabotu i stepeni nagruzki otdel'nykh partiitsev", marked for the attention of Stalin, 12 February 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 895, l. 37-40.

29. This was highlighted in a report on party organisations in enterprises compiled for Stalin - "Nizovye partorganizatsii na predpriiatiyakh", addressed to Stalin, produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, 10 February 1925, marked "Secret", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 902, l. 93-94.


31. "Nizovye ...", l. 93-94.
32. "O svyazi fraktsii ...", l. 17. For an example of a typical report see "Otchet o deyatel'nosti VTsSPS noyabr' - dekabr' 1923", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 661, l. 1. For copies of minutes filed in the archives of the party Secretariat see, for example: "Protokoly ... fraktsii VTsSPS, 22 aprelya - 2 fevralya 1922", d. 219; "Perepiska s VTsSPS, protokoly, doklady, polozheniya i dr. dokumenty o zarabotnoi plate rabochikh ... yanvar' 1922 - dekabr' 1922", d. 376; "Perepiska s TsK i fraktsiyami professional'nykh soiuzov ... dekabr' 1921 - dekabr' 1922", d. 377; "Protokoly ... fraktsii VTsSPS, marta 1923 - aprelya 1924", d. 556; "Protokoly ... fraktsii VTsSPS ... - iiun' 1924 g. - dekabr' 1925 g.", d. 789.

33. See, for example: "Protokol No. 77 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 15-17 noyabrya 1921g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 230, item 1; "Protokol No. 46 ... ot 27 yanvarya 1925g.", d. 486, item 30; "Protokol No. 48 ... ot 12 fevralya 1925g.", d. 488, item 39; "Protokoly zasedanii ... komissii TsK RKP(b) po obsledovaniiu Permskogo orudinogo zavoda (Motovilikh); materialy o konflikte na zavode", February-November 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 924.


35. For examples see: "Svodka o rabote komissii TsK (za period sentyabr' 24 - mart 25 g.)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 904, l. 138; "Protokoly komissii TsK RKP(b) po provedeniu 4-go Vserossiiskogo s"ezda metalistov, fraktsii RKP(b) i plenuma s"ezda s materialami 28-30 maya" 1921, d. 220; "Protokol No. 27 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 9 oktyabrya 1924g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 467, item 6; "Protokol No. 30 ... ot 23 oktyabrya 1924", d. 470, item 31; "Protokol No. 32 ... ot 30 oktyabrya 1924g.", d. 472, item 17; "Protokol No. 50 ... ot 25 fevralya 1925g.", d. 490, item 24; "Protokol No. 88 ... ot 5 noyabrya 1925g.", d. 528, item 18; "Protokol No. 20 - zasedaniya biuro fraktsii RKP(b) Permskogo Raikoma VSR Metalistov ot 30-go noyabrya 1924 года", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 924, l. 56.

36. "Protokol zasedaniya biuro fraktsii VTsSPS" 4 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 219, l. 4.

37. RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 554, l. 41, 44.

38. "Lichnoe pis'mo Vrid Sekretarya Ekaterinoslavskogo Gubkoma KPBUk t. Bychanko za mart-iuun' 1924 g." addressed to Molotov (Secretary of the Central Committee), 28 July 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 752, l. 7.
39. "Protokol No. 34 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 13 noyabrya 1924g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 474, item 5.

40. "Tsirkulyar Narodnogo Komissariata Truda SSSR ot 29 sentyabrya 1924 g., No. 1093 - O politike zarplaty", marked "Secret", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 703, l. 142.

41. "Protokol No. 84 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 22 oktyabrya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 524, item 10.


45. "Postanovleniya i rezoliutsii soveshchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami Gubkomov, Obkomov, i Kraikomov, sostoyavshegosya pri TsK RKP(b) 11-18 maya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 893, l. 49.

46. See, for example, the "Dekret TsK VKP(b) 28 avgusta 1926 - o blizhaishikh zadach parti v oblasti dvizheniya rabsel'korov", Pravda, 16 Sept 1926.

47. Sorenson, pp. 166-167; see also, for example: "Perepiska ... dekabr' 1921 - dekabr' 1922", l. 11-15 - which documents the Politburo's manipulation of the membership of presidiums of trade unions.

48. "Protokol komissii TsK RKP(b) po provedeniu 4-go Vserossiiskogo s"ezda Metalistov", 28 May 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 220, l. 1-2.


50. "Protokol No. 4 - zasedaniya fraktsii 4-go Vserossiiskogo s"ezda soiuza metalistov - 30-go maya 1921", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 220, l. 5-6.

51. "Protokol No. 2 - zasedaniye plenuma 4-go Vserossiiskogo s"ezda soiuza metalistov - 30-go Maya 1921", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 220, l. 14.
52. "Protokol No. 3 - zasedaniya fraktsii ... metalistov", 1. 4; "Protokol No. 4 - zasedaniya fraktsii ... metalistov", 1. 5. "Protokol No. 2 - zasedaniye plenuma ... metalistov", 1. 14.

53. "Protokol zasedaniya fraktsii 4-go Vserossiiskogo s"ezda profsoiuzov, 16 maya 1921", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 217, 1. 9-10.

54. Ibid., 1. 32-33 - this also provides the most likely explanation for the transfer of the labour safety organs to the unions - as a temporary appeasement of the demands for a greater role for the unions in the management of the economy.

55. Ibid., 1. 36-47.


58. "Protokol No. 91 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 20 yanvarya 1922", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 255, item 6; the Commission also sent out a telegram, in the name of the Central Committee, to all provincial party committees instructing them to "adopt measures to strengthen trade unions" with senior party members - "Otchet komissii TsK RKP(b) po proverke ...", 1. 2.


61. "Informatsionnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 3 - vsem TsK, Obiuro, GSPS, vsem Proforganizatsyyam", circa March 1923, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 555, 1. 7-8.

62. See, for example: "Gosinfsvodka Informatsionnogo otdela VeCheKa", 19 October 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2624, l. 77; "Gosinfsvodka ... VeCheKa", 29-30 October 1921, l. 131; "Gosinfsvodka Informatsionnogo otdela OGPU", 8 May 1922, d. 2632, l. 91; "Gosinfsvodka ... OGPU", 3-4 June 1922, d. 2633, l. 150. See also the condemnations of the campaign for the confiscation of church valuables in chapter 2.

63. "Vypiska iz spetspolitsvodki informotdela GPU za 15 i 16 sentyabrya 1923, No. 212/415", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 587, l. 159.

64. "Protokol zasedaniya biuro fraktsii VTsSPS, No. 18", 6 October 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 219, l. 24; "Protokol zasedaniya biuro fraktsii VTsSPS, No.
25", 12 November 1921, 1. 35.

65. "Gosinfvodka Informatsionnogo Otdela GPU za 8 maya No 57 (321)", 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2632, 1. 91.

66. "O rabote profsoiuzov (po materialam mestnykh partorgnov)", marked for Stalin and "Secret", 10 August 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 907, 1. 27.

67. "Gosinfvodka ... VeCheKa", 22 November 1921, RTsKhIDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2625, 1. 86.

68. V. Revzin, "Rastsenochno-konfliktne komissii", pp. 113-118 in Vestnik Truda, No. 1, January 1925, p. 117; Buyanov, pp. 99-100; "Informatsionno-direktivnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 7 ot 18/VII/1925 g.", pp. 3-28 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, p. 22.

69. Pravda, 16 Sept 1926.

70. N. Pilatskaya and V. Dokukin, Redkollegiya stennoi gazeti i kruzhok rabkorov - ikh organizatsiya i rabota (Moscow, 1928).

71. As cited in Pilatskaya, p. 10.

72. "Nizovye ...", 1. 86.

73. Order No. 44 of the VSNKhа "On attitudes of administrations of economic bodies to wall-papers and local print media", 28 May 1926, was issued specifically to combat the "frequently noted cases of managers totally ignoring the advice offered". Seven months later VSNKhа needed to issue another circular entitled "Reminder of circular No. 44", noting that "in some enterprises management continues to fail to give wall-papers the attention they are due" - Pilatskaya, pp. VI-VII, 22-23, 104-105.

74. "V Politbiuro TsK RKP(b) - Dokladnaya zapiska po obsledovaniyu Permskogo Orudiinogo Zavoda Komissiei TsK i TsKK RKP(b)", circa March 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 924, l. 184-185; "Prikazy po Permskomu Orudiinomu Zavodu", pp. 113-171.

75. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za fevral' mesyats 1927 g. (po dannym OGPU)", 7 April 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 201, 1. 56.

76. "Nizovye ...", 1. 91.

77. "O rabote profsoiuzov ...", 1. 30-31.
78. "O Rabote Profsoiuzov (po materialam mestnykh partorgnov)", addressed to Stalin, 10 Aug 1925, marked "Secret", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 907, l. 31.

79. Typical examples include: conflict between RKKs and technical norm setting bureaus, factory and shop managements, foremen, etc., over the setting of output norms and rates — "V Politbiuro ... po obsledovaniiu Permskogo Orudinogo Zavoda", l. 185; or conflict over the demarcation of responsibilities between trade union cultural departments, and party political education departments, which required resolution by the Politburo — "Protokol No. 75 — zasedaniya politbiuro ...", item 17. For examples of conflict between party cells and other organs in factories see earlier parts of this chapter. For further examples see the discussion on production commissions and meetings in chapter 4.


81. "Rezul'taty ...", l. 36-39.

82. "Nizovye ...", l. 104.

83. "Postanovleniya ... soveshchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami", l. 47-50.

84. The delegate assembly alone consisted of 500 members — Fin, p. 25.


86. Odilavadze, p. 158.


88. Odilavadze, "Nekotorye ...", p. 159.


90. "Nizovye ...", l. 96, 99.

91. Ibid., l. 99.

92. Ibid., l. 103.

93. "Obzor raboty po Ekaterinburgskoi Gubernii za aprel' 1922 g.", 16 May 1922, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 344, l. 32-33.
1924 was a milestone in the NEP, marking fundamental escalations in Bolshevik industrial policy. During the period of 1921 to 1924, the overriding concern of the Bolshevik leadership had been survival and consolidation of its authority. The prime aim in its management of the economy had been simply the restoration and maintenance of production. By 1924, the achievement of this aim appeared in sight. The Bolshevik leadership had grown confident of its position and now began to devote greater thought to long-term dilemmas. Two central problems became the focus of its industrial policies: how to pursue and finance further economic development, and how to narrow the growing 'gulf' between itself and the worker masses. While the two problems were perceived to be interlinked, and while many of the policies pursued were meant to sponsor both economic growth and narrowing of the 'gulf', for the purposes of ease of discussion, the latter will be examined separately in chapter 6.

Although very respectable rates of economic growth had been achieved during the years of 1921-1924, this was based primarily on recovery - on bringing existing machinery and plant back to production. The extent to which this had occurred by the middle of the NEP, and at what date full recovery was achieved, remains the subject of debate, and is beyond the remit of this study. What is of concern to this study is that by 1924, the leadership was aware that the scope for continued growth in output based on the restoration of existing capital was becoming limited and it now began to devote greater thought to the question of how further economic growth was to be achieved and industrial expansion financed.
The negative international reputation of the new Bolshevik state and its pursuit of class warfare deprived it of the possibility of financing capital construction through foreign, or domestic private investment. The "Scissors Crisis" which reached its peak in October 1923, had illustrated the inherent danger in attempting capital accumulation through raising prices on manufactured goods in relation to agricultural produce. Because of the primitive nature of Russian peasant consumer culture, peasants were able to increase their levels of self-sufficiency and reduce their participation in the urban-rural economic exchange when conditions did not suit them. Increases in the price differential between manufactured and agricultural goods hence led to decreases in the supply of agricultural produce to the cities, and threatened the smychka or 'union of co-operation' between peasantry and workers, upon which the NEP was based. This was regarded, in 1924, as too politically destabilising and hence the only option that was apparent to the Bolshevik leadership for financing capital expansion was through increasing productivity. The urgency of this task, of increasing productive efficiency and reducing output costs, was brought home by the "Scissors Crisis" itself.

Beginning in 1924, the Bolshevik leadership thus embarked on successive campaigns aimed at increasing efficiency and productivity to facilitate capital accumulation. The first of these, the Intensification and Rationalisation Campaign, after various trials through the spring and summer of 1924, was launched at the end of the year. This was combined with, and followed by, the launch (and later re-launch) of Production Meetings and Commissions through 1925, the Regime of Economy in 1926, the Rationalisation of Production in 1927 and various campaigns in the last years of the NEP, including the introduction of new wage-tariff handbooks and the launch of three-shift work. All of these campaigns were intended as implementation of a single
dominant campaign of the Scientific Organisation of Labour (Nauchnaya Organizatsiya Truda - NOT), and either incorporated or were accompanied by the 'scientific' study and organisation of production, time-motion studies, and fascination with Taylorism (the scientific study of labour and production processes to rationalise and maximise efficiency of worker movement).

The principles of many of these campaigns were certainly valid for raising efficiency and productivity, and can even be regarded as enlightened for their time. Nor should it be denied that the potential existed within the nation's economy for efficiency and productivity gains to be made. But the form in which these principles were pursued in the Soviet Union was inherently defective. The principles were incorporated into successive campaigns, launched by the central organs of the party, with the leadership of the campaigns allocated to local party organisations. The economic strategies thus became political campaigns whose evolution, goals, and progress were measured and dictated by party organs instead of industrial management bodies.

The Bolshevik leadership, having deprived itself of unbiased and independent channels of communication, had no reliable and accurate means by which to assess the state of the economy. With the progressive elimination of market forces from the operation of Soviet industry, the leadership lost effective measures by which to evaluate the efficiency of enterprises. Increasingly frustrated by conflicting reports from the locales and the perceived undermining of central policies by local party, union and management organs, the leadership responded by attempting to escalate regimentation and centralisation of the economy. The campaigns degenerated into successive blanket demands to reduce input of resources and increase output by central decree, enforced by the political might of the party, with little regard for the feasibility or impact of
such decrees. The driving principle of the regime's economic policies thus appears to have become a corruption of Marx's tenet: from each according to his maximum capability - to each according to his minimum needs.

Rationalisation of production processes is rarely simple, often requiring study, experimentation and capital expenditure. Hence, when management and technical staff were presented with demands originating from party organs to instantaneously improve output/input ratios, the reflex response was to pressure workers to intensify their labour, or seek cuts in total labour costs. All too often the campaigns were reduced to centrally-dictated, widespread mechanical increases in norms and reductions in rates, or cuts in expenditure which directly affected working and living conditions, combined with politically-driven rationalisations of production processes which often had a negative impact on the efficiency and quality of output.

The party leadership did not intend to reduce real wages for the bulk of shop-floor workers or to worsen working and living conditions. Governmental wages' policy was aimed at reducing the differences between the lowest and highest paid workers. The official objective was to increase wages in those sectors where they had fallen behind (e.g.: metallurgical, transport and coal mining) and for the lowest paid across all sectors, while restraining or reducing the wages of the highest paid skilled workers. It was also envisaged that all would benefit from reductions in prices of goods which would result from increased productive efficiency. But the party leadership must be held accountable for the impact of the politicisation of its economic campaigns and for its increasing hostility towards worker protest. The party must also be held accountable for the growing bureaucratic burden and centralisation that had to be financed by the nation's economy.
While 1924 can be regarded as a milestone in Bolshevik industrial management, the launch of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation was not a tergiversation as such, rather it was an escalation of existing attitudes. While the leasing of a large proportion of the nation's enterprises, and the transfer of nationalised industry to khozraschet (self-financing), which began in the autumn of 1921, marked the start of the laissez-faire stage of Soviet economic history, the young government was never committed to the principles of laissez-faire. Throughout the first years of the NEP, the party leadership continued to intervene in the management of the nation's industries at will. Indeed its interventionism seems to have been limited more by a shortage of qualified personnel and the greater urgency of other matters than any commitment to free-market economic principles. Hence the escalation of interventionist policies in 1924, once the most pressing issues endangering the survival of the regime had been resolved, could have been anticipated.

Similarly the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation, based on Taylorism and a negative evaluation of the working habits of the Russian worker, also did not constitute a change in attitudes in 1924. While the application of Taylorism in the West was condemned by the left, including Lenin, as a method of increasing the level of exploitation of workers, Lenin had endorsed the application of Taylor's methods to Soviet Russia as early as April 1918. Lenin believed that as gains in productivity would now, after the October Revolution, 'benefit' the working class as a whole, the exploitive aspect of Taylorism had been negated. In The Current Tasks of Soviet Power, Lenin concluded that "A
Russian is a bad worker compared with [workers of] the advanced nations .... To learn how to work - this task Soviet power must place before the nation in all its aspects", and for this purpose the "Soviet republic ... must adopt all that is of value in the achievements of science and technology in this sphere". "The latest word of capitalism in this respect is the Taylor system ... It is necessary to create in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system, and its systematic testing and application".

In accordance with Lenin's recommendations the creation of the Central Labour Institute (Tsentral'nyi institut truda - TsIT) was formally established in September 1920, under the directorship of Alexei Gastev - the leading Soviet proponent of Taylorism. It was charged with conducting research into improving labour productivity and efficiency of production processes, developing tariff and norm-setting procedures, and with providing general direction of vocational training. In the first years of the NEP, however, priority was allocated to raising total production levels and, with an abundance of cheap labour and high unemployment, raising productivity seemed of secondary importance. While in September 1920 TsIT was officially allocated a budget of 1.2 million rubles, a year later it had actually received less than 8,000 rubles and it began to receive regular state financing only in June 1923. TsIT was thus forced to lead a minimal existence during the first years of the NEP and its activities had only limited impact on Soviet industry.

The 'Scissors Crisis' of 1923 forced a re-evaluation, highlighting the importance of raising productivity and reducing costs to achieve economic recovery. The plenum of the VTsSPS in September 1923, instructed the VTsSPS Presidium to issue "practical directives to locales and union central committees on measures to struggle against
inefficiency ... and to develop recommendations for the ruthless rationalisation of overhead costs...". In the textile sector, whose product formed a main element of peasant purchases of manufactured goods, an emergency conference convened in October 1923 in response to the 'Scissors Crisis', resolved that production had to be rationalised and manning levels reduced. The profile of the TsIT was now given new prominence and at the end of 1923 a sub-organ, the Council for the Scientific Organisation of Labour, was finally created specifically for the purpose of implementing the 'scientific organisation of labour' (NOT) in state enterprises. The mid-twenties became the golden age for NOT in the USSR with in excess of one hundred organizations engaged in research on NOT. Large numbers of Soviet researchers were paid to travel abroad and extensive contacts and links with foreign institutions were maintained.

Various trials of 'intensification' were conducted in the spring and summer of 1924. In the textile sector an Initiative Council for NOT was created in February 1924, which issued a circular to all trusts and union branches in April 1924 instructing them to create NOT cells in all mills for the purposes of developing proposals for the rationalisation of production. An early 'trial' of the 'Intensification' campaign was conducted in the metalworking sector of the Southern Urals in the late spring of 1924. In the first half of May, the NKTruda provincial arbitrator, ruling on the new collective agreement for metal workers in the Southern Urals, reduced basic rates by up to 20%. The arbitrator also reduced wages for non-piece rate workers by 22% in the Mias factory, on a 'trial basis' to gauge worker reactions, prior to implementing such a reduction across all factories.
The political motivation for these reductions is revealed by the fact that the reductions were implemented via party organs and by the fact that rates in the Southern Urals had already been set at lower levels than those for the rest of the Urals with the transition to payment of wages in chervonets roubles in February 1924. The arbitrator's decision was endorsed and implemented by the bureau of the provincial party committee, which even ruled to backdate the reductions to 1 April 1924, with workers having to 'payback' wages in their May wage packet. The collusion between the provincial department of the NKTruda and the provincial party committee was unlikely to have taken place without approval, if not direction, from Moscow, and no documentation has been found to suggest that the Central Committee disapproved of it, although the Central Committee was made aware of the situation.

In the Mias experiment the leading role played by the party in implementing the reductions can be seen clearly. The plan for introducing the new collective agreement in the factory was developed by the Mias District Party Committee, and not by the factory management as one would expect (or even, for that matter, by the factory party cell). The director of the factory was totally opposed to the 'experiment' and demanded that the minutes record his immediate resignation from the party and from all obligations of administering the factory in protest. The minutes recorded him stating that he considered this entire matter "not to be the business of the district committee, but to be my business as the administrator" (he was also castigated for having warned workers of the impending reductions). Further evidence of the impetus for the reductions coming from above is provided by the Zlatoust Regional Party Committee Bureau, which, despite having composed the circular instructing the party organisation of the region
to adopt all measures to implement the new agreement, was also opposed to the agreement. In his report to the provincial party committee, the Secretary of the regional committee, Rumyantsev, declared that they had implemented the "party's instructions" only because the district committee of the Metal Workers' Trade Union had agreed to accept the agreement and they could not present the regional party committee as being to the left of the district committee of the union in wages policy. He also declared that he had believed that the reductions were being implemented fairly across all trusts in the Urals, but "now that I know that it is only our Southern Urals that are being subjected to such reductions, in this respect, I am, just like the workers, totally legitimately, dissatisfied with the decision". He concluded that in backdating the reductions "one must honestly say that we had overdone it, and by quite a fair bit ... If the material gain turns out to be minimal, then, when one weighs the amount of political capital that has been lost by the party and trade unions in the Southern Urals in the eyes of the workers and new party members, then one will be forced to say that we made a crude error".

The Campaign had anticipated that production processes would be studied in order to implement more efficient usage of resources and to rationalise production processes. This included achieving more efficient usage by workers of the working day (e.g. increasing punctuality, and eliminating stoppages caused by worker 'distractions' or 'wanderings' in search of tools and materials"), and the execution of time-motion studies to rationalise worker movements in performing their production processes. Workers would then be shown how to work more efficiently, allowing for norms to be raised or rates to be reduced to reflect these new higher attainable production levels. As workers would now be producing more, no general reductions in total earnings were anticipated, although brief short-falls in earnings
were not ruled out as workers 'adjusted' to new working practices. In the long term it was expected that increased productivity would facilitate increases in worker incomes. Throughout the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation unions were repeatedly instructed to ensure that total earnings did not fall, and that they be maintained at "current levels".

As in the case of the metal workers of the Southern Urals, cited above, the political impetus for 'intensification' led to the neglect of research, re-organisation and training, in favour of simply reducing rates and/or increasing norms. It is hardly surprising that such changes were met by extensive worker displeasure and the outbreak of strikes (see chapter 5). But few lessons appeared to have been learned from such early trials of intensification and the party leadership went full steam ahead with its campaign.

The Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation was developed by the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission's Wages Commission and launched by the Politburo itself at the end of 1924. The Politburo, however, obfuscated this by instructing that the circular on raising labour productivity be published over the signatures of the VSNKha, the VTsSPS, and the NKTruda. At the same time the Politburo issued a separate instruction to all provincial party committees specifically allocating them leadership of the campaign. This was a fundamental error, by allocating the leadership of the campaign to local party organs, the Politburo took away the leadership of the campaign from those bodies that could possibly have made competent decisions over issues of rationalisation and intensification - industrial management and unions. The Politburo formally created a situation where party officials had to intervene in the management of enterprises. Conflict between management and party
officials, who rarely had any industrial management experience, was guaranteed.

The conflict between management and party was exacerbated by the atmosphere of heroic optimism and suspicion of 'bourgeois' enemy elements that embraced the party faithful. Having 'miraculously' fought off the joint forces of Russian and international 'bourgeois' reactionaries, nothing appeared to the new 'believers' to be beyond the capabilities of the young Soviet nation. If the might of the people could be properly harnessed, there were endless 'opportunities' present in the Soviet economy for spectacular gains. All that stood in the way were 'backward sceptics' and hostile 'bourgeois' elements concealed amid lazy workers, managers and specialists, eager to derail the Soviet state off its historic journey. This atmosphere was, of course, continuously fuelled and propagated by the party itself.

This created a situation where party officials would have naturally wanted to assert their own 'competency' and the 'incompetency' of 'bourgeois' managers and specialists, encouraging the 'revelation' of gross 'inefficiencies' and 'opportunities' for instantaneous spectacular gains. The campaigns were condemned to becoming politicised.

Even before the formal launch of the campaign, rates began to be slashed and norms mechanically boosted across Soviet industry. In the metalworking sector, during the first quarter of the 1924/25 financial year (October-December 1924), increases in norms by an average of 10-15% were reported by the trusts of Gomza, Iuzhmash, Iugostal', Gospromtsvetmet, Mosmash, and the Krasnyi Oktyabr' works in Tsarytsyn. In coal mining, in Donbass norms were raised by an average of 25% between October 1924 and January 1925, reducing the labour costs of production by 21.8%. In the Azneft' trust (oil extraction) labour costs in relation to
output were reduced by 12.5%, in the Makhorka trust (tobacco products) by 29.8%, in the Perm'sol' trust (salt extraction) by 12%, and by an average of 6.7% across all cotton mills\textsuperscript{22}.

The OGPU reports for this period are full of references to instantaneous and mechanical reductions in rates and increases in norms by 20-50%, across all industries\textsuperscript{23}. The lowering of rates or increases in norms in excess of 50% were also not uncommon\textsuperscript{24}. In many instances new rates were introduced without any prior warning being given to workers\textsuperscript{25}.

The mechanical nature which the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation was adopting was recognised within the highest circles of the party. A. Andreev, a member of the central committees of both the party and the VSRM (and, after July 1926, a candidate member of the Politburo) was a leading critic. At a meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee in March 1925, convened to discuss the strike at the massive Profintern works that had occurred in January, he openly complained of the "mechanical approach to the lowering of rates" which threatened to "bring us to a huge row with workers":

I arrived in a provincial capital, there the district party committee was implementing a decision to obligate the head of the main railway workshops to increase productivity by 30% in the course of 4 days ... [illustrating, once again, the role of party organs in forcing the unrealistic pace of the campaign - AP]. In another place I encountered a case where wages were mechanically reduced by 75% ... In the Motovilikha works [Perm] wages are being automatically reduced every month. One cannot regulate wages in such a way, this is good for nothing. Rates are being lowered while no organisational measures are being taken with respect to the timely delivery of materials, tools etc.\textsuperscript{26}.

It was openly acknowledged that growth in output levels had been achieved solely by intensifying the labour of workers.
VTsSPS's "Informational-Directive Circular" of 18 July 1925 admitted that:

If we keep in mind that improvements in the technology of production were relatively small, then it becomes totally obvious that this growth in output was only possible under the conditions of higher intensification of labour.

Labour intensification was not matched by increases in wages and while average daily labour output reportedly grew by 26% from October 1924 to February 1925, average monthly wages in many sectors even declined. In April Vestnik Truda reported that among individual industries mining had shown the highest fall in wages, averaging 7%; in the Donugl' and Khimugl' Trusts (Ukraine) wages fell by 5% and 4% respectively, while inflation in the region was running at 10% for the quarter; in the textile industry wages remained almost the same; while in chemical, leather and food-processing industries wages reportedly increased by 4-8%. Two months later, however, Vestnik Truda was reporting that wages had fallen by an average of 7% in actual roubles and 12% in real terms across all industry.

The response of workers was entirely predictable and already by November 1924 increases in norms and reductions in rates were displacing delays in the payment of wages as the prime causes of worker dissatisfaction and strikes. In the metalworking, mining, chemical and sugar refining sectors, during the months of January to March 1925, 14 major collective agreements covering 400,000 workers had to be referred to mediation by central organs - meaning that such large reductions in rates and increases in norms were being demanded that even union organs were unwilling to accept them. The collective agreements in dispute included ones covering such major trusts as: Iuzhmash, Iugostal', Gomza, and GUVP in the metalworking sector; Donugl', Moskbasugol', and Kuzbass in the mining sector; GUVP and Vladimirsk Steklo in the chemical industry; and Sakho in the sugar refining sector. In the textile sector during
the same period not a single collective agreement was concluded at provincial or local levels, all requiring referral to the Textile Union Central Committee and state appointed arbitrators".

The negative impact of the campaign upon workers' wages was acknowledged within top leadership circles". The leadership of the VTsSPS openly admitted in its "Informational-Directive Circular" of 18 July 1925 that "reductions in the existing levels of income, totally understandably, caused dissatisfaction among workers". On 23 March 1925, at its last session prior to its dissolution, the Central Committee's Wages Commission (which had originated the campaign), in its conclusions on the campaign, admitted that:

... in individual enterprises in some industrial sectors, one observes the lowering of wages as a result of extreme reductions in rates, while norms are increased. Therefore, the Wages Commission believes that the Politburo must issue a directive to the VSNKha and the VTsSPS to review rates in those enterprises where wage reductions have taken place, in comparison with wages in September, with the aim of creating a correlation between wages and growth in labour productivity".

A few days later the Politburo adopted the Wages Commission's formula and also ruled that:

... in general, major results were achieved in the form of actual increases in labour productivity in the context of a general tendency towards increases in wages, nevertheless one must admit that in individual enterprises in some industrial sectors one notes a lowering of wages in association with extreme reductions in job-rates set in the context of increases in output norms.

The Politburo then authorised the VSNKha and the VTsSPS to make adjustments to rates in enterprises where output had increased but wages had fallen below their September 1924 levels".

Despite the fact that the whole Campaign of Intensification was based on, at the very least, the threat of reductions
in wages to achieve greater output, and the threat could not be maintained unless it was allowed to come into effect where targets were not met, the policy of Intensification was not officially blamed. The above-cited Politburo resolution declared that "... the work of the VSNKh in the implementation of the decision of the plenum of the Central Committee in the matter of raising labour productivity was implemented correctly". The Politburo was so confident of this 'correct implementation' that it also resolved not to make its reservations public, not to let it be known that "in some industrial sectors" wages had fallen, and that it was prepared to review the way in which the campaign had been implemented. The resolution ended with the following words: "To consider this decision to be secret and not subject to publication either among trade unions or among economic managers". Instead, local management and union bodies, especially the RKK, were blamed for "sanctioning the introduction of new norms and tariffs that resulted in reductions in the existing levels of income".

Central party organs engaged in acrobatics of logic in order to avoid blaming themselves for "excesses, deficiencies and errors" in the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation. A report produced by the Informotdel (Informational Department) of the Central Committee in the spring of 1925 still blamed management despite the report clearly stating that "factory committees, unions, and party cells in enterprises, through propaganda and agitation [budirovaniem], acted as the trailblazers [zastrel'shchiki] and herald bearers [glashatai] in this matter, while directors and management were able to stand on the sidelines...". The report claimed that it was "management which aimed to increase labour productivity as fast as possible", and had exploited the 'atmosphere' created by party and union organs. The party and unions were guilty merely of failing to "notice ... 'excesses', deficiencies and errors". The authors of the report seem to have
forgotten that the campaign had been launched by the Politburo and now appeared to believe that factory managers were independent of party influence.

The final conclusion of the report made a mockery of the above argument by stating that the campaign needed to be changed so that the initiators of all issues linked to increasing labour productivity in the factory should be the management. This was an admission that norms were being raised and rates reduced under pressure of the party cell and the factory committee. This was also, in effect, a rejection of the entire basis of the campaign: a rejection of intensification led from above and by the party. But the Politburo was deaf to such arguments and, in the same resolution in which it passed judgement upon the campaign, resolved to proceed with future campaigns.

While the Politburo refused to link the 'defects' and 'errors' in the Campaign with the politicisation and party leadership of the Campaign, by the summer it was sufficiently alarmed by the extent of dissatisfaction to stage a limited retreat. This retreat went far beyond 'corrections' and 'regulations' to restore a "correlation between wages and growth in labour productivity". Throughout the summer and autumn of 1925, at session after session, the Politburo examined the wages of individual groups of enterprises and trusts, and entire industrial sectors. The resolutions bore testimony to the alarm within the party leadership over the levels of dissatisfaction and unrest. After two years of pursuing policies of minimal or no growth in wages, significant wage increases were rushed through to placate workers. Officially tariff agreements expired for 55% of the industrial workforce in July, however, renegotiations in that month ended up encompassing 75% of the workforce of major industries as rates were changed even for those workers whose tariff agreements had not expired. In all
cases, wages were increased, with the largest increases being recorded for textile workers (14% increase over March 1925), miners (14%), chemical workers (9%), and metalworkers (6-7%). These increases ended up negating the financial benefits accrued from the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation.

(iii) Production Commissions and Production Meetings

Production commissions and production meetings were at the heart of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation. They were formally launched at the VI Trade Unions Congress in November 1924 in conjunction with the campaign which established a new organisational stratum across all enterprises. Production meetings were intended as gatherings of an enterprise's workers for the purpose of drawing upon their direct knowledge of production to identify possible improvements. The meetings were to be organised and led by permanent production commissions, appointed by the factory committee. The production commissions were also to be responsible for following up worker suggestions, developing and putting forward to management viable proposals and monitoring their implementation. Depending on the size of an enterprise, a specified number of members of the production commission would be freed from part or all of their regular working duties, so as to concentrate their efforts on behalf of the production commissions.

Increasing the role of trade unions in raising productivity was not a new concept. The importance of trade union involvement in this task had been emphasized at the second plenum of the VTsSPS in February 1922 and at the V Trade Unions Congress in September 1922. The new ingredient was the envisaged incorporation of the worker masses.
In addition to assisting in the 'rationalisation' of enterprises, production meetings were also intended as a forum where workers could be taught the importance of diligence and greater discipline. Finally, they were expected to help narrow the gulf between workers and the unions, party and state by increasing worker participation in the organisational life of enterprises (for a discussion of these aspects see chapter 6).

Production meetings usually consisted of a presentation by either a technical specialist, engineer or manager on an aspect of production and/or the introduction of a topic for discussion by a member of the production commission. The main areas envisaged for study by production meetings and commissions encompassed reductions in defects, economy of all resources and improving the utilization of the work-day. The last target was to be achieved by overcoming delays in the supply of raw materials, components and tools; improvements in the organisation of shop floors; and, most importantly, improving working discipline, eliminating stoppages, workers' distractions and "wanderings". On the basis of proposals made during the discussions, recommendations would be formulated (usually by the chairman and/or presidium of the meeting) and adopted by the assembly. These recommendations would then be further developed, if required, by the production commission and submitted to the enterprise's management for consideration.

The party leadership had no intention for production commissions and meetings to undermine management, which officially retained final authority for the implementation of recommendations. There was also no ambiguity as to the subservience of the new bodies to the factory committees, higher union organs, and, via the party fractions, to the party itself. The key to successful party guidance of production meetings was the membership of production
commissions. Here subservience was secured by the fact that the members of production commissions were appointed by the factory committee and not elected by the workforce'. The chairmen of production commissions were regarded by the party as among the most important posts in the factory, and they were almost always held by senior union and party members'^. Rank-and-file party members were also ordered to attend production meetings, and were expected to support the party line".

There were, however, problems and complications. In keeping with its own corporate culture, the Bolshevik leadership launched this whole new stratum in the organisational web with minimal forethought, preferring to take immediate action and sort out the detail after-the-fact. The actual delimitation of responsibilities and format of production meetings and commissions was left largely undefined'^. Little guidance was given on the limits on production commissions in investigating and auditing management and production processes, or as to their rights and powers in ensuring implementation. This encouraged interference in the management of production, and this interference, whether 'legitimate' or not, added to tensions within enterprises'^

Tensions were further exacerbated by the fact that local party, union and 'worker' groupings were eager to use production meetings and commissions to advance their economic influence, and some even interpreted this latest organ as the reintroduction of a form of workers' control. Reports and complaints of interference in the management of enterprises by the production movement were constant. Already by the spring of 1925, *Vestnik Truda* was regularly condemning the tendency of "individual" production commissions and meetings to take on factory administrative functions. The production commission of the *Trostyanetsk* sugar refinery ratified the financial budget, as well as
norms and calculation scales. The production commission of the Profintern works attempted to replace a foreman (production meetings were encouraged merely to nominate candidates for posts). The production commission of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Manufaktura issued instructions to individual departments of the factory management and made them responsible to the commission for the fulfilment of its decrees. Changes in norms by production meetings was a frequently-reported 'excess'. A report on party cell participation in the production movement, produced by the Informotdel, noted that sometimes party cells showed a tendency towards wanting to administer the factory through production commissions. Party and OGPU reports continually featured complaints of production commissions and meetings dealing with issues that were outside their spheres of responsibility, typically including reductions in work-forces, setting of tariffs, labour safety, etc.

Shop-floor workers also aspired to use production meetings to vent their grievances, especially over the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation Campaign. From their inception, the party and union leadership struggled to maintain control over this cauldron of conflicting interests and raw worker grievances. 'Organisational' issues hence quickly dominated the work and discussion of production meetings and commissions.

Initially production meetings were promoted as regular assemblies of all of the enterprise's workforce, but in practice this was quickly abandoned. It was soon recognised that on their own factory-wide production meetings encompassing the entire workforce achieved little. Furthermore, one must suspect that the union leadership found it difficult to control such large-scale gatherings where workers were able to voice their opinions over how their factories were run. Already by the start of 1925, production meetings on a shop-by-shop basis were
being officially endorsed, with factory-wide production meetings uniting only a 'selected' 'active core' of the shop production meetings to discuss factory-wide issues.

The practical achievements of production meetings were limited and tended to be minor, technically simple measures, requiring minimal study. Shortcomings in production were only noted in the most general terms, and focused on obvious deficiencies that were limiting output (i.e. limiting workers' piece-rate income), such as the utilization, disrepair, cleaning and positioning of machinery, shortages of skilled labour, and irregularities in the supply of raw materials. A study of production collectives (meetings) in Tula (where they had been introduced in the spring of 1924 on an experimental basis prior to their launch nationwide) concluded that significant achievements were made only initially and only in enterprises where defects were abundant and obvious. In enterprises that were already operating with high levels of efficiency, or once the most obvious shortcomings were resolved, further improvements were admitted to be beyond the capabilities of production collectives.

The voicing of worker grievances over 'intensification' was countered by attempting to strictly direct production meetings and focusing them on 'self-criticism'—on raising worker discipline. All this, of course, did not endear the meetings to workers and participation levels never matched expectations. After an initial spurt of enthusiasm, the regularity and reported attendance of meetings declined across the nation and central union and party investigators all ruled that the quality of their work deteriorated. A VTsSPS study published in May 1925 revealed that production meetings were attended by only 1-15% of the total workforce of the enterprises in which they were held, with shop-floor workers often barely making up 50% of those present. An Informotdel report from August 1925 cited...
attendance rates of production meetings in Ivanovo-Voznesensk as being typical, these were given as: 2% of the workforce in the Annenskaya mill (employing 2,000) and Tomna mill (employing 6,000); and 4.4% in the Vetkinsk mill (employing 1,200). The report complained that even party members did not always attend regularly, with on average only 25-30% of the membership of the cell attending production meetings⁶⁴.

Vestnik Truda reported that production meetings quickly got into the habit of simply listening to the presentations and passing very general resolutions. Major and practical work became concentrated within the production commissions working together with the factory's management and specialists, and various other dedicated bodies that had been launched for the pursuit of rationalisation and intensification, such as NOT circles and Orgstantsii (Organisational Stations). It was in these bodies that all practical work, such as the examination of deficiencies in the enterprise, time-motion and rationalisation studies and monitoring of implementation of recommendations, could be undertaken⁶⁵. This was a rejection of the theoretical mass basis of production meetings and it questioned the value of continuing the convening of production meetings.

Deficiencies in the work of production meetings were not, however, attributed to the institution itself, but to the way they were run. Unsatisfactory results were attributed to poor preparation, organisation and leadership of meetings, and insufficient attention to worker recommendations. The failure to attract worker masses was attributed primarily to the fact that the meetings had become bogged down in criticising worker discipline and in discussions over how the meetings and commissions should function⁶⁶. This paved the way for the re-launch of production meetings and commissions.
(iv) The Re-launch of Production Commissions and Meetings and the Regime of Economy

The intensity of worker unrest in 1925 in response to the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation (see chapter 5) revealed the limited possibilities of capital accumulation simply by reducing piece-rates and increasing norms. In addition, the party's economic policy was undermining efforts at narrowing the breach between itself and workers. This unrest, combined with the disappointing results and levels of participation in the production movement, forced the party leadership to reevaluate its tactics for financing capital growth. Increases in the prices of manufactured goods continued to be rejected as the need to preserve the smychka between town and countryside was still considered paramount. With the opportunities of raising funds in financial markets either abroad or at home remaining as limited as ever, the only option that seemed available to the party leadership was raising productivity. Having recognised that the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation had been ultimately reduced to simply increasing the physical burden upon workers, and that little gains had been made in technical rationalisation, the party leadership concluded that management had escaped the campaign. The party leadership now attempted to redirect its rationalisation drive specifically to target expenditures and inefficiency in the management and organisation of production. This was implemented through the re-launch of production commissions and meetings in the autumn of 1925, and through the launch of the Regime of Economy Campaign in 1926.

With the re-launch in the autumn of 1925, production commissions and meetings were specifically instructed to target management costs and procedures, to reduce the emphasis on working discipline, and to increase worker involvement. At the same time, the structure of production
meetings and commissions was strictly regimented to counter the advance of 'workers' control'. There was no question of the party's continued insistence to remain in command of the process. Party and union organs issued a constant stream of instructions to lower organs on how production commissions and meetings should be organised and conducted (even specifying agendas). In all instructions the importance of thorough preparation of meetings by the production commission, party cell, unions and management was constantly emphasised to counter the 'anarchic' and 'hostile' 'tendencies' of workers.

Initially, once again, attendance and participation in production meetings reportedly increased significantly, but still fell short of 'mobilizing the full initiative of the worker masses'. Party, union and management regimentation and domination of meetings, and persistent prominence given to issues of worker discipline continued to deter workers and the VTsSPS estimated that attendance of production meetings levelled out at an average of 10% of the workforce.

The specific targeting of organisation and management of production was continued by the Regime of Economy, publicly proclaimed by an order of the VSNKh on 23 February 1926 and launched on 25 April 1926 by a joint Central Committee-Central Control Commission address bearing Stalin's and Kuibyshev's signatures. Once again, the masses were to be harnessed to this task via production meetings and commissions, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate working together with Control and Audit Commissions, and the factory 'wall-papers', to "radically rationalise every step in the production process" and "ruthlessly eliminate waste". The Regime of Economy, even in theory, differed from the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation only in emphasis.
The inefficiency of Bolshevik state economic management was already apparent by the mid-1920s, and the continued escalation of managerial and bureaucratic costs was a matter of great concern. According to the Central Statistical Department of the VSNKha, on 1 July 1925, 10.9% of the workforce in 'census' industries were salaried employees (i.e. specialists, technical, administrative and management staff) — this was 4 percentage points higher than in 1913 and represented a 58% increase in salaried personnel. 'Excessive' administrative expenditures, especially on 'business trips', and on the operations of "numerous commissions" that were "not needed by anyone", came under specific attack in the Soviet press. Komsomol'skaya Pravda complained that the annual reports of trusts to the VSNKha typically weighed in at 5, 7, and 12 poods (180, 252, and 432 pounds) — the Sugar Trust's annual report tipped the scales at 125 poods (4,500 pounds).

The figures cited above did not take into consideration the growing financial burden of party, union and state bureaucratic structures. The rising costs of union and state bureaucracies were officially recognised. Even the VSNKha itself was censured in 1926 for 'excessive' expenditure, exceeding its budget for its central apparatus by 60%'. Union and state staffing levels were hence also targeted during the Regime of Economy. But the rising costs of party structures did not come under attack, neither was any link made publicly between growth in bureaucracies and Bolshevik organisational and managerial practice.

While the party leadership recognised that the impact of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation had fallen primarily on workers, it failed to acknowledge that this outcome was caused by the politicisation of the campaign. Thus the same defect was incorporated into the Regime of Economy: the leadership of the campaign was
allocated to party organs and the Narodnyi komissariat raboche-krest'yanskoi inspeksii (NKRKI) - the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. Special commissions were appointed, attached to each body of the RKI (Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate), to 'implement' the Regime of Economy. These commissions, together with party and Workers' and Peasants' inspectors, regularly descended on enterprises. They conducted inspections, heard reports by heads of economic organs, trusts, and factories, and then issued instructions on how to rationalise the enterprise and achieve savings. As in the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation, the party and worker activists performing these inspections rarely had extensive managerial or technical experience, but would have been eager to prove their value to their superiors by 'uncovering' dramatic waste by 'bourgeois' management and claiming that significant increases in output were possible. The situation was further exacerbated by the fact that their verdicts were generally beyond reproach.

As with the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation, the instinctive response of both management and inspectors, when faced with the requirement to achieve immediate, significant and quantifiable reductions in input costs, was to resort to measures that were detrimental to workers, or short-term measures that made little long-term economic sense.

The OGPU reported on numerous cases across all industries where the Regime of Economy was 'implemented' simply as reductions in rates and increases in norms, especially in (but by no means limited to) processes that required higher-paid skilled labour. Beginning in the summer of 1926, a wave of mechanical reductions in rates swept through the metal-working sector. The OGPU reported that in this sector in August and September rates were reduced
across: 40 enterprises in Leningrad (by 25-30% in the Krasnyi Puščilov works and by 30-40% in the Krasnyi Vyborzh works); 18 in Moscow (by 35% in the Serp i Molot works); 14 in the Ukraine; four in the Urals; and at least 14 in other areas, including the Krasnoe Sormovo works in Nizhnii Novgorod. During October the OGPU reported on 30 more cases where rates were reduced, and in November a further 38. The OGPU also again reported that higher-paid processes performed by skilled workers were particularly targeted.®

In order to meet targets for cuts, employees and workers would be sacked in one week only for others to be hired in the following week. This disrupted production, damaged the morale of the workforce, and often resulted in increased expenditure where redundancy compensations had to be paid and new staff trained.® This occurred in spite of the fact that large turnovers in workforces were identified as a major contributor to inefficiency, and the need to stabilise staffing levels was listed as a priority®®.

An Informotdel report on the first months of the campaign characterised the initial response as tendencies towards economy on petty expenditures that directly affected workers. The Krasnyi Bogatyr' factory in Moscow was cited as a typical example: here the management, in the name of the Regime of Economy, refused to install wash-basins and provide towels.® In a factory in Irkutsk, the lights in the Red Corner were switched off on Sundays and "cultural work ... totally died out in the factory". In the Ekaterinoslav Yards of the Southern Railway, the release of ill workers was banned, in the name of the campaign®. The secretary of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Provincial Party Committee, reporting to the Organisational Department of the Central Committee on the implementation of the Regime of Economy, complained that "... everything was begun from the point of directors making demands upon workers with
regards to reductions in work-force, in cost of housing, increasing discipline etc." while, at the same time, "nothing was done to eradicate squandering and mismanagement".

The textile sector, with its large-scale mills, high degree of mechanisation, and relatively uniform production processes, was an attractive target for 'rationalisation' theorists and drew a disproportionate level of their attention. This sector was subjected to endless experiments of 'uplotnenie' or 'consolidation', which involved the re-organisation of production teams with the aim of having fewer workers operate more machines; increases in speeds of production; and changes in methods of calculation of wages or simply, as in 1925, reduction in payment rates and increases in norms. Inevitably, in the majority of cases, these experiments resulted in increasing the physical burden upon the workforce or reductions in wages.

The official objectives of wages policy during the collective agreement campaigns at the end of 1925 and 1926 continued to be to raise wages in low-paid industrial sectors and of the lowest paid workers across all sectors, while restraining or reducing wages of the highest-paid skilled workers. The Regime of Economy undermined this objective and played havoc with real earnings across all sectors of the workforce. Pressure was maintained on management to make savings wherever possible and to pare 'superfluous' overhead expenditure. As a result, management tended to take a broad view of what constituted 'highest-paid skilled workers' and in the 1926 campaign increases in wages were generally minimal and limited to the lowest grades of workers. Simultaneously, renegotiations of collective agreements were often used to introduce higher norms or lower rates, to reduce holidays, and lengthen work-days.
The squeeze on 'overhead expenditure' invariably had a negative effect on all grades of workers. Cuts were made in expenditure on housing, social insurance, labour safety, work clothing, upkeep of the factory committee, cultural work, payments for transport, and places in sanatoriums, houses of rest and nurseries.

While it is easy to blame management, as the party and union leadership did, management was simply responding to pressure from party and state organs. At the same time party and union organs did little to prevent the erosion of workers' wages and conditions. Despite the fact that overhead expenditures on workers' daily and cultural needs were targeted for cuts in the collective agreement campaign at the end of 1925, the bureau of the party fraction of the VTsSPS refused to rule out further cuts. It instructed the VTsSPS and its departments to seek out benefits set by collective agreements that were in excess of the legal minimum, so that they could be cut or reduced. The fraction also ordered the VTsSPS to issue a directive to all unions to strictly reject any demands for increases in expenditure on worker benefits in the renegotiation or review of collective agreements. With the party forcing the unions - the supposed defenders of worker interests - to adopt such a position, it is no surprise that the VTsSPS, reviewing the results of the 1926 collective agreement campaign, found that economic trusts had again pursued reductions in worker benefits. In some instances the new collective agreements stipulated conditions which even contravened the labour code.

Managerial and, even more significantly, union and state bureaucratic structures were not entirely blameless. It is hardly surprising to discover that they were not very adept at trimming their own organisations and resisted targeting themselves in the course of the campaign. This was raised by the Informotdel report on the conduct of the first
months of the campaign, which even noted a degree of collusion between various bureaucratic structures, including organs of the RKI itself, in resisting the campaign. To cite some examples included in the report as typical:

In the Biiskii region the RKI Regime of Economy Commission attached to the Kommuna trust ruled that "the trust's enterprises are organized ideally - exactly like Ford", and claimed that "no changes were required";

In Irkutsk province some central organs stated that the administrative apparatus and its expenditure had already been cut earlier;

Individual textile syndicates claimed that the administrative apparatus was not subject to reductions, while 'other' directorships claimed that "everything was done before the decision of the Central Committee".

In order to tackle this tendency, set levels of cuts were imposed by decree. On 7 October 1926 the Labour and Defence Council (STO), and on 20 November 1926 the Politburo issued directives ordering 15% reductions to be made on all administrative and management overhead expenditures. This was implemented by the VSNKh by an immediate review of the already set budgets for the 1926/7 financial year, reducing budgets for administrative and managerial expenditures by a reported average of 12%, and for general factory overhead expenditures by 8%, in relation to actual expenditure in the second half of 1925/26.

Central organs, however, continued to uncover cases where cuts not only failed to be implemented, but where administrative and overhead expenditures actually increased (examples given include electrical, quarrying, food-processing, timber, paper, and metal sectors). In January and February of 1927 the RSFSR RKI conducted an inspection of 45 economic bodies: seven central and 38 local. Among the seven central bodies it found that the
number of staff had actually increased from 783 to 794, while among the 38 local organisations the decrease in staff was "insignificant" - from 3,015 to 2,903. The inspection also uncovered managerial manipulation in order to meet specific Regime of Economy targets: while the bodies being inspected reported a general decrease in overtime and piece-rate payments of 27.8%, the actual total wages bill was discovered to have grown by 20% during the course of the 1925/26 financial year.

The failure to make cuts extended into the highest levels of bureaucratic structures. In March 1927 the VTsSPS Presidium heard that, contrary to repeated directives and resolutions of trade union congresses, the majority of the central councils of individual trade unions had not decreased the size of their apparatus, and some had even grown significantly. The Presidium again instructed all union central councils to reduce their staff numbers by the start of the second half of 1927 and to adopt measures to reduce staffing levels across their local organs.

More worrying for the central party leadership, however, was the fact that neither the VSNKa nor RKI were able to supply accurate figures for actual industrial expenditure. Having deprived themselves of unbiased channels of information and market forces to gauge the efficiency of enterprises, the party leadership at the centre was increasingly forced to rely on anecdotal evidence being turned up by party and RKI inspections. As previously stated, these inspections were eager to uncover 'spectacular' 'waste' and their 'revelations' led the central party leadership to conclude that bureaucratic and managerial organs were intentionally undermining central policies.
The Regime of Economy was also undermined by policies emanating from the centre itself. Regimentation and attempts at tightening central control over the economy increased the burdens of reporting and the bureaucratization of the Soviet economy. Similarly, the expansion of party and union organs in the factory (see chapter 6) withdrew increasing quantities of labour from active production, the cost of which had to be borne by the nation's economy. The very organ assigned with tackling the problem of waste, the RKI, also added to the bureaucratic burden. This burden extended beyond simply the extra personnel involved. In keeping with the character of Bolshevik executive culture, the precise role of the RKI was poorly defined (if it even ever had been fully conceived), adding to bureaucratic conflicts and administrative complexities. In practice some RKI Regime of Economy Commissions adopted the role of an additional parallel managerial structure. An Informotdel report on the campaign cited examples such as the Kiev Metal Trust where without the Commission's advance permission "not a single expenditure could be undertaken - in other words a new level of bureaucracy was created, that could only slow work down".

The same report and a later Informotdel report on production commissions and meetings both complained of extensive confusion over the exact delimitation of responsibilities between the RKI Regime of Economy Commissions and production commissions and meetings. Within such an atmosphere of ambiguity over powers and responsibility, there was a disinclination to cooperate and the RKI and Control Commissions made almost no use of Production Commissions and Meetings in their rationalisation of enterprises. This led to duplication and situations where management had to juggle conflicting instructions emanating from different organs.
The implementation of the Regime of Economy was not, of course, uniform. There is much evidence to suggest that widespread collusion between management and workers also existed to negate the impact of this latest campaign, just as in previous campaigns. Output was modified in order to maximise the aspects stipulated in payment/output calculations (e.g.: increase in sheer mass of production while compromising on quality; production of less assortment; production of heavier, thicker, thinner, etc. product); administrative fiddles were pursued to help workers meet targets or increase take-home wages (e.g.: defective goods were passed as fit, employees were reclassified as workers, payment calculations restructured so as to increase bonus payments); or discipline relaxed and absenteeism ignored to placate worker tensions. RKI inspections of industries in the Sokol'niki district of Moscow in 1926, for example, found absenteeism rates of up to 15-20%. They also found huge stockpiles of defective and semi-finished goods in many factories, which had lain untouched for up to two years. In the Porcelain Trust in the Ukraine, RKI inspections revealed that bonus and overtime payments totalled 37.2% of all wages paid out. A commission reviewing the Moscow Leather Trust reported that when the trust had been instructed to sack employees, it simply 're-classified' a number of employees as 'workers' and thus maintained its apparatus intact. In January 1927, the OGPU reported that in the Marti metalworks in Nikolaev (Ukraine), false job-chits were issued to workers to ensure they received bonuses.

Such worker-management collusion was achieved not simply on the basis of mutual affinity for the hardships faced by each respective party. As management on every level came under increasing pressure from external agencies to meet or exceed plan targets, it found itself increasingly vulnerable to worker threats of withdrawing or relaxing the intensity of their labour, irrespective of whether these
threats were actually formulated or merely implied. The Informational department of the OGPU reported in November 1926, for example, that in the cast moulding shop of the Marti foundry a party member and trade union pleni potentiary had threatened personally to lead a strike if piece-rates were not set at a level where it would be possible for workers to earn 150% of their basic set payment rate. "As a result of worker pressure...", the report continued, "... one shop earns bonuses of 145%, while another, where the norm-setter is firmer, earns 85%. Over the last 6 months the workers have increased the size of their bonus from 60% to 120-125%"\textsuperscript{101}.

Collusion between management and workers begins to reveal the detrimental effects of campaigns such as the Regime of Economy. The detrimental effects went beyond increases in the bureaucratic burden upon industry, hampering administrative efficiency, and increases in waste as a result of defective output or inefficient product. In many cases, the campaigns wreaked havoc with budgets and plans, and even damaged economic output and capacity. As in the case of the Marti foundry cited above, reductions in basic payment rates had to be compensated by increases in bonus payments that were not budgeted for. As a result "The factory is running at a loss, it is not paying wages on time. The IuMT had compiled its budgets on the basis of average bonus rates of only 57.5%, while in reality they are forced to pay, on average, across the factory, 150%. This disrupts all the plans"\textsuperscript{102}. The emphasis on meeting short-term targets, often set or increased under the pressure of party organs, led to machinery being run at excessive speeds, resulting in premature breakdowns and shortened life-spans. The passing of defective product as fit had knock-on effects in other shops, factories and industries further down the production chain, particularly where the output consisted of processed materials, semi-finished or capital goods.
In the Textile sector, for example, poorly spun thread meant that weaving looms had to be halted more often in order to repair broken threads, reducing output and worker earnings, and increasing tensions in the mills. Another typical example is provided by the Zlatoustovsky machine factory (Uz Zh Ural Trust). In July 1926, 25 new grinding wheels manufactured by the Zlatoustovsky Artificial Grinding wheel factory were installed in the blacksmith shop. When they were put into use, all 25 wheels shattered, seriously injuring one worker and leading to a one-day stoppage in protest by the entire shift.

The economic policies being promoted from the centre also escalated tensions between workers, specialists and management, damaging shop-floor relations. Persistent reductions in rates and increases in norms raised worker hatred towards norm-setters and foremen. The increasing publicity given to management 'opposition' to the Regime of Economy and encouragement of worker denunciation of management waste and defects legitimised workers' attacks against management.

(v) The LenMash Trust

An OGPU investigation of the operations of the Leningrad Machine-Construction Trust during the financial year of 1925-26 provides a useful case study for illustrating many of the themes discussed in this chapter. (It is also worth noting as an illustration of the extent to which the OGPU was involved in monitoring the nation's enterprises and investigating managerial practices.)

The trust was responsible for all heavy industry in Leningrad, representing some of the nation's most sophisticated and important enterprises, including the Krasnyi Putilov, Karl Marks, and Sverdlov works. The OGPU
investigation uncovered that "the directorship, with the aim of covering up the true state of affairs, knowingly gives false figures and results in its official reports to the centre."

The trust obtained 15 million roubles from central state funds specifically for the purposes of financing the expansion, modernisation, retooling and rationalisation of production, yet almost nothing was done in these spheres and the funds were instead used to cover up production losses run up by individual enterprises of the trust. The trust officially admitted losses of 600,000R for the Krasnyi Putilov works, 192,000R for the Karl Marks works, and 177,757R for the Sverdlov works - while in reality they were running up losses at many times that level.

Tractors produced by the Krasnyi Putilov works, for example, were officially sold for 2,700R, with the trust claiming production costs of 2,589.46R. The OGPU, however, calculated that each tractor was costing the trust some 4,000R to produce, the lower figure being achieved by creative accountancy, with the losses being covered out of the 15 million roubles allocated for 'modernization.'

The trust's actual production, when compared to its official programme, suggests that the programme was set at far too ambitious levels - in the Krasnyi Putilov works 422 tractors were actually completed, versus a planned 12,000. Production was motivated more by trying to claim to meet specific programme criteria than completing saleable output. Thus large amounts of the trust's production during the 1925-26 financial year was represented by half-finished goods. In total only 50-60% of the production programme was achieved. This is, of course, only a quantitative assessment. When one examines output in qualitative terms the picture deteriorates further. The OGPU obliged our interests in this respect by focusing on the Krasnyi Putilov tractor.
The tractor was a direct copy of a Ford model, and it is difficult to overemphasise the importance and hopes that were attached to this production line. In official tests the Putilov tractor took 8 hours and 15 minutes to plough 2,400 square sazhen (approximately 11,000 square meters) and used 53 litres of fuel, the Ford original took 4.5 hours, using 33 litres of fuel. Owing to poor quality the Putilov tractor engine wore out quickly, and the testers listed numerous defects, including a radiator that leaked upon its first filling. In the first four months of 1927 21 tractors were entirely repackaged and returned to the factory by the clients. Sel'skoiuz purchased 72 tractors - under warranty the factory had to send them 2 replacement tractors and 7,000 roubles worth of spare parts (the official cost of a further two and a half tractors). The OGPU estimated that defective product accounted for over 20% of the total value of the tractor production line's output (while the official accounts listed the cost of defective output at 5%). 55% of defects were deemed to be caused by the poor quality of the metals used and illustrate the knock-on effects of defective production in one link of the production process was having further down the production chain.

The OGPU investigation implies that management incompetence was to blame for all the troubles in the LenMash Trust. The OGPU, apparently, failed to consider that perhaps the reason funds allocated to modernization and rationalisation were being used to cover up losses was because costs had been calculated at unrealistically low levels under the political pressures of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation Campaign and the Regime of Economy.

To be fair, the OGPU also uncovered straightforward misuse of the trust's funds and poor management: a specialist was sent to America to monitor the completion of an order placed by the trust for five dredgers, however, instead of
exerting any pressure on the American company, the specialist was reputed to have spent some 22 months travelling up and down California sampling its pleasures. The OGPU thought that this was more than a case of poor financial control, but also an example of ill-judged allocation of human resources as the specialist in question was known to have drinking bouts lasting up to two months and thus may not have been the most appropriate individual to send to California.

(vi) Conclusions on the Regime of Economy

As with previous campaigns, after an initial burst of 'activity' the momentum of the Regime of Economy dwindled. By June 1927 the Informotdel was reporting on a campaign that was perceived to be on its last legs. The Informotdel complained that local party attention to the campaign had fallen steadily during the period of October 1926 to April 1927: the number of "Regime of Economy issues" discussed by party committees declined systematically from month to month; convening of the party aktiv specifically for the purposes of discussing "Regime of Economy issues" was reported only by two party committees; only four party committees had sent circular letters on the subject to lower party organs; and only four party committees had referred to the subject in their closed letters to party cells. Of course, this is in itself highly indicative of the way central party organs assessed the success of a campaign - in terms of how many times it had appeared on the agendas and in the circular letters of lower party organs. Having deprived itself of independent analytical institutions and unbiased channels of communication, the leadership had little choice but to evaluate economic campaigns in such terms. This only further undermined the opportunities for real economic gains as the reporting structure encouraged an emphasis on 'paper flurries',
meetings and resolutions, rather than actual methodical and researched action.

Many of the defects in the results of the campaign were acknowledged within the highest levels of the party. In analysing the success of the campaign, in June 1927, the Informotdel concluded that the opportunities for savings had barely been exploited while the deficiencies of the campaign were much the same as they had been six months earlier. Its main conclusions were that:

- achievements to date had been mainly through the implementation of obvious and petty economies;
- the state and economic management apparatus had succeeded largely in escaping the focus of the campaign, while workers continued to bear the brunt of economies through reductions in wages and deteriorations in their working, living and cultural conditions;
- the "struggle for economy" remained sporadic, and not integrated into the daily work of state and economic organs;
- "formal", "bureaucratic attitudes" continued to dominate, with worker masses still insufficiently involved (worker proposals were not given sufficient consideration, proposals were not properly thought out, unfulfillable promises were made);
- and often measures which actually damaged or worsened the state of production were implemented in the name of the Regime of Economy"\textsuperscript{13}.

Nevertheless the party leadership continued to refuse to blame its own policies for these defects, attributing them instead to errors in implementation by local organs, and undermining of central policies by management, union and lower party organs. Increasingly it came to believe that this undermining was not innocent and unconscious\textsuperscript{14}. This provided the foundation for the escalation of the party's hostility towards 'bourgeois' specialists and management that would culminate in the show-trials and purges of this sector of society.
(vii) Increasing Centralisation, Regimentation and Standardisation of the Economy and 'Rationalisation of Production'

The nation's leadership responded to the perceived undermining of its policies at the local level by attempting to increase centralisation, regimentation and standardisation of the economy. This desire was also motivated by frustration over the lack of accurate information being received about what was happening in the nation's factories, and the abundance of conflicting reports on basic issues such as movements in wages, output and inflation. Centralism can be seen as inherent in Bolshevik corporate culture and was reflected in constant central intervention in the management of individual industries, trusts and factories throughout the first half of the 1920s. Centralism and regimentation escalated throughout the second half of the NEP, with:

- increasing regimentation of party, union and state organisational structures and procedures (see chapter 6);
- increasing transition to central planning via the issue of control figures;\(^{115}\);
- increasing involvement of the Politburo in the setting of wages and specification of wage increases;
- standardisation and national synchronisation of collective agreements;
- the introduction of new universal wage-tariff handbooks for the new collective agreement of 1927-28 (see below);
- and the introduction of the 'Rationalisation of Production Campaign'.

The 'Rationalisation of Production' Campaign was launched in the spring of 1927, aimed at maximising the efficiencies of economies of scale. Its objectives were to achieve full utilisation of plant and machinery, and to standardise and reduce the range of goods produced to allow for greater specialisation of factories and production lines.\(^{116}\) This campaign was pursued within the now constant struggle to reduce input costs and maximise output. It was envisaged
that this would increase the efficiency of the economy and make it easier to administer and control centrally. In 1928, under the aim of maximising the use of machinery the transition to a three-shift system was advocated. As with earlier efforts this campaign was imposed from above and led by party organs to overcome local 'resistance'. As previously, 'rationalisation' was all too frequently implemented as 'intensification', with predictable results. At the same time the change-over to continuous 'three-shift' production was imposed by decree on entire industries with little consideration given as to whether it was actually prudent to do so in each individual case.

The introduction of three-shift work was particularly advocated for machinery-intensive industries such as the textile sector. In this sector three-shift work began to be introduced in the first months of 1928, predominantly in the Central Industrial Region. By October 1928, 126,500 workers were engaged in three-shift work, the vast majority of these, 113,000, being textile workers (accounting for 22% of the labour force in this sector). The introduction of extra shifts also had the benefit of creating additional employment for new workers and in January 1929 it was decreed that all industries should transfer to three-shift work during the course of the first five-year plan.\(^7\)

While gains in total output were achieved, the transition to virtually continuous use of machinery also had negative implications. Continuous operation of enterprises meant that there was little opportunity for factory halls to cool or for dust to settle, adding to the hazards faced by workers and the increasing accident rate (see chapter 1). Three-shift work left little time for proper servicing of machinery and the decreed nature of the transition, with its accompanying political colouring, inhibited 'bourgeois' specialists from shutting down production lines to undertake preventative repairs. This disproportionately
shortened life-spans of machinery and resulted in increases in work stoppages owing to mechanical breakdowns.\textsuperscript{118}

The centrally-dictated nature of three-shift work and the politicisation of this economic measure was its greatest failing. Production simply outpaced supplies resulting in constant stoppages. Factories and workers were forced to make do with whatever raw materials could be obtained, irrespective of their suitability for the given task. Quality of output plummeted, with knock-on effects down production chains. Efficiency and workers' wages suffered. In the textile sector, the introduction of three-shift work was quickly followed by an escalation of worker discontent and strike activity (see chapter 5).

This assessment of 'Rationalisation of Production' and 'three-shift' work was confirmed by a meeting of senior party, union and state officials, convened by the Orgraspred Department of the Central Committee in October 1928 to discuss the recent wave of conflicts in the textile industry. This meeting also illustrates that, as before, the highest party circles were clearly made aware of the situation and that little had changed by the end of the NEP. G.N. Mel'nichanskii, chairman of the Textile Workers' Union, reported that "We thought that when we introduced a seven-hour day [three-shift system - AP] there would be celebrations in the street by workers, instead ... in almost all enterprises where a seven hour workday and three-shifts were introduced, worker dissatisfaction has escalated". Mel'nichanskii then proceeded to explain how workers' output and wages had fallen as a result of production outpacing the supply of materials or by increases in the frequency of mechanical breakdowns.\textsuperscript{119}

On the subject of 'Rationalisation of Production', Mel'nichanskii continued, "All the time we have rationalisation, rationalisation, rationalisation. When
you speak with management, eye to eye, they say: work in
the mills has become very heavy. Real rationalisation,
technological improvement in the textile industry has been
almost non-existent". Chernysheva, representing the
Leningrad Provincial Department of the Textile Workers'
Union, complained that there had been no capital investment
and that "rationalisation has been implemented exclusively
at the cost of workers' labour"  

Responding to criticisms over the lack of technical
rationalisation in the textile sector, Vorob'ev, representing the All-Soviet Textile Syndicate, complained
that it was "simply absurd" to expect an industry with a
capital of 1.5 billion roubles to be able to maintain and
restore existing plant and at the same time "create
something new" for 150 million roubles. He complained that
the Krasnyi Perekop mill and mills in Orekhovo-Zuevo were
currently standing idle because of breakdowns of power
plants - "We cannot put our power plants in order because
of a lack of funds, and now Gosplan is proposing to give us
20% less than last year. We cannot give anything to
improving labour safety or housing"  

Vorob'ev also provided an illustration of the damaging
effects that imposed 'rationalisation' in the supply of raw
materials was having on industry. In 1925-26, he told the
meeting, cotton mills operated with a 2.5-3 month supply of
cotton; in 1927, after the 'rationalisation' of supply
procedures, cotton mills operated with a 1.25-1.4 month
supply; since September 1928, the mills had been forced to
work with a ten day supply. As a result there was no
opportunity to sort raw cotton, workers were now forced to
work with incorrect grades, thread was spun to
inappropriate strengths, and tears were frequent, lowering
worker output and wages. "We are forced to throw raw
materials from one mill to another, which increases costs.
Not even in England, where you can buy cotton on the
exchange and have it in your mill in 3 days, do mills work with 10 day reserves". He stated that the Textile Syndicate had begged the Central Committee to allow them to halt production for the month of October 1928, so that they could build up reserves which would allow for cotton to be sorted, but they were told that "we must adopt heroic measures to find a way out of this difficult situation". This, once again, provides a clear indication of the party's responsibility, in this case the Central Committee's responsibility, for 'wrecking' Soviet industry.

Previously, Vorob'ev continued, production was planned on the basis of allowing 25 days for cotton to be transported from the Central Asian regions of the USSR, where it was grown, to the mills in the Central Industrial Region. By the summer of 1928 this had been reduced to 11-12 days. Now all the directorship of the textile industry, Vorob'ev complained, are forced to sit on the phone and send constant telegrams following the progress of each train. "Under such circumstances, one cannot work calmly and normally, and in my report to Kuibyshev and in the VSNKha's report to the Politburo we openly wrote that in November and December 1928 there will be stoppages, disturbances and output costs will rise and we will not be able to fulfil the financial plan. But we are ordered to work!"

A similar situation existed in the weaving halls. As previously noted, poorly-spun thread had knock-on effects in the weaving of cloth - multiplying defective product and time lost to mending tears. In the name of rationalisation, reserve stocks of cotton thread had also been minimised. As a result loom operators had to make frequent change-overs in the type, grade and size of cloth being produced, dictated by the type of thread that happened to be delivered. As Chernysheva complained: a worker spends 2-3 days getting used to producing a new product, bringing output up to top levels, and then she is
told to change over; on 1 October 1928, not a single factory had a firm production programme, no factory knows how much thread it will get, what it will produce and how many workers it requires124.

Sokolov, representing worsted trusts, voiced similar complaints. He stated that some of their mills were having to work with half-day supplies and that they never knew in what form thread would arrive, whether on cards, bobbins or drums. "Workers look at us as if we are fools when we want to rationalise production when we cannot keep workers supplied with materials at present production levels"125.

The 'Rationalisation of Production' Campaign extended to an attempt to centrally 'rationalise' wages across all industrial sectors. Party organs had always been prepared to intervene in the setting of wage levels and in 1924 and 1925 this intervention increased, developing into central control over wages. In 1924 the Politburo created a special Wages Commission to examine wages and payment arrears in specific industries, trusts and enterprises. These commissions adjusted wages at will in individual enterprises, trusts and entire industrial sectors126. Throughout 1925 the Politburo regularly passed resolutions specifying the exact levels of increases to be allowed in each industrial sector127. In September it finally ruled that no increases in wages would be allowed in the renegotiation of collective agreements in the autumn of 1925, without the increases being first examined by the Politburo itself. In the same resolution, the Politburo also instructed the Wages Commission to develop "practical measures which would guarantee control over the negotiation of collective agreements", seeking to establish central control over movements in wages128.

In 1927, in order to combat worker and managerial subversion of official wages policy (to achieve both higher
or lower wages than those intended by the Politburo) the introduction of new standardised wage-tariff handbooks was advocated. The new wage-tariff handbooks were to be applied to all workers across all enterprises. A separate handbook for each industry would categorise all functions in that industry to specific grade points, whose number was to be kept to a minimum and correspond to similar grade point structures for other industries. The ratio of lowest to highest wages was also to be centrally set, in line with national policy objectives of reducing wage differentials. The complex task of developing new wage scales dragged on through 1927 and officially came into force in January 1928, although in many industries categorisation of job functions remained incomplete.

As the objective for the new wage-tariff handbooks was to facilitate central control over wages, their introduction also incorporated a general rates and tariff reform in order to reduce the proportion of wages being paid out in bonuses. The declared basis for the setting of new rates and tariffs was that they should reflect the "technical maximum" - i.e. the amount that could be technically produced using the full capacity of machinery over the course of a fully-utilised working day. This was a clear instruction for the implementation of yet more drastic reductions in rates and increases in norms, which is precisely what occurred in many industries with the introduction of the new wage scales and corresponding collective agreements at the start of 1928. To cite one example: in the summer of 1928, in the Krasnaya Vetka Mill (Ivanovo-Voznesensk province) the operating speed of the machinery in the Vaternyi department was increased from 7,800 to 9,300 rpm. overnight, without even advising the factory committee. This resulted in a significant increase in the number of tears, reducing output and worker earnings. Sharp dissatisfaction lasted for a month before the old speeds were restored.
While it is hardly surprising that such changes aroused hostility among workers (see chapter 5), opposition to the campaign extended into the party organisation itself. The bureau of the Urals Party Committee, on 3 January 1928, refused to implement Moscow's instructions, passing the following resolution:

Consider the implementation of tariff reform in the current year, inexpedient, in light of the fact that the full implementation of this reform will cause reduction in the wages of significant groups of workers.

Even the bureau of the Moscow Party Committee clearly feared provoking a worker backlash and advocated against tariff reform where this was likely to be opposed by workers.

The underlying defect of the wage-tariff handbook campaign, however, was not merely its attempt to reduce bonus payments by reviewing rates and tariffs. The central defect of the campaign was to attempt to embrace all the complexities of a national economy within one set of centrally-imposed tables. Conflict was inevitable in such an oversimplification of industrial processes, especially when imposed from above in a relatively short period of time. Furthermore the imposed wage-tariff handbooks were inflexible and did not make allowances, for example, for the condition of machinery. This had very significant ramifications in such processes as cotton spinning and weaving, where the potential output rates were highly dependent not only on the skill and diligence of the operator, and on the type of machinery, but also on the actual condition of the machinery.

This was the implied criticism delivered by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist party in its resolution of 28 January 1928, perhaps the highest-
level condemnation of Moscow's practice of imposing changes in rates and norms from above:

In light of the fact that the simultaneous implementation across all industry of such major campaigns as the renegotiation of collective agreements (tariff reform, review of output norms and piece rates) creates political tension among the worker masses, acknowledge as essential that in future the review of output norms and piece rates will be implemented not in the order of a shock [udarnyi] campaign, but in the order of the daily planned work of enterprises, on the basis of thorough study of the issues of norm-setting and taking into consideration the rationalisation of production that has already taken place and technical and organisational improvements being introduced.\(^135\)

The imposed nature of the campaign, the complexity of the task of composing universal wage-tariff tables, and worker dissatisfaction was reflected in the difficulty encountered in concluding Collective Agreements for 1928 (see also chapter 5). The whole campaign was drawn out by several months beyond its allocated term. Directives, new tariff tables and skill guides were sent out late, additional wage funds were delayed as were directives on its allocation—all exacerbating worker dissatisfaction.\(^136\)

As always, the party hierarchy in Moscow refused to blame itself or its own policies. At the end of the NEP, central organs still regarded worker discontent as a product of insufficient preparatory work, poor leadership and defects in the implementation of campaigns by local party, union and management organs.\(^137\) The party's politicisation of economic policies and campaigns undermined them, negating economic benefits and damaging the productive efficiency of the economy. Its policies exacerbated tensions in labour relations and did little to win the active support of the working masses for the regime. At the same time the party's managerial culture increased the bureaucratic burden that had to be borne by the economy.
In the end the Intensification and Rationalisation, Regime of Economy, and Rationalisation of Production campaigns failed to deliver what was expected of them. While certainly one can find numerous examples of significant savings, the anticipated massive surpluses to finance capital growth did not materialize. Having devoted some half a decade to campaign after campaign aimed at extracting capital from the industrial sector, the party leadership ran out of ideas and patience. It was thus forced, albeit by its own actions, to seek to extract capital from the countryside. The end of the smychka, the foundation of the NEP, was now in sight. The continued 'revelations' of spectacular 'waste' and failures to implement 'rationalisation', led the central party leadership to conclude that bureaucratic and managerial organs were intentionally undermining central policies. By the end of the NEP, official reports were citing 'waste', failures in 'rationalisation' drives, and 'mismanagement' as evidence of 'anti-soviet' and 'treasonous' behaviour among administrative-technical personnel. This set the scene for the escalation of anti-specialist hysteria of the First Five-Year Plan and the 1930s.

2. The VI Trade Unions Congress in November 1924, directed that, in the absence of an influx of investment capital, future growth demanded a long-term process of accumulation of capital by increasing industrial incomes and achieving strict reductions in costs both of production and government - A. Ginzburg, "Rezhim ekonomii i profsoiuzy", pp. 3-7 in *Vestnik Truda*, No. 6, June 1926, p. 3.

3. See, for example: "Protokoly zasedanii komissii TsK i TsKK po voprosam zarabotnoi platy", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. B4, d. 922; "Protokol No. 70 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 8 iulya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 510, item 12; "Protokol No. 95 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 12 dekabrya 1925g.", item 9 and appendix 1 "O zarabotnoi plate tekstilei (utverzhdeno politbiuro TsK RKP(b) 12.XII.25 g.)", d. 535; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za oktyabr' mesyats 1926 g. (po dannym OGPU)", 9 November 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, 1. 116.


5. A. Gastev, "Baza vliyaniya TsIT'a. Razmakh raboty TsIT'a", pp. 77-82 in *Vestnik Truda*, No. 3, March 1926, p. 77; Beissinger, p. 35.

6. Gastev, pp. 77-82; Beissinger, pp. 41-42.

7. Ginzburg, p. 3.


11. Rates remained unchanged for the lowest and highest grades, with the greatest reductions for workers of grades 5, 6 and 7 (18%, 20% and 14% respectively), who made up the core of the production workforce - "Tarifnaya setka", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 8.

12. "V Obkom RKP(b) t. Kharitonovu ili Vasil'evu - Doklad", this copy forwarded to the Central Committee, to Molotov and Stalin, by Rumyantsev, the Secretary of the Zlatoust Regional Committee, marked "Top Secret", circa May 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 4.


14. "V Obkom RKP(b) t. Kharitonovu ...", l. 4.

15. "Vypiska iz protokola No. 22 - zasedaniya Miasskogo Raionnogo Komiteta RKP ot 19 Maya 1924 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 10.

16. "V Obkom RKP(b) t. Kharitonovu ...", l. 4-5.

17. This was regarded as a major failing in the industrial life of the USSR, particularly with regards to poor worker discipline, with workers abandoning their stations at the slightest pretexts. See, for example: M. Dynnik, "Proizvodstvenye soveshchaniya i NOT", pp. 90-98 in Vestnik Truda, No. 4, April 1925, pp. 90, 92; G. Veinberg, "Proizvodstvenye soveshchaniya (Opyt Leningrada)", pp. 169-188 in Vestnik Truda, No. 6, June 1925, p. 179.

18. See, for example: M. Tomskii, "K nedostatkam profsoiuznogo mekhanizma", pp. 3-18 in Vestnik Truda, No. 7, July 1925, p. 14; "Informatsionno-direktivnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 7 ot 18/VII/1925 g.", pp. 3-28 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, p. 20. "Rezoliutsiya o tarifnoi raboty III-go plenuma VTsSPS", December 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 84, l. 23.

19. "Protokol No. 32 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 30 oktyabrya 1924g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 472, item 17; "Protokol No. 41 ... ot 18 dekabrya 1924g.", d. 481, item 8; "Protokol No. 43 ... ot 3 yanvarya 1925g.", d. 483, item 22.

21. Ibid., pp. 54, 56.

22. Ibid., p. 54.

23. See, for example: "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za period s 15-go maya po 15-e avgusta 1924 g. (po dannym OGPU SSSR)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, l. 91; "Obzor ... za yanvar' m-ts 1925 goda (po dannym OGPU)", d. 181, l. 11, 16.; "Obzor ... za fevral' 1925 goda (po dannym OGPU SSSR)", l. 49.

24. See, for example: "Doklad o kampanii po podnyatiu proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela OGPU s noyabrya-24g. po 1 marta-25g.)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, l. 61; "Obzor ... za mart 1925 goda (po dannym OGPU)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 181, l. 72.

25. See, for example, "O proyavleniyakh nedovol' stva v svyazi s kampaniei podnyatiya proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela TsK RKP(b) po 10/X)", circa 10 October 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 2, l. 1-2.

26. "Vopros o konflikte na zavode 'Profintern' rassmotrennyi na zasedanii Sekretariata TsK RKP(b) 2 marta 1925 goda", marked "Top Secret", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 867, l. 3-4.

27. "Informatsionno-direktivnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 7 ...", p. 20. The importance attached to this statement is reflected by its repeated citation in related articles - see, for example, Robinson, "Pered novymi dostizheniyami (K politike zarplaty v 1925-26 g.)", pp. 29-35 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, p. 29.

28. Ginzburg, "K voprosu o proizvoditel'nosti truda i politike zarplaty", pp. 73-77 in Vestnik Truda, No. 4, April 1925, p. 75.

29. Robinson, "Rost ...", pp. 52-53.

30. "Doklad o kampanii ...", l. 57; see also chapter 5.

32. Tomskii, writing in Vestnik Truda, condemned the situation where norms and output had increased, but total take-home wages had fallen - "K nedostatkam ...", p. 14.

33. "Informatsionno-direktivnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 7 ...", p. 20.

34. "Protokol No. 17 – zasedanii komissii TsK i TsKK po zarplatе ot 23 марта 1925", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, 1. 52.

35. "Protokol No. 55 – zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 2 апреля 1925г.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 495, item 15.

36. Ibid..

37. "Informatsionno-direktivnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 7 ...", p. 20.

38. "Dobavlenie k vyvodam o nastroeniyakh", appended to "O nastroeniyakh v rabochikh massakh", produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, circa 20 March 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 903, 1. 66.

39. Ibid., 1. 66.

40. "Protokol No. 55 ... ot 2 апреля 1925г.", item 15.

41. The January and July collective agreement campaigns of 1924 were conducted under the slogan of "maintaining current salary levels", while the January 1925 campaign officially saw increases of under 2% - Ovsyannikov, "Iul'skie perezakliuchenie dogovorov", pp. 87-95 in Vestnik Truda, No. 10, October 1925, p. 88.

42. For examples see: "Protokol No. 66 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 11 июня 1925г.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 506, item 18 - which raised wages for all textile workers by 10%; "Protokol No. 68 ... ot 25 июня 1925г.", d. 508, item 13 - which raised wages in linen and worsted production by 8% in the mills of Penza, Ulyanov, and the Second Flax-directorship, and by 4% in the mills of the Tambov trust; "Protokol No. 80 ... ot 24 сен'ятьря 1925г.", d. 520, item 14 - which raised wages in the metalworking sector by 9%, in the oil industry by 5.85%, in quarrying by 13.4%, and in mining by 10%; "Protokol No. 83 ... ot 15 октября 1925г.", d. 523, item 1 - which raised wages for oil workers of Baku by 9%; "Protokol No. 84 ... ot 22 октября 1925г.", d. 524, item 16 - which authorised increases of up to 10% for workers in the pulp and paper, chemical, glass, ceramic, and match sectors, up to 7% in military
industries, and ruled that it was "essential" to raise wages of railway workers by 10%, overturning a previous decision of the Politburo; "Protokol No. 95 ... ot 12 dekabrya 1925g.", d. 535, item 10 - which raised wages in the communications sector by 14%.

43. V. Ovsyannikov, "Iul'skie perezakliuchenie dogovorov", pp. 87-95 in Vestnik Truda, No. 10 October 1925, p. 87-88.

44. Production meetings and commissions had begun to make appearances in factories earlier in the year. In Moscow, production meetings and production commissions were initiated by a joint directive of the VTsSPS and the VSNKh, of 21 May 1924, and became operative in the city's factories during September - October 1924 - V. Safronov, "Iz opyta proizvodstvennykh soveshchanii i komissii (Moskva)", pp. 129-133 in Vestnik Truda, No. 3, March 1926, p. 129.

45. Ginzburg, "Rezhim ekonomii ...", p. 3.


47. Krasovitskii, p. 120.


49. N. Evreinov, "Proizvodstvennye kollektivy (Opyt Tuly)", pp. 189-201 in Vestnik Truda, No. 6, June 1925, p. 192.

50. At first, there was no consistency in the form that production meetings took, and by the start of 1925 numerous variants can be identified.

51. "Uchastie yacheek v proizvodstvennoi rabote predpriyatii (Proizvodstvennye soveshchaniya, konferentsii, proizvodstvennye kruzhi, i t.p.). (Dopolnitel'no k svodke na 1 yanvarya). (Po materialam Informotdela TsK RKP(b) na 1 marta 1925g.)." RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 5, l. 50. The Perm Armament works provides a typical example - in October 1924, a production meeting appointed a commission to monitor the work of the materials accountants. The commission was promptly abolished by the director of the works, who ruled that the meeting was not authorised to appoint such commissions - "Prikaz po Permskomu Orudinomu Zavodu No. 25, 31 oktyabrya 1924", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 924, l. 114.
52. Krasovitskii, "Sostoyanie...", p. 124; for further examples see also Evreinov, p. 201.

53. Veinberg, p. 181; Evreinov, p. 201; "O rabote profsoiuzov (po materialam mestnykh partorgnov)", marked for Stalin and "Secret", 10 August 1925, RTsKhIDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 907, l. 35.

54. "Uchastie yacheek ...", l. 50.

55. See, for example, "O rabote profsoiuzov ...", l. 35.

56. Dynnik, p. 90.

57. Krasovitskii, "Soiuzy ...", p. 120.

58. Ibid., p. 120.

59. Dynnik, p. 97.

60. Dynnik, p. 97; Krasovitskii, "Sostoyanie ...", p. 122.


62. "Obzor No. 23 informotdela TsK o proizvodstvennykh komissiyakh i sobraniyah", 16 October 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 57, l. 1; Evreinov, "Proizvodstvennye ...", pp. 191-192; Veinberg, p. 187.

63. Krasovitskii, "Sostoyanie ...", p. 117.

64. "O rabote profsoiuzov ...", l. 36.


66. "Obzor No. 23 informotdela ...", l. 1.

67. "Obzor No. 23 informotdela ...", l. 1-3.

68. "Informatsionnaya spravka o prokhozhdenii proizvodstvennykh konferentsii po promyshlennosti Moskovskoi gubernii", produced by the Orgraspred-Informstat p/o MK VKP, 18 Oct 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 67, l. 102-103.

69. In Leningrad, where workers 'registered' to participate in production meetings, average attendance of meetings increased from 24% of those 'registered' in the fourth quarter of 1925 to 31% in the first quarter of 1926; in Perm, average attendance increased from 14% of the workforce in the first quarter of 1925 to 28% in the second quarter of 1926 - "Obzor No. 23 informotdela ...", l. 2.
70. Reported rates of attendance varied greatly, the highest figures given in party reports included 56% of the workforce attending in the Sormovo works, 28% in the Tula Ammunition works, and 25-30% in the Profintern works in Bryansk; the lowest figures included 2-8% in the spinning halls of the Proletarka mill in Tver', 1.1% in the Zlatoust Mechanical factory, 0.5% in the Tver' Porcelain works, and 0.1% in the Nizhnii Tagil Metallurgical works - Ibid., 1.8.


72. Ginzburg, "Rezhim ekonomii ", p. 5.

73. Komsomolskaya Pravda, 28 April 1926 - as cited in "Obzor No. 16 informotdela TsK o kampanii rezhima ekonomii", 29 June 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 51, l. 11.

74. Ibid., l. 11.

75. Ibid., l. 2-3; Rees, pp. 134-136.


77. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za iul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 27 Aug 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, l. 7.

78. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za avgust mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 29 Sept 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, l. 40; "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 79; "Obzor ... za oktyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 115; "Obzor ... za noyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 156.

79. "Informatsionnaya ... po promyshlennosti Moskovskoi Gubernii", l. 106.

80. Ginzburg, "Rezhim ekonomii ", p. 5; see also "Obzor No. 16 informotdela ", l. 17, which cited the example of the Tambov linen trust, where out of 144 employees (i.e. skilled administrative personnel) only 68 had been with the trust for more than 1 year, 20 between six and twelve months, and 56 less than 6 months. The report noted that in addition to the effect such high levels of staff turnover had on the work of the trust, the payment of holiday wages in advance to those who departed constituted a significant part of the trust's budget, with the trust
owed some 23,400R by employees who had left the trust.

81. "Obzor No. 16 informotdela ..., l. 16.

82. "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 7.

83. "Doklad Sekretarya Ivanovo-Voznesenskogo Gubkoma - t. Kolotilova", presented at a session of the Central Committee Orgraspred department on 2 April 1927, as part of a review of the work of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk party organisation, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 130.

84. Ward, chap. 10; "Obzor ... za noyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 156 - which reported that wages were reduced in 25 mills, including 19 in Moscow.

85. "Obzor ... za oktyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 116; "Obzor ... za noyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 157.

86. "Proekt rezoliutsii NKTruda ob otchete S.I. Kapluna", (on labour safety for the IV Plenum of the VTsSPS, 7 June 1926), RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 84, l. 59; "Informatsionnaya ... po promyshlennosti Moskovskoi Gubernii", l. 106; "Obzor ... za oktyabr' mesyats 1926g (po dannym OGPU)", l. 116; "Obzor ... za noyabr' mesyats 1926g (po dannym OGPU)", l. 156-157; Ginzburg, "Rezhim ekonomii ...", p. 4.

87. "Protokol No. 65 - zasedaniya biuro fraktsii VTsSPS ot 28 aprelya 26g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 82, l. 47, item 4; "... No. 67, 12 maya 26g.", l. 45, item 1.

88. "Rezoliutsiya tarifno ekonomicheskogo soveshchaniya VTsSPS po voprosu 'Itogi i perspektivy perezaklucheniya kollektivnykh dogovorov'", circa August 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 84, l. 217.

89. "Obzor No. 16 informotdela ...", l. 11.

90. "Obzor informotdela TsK - rabota mestnykh partorganizatsii po provedeniiu rezhima ekonomii (za period oktyabr' 26g. - aprel' 27g.)", 4 June 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 102, l. 12.

91. Ibid., l. 12-13.

92. Ibid., l. 13-14.

93. "Protokol No. 9 - zasedaniya prezidiuma VTsSPS ot 4 marta 1927g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 82, l. 163, item 114.

95. See, for example, "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 7. To cite one example of the RKI in action, after studying the goods trading apparatus of the USSR, the NK RKI RSFSR shut down 783 out of 1099 representative offices examined, ruling them to be superfluous, and claiming the move would save 17 million roubles – "Obzor informotdela TsK – rabota mestnykh partorganizatsii ...", 1. 13. See also Rees, pp. 145-154.

96. "Obzor No. 16 informotdela ...", 1. 3.

97. "Obzor No. 16 informotdela ...", 1. 2-3; "Obzor No. 23 informotdela ...", 1. 23, 31.

98. "Obzor No. 16 ...", 1. 16-17.

99. "Informatsionnaya ... po promyshlennosti Moskovskoi Gubernii", 1. 106.

100. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za yanvar' mesyats 1927g. (po dannym OGPU)", 27 February 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 201, 1. 3.

101. "Dokladnaya zapiska - uchastie partiitsev v zabastovkakh i konfliktakh na predpriyatiyakh", produced by the Informational Department of the OGPU, sent to Stalin, 16 Nov 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, 1. 69.

102. Ibid..

103. See, for example: "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 5 – which reported on conflicts in mills in Vladimir, Kostroma, and Leningrad provinces, over reductions in output and earnings by up to 45% as a result of poor quality raw materials; "Obzor ... za oktyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 115 – which reported that the main cause of strikes in the textile sector were reductions in earnings due to inferior raw materials which was preventing workers from fulfilling norms. The report noted 34 mills affected, including 19 in Moscow, with norms being under-fulfilled by 30-50%; and "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 12 (181) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 3 October 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, 1. 65, 68.

104. "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 14.
105. For other examples of OGPU investigations of the management of enterprises see RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 291, especially the documents starting with l. 63 which provide detailed assessment of each individual member of the leadership of the GOMZa Trust.

106. "Vypiska iz informatsionnoi svodki o deyat'nost' Leningradskogo Mashinostroitel'nogo tresta", produced by the Economic Directorship of the OGPU, forwarded to the Central Committee, marked "Top Secret", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 291, l. 40.

107. Ibid., l. 40-43.


109. "Vypiska ... Leningradskogo Mashinostroitel'nogo tresta", l. 42-43:

Production for the 1925-26 financial year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned</th>
<th>Actually produced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12,000 tractors</td>
<td>422 completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 dredgers</td>
<td>5 built, but none handed over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 water turbines</td>
<td>2 built, remainder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 steam turbines</td>
<td>17 built, 9 handed over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diesel engines</td>
<td>total of 12,195hp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totalling 13,005hp</td>
<td>handed over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326,000 pre-war roubles of diesel</td>
<td>180,000 roubles worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engine spare parts</td>
<td>produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 locomotives</td>
<td>18 built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 coal loaders</td>
<td>0 built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151 metal lathes</td>
<td>20 built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,441,600 pre-war roubles of textile</td>
<td>1,697,227 produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>machinery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205 tobacco tube machines</td>
<td>147 built</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

110. "Dokladnaya zapiska o traktorostroenii ...", l. 51-56.

111. "Vypiska ... Leningradskogo Mashinostroitel'nogo tresta", l. 41-42.

112. "Obzor informotdela TsK - rabota mestnykh partorganizatsii ...", l. 3.

113. "Obzor informotdela TsK - rabota mestnykh partorganizatsii ...", l. 11-12, 14-15.
114. See, for example, "Obzor ... za iuli' mesyats 1926g (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 7.


117. Ibid., pp. 500-504.

118. Ibid..

119. "Stenogramma soveshchaniya sovetskih, partiinykh i profsoiuznykh rabotnikov pri orgraspredotele TsK VKP(b) po voprosu o prichinakh konfliktov v tekstil'noi promyshlennosti - zasedanie ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 305, l. 5. For further examples see also "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi gubernii (za 1928 god): Prilozhenie No. 1 - ratsionalizatsiya proizvodstva", produced by the OGPU, 15 September 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, 1. 10-11.

120. "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 8, 21.

121. Ibid., 1. 12.

122. Ibid., 1. 10-13; see also "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 12 ...", 1. 65, 68.

123. "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 10-13; see also "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 12 ...", 1. 68.

124. "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 25-26; see also "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 12 ...", 1. 65, 68.

125. "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 28-29.

126. See "Protokoly ... po voprosam zarabotnoi platy".

127. See above n. 42.

128. "Protokol No. 80 ... ot 24 sen'tyabrya 1925g.", item 14.

129. Carr and Davies, Foundations ... Vol. 1, pp. 534-537.

130. "Itogi koldogovornoi kampanii 1927-1928 gg. - svodka informatsionnogo otdela TsK VKP(b)", 13 September 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 308, 1. 9.

131. See, for example, "Informatsionnaya svodka informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan - Svodka No. 7 (176)", 14 May 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, 1. 4-5 - which reported that in the Krasnoe Sormovo works the new
collective agreement reduced rates in the Diesel shop from 26 to 12 kopecks for one type of valve, and from 2.6 roubles to 60 kopecks for another. In the Mechanical shop, the rates for several details were reduced from 1 rouble to 18 kopecks, for another from 65 to 18 kopecks. In the forging shop, a casting previously rated at 2 roubles, was reduced to 66 kopecks. See also: "Informatsionnaya svodka informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan - Svodka No. 8 (177)", 15 June 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, l. 21; "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 5.

132. "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi ...", l. 9.

133. "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 5.

134. In November 1927 it passed the following resolution:

Acknowledge that in the current agreement campaign, it is possible to introduce new tariff tables in those enterprises where, in agreement with the assessment of the corresponding trade union and management organ, this introduction will not be associated with major difficulties and complications in the conduct of the re-conclusion of agreements

Ibid.

135. "Postanovlenie Politbiuro TsK KP(b)Uk ot 28 yanvarya 1928 goda po Dokladu o predvaritel'nykh itogakh kampanii po perezakliucheniiu Koldogovorov (v dopolnenie k rezoliutsii Politbiuro TsK KP(b)Uk ot 21/I-1928g.)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 26, d. 18, l. 26-27.

136. "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 12.

137. Ibid., l. 7-9, 12; "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi ...", l. 8.

138. See, for example, "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi gubernii (za 1928 god): Prilozhenie No. 2 - nedochety i beskhozaiastvennost' v kapital'nom stroitel'cstve", produced by the OGPU, 15 September 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 12.
(i) Introduction

As was documented in chapter 2, recovery in production and economic stabilisation during 1921-1924 led to a year-on-year reduction in strike activity. This decline was halted by the initiation of the intensification and rationalisation campaigns. As the figures presented in this chapter illustrate, the second half of the NEP saw a dramatic escalation in strike activity. The vast majority of these strikes were in direct response to erosions in earnings caused by the various economic campaigns being initiated from the centre. Strike figures on their own, however, aside from attesting to worker dissatisfaction, tell us little of worker attitudes towards the state. To gain an understanding of worker grievances it is necessary to look at the character of strikes, how they arose, the demands advanced, and how they were resolved. In addition, strikes were not the only manifestation of worker unrest and it is necessary to look beyond work stoppages to assess worker dissatisfaction fully. Despite the escalation in state-labour tensions, worker unrest never again reached the levels recorded in 1905, 1917 or 1921, and did not threaten to depose the regime. To understand the declining ability of workers to challenge central authorities it is also necessary to examine the state's response to worker dissatisfaction.

(ii) Survey of Strikes and Strike Figures, 1924-1928

As in chapter 2, the figures presented here should be treated only as indicative and not accurate measures as the original figures often vary from table to table. In the case of the number of strikes, the variations are small
(within 10%, and rarely exceeding 5%), and consistent in indicating general movements in strike figures. Figures for the number of participants and workdays lost to strikes, are less consistent or reliable. Gaps in various tables indicate that reporting on these aspects was often incomplete. To cite one example: a table of strikes for 1925 produced by the OGPU gives a figure of 2,480 workers involved in strikes in the metalworking sector (out of a total of 3,050-3,270 across all sectors) in January 1925. Yet a special Central Committee Commission investigating the Profintern strike which took place in the same month reported that 2,800 workers were involved in this one strike alone. Gaps are so significant as to make any figures meaningless for the total number of participants prior to 1925, and the total number of workdays lost prior to 1926. It should also be noted that the frequency with which one encounters simple arithmetical and typographical errors in the tables of the time raises further doubts over the accuracy of figures, particularly in the case of the number of participants and workdays lost simply because these were much larger figures. Nonetheless, the figures are consistent and indicative enough in order to be able to draw general conclusions on worker behaviour.

Table 5.1 and graph 5.1, provide concrete evidence of persistent worker militancy and hostility towards their employers throughout the NEP and refute the generally-held belief that strike activity evaporated in the second half of the NEP. The figures reveal that with the launch of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation in 1925, a sharp reversal in the decline in strike activity occurred. After a year-on-year decline in the number of strikes from 1921 to 1924 (see chapter 2), in 1925 the total number of strikes recorded leapt by a third in comparison with 1924, increasing from 327 to 420. This escalation in strike activity persisted in the following years, with a total of 841 strikes recorded in 1926 and 981 in 1927.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of Strikes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 1922</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1922</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1923</td>
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<td>Mar 1923</td>
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<td>Apr 1923</td>
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<td>May 1923</td>
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<td>Jun 1923</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 1923</td>
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<td>Aug 1923</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Sep 1923</td>
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<td>Oct 1923</td>
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<td>Nov 1923</td>
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<td>Dec 1923</td>
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<td>Jan 1924</td>
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<td>Jan 1928</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 1928</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The figures given for April - June and September - October 1923 are acknowledged by the original sources to be incomplete.

Conflicts in data:
- F. 17, op. 87, d. 178, l. 6 confirms the figure of 40 strikes given for September 1923, but states that there were over 50 strikes in October 1923. This is not contradictory as the source which listed the number of strikes in October at 47 acknowledges that this figure is incomplete.

Sources:
- F. 17, op. 84, d. 178, l. 121 lists a figure of 17 strikes for January 1924. D. 922, l. 55 lists figures of 22 strikes in January, 12 in February, 10 in March, 48 in April, 34 in May, and 53 in July 1924. While the figures listed in this source agree with those given in the table left for August - November 1924, a lower figure of 18 is given for December 1924. This is likely because December was the last month covered by this report, hence the compilers may not have yet had the full figures for that month.
For sources see table 5.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Sector</th>
<th>1923</th>
<th>1924</th>
<th>1925</th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1927</th>
<th>Jan-Sep 1928</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>10784</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>20395</td>
<td>3127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6191</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6350</td>
<td>10000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Textile</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>33832</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>11728</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood-working</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Food-Processing</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Printing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
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<td></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10233</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>45023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>19157</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>21449</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>19157</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>301</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>80197</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>104945</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total given in Graph 5.1</strong></td>
<td>430</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>69320</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>100996</td>
<td>981</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Column 1 = Number of strikes
Column 2 = Number of participants in strikes

Notes: The figure given for the number of participants in strikes in 'Other' sectors for 1926 includes participants in the 'Transport' sector.
Figures for strike participants also show an increase in 1926, with over 100,000 involved in strikes, in comparison to 1925, with 69-80,000 involved (no complete figures are available for preceding years). But in 1927, the figure for the total number of participants begins to decline once again, with a total of over 81,000 reported. The increase in participants from 1925 to 1926-27 did not, however, keep pace with the increase in the total number of strikes. This indicates that there was a steady decline in the average numbers involved in each strike, that is in the size of each strike, reflecting a decline in the independent organisational abilities of workers. The average size of strikes declined from those involving some 166 workers in 1925, to around 120 workers in 1926, and 83 in 1927. The most significant decline in the size of strikes occurred in the textile sector, from an average of over 370 involved in each strike in 1925, to an average of around 100 workers involved in each strike in 1926 and 1927. In the textile province of Ivanovo-Voznesensk, while the number of strikes was almost the same in 1926 (60) compared to the previous year (57), the number of strike participants declined from 16,000 in 1925 (an average of 280 per strike) to 4,954 in 1926 (83 per strike). This decline continued in the following year with 49 strikes involving 2,800 participants (57 per strike) recorded in the province in 1927. The high number of participants for 1925 can be seen as a measure of the intensity of worker hostility to the extremes of the Intensification Campaign in the textile sector in 1925. But this decline was not self-perpetuating - the introduction of three-shift working in 1928 in the textile sector brought about a dramatic increase in the scale of strikes in the nation's mills. In Ivanovo-Voznesensk, in the first 8 months of 1928 alone 4,407 workers were involved in 27 strikes - an average of 163 workers per strike, and a big increase over the
previous year. Nationally, in the first 9 months of 1928, 17,000 textile workers participated in 96 strikes (an average of 177 per strike), again a significant increase in the numbers involved over the total for all 12 months of 1927 when 13,000 workers participated in 158 strikes (82 per strike). Similarly, the increased targeting of the metal sector in 1926 for intensification and rationalisation inflated the average size of strikes in this sector from 95 participants per strike in 1925, to 114 in 1926.

Figures for the numbers of workdays lost reveal that strikes, on average, were also getting shorter. At the start of the NEP the average length of strikes was 1-2 days. By 1926 the average length of strikes had fallen to 1.26 days, although this figure is a little misleading - in seasonal industries strikes were longer, averaging 1.6 days, while in non-seasonal industries they were shorter averaging 1 day in length. By 1928 the vast majority of strikes were lasting less than a couple of hours, this being the minimum length of time required for party and union officials to note the specifics of worker grievances, issue promises that they would be examined, and make clear to strikers that continued refusal to work would be interpreted as 'anti-Soviet' action.

Longer strikes, however, can still be found, even at the end of the NEP. A report on strikes during the last two months of 1927 noted that out of the 55 strikes for which details were received, one strike had lasted five days (in a porcelain factory in Bryansk), and one strike had lasted three days (three other strikes had lasted two days, 17 one day, and the remaining 33 less than one day). Similarly, strikes involving larger numbers, from 500 to several thousand, can also be encountered in the last years of the NEP, bearing witness to strong underlying currents of worker dissatisfaction. Larger strikes cited in the same
report included a strike by 2,000 workers of the Liubertsy factory near Moscow (producing agricultural machinery), a strike by 1,000 workers of a sugar refinery in Cherkas, and a strike by 800 dockers in Odessa. A few months later another report recorded a strike by 4,000 workers at the Khalturin cotton mill in Leningrad on 10 April 1928.

A breakdown of strike figures by industrial sector (see table 5.3 and graph 5.3) confirms, as noted in chapter two, that no single branch of industry can claim to dominate worker militancy, with individual sectors prominent during specific periods. In particular, the metal sector was prominent in 1924, and the summers of 1925 and 1926; and the textile sector stands out from early in 1925 onwards, especially in May-June 1925, November 1926 to February 1927, and the summer of 1928. The seasonal sector was responsible for the largest increase in the number of strikes in 1926, accounting for a third of all strikes in that year with 285 reported, as compared with 59 in 1925. These peaks simply reflect when each sector attracted the attention of the various intensification and rationalisation campaigns.

Compiling precise strike figures for 1928, the last year of the NEP, becomes problematic. Complete structured data for all industrial sectors have not been found (although strike figures for certain specific industries were found - see below). While a set of summaries on the "moods of workers and peasants" compiled by the Informotdel of the Central Committee are available, they do not provide consistent monthly data. They do, however, reveal that strike activity continued across all industrial sectors and regions through 1928. The summary dated 14 May 1928, for example, provides details of 20 strikes affecting industries in Moscow, Leningrad, Bryansk, Nizhnii Novgorod, Ul'yanov province, Khar'kov, Kiev, Odessa, Lugansk region, Berdichev region, Artemov region, Viteb region, Groznyi
Table 5.3: Summary of the number of strikes by industrial sector

|       | Metal | Textile | Mining | Chemical | Silicate | Wood- | Food- | Leather | Print | Construct | Seasonal | Dockers | Trans | Other | Ttl 1 | Ttl 2 |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|----------|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Jun 1923 | 47    |         |        |          |          |        |       |         |       |           |          |         |       |       | 18    | 47   |
| Nov    | 60    | 11      |        |          |          |        |       |         |       |           |          |         |       |       | 15    | 60   |
| Dec    | 20    | 5       | 0      |          |          |        |       |         |       |           |          |         |       |       | 10    | 20   |
| Jan 1924 | 19    | 5       | 0      |          |          | 4      |       |         |       | 0         |          |         |       |       | 4     | 15   |
| Feb    | 20    | 5       | 1      | 1       | 0        | 1      |       |         |       | 0         |          |         |       |       | 2     | 5    |
| Mar    | 18    | 5       | 0      | 2       | 1        | 1      |       |         |       | 0         |          |         |       |       | 1     | 12   |
| Apr    | 43    | 9       | 3      | 1       | 5        | 4      |       |         |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 4     | 48   |
| May    | 41    | 9       | 3      | 6       | 4        | 1      |       |         |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 5     | 35   |
| Jun    | 62    | 13      | 7      | 0       | 8        | 2      |       |         |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 5     | 52   |
| Jul    | 32    | 5       | 4      | 4       | 2        | 1      |       |         |       | 0         |          |         |       |       | 3     | 32   |
| Aug    | 24    | 8       | 6      | 3       | 1        | 0      |       | 1      |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 3     | 25   |
| Sep    | 15    | 9       | 3      | 2       | 1        | 1      |       | 1      |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 1     | 15   |
| Oct    | 22    | 4       | 6      | 4       | 0        | 2      |       | 1      |       | 0         |          |         |       |       | 0     | 22   |
| Nov    | 10    | 2       | 3      | 2       | 0        | 0      |       | 1      |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 0     | 10   |
| Dec    | 21    | 8       | 4      | 1       | 1        | 0      |       | 1      |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 0     | 18   |
| Jan 1925 | 17    | 8       | 2      | 2       | 0        |       |       |         |       |           |          |         |       |       | 5     | 17   |
| Feb    | 12    | 6       | 2      |         |          |       |       |         |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 2     | 12   |
| Mar    | 23    | 8       | 4      |         |          |       |       |         |       | 5         |          |         |       |       | 4     | 23   |
| Apr    | 23    | 9       | 8      | 2       |          |       |       |         |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 3     | 23   |
| May    | 41    | 5       | 13     | 5       |          |       |       |         |       | 7         |          |         |       |       | 11    | 41   |
| Jun    | 38    | 8       | 13     | 5       |          |       |       |         |       | 6         |          |         |       |       | 6     | 38   |
| Jul    | 47    | 17      | 5      | 12      |          |       |       |         |       | 10        |          |         |       |       | 3     | 47   |
| Aug    | 30    | 8       | 6      | 2       |          |       |       |         |       | 6         |          |         |       |       | 8     | 30   |
| Sep    | 55    | 16      | 9      | 1       |          |       |       |         |       | 8         |          |         |       |       | 21    | 55   |
| Oct    | 53    | 10      | 9      |         |          |       |       |         |       | 3         |          |         |       |       | 31    | 53   |
| Nov    | 51    | 13      | 14     | 3       |          |       |       |         |       | 8         |          |         |       |       | 13    | 51   |
| Dec    | 32    | 6       | 6      | 2       |          |       |       |         |       | 3         |          |         |       |       | 13    | 30   |
| Jan 1926 | 41    | 9       | 9      | 2       | 2        |       |       |         |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 9     | 5    |
| Feb    | 45    | 13      | 16     | 2       | 1        |       |       |         |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 7     | 44   |
| Mar    | 44    | 11      | 9      | 3       | 4        |       |       |         |       | 1         |          |         |       |       | 8     | 44   |
| Apr    | 55    | 11      | 6      | 10      | 4        |       |       |         |       | 5         |          |         |       |       | 7     | 55   |
| May    | 89    | 16      | 6      | 9       | 6        |       |       |         |       | 41        |          |         |       |       | 47    | 99   |
| Jun    | 139   | 29      | 5      | 5       | 6        |       |       |         |       | 74        |          |         |       |       | 10    | 139  |
| Jul    | 113   | 14      | 9      | 7       | 8        |       |       |         |       | 52        |          |         |       |       | 13    | 113  |
| Aug    | 82    | 17      | 11     | 1       | 5        |       |       |         |       | 40        |          |         |       |       | 3     | 82   |
| Sep    | 82    | 16      | 8      | 6       | 3        |       |       |         |       | 32        |          |         |       |       | 4     | 82   |
| Oct    | 63    | 8       | 13     | 1       | 1        |       |       |         |       | 24        |          |         |       |       | 8     | 63   |
| Nov    | 47    | 16      | 8      | 1       | 1        |       |       |         |       | 10        |          |         |       |       | 4     | 47   |
| Dec    | 41    | 9       | 15     | 5       | 3        |       |       |         |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 5     | 41   |
| Jan 1927 | 53    | 6       | 20     | 7       | 3        |       |       |         |       | 2         |          |         |       |       | 11    | 58   |
| Feb    | 70    | 12      | 29     | 4       | 2        |       |       |         |       | 9         |          |         |       |       | 9     | 70   |
| Mar    | 41    | 9       | 3      | 10      | 3        |       |       |         |       | 4         |          |         |       |       | 5     | 41   |

Notes: Ttl 1 = Total number of strikes as given in Graph 1.
Ttl 2 = Total number of strikes for which a breakdown by industrial sector is given.

Where no figures are given, no data for the relevant industrial sector for the given month has been found. Strikes that would have taken place in these sectors would have been included under the category 'Other'. Where no separate figures are given for 'Dockers', in this sector would have been included under 'Transport' (e.g. November - December 1923, January - February 1927).

Sources: RTsKHIN, F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, l. 56 (1924); op. 85, d. 99, l. 2 (1926); d. 169, l. 170-175, 252 (1925); op. 87, d. 177, 1.137, and d. 178, l. 8-9, 59-60 (1923); d. 181, l. 43 (1924); d. 200a, l. 244-251 (1925); d. 201, l. 13, 84, 141 (1927).
Graph 5.3: Number of strikes by industrial sector, 1923-1927

For sources see Table 5.3.
region, and Azerbaijan. Industrial sectors affected by these strikes included: metalworking, glass, mining, leather, light industry and transport. Another summary dated 15 June 1928 reported 29 strikes: eleven in seasonal industries, nine in metalworking, three in textile, three in mining, two in food-processing, and one in a paper-mill. The strike in the paper-mill (in Leningrad) involved 500 workers.

These figures suggest a general decline in the number of strikes in 1928 in comparison with 1927, but not dramatic enough to indicate the future disappearance of strikes. Neither was the decline uniform: for the period of January to September 1928, a combined total of 127 strikes with 10,000 participants is reported in the mining and metalworking sectors, down on the previous year; while, as we have already seen, the textile sector recorded a dramatic escalation in strike activity in 1928.

The uneven nature of strikes across different sectors reveals that strike activity continued to flare up in direct response to the implementation of central campaigns in the relevant sector. In January 1928, 8 strikes involving 2,994 workers with a loss of 7,315 workdays were reported in the metal industry where rates and norms were being recalculated, while only 556 workdays were lost to strikes in the textile industry. In August it was the turn of the textile sector with 13,382 workdays lost to strikes in response to the introduction of three-shift work, against 3,374 recorded in the metal industry.

Table 5.4 provides a breakdown of strikes by 'causes' for 1926. Again, too much importance should not be attached to the precise levels of each figure, as arithmetical and typographical errors, and the quality of local reporting of strike details leave much to be desired. The usefulness of the figures in table 5.4 is also compromised by the failure...
Table 5.4: Causes of strikes in 1926, based on OGPU data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Sector</th>
<th>Level of wages No. %</th>
<th>Rates and bonuses No. %</th>
<th>Delays in payment No. %</th>
<th>Norms No. %</th>
<th>Working conditions No. %</th>
<th>Admin No. %</th>
<th>Other causes No. %</th>
<th>Total No. %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>35 20.71%</td>
<td>49 28.99%</td>
<td>27 15.98%</td>
<td>15 8.88%</td>
<td>10 5.92%</td>
<td>2 1.18%</td>
<td>31 18.34%</td>
<td>169 20.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile</td>
<td>43 37.39%</td>
<td>29 25.22%</td>
<td>9 7.83%</td>
<td>9 7.83%</td>
<td>10 8.70%</td>
<td>2 1.74%</td>
<td>13 11.30%</td>
<td>115 13.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>9 17.31%</td>
<td>7 13.46%</td>
<td>12 23.08%</td>
<td>11 21.15%</td>
<td>6 11.54%</td>
<td>0 0.00%</td>
<td>7 13.46%</td>
<td>52 6.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>11 30.56%</td>
<td>6 16.67%</td>
<td>11 30.56%</td>
<td>2 5.56%</td>
<td>1 2.78%</td>
<td>1 2.78%</td>
<td>4 11.11%</td>
<td>36 4.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transport</td>
<td>11 23.91%</td>
<td>20 43.48%</td>
<td>5 10.87%</td>
<td>2 4.35%</td>
<td>0 0.00%</td>
<td>6 13.04%</td>
<td>46 5.47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td>95 33.33%</td>
<td>69 24.21%</td>
<td>62 21.75%</td>
<td>23 8.07%</td>
<td>7 2.46%</td>
<td>8 2.81%</td>
<td>21 7.37%</td>
<td>285 33.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical</td>
<td>0 0.00%</td>
<td>1 20.00%</td>
<td>0 0.00%</td>
<td>0 0.00%</td>
<td>1 20.00%</td>
<td>1 20.00%</td>
<td>2 40.00%</td>
<td>5 0.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silicate</td>
<td>4 9.52%</td>
<td>6 14.29%</td>
<td>11 26.19%</td>
<td>5 11.90%</td>
<td>6 14.29%</td>
<td>0 0.00%</td>
<td>10 23.81%</td>
<td>42 4.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>25 27.47%</td>
<td>13 14.29%</td>
<td>25 27.47%</td>
<td>3 3.00%</td>
<td>4 4.40%</td>
<td>1 1.10%</td>
<td>20 21.98%</td>
<td>91 10.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>233 27.71%</td>
<td>200 23.78%</td>
<td>162 19.26%</td>
<td>70 8.32%</td>
<td>47 5.59%</td>
<td>15 1.78%</td>
<td>114 13.56%</td>
<td>841 100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: 'No.' = the number of strikes in the given sector attributed to the relevant cause.
'%' = this number expressed as a percentage of the total number of strikes in the relevant sector.

Notes: 'Delays in payment' also includes dissatisfaction over partial payment of wages, and dissatisfaction over irregularities in the payment of wages (e.g. payment in promissory notes, goods etc.).
'Admin' includes dissatisfaction with management, rudeness on the part of members of the administration, incorrect actions by members of the administration, and 'non-fulfilment of collective agreements'.

Source: P. 17, op. 85, d. 99, l. 1.
to differentiate between strikes following reductions in payment rates, and strikes that sought to increase real payment rates to higher than previously-existing levels. When comparing the figures in this table with those in table 2.3 (chapter 2) it is, however, clear that the dominant cause of strikes changed in the summer of 1924. As the economy stabilised and wage debts began to be eliminated, strikes over this issue declined, to be replaced by strikes in direct response to reductions in rates, increases in output norms, and changes in the organisation of production. From 1925 onwards, these were the causes of the majority of strikes.

The spectre of delays in the payment of wages, however, never disappeared. Indeed, by the summer of 1926, wage arrears were, once again, an increasingly common cause of worker dissatisfaction, accounting for around 20% of all strikes. This reflected the havoc created by mechanical cuts, implemented in the name of the 'Regime of Economy', to the finances of trusts and were most problematic towards the end of the financial year as budgets ran out. The metalworking sector, as a leading target of the Campaign of the Regime of Economy, was particularly afflicted by delays in payments, and the OGPU reported that in many enterprises workers threatened to leave or halt work. Delays in payments continued to be problematic in the last years of the NEP, accounting for some 14% of all strikes in 1927, and a source of frequent complaint in 1928.

Another increasingly common cause of worker dissatisfaction, contributing to strikes and stoppages, was the poor quality of materials or equipment which prevented workers meeting norms or even presented a physical hazard. This, in itself, was often a direct result of central campaigns. In order to meet higher production targets imposed from the centre, workers paid less attention to the quality of their output, which had knock-on effects in the
shops and plants that were next in the production line (see chapter 4)".

Secondary factors contributing to industrial unrest included, as in the first half of the NEP, compulsory distribution of loan bonds. This would take the form of payment with loan bonds in lieu of wages, compulsory allocation of loan bonds (backed by threats of dismissal, accusations of being 'anti-Soviet', or transfer to temporary or lower-paid work), and even the issue of bonds instead of change in some worker co-operatives and state alcohol and wine shops²⁰.

In the late summer of 1926 deteriorations and shortages in flour supplies added to worker displeasure. Food shortages escalated in 1927 and became an increasingly acute issue for workers in 1928, contributing to dissatisfaction, strikes and higher absenteeism rates as workers left urban centres to search neighbouring villages for flour²¹.

The causes, decreasing size and length of strikes reveal the changing nature of worker militancy during the NEP. As a 1927 report on the province of Ivanovo-Voznesensk noted, the majority of strikes had become ...

... defensive in character (attempting to prevent reductions in wages, both direct and those resulting from changes in the technical conditions of production - poor state of equipment, poor quality raw materials etc.), only rarely did they erupt, in association with workers' desires to bring their wages up to the level of workers of the same specialty in other enterprises ...

Frequently strikes were simply the final chord of extremely dragged out conflicts (of six months or even a year) ...²².

This is reaffirmed in numerous OGPU reports which repeatedly note that strikes were predominantly occurring in response to reductions in wages²³. An 'Italian' strike - where workers decreased or ceased real output without formally declaring a strike, in the Dynamo factory in
Moscow in 1926, provides a typical example. It was confined to a "small group" of metal turners, who were protesting reductions in their rates from 23 roubles to 13 roubles. The turners kept up the strike for a week, returning to normal work once rates were set at 17 roubles. Their actions were thus limited simply to attempting to moderate the decline in their earnings, and not even maintaining existing levels".

(iii) Strikes and the State

While industrial unrest and worker alienation from the party had certainly been troubling the Bolshevik leadership during the first half of the NEP, it believed the problem to be short term. The party leadership, while never officially endorsing industrial action in the state sector, acknowledged that workers striking over delays in the payment of wages had an understandable grievance. Similarly it recognised that workers were reacting negatively to 'bureaucratic' and 'undemocratic' conduct of factory organisational life. Having established extensive organisational structures for 'resolving' worker grievances, the party expected that once the wage debt was eliminated and organisational procedures improved and corrected, it would find itself reunited with the nation's workforce and workers would voluntarily cease resorting to strikes. The persistence of strikes is hence all the more significant.

The party leadership could not accept that workers could be justifiably opposed to industrial policies that it was implementing in the 'interests of the working class as a whole'. Despite the continued reports of dissatisfaction and outbursts of strikes in reaction to each advance of the intensification campaigns, despite protest from local and senior union, management and party officials, the central
party leadership refused to blame or moderate its own policies (see chapter 4). Instead it identified "errors" and lack of "preparation" in the implementation of policies and the primitive levels of proletarian consciousness among the workforce (particularly among the influx of new 'peasant' workers) as the causes of strikes. Hence the official party line was that if workers were made to understand that the policies being implemented were in the interests of the working class then they would not have any cause for resorting to industrial action. Even where errors of implementation did take place the structure of conflict-resolution organs that had been established provided, the leadership considered, an adequate route for resolution of grievances. The top party leadership thus believed that there could be no justification for strikes. This official attitude can be seen in Stalin's pronouncement in February 1927 on strikes in the textile industry, in which he declared that every single strike could have been avoided. This pronouncement was adopted as the official resolution on the strikes by a high-level meeting convened by the Central Committee to discuss the matter. Continued outbursts of strikes shocked the leadership and were seen as manifestations either of undeveloped 'proletarian conscience' or 'anti-Soviet' attitudes, and the official stance towards any form of worker opposition became increasingly hostile. If strike activity persisted after 'proper' attempts had been made to enlighten workers suffering from 'under-developed proletarian consciousness' then this was seen as a manifestation of 'anti-Soviet' attitudes. By 1928 it was enough to propose resolutions abolishing fines for breaches of working discipline, or opposing the introduction of a new tariff table, or advocating linking growth in productivity with growth in wages, to be categorised as 'anti-Soviet'. Equating
economic protest with treason escalated the threat of punishment for strike action or voicing opposition.

The first years of the NEP had, however, demonstrated that arrest of striking workers was the one action that was most likely to unite large numbers in anti-government protest (see chapter 2). Actual arrest in the course of strikes was hence discouraged by the centre and appears to have become a rarity by the end of the NEP\(^7\), although arrests were more common in cases of unrest among seasonal workers and especially among the unemployed (where they often had the same effect as arrests in the first years of the NEP galvanizing and escalating opposition, see below). It is likely that persistent worker activists could have been arrested in general round-ups of 'anti-Soviet' elements. What is clear is that workers feared arrest or retribution and that such threats were used, particularly against 'ring-leaders'\(^8\).

The use of other repressive measures against workers was also discouraged by the centre. Strikers were no longer dismissed, transferred, demoted or ejected from the union as readily as in the past. But repressive measures were not rejected out of hand. Workers were regularly intimidated with such threats, and those deemed to be persistent activists or particularly undesirable individuals could yet find themselves victims of direct repressive measures\(^9\). In the Rykov metallurgical works in Artemov (Ukraine) in August 1927 a group of 36 smelting workers halted work, demanding extra payment for cleaning the channels down which the molten metals flow. When the administration suggested the workers submit a written declaration of their grievance, the workers announced: "Enough, we have submitted written declarations a hundred times, and there are no results". After this the Deputy Head of the militsiya arrived with two officers and told the workers that if they refused to return to work "then
they would be fired" (this from a member of the police organs and not the management). Then, upon his order, the two officers took one worker by the arms. The worker, trying to break free, screamed: "Comrades, officers, I have not done anything, I will work". After this the workers returned to work, although the OGPU report records grumbling along the lines of "The militsiya forced the workers to work with the threat of the whip, behaving just like the old gendarmes". The report also notes that 20 workers were identified for dismissal. In this particular case the Regional Party Committee condemned the actions of the management and local party and union organs, but only because they had not "exhausted all other measures for preventing this conflict".30

Another example is provided by a certain Morozov in the Zarya mill (Ivanovo-Voznesensk). A former party member, he worked in the trade union "very actively, sometimes demagogically", enjoying "more authority than the factory committee". "A situation developed where it became necessary to get rid of him" and he was forcibly transferred out of the mill. Again, these actions are criticised by a higher-ranking official, by the Chairman of the Textile Union G.N. Mel'nichanskii. However, once again the criticism is not directed at the removal of Morozov, but at the fact that this was "done clumsily" as a result of which "two teams of weavers rose up in protest, demanding 'Give us back our Morozov'".31

Local union and party organs not only failed to protect workers against repressive measures, but even endorsed them.32 If a factory committee supported workers' demands, as in the case of a strike at the Bogdanov Timber Mill (Kherson region) in November 1925, it was simply disbanded.33 As in the first years of the NEP all union, party and state resources continued to be mobilized to 'browbeat' workers and 'liquidate' strikes. Party and
Komsomol members were ordered to return to work by their party organisations, backed by threats of disciplinary action and expulsion. Party and Komsomol members would also be drafted in from other enterprises and duties as strike-breakers.

Publicly, the Bolshevik leadership increasingly blamed strikes and unrest on the influx of 'new peasant workers' and 'anti-Soviet elements'. As Tomskii told the XIV Party Congress in 1926, the 'new peasant workers' considered themselves to be:

... temporary guests in the factory ... Before Sunday, on Saturday, such a worker leaves with his wage for his village, he returns to work on Monday, with a knapsack in which he brings bread, potatoes, and other produce for the week. At first such a worker keeps himself aloof from the workers' social life. This worker brings with him many village perceptions and a new, totally unique, attitude to the factory. He does not regard the factory, still has not got used to regarding it, as his own, unlike its core workers who lived through the revolution, who themselves put the factory back into production — with great hardships, and under great pressures, who experienced the fires of devastation and the joy of reconstruction. He [the new worker] has a totally different approach, a self-seeking approach.

These 'selfish' 'new peasant workers' supposedly reacted badly to defects in party and union work, and fell under the influence of 'anti-Soviet' and 'hostile' elements. This approach was echoed in OGPU and party reports forwarded to the centre, which continually blamed 'anti-Soviet' elements for fomenting discontent and causing unrest.

The attribution of opposition to 'hostile' elements and 'new' workers was only an attempt to find an acceptable explanation to avoid having to admit publicly an unpleasant conclusion. As can be seen in the strikes cited throughout this chapter, dissatisfaction and unrest was not concentrated among new workers, but encompassed the traditional and experienced 'proletarian' stratum of the
workforce. All evidence in the archives clearly indicates that it was not 'enemies' of a 'socialist' 'workers' state who were instigating strikes. Time and time again, it was members of the very same 'aktiv', those whom the party cultivated, that were to be found at the forefront of strikes. It was the most 'proletarian' and 'conscious' elements of the workforce, rather than 'new' peasant workers, who rose against the state's economic policies - skilled and long-serving workers; and current and former members of factory committees, of the party, or of the Komsomol. To cite a few examples:

In 1926, in the model shop of the Marti metalworks in Nikolaev (Ukraine), Sosna-Sosnenko, the union plenipotentiary and a member of the party, declared to the norm-setters that if they did not set piece-rates so that it would be possible to earn an additional 150% of basic wages then he himself would lead a strike (the collective agreement had envisaged piece-rate payments of 57-58% on top of basic wages).

A strike over reductions in wages on 18 January 1926 in the Liudinov factory (Bryansk province) was initiated by a member of the Metal Workers' Union Raion Committee.

An Informotdel report on industrial unrest during the Collective Agreement Campaign at the end of 1927, specifically noted the "announcement of the Baku [Party] Committee, which stated that party members who joined in the 'October' [anniversary of the Revolution - AP] enrolment, behaved themselves better than many communists who had joined the party earlier".

The Informotdel summary of 20 April 1928 reported that members of the Leningrad Soviet, reviewing the Metallist factory, received a declaration requesting to maintain old payment rates, signed by 28 party members and two non-members. The workers who submitted the declaration stated that "non-party members are afraid to submit [their names], but we, as leading workers [peredoviki], are taking this role upon ourselves".

A report by the Secretary of the Yaroslavl Provincial Party Committee on the Krasnyi Perekop textile mill, addressed to the Central Committee and dated 31 December 1928, provides a further illustration. In 1927, there had been a
"disturbance" which was led by a Komsomolets named Lytochkin. After the "disturbance" he was sacked, but managed to have himself rehired in January 1928. Then, in the same month, he was reported to be one of the "vozhdi" (leaders) of a group of outspoken opponents, which included other party members, at a factory conference convened to approve the new collective agreement and transfer to a seven-hour day. The group managed to shout down the Chairman of the GSPS, and it was only with great difficulty that the party managed to push through its resolutions.\(^{4}\)

During the high-level inter-organisational discussion of strikes in the textile industry in 1928, convened by the Central Committee, Alekseev, representing the OGPU, claimed that "60% of the conspirators-initiators of strikes, the most vocal and complaining \(\text{buzoterovyi}\) element are sub-foremen" (i.e. highly skilled workers). Chernysheva, representing the Leningrad Provincial Textile Union Department, added that, in her experience, "communists made for very good leaders of disturbances\(^{45}\)."

Reports forwarded to the Central Committee from regional and local party committees and summaries produced by the Informotdel are full of details of party and Komsomol members leading strikes\(^{4}\). A few examples include:

A strike in the spring of 1925, at the Petrov Mechanical Factory in Kaluga, where the chairman of the strike committee was a member of the bureau of the party cell and a member of the provincial union committee\(^{7}\).

The initiators of a strike by 300 workers at the Bol'shaya-Dmitrovskaya mill in Ivanovo-Voznesensk at the end of 1927 included two Komsomol and three party members\(^{8}\).

A strike at the Anisimov factory in Leningrad in May 1928, which was initiated by a Komsomol member (who was the first to disconnect the drive belts from machines) and a former party member\(^{9}\).
The party could not rely upon even its own membership to support its industrial policies. Throughout 1925-28, OGPU and party investigators continually reported widespread khvostizm ('tailism') - where union activists and party members supposedly 'followed' and 'fell under the influence' of the mass of the workforce\(^9\). During a six-day strike against a newly introduced tariff agreement by the polishing shop of the Bukharin crystal factory in the province of Vladimir in 1925, the 80 party and 80 Komsomol members in the shop either absented themselves from the worker meetings or voted with the workers against the district committee's recommendations to return to work. The party members "refused to submit to the directive of the district committee, which instructed them 'not to retreat one step from the concluded agreement'; and [refused to submit] to the resolution of the party meeting; [the party members] showed their lack of discipline by refusing to work and instead supported the workers' demands"\(^51\). In response to increases in rates in the Krasnoe Sormovo works, in January 1925, some party members "chucked in their party tickets and joined non-party workers in refusing to work"\(^52\).

More worrying for the party leadership was that at the end of the NEP there was little evidence to suggest the future disappearance of khvostizm\(^3\). The available evidence even suggests that strikes had a greater tendency to occur precisely where the party organisation was at its strongest. Alekseev, representing the OGPU at the meeting convened by the Central Committee in October 1928 to discuss the recent wave of strikes in the textile industry, reached precisely this conclusion. He drew attention to decreases in strike activity in centres such as Tver' (from 2,000 workers involved in strikes in 1927 to zero over the first 9 months of 1928), and Kostroma (from 1,500 to 70), while centres such as Ivanovo-Voznesensk were reporting a 40% growth in those involved in strikes, and Moscow 30%. 
Alekseev then concluded that this showed that strikes were now centred where "our strengths are concentrated".

Even the central party leadership, in its own internal investigations, acknowledged that 'anti-Soviet' elements were not to blame for strikes, but it refused to condemn its own policies (although there were condemnations by individual senior party members and party organisations - see chapter 4). Repeatedly, the party concluded that the roots of strikes and worker discontent were not the mechanical reductions in payment terms, but 'insufficient attention' to worker moods, 'errors' in implementation, and inadequate preparation of the workforce for the changes.

(iv) Case Studies of Strikes

Southern Urals, spring 1924

Worker hostility to the intensification campaigns of the second half of the NEP should have come as no surprise to the party leadership as the very first 'trials' of intensification in the Southern Urals in the spring of 1924 (see chapter 4) had led directly to strikes. Local party secretaries reported universal dissatisfaction and hostility to the new collective agreement and that, initially, disturbances were avoided only because "we threw the weight of the entire party and trade union organisation into implementing the decision of the provincial organs". The secretary of the Zlatoust Regional Committee reported that "we discussed the matter in the bureau of the regional committee, wrote a 'devil-may-care' circular to all cell secretaries and factory committees, instructing them to adopt all measures, to enlist the full force of their 'machines' no matter what happens, to implement the arbitrators' resolution, to persuade workers that this was
a supreme-governmental measure, adopted out of necessity and is being implemented across the entire Urals”17.

The efforts of the party were, however, insufficient. On 21 May, when wages for the month were issued, "totally unexpected and sudden" strikes broke out in the Ust'-Katava, Katavo-Ivanovo and Iuriuzan' metalworks in Katava, and in the Magnezit and Bakal pits, with workers demanding full payment for April and a return to the old norms and rates. The concentration of strikes in this area was attributed to the absence of the District Party Committee Secretary and the party cell secretary of the Ust'-Katava metalworks which prevented the local party machine from being as effectively mobilised as elsewhere in the province58.

The strike in the Ust'-Katava metalworks appears to have been the most serious, lasting three days. Nevertheless it encompassed only a minority of the work-force and failed to win concessions. Despite reported universal hostility within the works to the new rates and norms, and despite a vote in favour of strike action by a meeting of the workforce, only 262 workers out of the total workforce of 722 failed to turn up for work on 21 May (62 of these were later even able to supply excuses to justify their absence). By 23 May, the last day of the strike, all shops in the factory were operational with the exception of the blacksmith shop, employing some 90-100 workers. That they were the most militant was not surprising - most of the blacksmiths are reported to have had their own forges, thus dismissal was not as potent a threat for them as for the rest of the workforce. The strike illustrates that again it was the most 'proletarian' elements that were to be found at the forefront of protest. The initiators of the strike included shop plenipotentiaries and worker delegates, its main proponents were the blacksmiths - among the factory's highest skilled workers, and the strike found
support among the membership of the factory's union leadership.\[9\]

The ineffectiveness of the strike and its collapse after the third day is understandable in light of the response of the authorities. On 21 May, the first day of the strike, the Zlatoust Regional Committee had already identified and resolved to sack 14 individuals within a week and three others within the next month (after suitable replacements had been found), to transfer six "SRs" to other shops, and "to sack SR members from other factories in the near future". It is worth noting that such decisions were being made by the Regional Party Committee, and not the management of the factory.\[60\] Meanwhile the workforce was told that the factory would be closed if the new terms of the collective agreement were not accepted. Those on strike were informed that if they absented themselves for three days then they would be automatically sacked in accordance with the regulations on unauthorised absences of the Labour Code - a threat that was implemented.\[61\]

Union organs were exploited so as to give the appearance that the strike was being condemned by fellow workers. On 24 May, a meeting of the presidium of the factory committee was convened to approve actions to end the strike. Despite the importance of this meeting, the entire membership of the factory committee was not convened and only its three-man presidium was in attendance. This was, presumably, because a full meeting was unlikely to have been as receptive to the measures demanded by the authorities, especially as we are told that the strike was supported within the factory's union leadership. The three-man presidium was out-numbered by the factory director, a representative of the trust, a representative of the raion committee of the Metal Workers' Trade Union, the secretary of the party cell, and even a plenipotentiary of the GPU (this also provides an indication of how all these elements
were brought together to suppress strikes). This "work ers'" meeting "democratically" resolved to: 1) temporarily lay off workers of the Mechanical, Steam-repair and Wagon shops, and those blacksmiths who had continued to work, as these shops were directly dependent on the production of the blacksmith shop; 2) transfer all available blacksmiths from neighbouring factories and labour exchanges to replace those who had been sacked; and 3) to 'cleanse' the membership of the Metal Workers' Trade Union - presumably under the supervision of the GPU.

Profintern, Bryansk, January 1925

The events in the Southern Urals were ignored and the party leadership embarked on all-out forced intensification at the end of 1924. New collective agreements were met by worker dissatisfaction and, in some cases, strikes. In the metalworking sector, one of the prime targets for intensification, in the period of November 1924 to February 1925, enterprises affected by strikes included: the Krasny\'i Sudostroitel' shipyards in Leningrad; the A and B metalworks in Mariupol'; the Kramator works in the Ukraine; the Izhev works in Vot' (now Udmurtia); and the Krasnoe Sormovo works in Nizhnii Novgorod. In January 120 forgers in the Liudinov machine-production factory in Bryansk went on strike over increased output norms. 62 ended up being dismissed, 47 returned to work, and the remaining 11 departed to look for work "in the south".

The most significant strike was the four-day strike at the beginning of January 1925 in the massive Profintern metalworks in Bryansk. The strike followed the introduction of a new collective agreement which increased norms by an average of 7% and reduced rates by an average of 20%. The new norms and rates were set by an NKTruda arbitrator in Moscow on 19 December 1924, as part of the
Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation, and were accompanied by similar changes in rates and norms across the main metalworking trusts⁶⁵.

In the implementation of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation it is difficult to identify even a pretence of a 'scientific' basis to the reductions. The secretary of the local district party committee, Koverznev, complained that while he had spoken to the Profintern workforce about the need for reductions prior to their implementation, which he claims they were, in principle, willing to accept, he had no advance knowledge of their size, could not give workers any figures, and could not prepare them for the full scale of the shock. No opportunity was given between the rates and norms being set and their implementation so that their impact could be assessed and so they could be introduced sensitively. The reductions and deductions were heaped onto the first pay-packet for January so that workers were "left without a penny"⁶⁶.

The extent of worker hostility to the party's economic policy shocked the Politburo and, at its meeting of 27 January, it instructed the Central Control Commission to appoint an "authoritative commission" to conduct a full and thorough examination of the strike⁶⁷. The investigative Commission reported to the Politburo on 25 February, and the strike was examined in great detail at a session of the Secretariat of the Central Committee on 2 March. The "secret" minutes of this session were sent to all national, regional, provincial, and city party committee secretaries, hinting at the fear the strike provoked within the Politburo⁶⁸.

Despite the large scale of the strike it must be noted that it failed to unite the majority of the workforce, involving some 2,800 workers out of the total workforce of over
8,000. The changes in rates and norms did not affect all workers equally (reductions in piece-rates varied from 6-40%, with the largest reductions in the blacksmith shop), and the strike was concentrated among those shops where wages fell by the greatest amounts (the Smelting, Blacksmith, Carriage-assembly, Bolt and Spring shops), attesting to declining worker solidarity. What particularly worried the investigators, however, were the sources of opposition. The fact that such a large and significant strike should happen in the Profintern works at all, where a quarter of the workforce had been recruited into the party or Komsomol, was alarming enough. Worse was to follow. Contrary to the party's own official pronouncements, the investigators found that 'anti-party' or 'anti-Soviet' elements or influences had not played any part in the eruption of the strike. When workers turned to former Mensheviks or SRs they had replied "We cannot join you in any way, as we know how this will finish and how it is finishing for us". Instead the Commission was alarmed to learn the extent of "passive opposition to the firm party line by Komsomol and party members" and "active participation in the leadership of the strike by individual Komsomol members and even individual party members", including a member of the Provincial Party Committee. Komsomol members were reported to be especially active in the strike. Many members of shop cell bureaus "were on the verge of participating or openly sympathised with the strike". Although the Komsomol and party had some 2,000 members in the works, both rank-and-file and middle-level party members offered no support to party officials who spoke out publicly in favour of implementing the new norms and rates. At the works conference held in the immediate aftermath of the strike "not a single voice was heard from the hall in support of party officials", although there were 80 party members among the representatives of the workforce present. In one shop, with over 80 Communists, only ten individuals voted in favour of the resolution
proposed by the party cell to accept the new rates and norms.

The investigators' comments on Gaika provide further insight. Gaika was the works newspaper, officially published by the party cell and the factory committee. It had a circulation of 10,000 and was in great demand not only in the Profintern works but in neighbouring factories. The Commission reported that: "It is complimented as being 'our' newspaper but it is not 'ours' for our party, but against the party. ... All buzaters ['trouble makers'] at other factories of the Mal'tsev region consider it to be 'their' newspaper". On the jubilee of 'Worker Correspondents' Gaika published statements stating that "the form which Gaika has chosen, is the true form of a 'free press'". The Commission criticised it for "floating along the currents, winning its authority as the proclaimer of a 'free press'". The attitude of its staff was described as one of "don't hinder us, we know what to do, we are party members ourselves, and you don't interfere with a party organ..." - "party leadership [i.e. external leadership from above - AP] is considered there to be interference in the rights of the press".

What the investigators, of course, revealed is that Gaika, and at least part of the membership of the local party organisation, were defending local worker interests against policies emanating from the centre and were actively resisting central domination. The Commission also reported that the Party Cell Secretary, Kalnin, who was considered to be one of the most steadfast old members of the party in the works, even suggested publicly "To create an economic bureau to direct the factory, consisting of the factory director, the secretary of the cell and the chairman of the factory committee". This would have been tantamount to reintroducing worker control via the back door.
Antagonism to the Politburo's economic policies was festering not only within the factories. As was described in Chapter 4, opposition to the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation extended into the highest levels of the party. Hostility and dissatisfaction can be found at almost every level of the party, state and union bureaucracy. The Chairman of the Metal Workers' Union District Committee, Bychkov, told the Secretariat meeting that they had opposed such large changes in rates and norms, sanctioning a maximum increase in norms of 15% with no reduction in rates. Arsent'ev, representing the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union on the Commission and at the session of the Central Committee Secretariat, revealed that during arbitration the union's central body had also opposed increases in norms or reductions in rates in excess of 8-10%, which they believed was the maximum possible, and warned that the new rates and norms would cause "great difficulties in the factories". But despite the extent of such opposition neither local nor national union or party organs offered any direct public support to workers in their struggle against the new collective agreements.

The conclusions drawn by the Commission and the resolutions adopted by the Secretariat of the Central Committee and the Politburo, however, did not condemn, criticise or qualify the party's economic policies. On the contrary it was concluded that the main cause of the strike had been insufficient work in advance of the introduction of the new rates and norms, and that the strike could have been avoided if the party and Komsomol organisation within the factory had been thoroughly "prepared". As these resolutions were circulated to lower party organs, they constituted instructions to strengthen party leadership as the only acceptable response to worker resistance to central economic policies. With specific reference to the Profintern works, the Politburo and Secretariat ordered
the party to strengthen its leadership and supervision over the works - that is to reinforce external party supervision. An instructor from the Central Committee and two "senior propagandists" were temporarily assigned to fortify the local party organisation and ensure adherence to central policies. A review of the membership of the editorial board of Gaika and the provision of "proper party leadership" was ordered, to turn the factory newspaper (officially a union publication) into the "organ of the District Party Committee".

Vyshnii Volochok spinning mill, Tver', December 1926

The strike in the Vyshnii Volochok mill, at the end of 1926, while untypical in its large scale, illustrates many of the threads discussed in the first half of this chapter. In the course of 'rationalisation' in 1926 output levels at the mill were increased by approximately 15%, exceeding pre-war levels by 10%. Work teams were reorganised so as to work and service three machines instead of two, the speeds of the machinery were increased and two straight shifts with no breaks were introduced. But, as an OGPU report admitted, the growth in productivity was achieved "primarily at the cost to the muscular strength of workers", and "the degree of wear on machinery is now far greater than in pre-war times". This was confirmed by the Deputy Head of the mill who declared that: "It is unquestionable that the work-load in the spinning department is higher than before the war, the loading of individual workers is great, while [technical] rationalisation is insignificant". Not surprisingly, this led to a build-up of worker hostility, which was further exacerbated by deteriorations in the quality of raw materials towards the end of the year (making it more difficult for workers to meet output norms)".
Central authorities, however, continued to press for further increases in productivity. At the end of December, the management of the mill received the terms of the new collective agreement from Moscow, where it had been concluded by central organs without local involvement. The new terms entailed a reduction in wages. On 29-30 December wages were issued according to the new agreement, although the new rates had not been displayed in the shops (contrary to labour regulations), and workers had not been informed. In the afternoon of 29 December 750 workers of the mule department went on strike. The following morning the first shift of the entire spinning division, without the knowledge of the factory committee organised a meeting, where it was resolved to send a telegram to the Central Committee of the All-Soviet Textile Trade Union, demanding that a representative be sent out to the factory to resolve the conflict. At first the delegates appointed by the meeting to send the telegram were refused permits to leave the factory - suggesting that local organs were eager to prevent news of the conflict reaching Moscow. Workers then resolved to continue the strike until the arrival of representatives of the Union Central Committee. When the worker delegates reached the telegraph office the officials refused to send the telegram in the name of the workforce as they had been instructed by telephone by the factory committee to regard its stamp on the telegram as invalid. The delegates were then forced to send it as a personal telegram over their own signatures - this was a direct attempt to intimidate the delegates, as now they would be personally associated with the action.

Throughout 30 December, 2,100 workers, the bulk of the spinning division, remained on strike with only students of the mill's training school, party and Komsomol members and a few others continuing to work. A telegram was also sent to the workers of the neighbouring Tabolk mill calling upon them to join the strike and at 5:00 p.m. 200 spinners and
doffers halted work and held a meeting. On 31 December at
11:00 a.m., 740 workers of the Vyshni Volochek dyeing works
joined the strike, demanding that representatives from the
centre be sent for negotiations. The strike in the
dye-works ended after several hours thanks to the agitation
of party members and trade union officials. But the mood
in the dye-works reportedly remained inflamed, and workers
maintained their demands for representatives to be sent
from the centre. Despite the intense efforts of local
party members and party officials delegated by the District
Party Committee, the strike in the spinning department
persisted until the representatives from the centre
arrived. A meeting organised by the mill's party cell and
factory committee ended when the workers marched out en
masse, refusing to hear out official speakers”.

The three leaders of the strike in the spinning department
were identified in the OGPU report as an expelled former
member of the Komsomol, a candidate party member, and a
party member. In the dye-works, the strike was led by two
former Komsomol members, two former party members, and one
member of the Komsomol. The OGPU report also recorded that
they had voiced sharp attacks against local party officials
and against Soviet rule - opening the possibility of future
action against the strike organisers as 'anti-Soviets'.
The report further noted widespread 'khvostizm' ('tailism')
within the mill's party organisation. In addition to the
participation of party and Komsomol members in the
leadership of the strike, other Communists and Komsomols
quietly encouraged worker attacks against local organs.
"Part" of the party and Komsomol membership refused to
speak out at worker meetings against the strike or vote in
favour of party resolutions, joined in walk-outs of
meetings, and failed to turn up for work. The party cell
itself was at a loss what to do and did not hold its first
meetings until the evening of 30 December - at the end of
the second day of the strike".
The OGPU report also complained that the administrative-technical personnel did not take any steps to help resolve the conflict. This may indicate that they neither felt responsible for, nor supported the policies being dictated from Moscow, regarding the conflict as one between the party and the workforce. Party organs did take the lead in breaking the strike. The local district party committee produced the following poster in the name of all local party, state and union organs. It is worth reproducing in its entirety as it also provides insight into the tactics used against striking workers:

Comrade workers - The Vyshnii Volochok District Committee of the VKP(b) jointly with representatives of: the District Executive Committee, the City Soviet, the District Trade Union Bureau, the District Committee of the Komsomol, the Provincial Department of the Textile Union and Provincial Trade Unions Council, having discussed the situation arising in the Vyshni Volochok mill, finds that at the present moment, when the working class, under the leadership of the VKP(b), tirelessly works for the development and strengthening of our socialist economy, such a form of defence of one's interests, which was adopted by the spinners of the Vyshnii Volochok mill - the halting of work and unrest - is impermissible, clearly hostile to Soviet authority and the party and as a whole to the working class. It has been condemned by the most recent congresses of the party and trade unions. With Soviet government, when the working class is in power, the working masses have many other ways of defending their rights and interests in a fully organised manner. The Soviet authorities and trade unions never refuse to discuss with worker representatives their legitimate demands. The District Party Committee, together with representatives of the organisations listed above, call upon all workers of the spinning mill to return to work immediately. At the same time workers must elect from among themselves the most authoritative representatives for joint discussions of the reasons for dissatisfaction and demands of the workers with trade union organs and the administration. The results of the discussion of the conflict will be publicised in due course among the workers. The District Party Committee and representatives of organisations also call upon the workers of other factories to condemn the action taken by the spinners and to advise them to return to work immediately. It is essential for conscientious workers to understand that the organisers of this disturbance are clearly an element hostile to the working class and Soviet
authority. The worker masses, in rejecting the resolution of the conflict through their trade union organizations, are unwittingly falling under the leadership of these hostile elements. The latter yell about 'defence' of worker interests - in reality, by creating disturbances, they are ruining our economy, and in such a manner betray the true interests of the workers. It is essential for workers to sharply disassociate themselves from these elements and lead work jointly with the trade unions and the party. Knowing the conscientiousness and self-discipline of the workers of the Vyshni Volochok mill as being the best part of the toilers of the city and district, the District Party Committee, social and soviet organisations are certain that in the given case they will prove their conscientiousness and self-discipline and will immediately return to work.

The document illustrates how the regime attempted to intimidate workers, especially the leading 'instigating' element, through equating their actions over economic grievances with 'anti-Soviet' behaviour, carrying the underlying threat of punishment befitting 'treason'. This was done purely to intimidate workers as the provincial party committee's own investigator concluded that the strike was not political, and 'anti-Soviet' or 'anti-party' moods were not to blame. The document also provides some clues as to how strikes were tackled: the machinery of the authorities was mobilized to present a united front against the strike; resolutions condemning strike action were forced through neighbouring works, with the aim of isolating strike action, and within the works to attempt to split worker solidarity; the bulk of participants were browbeaten to return to work with promises that grievances would be addressed, concessions, and threats; while the instigators were identified and subjected to more serious threats.

The strike in the Vyshni Volochok mill ended after representatives from the Union Central Committee arrived. A meeting was held at which workers elected a commission to examine, together with the representatives of the Union Central Committee, the causes of the conflict and attempt
to resolve them. The meeting also specified that the work of this commission was to be reviewed first by delegate and then by general meetings. At the meeting 112 declarations were submitted by workers: 68 concerning wage levels, 25 on working and safety conditions, and 19 complaints against management. At the meeting a promise was also extracted from the representatives of the Union Central Committee, Provincial Party Committee and the trust that no repressive measures would be adopted against the initiators and leaders of the strike - clearly indicating that workers anticipated reprisals.

The reports on the strike state that the Commission resolved 47 out of 58 of the declarations submitted to it by workers of the spinning division in favour of the workers. While this suggests that the authorities were willing to make concessions when confronted by such united mass hostility, the reports provide no details of which grievances were accepted and which rejected. The reports refuse, however, to blame the policies implemented under the Regime of Economy. The OGPU report concludes that the strike was caused by the "bureaucratic attitude of the administration and technical apparatus of the factory to the needs of the workers, the absence of a live link between the working masses and the party and trade union organs, who were unable to identify and disarm the growing dissatisfaction of workers in time". According to the OGPU the strike was not caused by reductions in payments embodied in the new collective agreement, but by the fact that the agreement was concluded without local worker involvement and was not properly explained to the workers. The provincial party investigator concluded that the fact that the majority of worker grievances were resolved in favour of the workers proves that the conflict was avoidable and therefore the fault of the management for not addressing worker grievances earlier.
Both reports seem oblivious to the notion that it was more likely that concessions were deemed possible only because of worker action. An OGPU report dated 16 November 1926, over six weeks before the strike, had already warned that:

Work on three machines is causing strong dissatisfaction among workers. Workers are making demands to transfer from three machines to two and to have their salaries increased. These demands are supported by some Communists. There is talk even of declaring a strike. At one of the party meetings, a group of workers appeared, led by Anisimov, a party member, demanding the abolition of work on three machines. Anisimov declared that 'all the juice has been squeezed out of us, our Factory Committee Chairman identifies himself with the director and pays no attention to the declarations of workers'.

Despite the fact that these grievances were known both locally and in the centre well before the strike, not only were concessions not considered until workers resorted to strike action, but the authorities had sought to intensify production still further.

Finally, while no details are provided of specific worker demands, the report by the provincial party investigator does state that workers did not demand wage increases as such, only demanding that wages be left as they were - indicating the defensive nature of the strike.

**Verkhne-Seredsk** spinning mill, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, August 1928

As with the preceding strike in the Vyshnevolotsk mill, this strike is untypical - particularly at the end of the NEP - in both its length, lasting over three days, and its large scale, involving 2,253 workers. Nevertheless this strike is also useful to illustrate many of the aspects discussed in this chapter. Similarly it is notable as a reminder that while worker militancy had been subdued by the end of the NEP, it had not been eliminated.
In January 1928 the departments of the mill began to switch over to working continuous seven-hour shifts, without breaks, and adding third shifts. In the months that followed the changeovers there were numerous stoppages caused by production outstripping the supply of materials, breakdown of machinery and protests against the new system of work. As production outpaced supplies, stoppages increased and workers were forced to work with inferior or inappropriate materials. The result was that output per worker and income levels fell and discontent simmered.

Discontent boiled over in the strike that began on 16 August at 1:45 p.m. when the second shift (11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) of the mule shop halted work in protest over the poor quality of raw materials (which would have made it difficult to meet their output norms). The informational report on the strike claimed that the quality of the materials was not that bad and that this was only an excuse to demand wage increases, trying to depict the strikers as 'greedy' and deflect blame from the state to the workers. Judging by the demands made by the workers (see below), this was clearly not the case. At two in the afternoon the ring-spinning department joined the strike, followed by the winding, warping, and flyer-frame departments, shutting down the entire mill. The third shift (6:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.) continued the strike and the first shift (4:00 - 11:00 a.m.) on the following day also barely worked, demonstrating the depth of dissatisfaction in the mill and suggesting advance organisation of the strike. This is confirmed by the District Party Committee Secretary's report on the strike. He states that a number of party members were aware of preparations for the strike but were sufficiently sympathetic not to warn the party organization. "Some party members" even participated in illegal meetings that preceded the strike. As a result the strike took the party organization totally by surprise. According to this report the initiators of the strike were
a group of former members of the party, although they "did their best to keep a low profile" (obviously fearing retribution)\textsuperscript{31}.

On the second day of the strike (17 August) a meeting of the first and second shifts took place outside the mill at 11:00 a.m. Union and mill officials called upon the workers to return to work and then make their demands and elect representatives to sort out the matter. The workers responded that they would not return to work until they had received answers to their demands. In the afternoon an expanded plenum of the factory committee (i.e. its membership probably bloated by union and party officials) was held. The plenum was addressed by Muranov, a "peasant" brought in from a "neighbouring kolkhoz", who berated the striking workers for sabotaging the smychka between town and countryside. The peasants needed the factory's output, for which they exchanged their grain. The resolutions of the "expanded" plenum condemned the strike: it was "harmful to the interests of socialist construction and benefitting the enemies of the working class, especially noting the impermissible actions of individual workers who, after halting their own machines, prevented those conscientious workers, who considered it essential not to halt work, from working". The strike was thus 'condemned' by 'fellow workers', and the strikers themselves were menaced with threats that their actions were regarded as treasonous. At the same time, the resolution provided both the workers and local party and union organs with an escape clause: workers 'halted work' and the strike was so extensive because the workers were 'forced' into participating\textsuperscript{32}.

At a delegate meeting held on 18 August workers complained that their income was falling owing to poor quality raw materials, and that "the trade union does not defend workers during strikes, but forces them to work". Full work in the mill resumed only on 20 August after a 39
member commission was elected to examine and present worker grievances. Only two communists were elected to the commission, one of whom was active in leading the strike, while the other was the representative of the VTsSPS in the mill.

The dominant theme running through the 20 pages of demands put forward by the commission on behalf of each department was for the management to resolve supply problems and pay workers for stoppages for which they were not to blame. In each department workers complained that shortages in supplies, poor quality of supplies, and stoppages (which were all, as was described in chapter 4, byproducts of the manner in which the state managed the nation's economy) prevented them from fulfilling norms and earning bonuses. As a result, while the last collective agreement had promised higher incomes, their wages were falling. These demands also clearly demonstrate, once again, that worker discontent was not about 'anti-Soviet' attitudes or undeveloped 'proletarian consciousness'. Workers were objecting to economic policies that prevented them from maximising output and increasing their piece-rate incomes.

The conclusions on the strike drawn by the District Party Committee predictably blame weakness of party and union work in the mill, and managerial and administrative deficiencies. The conclusions state that the party and unions paid insufficient attention: to worker complaints; to explaining to workers that there were going to be some irregularities in the initial period after the change to seven-hour workdays; and to nominating workers to lower administrative posts (to narrow the gulf between workers and management). Managerial deficiencies included not only the 'inability' to keep workers supplied with good-quality raw materials, but also the Chief Technical Specialist's opposition to the new system of work and his refusal to
participate in the transfer. It did not even seem to occur to the Party Committee that there could possibly be a justifiable economic basis for such opposition”.

The measures proposed by the District Party Committee included:

- "some repressive party measures with regards to the more khvostistskie ['tailist'] elements of the party organization";
- getting the strike condemned by social, union and party organizations;
- increasing party-membership among the workforce and administrative-technical personnel;
- ridding the mill of "hostile drunks";
- "have the party collective, together with the organizational department, once again review the appointed composition of the factory committee, ensuring it is strengthened with capable comrades who enjoy the authority of the worker masses";
- and replacing the Deputy Director of the mill”.

Unsurprisingly nowhere in this report are the actual central economic policies of 'rationalisation' which created this situation subjected to any scrutiny, let alone criticism.

(v) Strikes in Seasonal Industries

The four-fold increase in strikes in the seasonal sector in 1926 is particularly notable, eclipsing that in the non-seasonal sectors (see table 5.2 and 5.3, and graph 5.3). Owing to the seasonal nature of this sector, strikes were concentrated over the six months of May-October. During this period some 42,071 workers were involved in 263 strikes, with a total loss of at least 68,425 workdays, representing over 92% of the annual total for this sector, and dominating strikes across all sectors during this period. The strikes were characterised by their relative length, large numbers involved, and the sharpness of conflicts. In most cases strikes lasted over one day, often two to three days, and up to one and a half weeks in
individual cases (averaging 1.6 days in length). On average each strike involved 155 workers, with some strikes involving hundreds and even thousands of workers. Threats and actual violence, and rampages by workers were also common\textsuperscript{97}.

The eclipse of strikes in non-seasonal industries by strikes in the seasonal sector can be attributed to a combination of several factors. As noted in chapter 4, in many non-seasonal industries management and workers were able to find ways to mitigate some of the impact of cuts ordered under the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation and the Regime of Economy. In the seasonal sector the product was usually much more basic and uniform (e.g.: timber-felling, peat and sugar beat harvesting) and opportunities for such mitigation were more limited. Hence reductions to the budgets of trusts operating in the seasonal sector tended to be passed on directly to the workforce through unilateral reductions in wages, delays in payments (strikes over delays in payments accounted for 21\% of the total), supply of poor quality produce calculated at high rates (as part of the total remuneration package), and economy on expenditures affecting working or living conditions. Workers in seasonal industries commonly had to live in appalling conditions or under the open sky with no protection from the elements. These, invariably, were the causes of worker dissatisfaction in this sector\textsuperscript{98}.

The situation was exacerbated by unscrupulous recruiting agents. After workers had encountered unsatisfactory wages and conditions in 1925 - a product of the first wave of the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation - many declined re-employment with the same trusts in the following year. In 1926 difficulties were widely reported by trusts across the seasonal sector in recruiting their usual workforces. Recruitment agents commonly resorted to exaggerating earning potentials and conditions in order to
sign up sufficient numbers and when workers arrived on site, sometimes having travelled great distances, they frequently found that conditions and wages were worse than they had anticipated and resorted to strike action or simply quit. This only further aggravated budgetary difficulties as trusts often had to bear the cost of the return travel of these workers (having, in most cases, paid for their outbound travel), and sometimes even lost advances already paid out.

Other factors contributing to the high levels of militancy in the seasonal sector stem from the peasant and transient nature of the workforce. This was not, however, due to supposed 'peasant consciousness', lack of 'peasant industrial discipline' or 'peasant alienation' to wage-based employment, as Soviet sources would have us believe. As the bulk of the workforce in the seasonal sector was made up of peasants who were merely supplementing their own or their family's agricultural income, they were not dependent upon employment for survival and the threat of dismissal was not as effective in moderating their behaviour as in non-seasonal industrial sectors.

A less obvious, but perhaps even more important factor, was the minimal presence of party and union organisational networks in the seasonal sector. Partially this was a result of the limited resources of the party and unions (especially in terms of capable manpower) combined with the regime's ideological bias towards large-scale manufacturing industry. Additionally, because of the largely transient, low-skilled, and peasant nature of the workforce the party and unions had greater difficulty in building up their organisational networks in seasonal sectors. The often isolated location of seasonal works, and distribution of workforces over large areas (especially in such sectors as timber-felling) added to the problems of effective supervision by the party and unions. During the NEP, in
the majority of seasonal works there was a total absence of active trade union and party work, especially on the periphery of the nation\textsuperscript{101}. Workers in seasonal industries were thus at far greater liberty than workers of large-scale manufacturing enterprises to organise themselves and sound each other out, undetected and unhindered by the tentacles of the unions, party and OGPU.

Worker organisation in seasonal industries is attested by the large numbers involved in strikes and their above-average durations. This is further confirmed by an OGPU report on the seasonal sector for 1926, forwarded to Stalin, which recorded many cases where worker organisation was clearly evident:

Workers of the Elektrotrop peat-works (with estates in the provinces of Leningrad and Novgorod) managed to launch a strike involving 5,000 workers, and appoint special delegates for maintaining communications between estates;

At the Post Torfyanye peat-works (Novgorod province) striking peat workers arrived from Leningrad province and distributed leaflets calling for all peat workers to strike. The leaflet indicated that peat workers were striking across the entire North-Western province. The workers of Post Torfyanye works halted work and demanded to be transported to their homelands, threatening to raid the co-operative;

A strike in the timber-felling works of Severoles (Arkhangel district) was organised by an "'initiative group' which proceeded through the woods under a red flag, going from artel' to artel'";

The 243 workers of the Domodedovo brick works went out on strike in support of a strike by the 600 workers of the Mytishchenskii brick works (both works were part of the same Moscow Silicate Trust). The strikers elected a special delegation to encourage workers of other works to join the strike;

The 300 stone-masons on strike at the construction site of the Krasnyi Aksai factory in Don region, appointed a five-member group to lead the strike\textsuperscript{102}. 
Resort to violence in the seasonal sector was attributed to the severity of the hardship endured by workers. On the construction sites of the Kokchetav railway, for example, workers earned no more than one rouble per day, with half of this amount being deducted for produce distributed to workers, which was reportedly calculated at very high prices. Workers were not provided with any potable water or shelter and slept in the open despite poor weather. On 24 February 1926, 259 excavation workers declared a strike. On the eve of the strike they broke and burned everything they could find. Workers who refused to join the strike were beaten. The OGPU report further records that workers twice attempted to sabotage the motorized hand-car on which managers travelled and that on 8 June the hand-car was derailed with eight people seriously injured.

In Central Asia, on the construction of the Linin Termez Dar Kurgan railway, because of shortages of materials and tools, workers were earning only 70-80% of the official norm, they slept in earthen hovels or in the open, and potable water was supplied only irregularly. On 14 July 1926, an artel of workers, enraged by an order to take drinking water from an unfit cistern, beat up the representative of the administration. Those involved were arrested, further inflaming unrest - runners were sent up the line and 300 workers went on strike, demanding the freeing of those arrested. This was followed by the launch of a more organised strike on 1 August involving 700 workers, demanding a review of the collective agreement and increases in wages. It seems that state organs were more willing to compromise when confronted by such inflamed militancy and the strike ended a week later when workers' demands were reportedly met.
The Lenin and Khalturin Plantations, Poltava

The sugar beet plantations of the Lenin and Khalturin sugar refineries in Poltava provide an illustration of many of the problems affecting seasonal industries described above. In 1926, the refineries had great difficulty in recruiting harvesters as those whom they had employed in the past, dissatisfied with the wages and conditions they had experienced in 1925, did not sign up. The agent of the refineries resorted to paying locals 25 kopeks for each worker they signed up and promising to appoint those who recruited over 50 workers as overseers. The new local 'agents' proclaimed that the beets were large ("no smaller than a bottle"), conditions good and that workers would earn one to two roubles per day. Once workers reached the beet fields they found the beets to be small, food of poor quality and in short supply, and earnings averaging 60-80 kopeks for a 12-14 hour day. When the weather turned colder, workers began to grumble and demand increases in rates. Between 27-30 September, spontaneous strikes lasting two to three days, broke out on three plantations (involving 150 out of 560 workers on one plantation, 307 out of 843 on a second plantation, and 550 out of 652 on a third plantation). Workers' demands were not met, though the refinery complied with the request of some workers to be sent home. On the Krasnyi plantation, however, where exceptionally small beets were being dug up, rates were increased to seven kopeks per pood (16.38 kg. - workers had demanded ten kopeks), which sparked a second wave of more organised strikes, lasting two to five days, from 3-9 October, at other plantations (involving 170 out of 560 on one plantation, 518 out of 833 on a second plantation, and 450 out of 864 on a third plantation). This time rates were increased to four kopeks across the remaining plantations.
Workers were not, however, entirely helpless. In the Artemov plantation the head of the Lenin refinery guard invited some of the strike leaders into his office, where they were forcibly detained. The head then sent for the remaining strike leaders, but they realised what was in store for them, and arrived at the office accompanied by 50 other workers and demanded the release of their brethren, which they achieved.  

Nor were workers incapable of subterfuge. In the Krasnyi plantation, where rates had been increased to seven kopeks as the beets were small, 650 out of the 1,049 workers staged a strike from 6-10 October demanding a further increase to 15 kopeks. After the strike was ended by an increase in rates to ten kopeks, the workers 'suddenly' began to dig up bigger beets.

(vi) Other Manifestations of Worker Dissatisfaction

The authoritarianism of the state and the range of repressive measures at its disposal moderated worker resort to strike action and it is necessary to look beyond strikes to assess worker attitudes towards the regime. OGPU and party reports throughout this period continually recorded widespread dissatisfaction among the nation's workforce over wages, intensification and rationalisation. In addition to strikes, this was manifested through: increasing absenteeism and job-flitting as workers searched for better wages or conditions; widening of the 'gulf' between workers and union and party organs; the venting of frustration through attacks on specialists, management and even fellow-workers (see chapter 6); and decreases in the pace of production or attention to quality.
The Ul'yanov Ammunition factory in 1924 provides an example of workers resorting to a 'go-slow' as a form of protest. After the RKK confirmed new norms, which workers had protested, workers of the Shell and Packing Shops colluded not to exceed the old August norms, which they met precisely. According to the Informotdel report, workers were capable of exceeding the old norms as they fulfilled them prior to the end of the workday and spent the last 30 minutes wandering around the shop. The report also states that the same situation existed in the other shops of the factory.¹⁰

An OGPU special paper of March 1925 on the campaign for raising labour productivity reported that in many textile mills workers opposed working three spinning banks by deliberately failing to fulfil norms or running empty machines. The paper named, as an example, the Rol'ma mill in Yaroslavl. Here workers, when questioned as to why they were running unloaded machinery pointlessly, answered "we are raising productivity". The paper reported that there were similar cases of deliberate under-fulfilment of norms in the metalworking sector, naming the coupling-cutting department of the Khar'kov metalworks.¹¹

A Central Committee summary of May 1928 complained that cases of 'Italian' strikes, where workers deliberately reduced or halted real output without formally declaring a strike, were increasing. The report cited the Guta glass factory in Kiev, where over a period of ten days craftsmen who used to produce 1,600 glasses per day produced only 1,000 glasses. As a result the polishing shop also ended up standing idle for half of the working day. According to the report the 'go-slow' was led by a craftsman who went about the shops of the factory declaring to the workers that "the union did not want to defend our interests, so we will defend them ourselves".¹² Another Central Committee summary from April 1928 recorded that workers were
responding to reductions in wages with "sharp drops in labour intensity and an increase in defective output", citing numerous factories\textsuperscript{113}.

(vii) Unrest Among the Unemployed

Unemployment continued to be a source of growing concern for the party leadership throughout the NEP. As was highlighted in chapter 2, the ranks of the unemployed, no longer constrained by fear of job loss, presented an especially volatile element. The lack of formal organisational structures, with no 'factory committees', 'assemblies', or 'meetings', made it difficult for the party or unions to monitor or influence their behaviour. With little to lose unemployed workers were much more assertive and militant in putting forward their demands than their employed brethren.

Details of demonstrations and unrest among the unemployed are far more frequently encountered in archival documents from the second half of the NEP. An Informotdel summary of June 1925, reported on demonstrations by unemployed workers in Minsk, Kiev, and Bobruisk - where military units had to be called in\textsuperscript{114}. A summary from September 1925 states that in the Odessa and Kiev labour exchanges "excesses" were occurring on a daily basis. Rooms were being ransacked, windows smashed and staff were terrorized and subjected to beatings\textsuperscript{115}. The ransacking of a labour exchange in Kostroma ended in exchanges of gun shots with one person killed\textsuperscript{116}. OGPU reports from the summer of 1926 provide details of further ransacking of labour exchanges and beatings of staff in Pervomaisk, Nikolaev, Zhitomir, Zaporozh'e, and Krivoi Rog (all in the Ukraine), Minsk, Alma-Ata and Tashkent. The reports also record unsanctioned meetings in Moscow, as well as demonstrations and rioting (often featuring beatings of militsiya
officers) in: Poltava (see below), Artemovsk and Kiev (all in the Ukraine); Minsk; and Tashkent, Alma Ata, and Pishpek (all in Central Asia).\textsuperscript{117}

The above-cited OGPU report from 1926 provides plenty of illustrations of the militancy of unemployed workers. In April some 8,000 unemployed workers gathered in Grozny (Chechnya) following the appearance of an article announcing the construction of an oil pipeline from Grozny to Tuapse (Georgia). The project was, however, postponed and there was no work for the unemployed. But the unemployed workers, most of whom were peasants from the Volga region, succeeded in forcing local organs to agree to transport them free of charge to their homelands. En route, at the Stalingrad station, they seized bread from market traders and cooperatives, leaving the local population temporarily without bread. This case is cited by the report as a common occurrence and details of other similar cases are provided\textsuperscript{118}. Another example on militancy by the unemployed, occurred in Mariupol', on 3 June. 250 unemployed loaders occupied the wharf of the port and seized shovels and wheelbarrows from the 90 employed workers present, declaring that they would work the first two shifts and the employed loaders could work the third shift. Local organs fearing further conflict complied and hired the unemployed as an extra shift\textsuperscript{119}.

What the party leadership feared most was unemployed workers organising themselves independently of the party and unions and the politicisation of their discontent. OGPU reports frequently recorded "significant dissatisfaction" with the trade unions and party among the unemployed, and calls for self-organisation and the appointment of "triumvirates" or "pentads" to defend their interests. Numerous cases are noted of 'anti-Soviet' influences and outbursts among the unemployed, as well as
calls to demonstrate under a 'black flag' and with banners.

At the Conference of the Moscow Province Printers' Union in October 1926 delegates representing unemployed printers criticised "in an organised manner" the union's efforts to combat unemployment. They refused to vote in favour of resolutions approving the work of the union leadership and tabled their own resolutions condemning the attitude of the union to unemployed workers as "bureaucratic and insensitive". Their resolution criticised "the detachment of the leadership from the lower masses of unemployed" which resulted in "distrust towards the union as a whole among all unemployed". After this conference unemployed printers organised a meeting of their own. Speakers from the union were shouted down: "Enough, Down with you ... We have listened enough to you over nine years". Resolutions proposed by the union were rejected unanimously, repudiating OGPU claims that it was a small handful of 'anti-Soviet' ringleaders who were to blame for discontent. The resolutions passed by the unemployed further reveal their mistrust of the state. Their demands included: the urgent convening of a Moscow-wide Conference of Unemployed; the organisation of committees of unemployed attached to labour exchanges to ensure that the exchanges were being run fairly; that money budgeted by unions and factory committees for the celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution be spent on aid for the unemployed; and to have their resolutions printed in full in the national press. On 22 October, a group of unemployed printers even appeared at the editorial offices of Pravda to demand that the resolutions be published. After the editors refused to give them an answer, the OGPU report records that there was talk of setting up illegal presses.
At the Kiev Labour Exchange on 22 June 1926, Prikhod'ko, an unemployed construction worker, called upon his colleagues to go to the union, the Komkhoz, and Ispolkom and demand work: "We have nothing to fear, the militsiya and soldiers are workers, same as us". He succeeded in gathering a group of some 100 unemployed workers and headed off to the local trade-union offices. In the office of Gaitsan, the local chairman of the construction trade union, Prikhod'ko declared "You do not defend our interests, do not go with us, but do what the party dictates. We want our trade unions to be without the communist party. We do not need the dictatorship of the party, let's organise worker control over institutions and nobody will dictate to us." Another unemployed worker, Lastiskii, added "Our trade unions are not economic organisations but political ones, the communist party does not defend, but tramples us." The OGPU report recorded that the other leaders of the disturbance made similar statements. In the end they declared: "Comrades, let's take Gaitsan and the other workers of the union, give them red banners, as they are communists, our vanguard, and go to the regional IspolKom, let the Communist Party see that in front of us go our defenders." After this the group spent the next three days inciting unemployed workers to organise a demonstration on 26 June. Thanks to 'measures' adopted by the trade union, according to the report, they were, however, unsuccessful in organizing a demonstration.

In Poltava (where 6,000 were registered as unemployed), on 11 May 1926, 60 unemployed workers appeared at a session of the Regional Congress of Soviets and demanded work, threatening "unrest by the hungry". They were told that the issue would soon be decided. On the morning of the 14 a handwritten bill appeared in the labour exchange and the offices of the social insurance fund, calling for workers to demonstrate the next day. On the 15 a crowd of some 300 unemployed workers gathered at the labour exchange, where
they were addressed by Spasov (an unemployed financial inspector - i.e. a highly skilled professional). He read out a declaration addressed to the Regional Executive Committee demanding work and threatening unrest, and signed by 250 individuals. The crowd then marched to the offices of the Regional Executive Committee to deliver the declaration. En route they clashed with the militsiya, beating up several officers. The OGPU report recorded that those delivering the beatings were unemployed members of the Komsomol. After the Chairman of the Regional Executive Committee promised that work would be created the crowd dispersed, but not before threatening further 'disturbances' if jobs were not forthcoming.

On 17 May, 90 vacancies were announced at the labour exchange and a committee representing the unemployed (which included Spasov) selected workers to fill the vacancies. The next morning, however, a crowd gathered at the exchange complaining against the meagreness of the measures being taken to provide jobs for the unemployed. The crowd, numbering 1,000-1,500, once again headed for the offices of the Regional Executive Committee. Along the way many joined the crowd including, according to the OGPU report, large numbers of "criminals and prostitutes" (thus providing a more ideologically acceptable scapegoat for the 'anti-Soviet' behaviour of the mob). After various exchanges outside the offices of the Executive Committee the militsiya cavalry was called out. According to the report it was 'attacked' by the crowd, pelted with stones and forced to retreat to its barracks. Having chased away the mounted militsiya the mob returned its attention to the building of the Executive Committee, now protected by officers of the militsiya and by the reserve command of the OGPU Special Troops.
Several unemployed workers addressed the crowd. One (named Chela) is recorded as stating: "In 1905 the workers begged for bread, and they were poisoned, now they send out the mounted militsiya, which reminds one of cossacks. Is this what we fought the revolution for, so that now communists, like the Tsars and landlords in the past, drive around in cars while we starve?" Eventually the crowd was pacified and a meeting was organised in the grounds of the workers' club. After long debates a resolution was adopted demanding urgent struggle against unemployment and a commission was appointed from among the demonstrators and members of the City Soviet to work jointly with the Executive Committee to liquidate unemployment. Shortly thereafter 200 unemployed workers were given jobs on public works and 415 vacancies were found in sugar refineries.

As was typical of Bolshevik crisis management, the carrot was, however, accompanied by a stick. During the night after the demonstration of 18 May, the militsiya, with the sanction of the Regional Executive Committee, arrested eight individuals deemed to have organised the unrest (who were branded, in the OGPU report, as "criminals"). The following morning, on the 19, a large number of unemployed workers gathered once again at the labour exchange. Hearing of the arrests of the aktiv, they demanded their release under threat of new demonstrations. The report states that the authorities were 'forced' to release three of those arrested. Resort to arrests appears to have been much more common when dealing with unrest among the unemployed, probably reflecting the greater militancy of unemployed workers as well as the regime's desperation in dealing with this sector. An OGPU report for January 1927, in attributing an improvement in the mood among the unemployed "to the arrest of active groups of leaders of the unemployed", suggests that there may even have been a national round-up of activists.
As with discontent among employed workers, unrest among the unemployed was not blamed on the consequences of the economic policies being pursued by the centre but on "insufficient attention being paid to the unemployed by local officials". Responsibility was thus passed from the centre to local organs, implying the discontent was a product of local organisational deficiencies. But by the end of the NEP, such explanations were wearing thin and, what worried the leadership even more, unrest among unemployed workers appeared to be a growing problem. By 1928, Informotdel summaries were reporting disturbances, often involving thousands of unemployed workers, with alarming frequency.

The Informotdel summary of 14 May 1928, for example, reported the ransacking of the Auxiliary Workers Labour Exchange in Leningrad on 19 April by a mob of 2,000 unemployed workers, with windows broken, furniture scattered, employees chased out, and the head of the exchange beaten. The same summary reported that similar clashes had taken place at the Archangel and Orenburg labour exchanges. The summary of 15 June carried numerous reports of demonstrations by unemployed workers, including one by 5-8,000 in Semipalatinsk; and one by 3,000 unemployed construction workers at the Kalanchevskaya Labour Exchange (Moscow). In the latter demonstration, officers of the militsiya were beaten, private shops ransacked, and the mob attempted to storm the head offices of MosSel'Prom. The summary stated that after the event, the entire population of Moscow was talking about the disturbances and that "a significant part of workers expressed dissatisfaction over the fact that the press did not discuss this issue". The growth of the threat to political stability presented by the unemployed would certainly have been an important factor in encouraging the party leadership to opt for all-out industrialisation and
in favour of the first five-year plan with its promise of eliminating unemployment.

(viii) Conclusion

Despite the persistence of strike activity, a shift in the nature of industrial action had occurred. Not only had strikes become shorter and more limited, but they had become purely re-active and defensive in character. By the end of the NEP, when resorting to strike action, workers no longer even aspired to achieve economic gains, seeking merely to prevent further erosion of wages and working conditions. Strikes became last futile acts of desperation against changes in rates, norms, or working practices which reduced workers' incomes. The response of workers to the intensification campaigns should have been entirely predictable. The conclusion and approval of collective agreements became problematic, and reported dissatisfaction, demands for increases in wages and strikes increased. This was evident from the very first 'trials' of intensification campaigns that were conducted in the late spring and early summer of 1924. But the extent of workers' negative response to 'intensification' and their resort to strike action appears to have shocked the central party leadership, and industrial unrest became a prime issue on the agendas of meetings of the Politburo. Repeatedly instructors and investigative commissions were sent out from provincial capitals and Moscow to search out the cause of strikes and special meetings were convened at top levels to find solutions.

The ability of shop-floor workers to translate their hostility to the economic policies emanating from the centre into organised and effective opposition had, however, declined. While the number of strikes increased dramatically after 1924, strikes rarely united the entire
workforce of even one factory, let alone neighbouring works or entire industrial areas as they had in 1921. As class behaviour by workers disintegrated, increasingly workers responded on individual levels, each seeking out their own path in attempting to moderate the impact of intensification drives, whether by reducing the quality of output, deliberate under-fulfilment of norms or production of defective goods, malicious damage of output or machinery, increased absenteeism, job-flitting, or simply disillusionment with the Soviet state and defeatism. One other alternative also remained open for the shop-floor worker seeking to improve his lot: he could join the party, submit himself to party discipline, and pursue advancement into party, union, state or managerial bureaucracies.
Notes: Chapter 5

1. Tables in RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 200a, l. 244-251, for example, give total figures of 868 strikes for 1926, compared with the total of 841 given in the tables cited here, with similar discrepancies for individual sectors.

2. The majority of the figures given for numbers involved in each sector in the tables in RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 200a, l. 244-251, for example, vary from those presented here in table 5.2.

3. RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 169, l. 170-175; F. 17, op. 87, d. 200a, l. 244-251.

4. Columns of figures frequently do not add up to the totals given in the tables, and it is not uncommon even to find an extra zero tacked on, or a digit 'lost'. All such instances that have been uncovered, or where it has been possible to confirm inaccuracies from other tables or reports, have been corrected.


6. "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoii gubernii (za 1928 god)", produced by the OGPU, 15 September 1928, RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 6.

7. "Stenogramma soveshchaniya sovetskih, partiinykh i profsoiuzykh rabotnikov pri orgraspredotdele TsK VKP(b) po voprosu o prichinakh konfliktov v tekstil'noi promyshlennosti - zasedanie ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 305, l. 14.

8. See, for example: "Dokladnaya zapiska o nenormal'nostyakh v rabote nizovykh proforganizatsii", produced by the OGPU, circa 11 March 1926, RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 169, l. 21; and the summaries of the Informotdel of the Central Committee for 1928, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307 & 311.

9. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 1 (170) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 14 January 1928, RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, l. 4.

10. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 6 (175) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 20 April 1928, RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, l. 94.
11. "Informatsionnaya svodka informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan - Svodka No. 7 (176)", 14 May 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, 1. 1-3.

12. "Informatsionnaya svodka informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan - Svodka No. 8 (177)", 15 June 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, 1. 20-21. For further details of strikes in 1928 see the other summaries for this period in this delo and in d. 311.


15. See, also: "Doklad o kampanii po podnyatiu proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela OGPU s noyabrya-24g. po 1 marta-25g.)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, 1. 57; "Materialy o nastroeniyakh i protsessakh, proiskhodyashchikh v rabochikh massakh (Nedovol' stva, brozheniya, konflikty, zabastovki i ikh prichiny), za period mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, d. 907, 1. 2; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 44 (165) informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan", 20 August 1927, F. 17, op. 85, d. 213, 1. 4; "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 4-5, 9; "Itogi koldogovornoi kampanii 1927-1928 gg. - svodka informatsionnogo otdela TsK VKP(b)", 13 September 1928, F. 17, op. 84, d. 308, 1. 14; and d. 307 & 311 for data on 1928.

16. See, for example, "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 27 August 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, 1. 2, 5.

17. Ibid., 1. 5; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za noyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 24 December 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, 1. 156, 167.

18. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 1 ...", 1. 8; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 11 (180) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 28 August 1928, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, 1. 134.

19. See, also: "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 5 - which reported on conflicts in mills in Vladimir, Kostroma, and Leningrad province, over reductions in output and earnings by up to 45% as a result of poor quality raw materials; Ibid., 17 - which reported that in July 1926, 25 new grinding wheels were installed in the blacksmith shop of the Zlatoust machine factory (IuzhUral Trust). All 25
wheels shattered, seriously injuring one worker and leading to a one-day stoppage in protest by the entire shift; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za avgust mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 29 September 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, 1. 51 - which reported that in the Trud factory (Vladimir province) the transfer of axe sharpeners from one type of sharpening tool to another resulted in a drop in wages from 90 to 50 roubles, which eventually resulted in a strike after worker demands to have rates raised were rejected; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za oktyabr' mesyats 1926 g. (po dannym OGPU)", 9 November 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, 1. 115, 125 - which reported on a strike in the B-Dmitrovskaya mill (Ivanovo-Voznesensk) in October 1926, in protest over the poor quality of spun thread which was lowering productivity. For further examples see also F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, 311 and the case study of the Verkhnyaya Seredsk strike in this chapter.

20. "Informatsionnaya svodka informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniakh rabochikh i krest'yan - Svodka No. 5 (174)", 26 March 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, 1. 77-78; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ...", 1. 6-7; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ...", 1. 7, 34-35.

21. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, 1. 81; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 2 (171) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 6 February 1928, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, 1. 31; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 9 (178) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 3 July 1928, d. 307, 1. 44; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 11 ... ", 1. 134, 136; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 12 (181) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 3 October 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 307, 1. 65-66; "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 5-6.


23. See, for example: "Obzor ... za avgust mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 40; "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 79; "Obzor ... za oktyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 115; "Obzor ... za noyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 1. 156; "Doklad Sekretarya Ivanovo-Voznesenskogo Gubkoma - t. Kolotilova", presented at a session of the Central Committee Orgraspred department on 2 April 1927, as part of a review of the work of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk party organisation, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, 1. 129.
24. "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 79, 89.

25. "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", l. 14.

26. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 1 ...", l. 11.

27. Few cases were encountered where details are given of arrests. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 6 ...", l. 107, however, tells of the arrest on 10 February of two officers of the militsiya (N.E. Glushkov, a member of the party, and P.A. Pervachuk, a candidate member of the party) in Barnaul region (Siberia) for attempting to organise a strike "against Bolshevik authority".

28. See, for example, the case study of the Vyshnevolotsk strike, discussed later in this chapter. During a strike at the No. 8 & No. 10 Obagashchene mines one of the initiators, clearly fearing punishment, threatened to "kill anyone who turned in the organizers of the strike" - "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 15. Following the collapse of a strike in the Dzerzhinsk-Dnepropetrovsk State steel-works (Ugostal' trust, Ukraine) in September 1926, many workers claimed that they were "forced" to join the strike, suggesting they feared punishment - "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 79, 88.

29. See, for example: "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 15-17; "Obzor ... za avgust mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 50; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 45 (166) informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan", 7 September 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 217, l. 58; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 48 (169) informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan", 17 November, l. 99. See also the case study of the Vyshnevolotsk strike, discussed later in this chapter.

30. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 45 ...", l. 57-58; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 48 ...", l. 99.

31. "Protokol - soveshchaniya sekretarei partkollektivov, predpsedatelei fabkomov i direktorov tekstil'nykh fabrik gor. Ivanovo-Voznesenske, sozvannogo Gubkomom VKP(b) 14-go Marta 1928 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 65.

32. During a strike at the No. 1 Mechanical factory in Penza province the factory committee, party cell and the Metal Workers Union all passed decisions in favour of adopting "legal repressive measures up to and including expulsion from the union and dismissal from employment" to break the strike - "Obzor ... za avgust
mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 50. See also the case studies below.

33. "Dokladnaya ... nizovykh proforganizatsii", l. 32.

34. See, for example: "Materialy o nastroeniyakh ... mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", l. 5-6; "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 79, 88.

35. "Dokladnaya ... nizovykh proforganizatsii", l. 32.


37. Ibid., p. 3.

38. For additional examples see: "Obzor ... za avgust mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 40; "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 79.

39. "Dokladnaya zapiska - uchastie partiitsev v zabastovkakh i konfliktakh na predpriyatiyakh", produced by the Informational Department of the OGPU, sent to Stalin, 16 Nov 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 69.

40. "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 11.

41. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 6 ...", l. 101.

42. "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 11.

43. "Materialy o nastroeniyakh ... mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", l. 5; "O povedenii kommunistov rabotaushchikh na predpriyatiyakh vo vremya konfliktov", produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, circa autumn 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 908, l. 20-26; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 42 (163) informotdela TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan", 30 June 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 217, l. 30; "Stenogramma
... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 24; "Itogi koldogovornoi ", 1. 11; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 6 ", 1. 100-101.

47. "Materialy o nastroeniyakh ... mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", 1. 5.

48. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 1 ", 1. 5.

49. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ", 1. 12.

50. See, for example: "Materialy o nastroeniyakh ... mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", 1. 5; "O povedenii kommunistov ", 1. 20-26; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 42 ", 1. 30; "Itogi koldogovornoi ", 1. 11; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 3 (172) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 17 February 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, 1. 40; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ", 1. 12; see also the account of the Profintern strike later in this chapter.

51. "Materialy o nastroeniyakh ... mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", 1. 4-6.

52. "Materialy o nastroenii rabochikh mass i otnoshenie ikh k partii i sovvlasti (Po materialam Informotdela TsK i OGPU za period s 1 noyabrya 1924g. po 15 fevralya 1925g.)", 3 March 1925, produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 904, 1. 58.

53. See, for example: "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 6 ", 1. 100-101; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ", 1. 11; "Itogi koldogovornoi ", 1. 10.

54. Alekseev also includes Leningrad in his list, where there were 6,000 involved in strikes in the first 9 months of 1928, but fails to provide a figure for 1927 - "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", 1. 14, 16.

55. 'Anti-Soviet' elements were barely even mentioned at the previously-cited Central Committee meeting convened to discuss strikes in the textile sector in 1928. At this meeting there was no confusion over the roots of strikes: low incomes and poor working and living conditions - Ibid., 1. 1-78. See also the account of the Profintern strike.

56. See, for example the case studies cited later in this chapter or: "O proyavleniyakh nedovol'stva v svyazi s kampaniei podnyatiya proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela TsK RKP(b) po 10/X)", circa 10 October 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 2, 1. 3; N. Shvedov, "V Nizhegorodskih profsoiuzakh", pp. 177-181 in Vestnik Truda, No. 12, December 1925, p. 178; "Spravka o konflikte na B. Dmitrovskoi m-f
(Iv-Voznesensk)"), 27 December 1927, produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 112-113; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 1 ...", l. 5; "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 1-20.

57. "V Obkom RKP(b) t. Kharitonovу ili Vasil'yevу - Doklad", this copy forwarded to the Central Committee, for Molotov or Stalin, by Rumyantsev, the Secretary of the Zlatoust Regional Committee, marked "Top Secret", circa May 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 4-5; "Doklad", addressed to com. Rumyantsev (Secretary of the Regional Party Committee), produced by the Organisational-Instructional Department of the Zlatoust Regional Party Committee, June 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 6.

58. Ibid..


60. Ibid..

61. Correspondence between the Chairman of the Factory Committee, the Director of the factory, and the Chairman of the Trust, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 16.

62. "Protokol No. 24 - zasedaniya prezidiuma Ust'-Katavskogo zavkoma ot 24 maya 1924 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 759, l. 17.

63. "Doklad o kampanii po podnyatiu proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela OGPU s noyabrya-24g po 1 marta-25g)", addressed to Andreev of the TsK RCP, signed by Prokofiev, Head of the Informational Department of OGPU, and Naimon, Vrid Nachal'nik of the Second Department, dated 23 March 1925, marked "Top Secret" and "Personal", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, l. 60.

64. "Materialy ... k partii i sovvlasti", l. 63.

65. "Vopros o konflikte na zavode 'Profintern' rassmotrennyi na zasedanii Sekretariata TsK RKP(b) 2 marta 1925 goda", marked "Top Secret", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 867, l. 2-4 - changes in rates and norms in January reduced average wages by 20% in the Krasnoe Sormovo works in Nizhnii Novgorod; in the Motovilikha works in Perm wages were being reduced automatically every month.

66. Ibid., l. 2-3.
67. "Protokol No. 46 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 27 yanvarya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 486, item 30.

68. "Protokol No. 50 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 25 fevralya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 490, item 20; "Vopros o konfliktke na zavode 'Profintern' ...", l. 1-5.

69. "Vopros o konfliktke na zavode 'Profintern' ...", l. 2-3; "Materialy ... k partii i sovvlasti", l. 62-63.

70. "Vopros o konfliktke na zavode 'Profintern' ...", l. 2-3.

71. Ibid.,

72. Ibid.,

73. Ibid., l. 2-4.

74. "Predlozheniya po dokladu komissii TsKK o konflikte na Bryanskom zavode 'Profintern' (Odobreno Sekretariatom TsKK na zasedaniiye 16 fevralya 1925, pr. no. 59-14, i odobreno Sekretariatom TsK RKP(b), na zasedaniye 2 marta 1925 pr. 67-1)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 867, l. 6; "Protokol No. 50 ... ot 25 fevralya 1925g.", item 20; "Rezoliutsiya Politburo TsK RKP(b) po dokladu komissii Politburo o konflikte v zavode 'Profintern', adopted on 25 February 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 867, l. 5.

75. "Dokladnaya zapiska o zabastovkah na V. Volotskoi f-ke tverskogo Kh/B Tresta 29/31/XII-26g. i 3/l-27g.", produced by the Informotdel of the OGPU, circa January 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 133-135; G.K. Nosov, "Dokladnaya zapiska o zabastovke na V-Volotskoi m-f", 7 February 1927, addressed to the Bureau of the Tversk Provincial Party Committee, marked 'Top Secret', RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 245, l. 1; "Dokladnaya zapiska - uchastie partiitsev ...", l. 72.

76. "Dokladnaya ... V. Volotskoi ...", l. 133-135; Nosov, "Dokladnaya zapiska ...", l. 1.

77. "Dokladnaya ... V. Volotskoi ...", l. 136-137; Nosov, "Dokladnaya zapiska ...", l. 1.

78. "Dokladnaya ... V. Volotskoi ...", l. 137-138.

79. Ibid., l. 138.

80. Poster printed in 500 copies, issued over the name of the District Party Committee, circa 29 December 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 132.
81. Nosov, "Dokladnaya zapiska ...", 1. 7.
82. "Dokladnaya ... V. Volotskoi ...", 1. 138-139.
83. Ibid., 1. 139; Nosov, "Dokladnaya zapiska ...", 1. 7.
84. "Dokladnaya ... V. Volotskoi ...", 1. 133-135.
86. "Dokladnaya zapiska - uchastie partiiitsev ...", 1. 72.
87. Nosov. "Dokladnaya zapiska ...", 1. 3.
89. "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi ...", l. 6, 10-11.
90. "Khod zabastovki", circa September 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 21-25.
91. "Dokladnaya zapiska Seredskogo ...", l. 56-58.
92. "Khod zabastovki", l. 21-25.
93. Ibid.
94. "Protokol zasedaniya avtoritetnoi komissii po rassmotreniu pretenzii, pred'yavlennykh rabochimi Verkhnei Pryadil'noi fabriki Seredskoi ob "edinennoi manyfaktury. S 20-go avgusta 1928g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 30-55.
95. "Dokladnaya zapiska Seredskogo ...", l. 59-61.
96. Ibid., l. 61.
97. "Tablitsa dvizheniya stachek za 1926 god (Kolichestvo, uchastniki, poteryannoe vremya) (po materialam GPU)"; marked "Top Secret", RTsKhIDNI, 17, op. 85, d. 99, l. 2; "Dokladnaya zapiska o polozhenii sezonnykh rabochikh (po materialam za 1926g.)", produced by the Informotdel of the OGPU, circa March 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 201-217.
98. Ibid., l. 201-211; "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 5; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 11 ...", l. 134-135.
99. "Dokladnaya ... sezonykh rabochikh ...", l. 201-204; "Informatsionnoe pis'mo Poltavskogo okruzhkoma KPbUk o stachkakh v imeniakh Leninskogo i Khalturinskogo
sakharnykh zavodov (sostavleno po info svodke GPU)", 20 October 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 70, l. 9.

100. "Dokladnaya ... sezonnuykh rabochikh ...", l. 206; "Dokladnaya zapiska o polozhenii bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", produced by the Informotdel of the OGPU, circa 4 August 1926, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 7 - in the Nizhnii-Taqil' Metal Trust, in February 1926, a large group of workers were recruited among the unemployed in Byelorussia for timber felling. Upon arrival they realised that the conditions they had been promised would not be fulfilled. The administration at first responded to their protests by arresting 130 individuals. After the workers declared a hunger strike, sent a telegram of complaint to Kalinin, and called upon the workers of Byelorussia to support their grievances, the trust was forced to pay the travel costs of those workers who wished to return to Byelorussia (having already paid for their outbound journey). In the Kalabinsk works (Ural Copper Trust), in March 1926, 118 lumberjack recruited in Byelorussia, refused to work and demanded to be returned to their homeland when conditions did not match those promised. The transportation of the workers from Byelorussia had cost the trust 5,000 roubles.

101. "Dokladnaya ... sezonnuykh rabochikh ...", l. 210 - makes precisely this point; see also the details of individual strikes in seasonal industries cited in the body of this chapter, where the absence of references to union and party organs is notable.

102. Ibid.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid., l. 201-211.

105. "Informatsionnoe pis'mo Poltavskogo ...", l. 9-11.

106. Ibid., l. 11.

107. Ibid., l. 12.

108. See, for example: "Doklad o kampanii ...", l. 57-61; "Vypiska iz inform doklada", produced by the Informotdel of the OGPU, 22 September 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 1004, l. 124; "Vypiska iz spets inform doklada PPOGPU v LVO 6/X-25 g.", 26 October 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 1004, l. 191; "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 1-37; "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi ...", l. 10; "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", l. 5.
109. "Materialy ... k partii i sovvlasti", 1. 58; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za dekabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)" , 3 February 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, l. 199; "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 1 ...", 1. 5: "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", l. 21; "Stenogramma ... ot 10 oktyabrya 1928g.", l. 6; "Doklad o kampanii ...", l. 61; "Vypiska iz spets inform doklada PPGPU ...", l. 190.

110. "O proyavleniyakh nedovol'stva v svyazi s kampaniei podnyatiya proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela TsK RKP(b) po 10/X)", circa 10 October 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 2, l. 1.

111. "Doklad o kampanii ...", l. 58, 61.

112. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ...", 1. 3-4.

113. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 6 ...", 1. 97.

114. "Materialy o nastroeniyakh ... mart, aprel', i mai 1925 g.", l. 10-11.

115. "Svodka No. 45/130 Informatsionnogo otdelta OGPU za vremya s 2 po 12/IX-25g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 197, l. 29. For further examples from 1925 see: "Svodka No. 41/126 Informatsionnogo otdelta OGPU za vremya s 12 po 14/VIII-25g.", l. 21; "Svodka No. 46/131 Informatsionnogo otdelta OGPU za vremya s 12 po 16/IX-25g.", l. 31.

116. Ibid., l. 31.

117. "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)" , 1. 7 & 20; "Obzor ... za sentyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)" , l. 81; "Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", 1. 8-11.

118. "Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", 1. 5.

119. Ibid., l. 6.

120. "Svodka No. 45/130 Informatsionnogo otdelta OGPU ...", l. 29; "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)" , l. 7; "Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", l. 8; "Materialy o nastroeni bezrabotnykh (oktyabr' i nachalo noyabrya)", produced by the Informotdel of the OGPU, circa 12 November 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 170, l. 55-65; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za yanvar' mesyats 1927g. (po dannym OGPU)" , 27 February 1927, F. 17, op. 87, d. 201, l. 4, 21; "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za fevral' mesyats 1927 g. (po dannym OGPU)", 7 April 1927, d. 201, l. 45.

121. "Materialy o ... bezrabotnykh ...", l. 57-65.
"Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", l. 8.

Ibid., l. 9-10; "Informatsionnoe pis'mo sekretarya Poltavskogo okruzhkoma t. Klochko (o vystuplenii bezrabotnykh)", 19 May 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 70, l. 16-18. It is worth noting, as an example of the limits of the reliability of reports, that there are a few minor discrepancies between these two sources. The latter source states that 100 workers (not 60) appeared at the meeting of the Regional Congress of Soviets, and that this was on the 10 May and not the 11.

"Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", l. 9-10; "Informatsionnoe pis'mo ... t. Klochko ...", l. 16-18.

"Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", l. 9-10; "Informatsionnoe pis'mo ... t. Klochko ...", l. 16-18.

See, for example: "Obzor ... za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 7 & 20 - which reported the arrest of 15 "initiators" following demonstrations by unemployed in Tashkent; "Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", l. 10 - which reported that disturbances by unemployed in Pishpek featured arrests of several individuals for posting bills calling for demonstrations. The unrest ended only after measures were announced to create work and promises made to release those arrested. Similarly, after disturbances among the unemployed of Alma-Ata had been pacified, ten individuals were arrested by the OGPU "to prevent further unrest".

"Obzor ... za yanvar' mesyats 1927g. (po dannym OGPU)", l. 4.

See, for example: "Dokladnaya ... bezrabotnykh (za 1926 g.)", l. 8-11.

"Informatsionnaya svodka No. 7 ...", l. 15-16.

"Informatsionnaya svodka No. 8 ...", l. 22-23, 31; see also "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 4 (173) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 6 March 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, l. 64.
Chapter 6: Bridging the 'Gulf'

(i) Increasing Participation and Expansion of Organisational Structures 1924-1928

The scale of worker dissatisfaction provoked by the 'productionist' economic policies pursued by the state caused great concern for a regime which believed itself to be the vanguard of the working class. Estrangement from the unions and party led workers to disassociate themselves from the decisions and policies of these organs. This encouraged workers not to feel bound by the terms of collective agreements and to resort to spontaneous forms of direct action to undermine or oppose them (see chapter 5). The leadership of the VTsSPS feared that unless the 'gulf' was breached "the method for resolving disputes will unavoidably become spontaneous strikes, which the trade unions will be unable to prevent, having lost the leadership of the masses". This 'gulf' between itself and workers was all the more worrying for the Bolshevik leadership as it looked to the industrial proletariat as the life-blood of the party which would supply the recruits for its regeneration and expansion.

During the period of War Communism and the first years of the NEP, however, sheer survival and consolidation of power took precedence over winning back the hearts and minds of the nation's workers. This was reflected in Bolshevik management of the economy which was driven by the principles of restoration and maintenance of production. During the first years of the NEP, the Bolshevik leadership could also console itself with the knowledge that the main contributors to worker dissatisfaction were wage arrears and economic hardship associated with post-war recovery - factors that were largely beyond their control. But by 1924 post-war recovery appeared in sight, progress was being made in the struggle against wage arrears and the
leadership began to give greater consideration to long-term economic aims. Two of these goals dominated labour and economic policy in the second half of the NEP. The search for a method to finance industrialisation, as was described in the preceding chapters, constituted one such central goal. The need to bridge the 'gulf' between the party and the nation's workforce constituted the second goal.

The emergence of a 'gulf' between the party leadership and the worker masses can be traced back to May 1918, when the CheKa opened fire on a crowd of demonstrating workers in the industrial town of Kolpino, south of Petrograd. The 'gulf' widened during the years of War Communism, with fissures running into the top ranks of the party organisation, as manifested by the Workers' Opposition at the IX Party Conference in September 1920. The strike wave that swept the country in February and March 1921 exposed to all that the 'gulf' had become a yawning chasm.

Although the Bolshevik regime survived this wave of unrest, the economic realities and policies of the years that followed did little to endear the party to the mass of workers. The reintroduction of 'private' industry, a monetary economy, charges for public services, and the reemergence of a wealthy sector of society enjoying conspicuous consumption were all widely perceived by workers as betrayals of the revolution. The reappearance of unemployment, reinstatement of traditional forms of factory management and rejection of workers' control convinced workers that their interests had been displaced from the top of the national agenda. Growing bureaucratisation, centralisation and authoritarianism of union, state and party organisations, and their domination by the party, while having secured the survival of the Bolshevik regime, resulted in mass disillusionment. The lack of support workers received from union and party organs when seeking redress of grievances, the coercion
used in the suppression of strikes, the slow pace of improvements in workers' living and working conditions, the privileges enjoyed by party officials, managerial staff and 'bourgeois' specialists, all contributed to a growing feeling of defeatism, disenchantment and estrangement from the regime.

The 'gulf' extended into and greatly affected the party itself. Disillusionment within the party was accentuated by changes in the demands placed on members in the transition from the frenzy of war to the bureaucratic nature of civic party life. The crisis of the Civil War had required party members to be tireless men of action, willing to take the initiative and make instantaneous decisions over issues with great consequences. The NEP, however, placed supreme value on administrative skills. Party members were required to be masters of bureaucratic organisation, able to orchestrate countless bodies and commissions, endlessly file reports, and obediently implement decisions sent down from above. The introduction of the NEP was followed by large numbers of resignations from the party. Disillusionment with the Bolshevik leadership was not, however, the only contributor to this exodus - after years of revolution, war and hunger, many members were simply physically exhausted and could not face the continued heavy demands of party work. With the revolution 'successfully' saved, many members felt that their own personal sacrifice to the cause was no longer crucial and felt justified in taking a rest.

Several years into the NEP the leadership still did not need to look very hard for evidence of this 'gulf'. When workers took action to force concessions they did not bother informing official organs - a report by the Informotdel of the Central Committee claimed that in 1923 96% and in 1924 98.5% of all strikes were taking place
"against union instructions, without union sanction, and without advance notification of unions".

Party domination of union organisations and the imposition of party-backed candidate lists upon worker electorates (see chapter 3) contributed to a loss of worker interest in union work. By 1925 Tomskii was reporting that attendance at factory committee elections had fallen to an average of barely 50% of the workforce, while attendance at general meetings was averaging 15%*. Even these figures can be regarded as artificially inflated as forced attendance was common. Factory gates were often locked to prevent workers from leaving when meetings were scheduled (e.g.: in the Vyksa factories in Nizhegorodsk and Neva textile mill in Leningrad). In other enterprises those who did not attend meetings were judged to have low levels of 'proletarian consciousness' and found themselves at the top of redundancy lists (e.g.: in the food processing enterprise Krasnaya Bavariya in Leningrad). Reports from all across the country told of poorly-attended and passive meetings, with many workers walking out prior to their conclusion*.

Frequent reports of withholding of union dues provide further evidence of worker estrangement'. Party control and emphasis of 'positive' activities stunted factory club life. Workers complained that clubs had taken on a 'school-like' character, discouraging mass involvement, and 'adults' now avoided the clubs®.

An OGPU report on the Krasnyi Putilov works in Leningrad, a hotbed of dissatisfaction over low wages in 1925, vividly illustrates the estrangement of workers from the regime. Despite extensive publicity given to the convening of meetings and the posting of party members at exits to urge workers to attend, "non-party worker masses" boycotted all meetings. Workers were quoted as saying: "Let the commune do what it wishes, they are now the masters, there is
nothing there for us to do". Two "anti-Soviet" workers were reported to be "conducting anti-Soviet agitation under the slogan 'the USSR is not a dictatorship of the proletariat, but a dictatorship over the proletariat'". After a worker was sacked for rejecting new rates, shouts of "There is no truth in our USSR, again they have started riding on the back of our brother and started throwing us out of the factory", and "Down with Communists and Soviet power, which consists of thieves and Jews [ghidy], robbing and torturing the working class" were recorded*.

When a delegation of German workers visited the works in September 1925, "anti-Soviet elements" urged their fellow workers to show their real feelings. The party cell instructed the entire workforce to attend an open meeting with the delegation - only 2,000 out of the workforce of 9,000 turned up, and only 500 remained until the end of the meeting. During the meeting one of the German delegates, Fritz Klit, was handed an anonymous note stating:

I am writing in such a manner so I won't be recognized, otherwise there will be nothing but scraps left of your friend. In Russia it is now impossible to say the truth, this is what the CheKa exists for. Greetings to German Workers!

The note ended with the following couplet:

Ves' mir nasiliem my razroem
My peli prezhde vsem
Teper' kak volki v pole voem
Ostavshis', vidite, ni s chem'.

signing off as:

Nekrasnyi, nastoyashchii ryadovoi rabochii-chestnyi putilovets.

(The whole world we will conquer
We used to sing to all
Now, like wolves in a field we are howling
Left, as you can see, with nothing.
Signed: Not-red, real, rank-and-file worker - a true Putilov worker)\textsuperscript{19}.\]
The party leadership, however, desisted from linking this 'gulf' with their own economic policies. Instead the 'gulf' was blamed on organisational deficiencies and the low levels of 'proletarian consciousness' of the workforce. Lower party, union and state organs were repeatedly blamed for 'errors' in the implementation of policies, and for the poor organisation of work which resulted in a failure to attract worker support and participation. 'Misunderstandings' on the shop floor were blamed on "the influx into the factories of significant numbers of peasant elements, which do not submit themselves to union education [vospitaniu] very easily", "weakness of union work", and "poor ties to the masses".

Such an analysis of worker dissatisfaction led the party leadership to advocate organisational solutions. These organisational solutions can be grouped into three thematic strands:

1) Ensuring correct implementation of policies through increased inspection of lower organs, increased reporting up the organisational ladders, closer party monitoring of both party and non-party bodies, and stricter organisational controls;

2) Securing worker endorsement for the economic policies being pursued in their name by improving union and party work, ensuring matters are approved in the appropriate bodies;

3) Increasing worker involvement and participation within sanctioned organised activity, by expanding organisational structures, holding more regular, better organised and more frequent meetings, and by 'livening' and 'democratising' union, party and state work.

By expanding and manipulating organisational structures the leadership endeavoured to forcibly increase worker involvement and participation in the economic life of the nation. It was hoped that this would help educate workers with a sense of 'proletarian consciousness', and make them feel responsible for the economic policies originating from
above, and bound to accept the ramifications of these policies. By involving workers who displayed initiative or organisational qualities within official institutional structures, the leadership also hoped to deprive disaffected workers of their potential vanguard as well as replenish the bloodstock of the party. During 1924 the pace of the physical expansion of organisational structures within the nation's factories was thus intensified. Existing structures were enlarged and whole new strata were created, often driven by the aim of simply incorporating as many workers as possible into the party's organisational 'schools'.

The 'Lenin Enrolment' was a part of this process of trying to unite the party with the nation's workers through expanding worker membership and involvement in the party. Launched at the XIII Party Conference in January 1924 it aimed to recruit 100,000 new 'genuine proletarian' members from the factory floor. Four months later the XIII Party Congress went a step further, setting a recruitment target of raising worker members, directly involved in production, to 50% of the total party membership. In order to accommodate this influx the Congress formally sanctioned a new stratum in the organisational network - that of shop party cells, led by a shop cell bureau. Among other perceived benefits, this new stratum physically expanded the number of posts available for increasing worker involvement in party organisational work. It replaced the former single shop party organiser by a shop cell bureau, usually consisting of 3-5 members, often with a further 2-3 candidate members attached so as to provide them with 'training' in party leadership. A Central Committee report on lower party organisations illustrated the success of shop cells by highlighting the example of the Elektrosila works in Tsaritsyn, where now there were 60 members engaged in functions that previously involved only 9 members. Shop cells were also valued for providing a wider introduction
to party life for non-party workers and they were encouraged to organise meetings and political-educational lectures open to non-members'.

The creation of production commissions and production meetings across all enterprises was a further major organisational expansion that was initiated in 1924 (see chapter 4). While the prime publicised aim of production meetings and commissions was to assist in the 'rationalisation' of enterprises, their anticipated role in helping to bridge the 'gulf', by increasing worker participation in the organisational life of enterprises, was a central justification for their formation.

Great expectations were attached to production meetings and commissions. They were expected to help neutralise worker oppositional tendencies towards the state's economic policies by forcibly involving workers in the implementation of economic policies, and hence also making them jointly responsible for their impact. The production movement was expected to "direct this [workers'] energy into the general economic interests of the working class and not allow it to follow the current of shop-floor interests". The production movement was thus to act as a pressure valve to release worker dissatisfaction, channelling this energy away from oppositional manifestations (demands for increases in wages) and into increasing productive efficiency.

The establishment of permanent production commissions, appointed by the factory committee to organise and lead the work of production meetings, greatly expanded the number of posts available for involving worker 'activists' in the official organisational hierarchy. By implicating such 'activists' in the institutional network, worker opposition would be deprived of its potential natural 'vanguard'. To tempt 'activists', a number of members of the production
commission, depending on the size of an enterprise, would be freed from part or all of their regular work duties^.

Production meetings and commissions were also expected to act as 'schools of labour' and 'schools of communism'. As 'schools of labour' production meetings were expected to teach workers, especially the "inefficient and easily distracted new peasant recruits", the importance of diligence and discipline. By "drawing the masses' attention to general administrative issues" (finance, accountancy, overheads) the authorities hoped to change workers' attitudes towards production. They wanted to stop workers thinking about what impact production issues would have on their wage packets and start thinking about how these issues would affect the enterprise and the economy as a whole^.

In other words, production meetings were expected to assist in the process of replacing 'shop-consciousness' with 'working-class consciousness' ('proletarian consciousness'), to assist in the creation of the 'new Soviet man' - without which communism was deemed to be unattainable.

As 'schools of communism' production meetings and commissions were expected to help identify workers with potential management or technical skills and provide them with relevant training and experience. This, in turn, would assist in the long-term development and promotion of workers into the ranks of specialists and managers, thereby reconstructing the class bases of these groups^.

The VI Trade Unions Congress of November 1924, in addition to the launch of production meetings and commissions, saw the promotion of a series of measures aimed at tackling the 'gulf'. Worker dissatisfaction with collective agreements was attributed by the Congress not to the actual terms of agreements, but to the lack of direct worker involvement in their negotiation and conclusion, especially in the case of
'general' (obshchie) collective agreements. These were agreements which were applied to large industrial trusts or even entire branches of industry, whose workforce would often be spread across the nation, and which were negotiated in Moscow. The VI Congress thus resolved that 'general' collective agreements should only be concluded for All-Union enterprises, with all other agreements to be concluded by local union organisations. The Congress stipulated that all collective agreements had to be "discussed" at general or delegate meetings prior to their conclusion, in the expectation that by involving workers in the discussion process their dissatisfaction would be alleviated.

In examining why a 'gulf' had developed the Congress was told that all the work of factory committees had become concentrated within their presidiums, usually in the hands of only the chairman and secretary. At the same time a reliance on paid union staff had evolved. The Congress was told that in the majority of cases worker commissions existed only on paper - meeting rarely and seldom passing important decisions. The Congress' solution to the 'gulf' was thus to advocate organisational changes or improvements to increase worker participation, in the expectation that this would unite the union hierarchy with the union membership. Factory committee presidiums were abolished, in the expectation that this would force the distribution of responsibilities among all members of the factory committee. The Congress demanded that factory committees report to meetings of factory delegates to increase delegate involvement in the work of the enterprise. It also demanded that delegate meetings not replace regular convening of general meetings of all workers, and that functions such as union dues and mutual aid fund collectors, worker delegates, representatives on cultural, labour safety and other commissions, be distributed among as many workers as possible. Lastly,
the Congress officially introduced yet another stratum in the organisational network, that of shop plenipotentiaries. These were to be elected by the workers of a shop to act as a link between them and the factory committee.

The chairmen and secretaries of party cells were subjected to similar criticism by central party organs to that levelled against factory committee presidiums by the VI Trade Unions Congress. The leaderships of party cells were repeatedly instructed to distribute official functions among all members of the cell in order to expand the numbers of workers actively involved in party work, again in the expectation that this would help unite the party with the masses.

The party leadership also recognised that blatant domination of non-party organisations by party cells and cell secretaries was estranging shop-floor workers. Already in the second half of 1924, party cells were being instructed to decrease their numerical domination of factory committees and non-party commissions (see also chapter 3). A circular issued by the Moscow Party Committee to all its subsidiary party organisations in March 1925 provides an illustration. It reported that, in the majority of cases, party fractions of factory committees had either not been formed or did not undertake any systematic independent work. This resulted in:

incorrect implementation of party leadership over the work of factory committees leading to the replacement of the factory committee by the party cell ... Such party leadership weakens one of the core organisational links between the party and the broad worker masses ... resulting in: first of all, the overburdening of the party cell ...; secondly, the suppression of the initiative and responsibility of those party members who work in the factory committees; and thirdly, the loss of authority by the factory committee as a union organ.
The way to regain the support of rank-and-file workers was thus not to change industrial policy, or abandon party leadership, but to implement the correct organisation of party leadership. The circular hence instructed that party leadership be exercised through the fractions of factory committees and that the initiative of non-party members of the factory committee not by forcefully suppressed". Two months later a meeting of the heads of provincial and regional party organisational departments, convened by the Central Committee, was told to promote more non-party workers into responsible positions".

Despite these measures, the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation only led to growing worker discontent (see chapter 5) and the widening of the 'gulf'. An Informotdel report of March 1925 complained that party and union support for the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation resulted in "mistrust towards elected organisations", with workers convinced that "elected organisations do not defend their interests and do not express their opinion". The report continued:

The factory committee says more about raising labour productivity than management. When you point out that management is making errors, the factory committee remains silent, the masses begin to 'grumble' ['buzit']. Mensheviks and other menshevik-type individuals set to work, and seize upon this mood".

The attempts to narrow the 'gulf' by organisational measures failed to tackle the root causes of worker dissatisfaction and could not succeed. OGPU summaries continued to carry reports of extensive worker displeasure with the organisational hierarchy". The summary for March 1925 cited the complaints of Yaroslavl workers as typical. The workers protested that they had no use for unions as they only collected dues and did not protect workers' interests. In the province of Gomel', the same summary reported, workers of the Zinoviev Glukhovsk flax mill stated that factory committees were a superfluous overhead
cost from which they derived no benefits. This summary took the brave step of concluding that the main cause of worker dissatisfaction with trade unions was not 'organisational defects', but their feeble defence of worker interests.

An OGPU report analysing the continuing increase in worker passivity in the metalworking industry in the first half of 1925 provides additional illustrations. It reported a lack of interest in general meetings, citing expressions by workers, such as "There's never anything of use there, only talk", or, "We have nothing to do at the general meeting, as they never elect anyone from our midst", as typical. The report concluded that a "significant part of the workforce maintained a passive attitude towards union organs and the RCP(b), which, in the opinion of workers, are not concerned with improving their [worker] conditions, especially towards trade unions, which many consider to be superfluous organisations..."

The report also specifically noted an increase in passivity among party members, especially those recruited as part of the Lenin Enrolment. It describes them as being indifferent to all questions, many just sitting and sleeping at meetings. The report cited the cell of an instrument shop in an ammunition works as typical - during the demonstration against the oppression in China on 15 June 1925, when the shop delegation reached the main square and the cell secretary cried out the salute "Shlem proklyatiya terroru burzhuazii v Kitae, ura" ("Damnation to bourgeois terror in China"), only one party member responded with a cheer ("ura"); the rest remained silent; after the demonstrations had passed one block, 18 party members, out of the 82 who had turned up, had already vanished.
The abolition of factory committee presidiums did not automatically involve the entire committee in union work. Surveys of local union organisations revealed that the work of factory committees continued to be concentrated among the members who were free of regular working duties - this usually being the chairman and secretary.

Involvement of delegate congresses in union work and reporting by factory committees to delegate meetings remained limited. The work of the delegate congress of the No. 1 Railway Workers' Committee in Nemrespublika provides an illustration. While this delegate congress actually convened three times in as many months during the period of March-May 1925, the items it was permitted to examine were unlikely to inspire much interest. The items on the agendas of the three meetings consisted of:

1) Delegates' subscriptions to Gudok (the Railway Workers' Union newspaper);
2) Local Committees' subscriptions to Gudok;
3) At which time work should end;
4) Report to delegates on the collection of union membership dues;
5) Report to delegates on the general collective agreement;
6) Initiation of union members into subscribing to Gudok;
7) On delays to the start of work; and
8) The reading out of two circulars of Dorprofsozhe.

The report to the delegates on the Collective Agreement was probably the only item that was bound to provoke extensive interest. The congress was, however, forbidden from debating this item by the Local Union Committee.

Agendas of general meetings were not very different - "containing few issues that are of great interest to the working masses". In the words of Vestnik Truda, the main journal of the VTsSPS, they were "overstuffed with issues which, in the majority of instances, can be characterised as political 'campaigns'". The Union of Medical Workers in Nemrespublika held seven general meetings between January
and May 1925, to discuss the following issues:

1) Lenin and the trade unions;
2) The life, work and death of Lenin;
3) The 20th anniversary of Bloody Sunday [1905];
4) Lenin and the Communist International;
5) The work of the trade unions among women over the last five years;
6) The 54th anniversary of the Paris Commune;
and 7) A report on the work of the union's leadership.

The journal adds that such a picture can be observed in the majority of trade unions.

With regard to production meetings and commissions, as was described in chapter 4, initially these were met by considerable interest. Workers eagerly vented their grievances, especially over the Campaign of Intensification and Rationalisation. But the strict direction of production meetings and their focus on 'self-criticism' and raising worker discipline, quickly dampened worker enthusiasm and participation levels rapidly declined.

In response to such lack of progress, in 1925 the party embarked on the most dramatic of its measures in attempting to bridge the 'gulf', launching 'democratisation' of the party and trade unions. The campaign of 'democratisation' of the trade unions was publicly initiated by Tomskii in his address to the Leningrad Congress of Trade Unions in May 1925, where he called for the abandonment of the system of electing the membership of union organs by lists. In the following months a series of directives and instructions were issued by the VTsSPS and the central committees of individual trade unions to their members on changes to the methods of electing lower union bodies. The key point of these changes was the banning of voting by lists, to be replaced by separate votes for each individual. The practice of declaring 'unanimous approval' of a candidate, without an actual show of hands, was also banned.
The abandonment of elections by lists in conjunction with the expansion of worker participation in party, union and state organs has been greeted by scholars such as William Chase as proof of the 'démocratisation' of the party and its reunification with the working class. This led, according to Chase, to the "reforging" of the "historical alliance" between the party and workers during the second half of the NEP*. But this 'démocratisation' and the continued advocacy of increasing worker participation needs to be examined in closer detail in order to be assessed.

The purpose of the resolutions passed by the VI Trade Unions Congress, expanding organisational structures, de-regimenting party domination and abandoning elections by lists, was to sensitize the trade unions and party to worker concerns and force the growth of sanctioned worker participation in factory life. This, however, must not be equated with a willingness to give up party leadership and influence over factory life. What the party leadership was trying to achieve was to replace obedience based on coercion with voluntary obedience. Through involving greater numbers in organisational/social functions the party hoped to mould the minds of workers so that their aims would harmonise with those of the party leadership. The goal was not to create a labour force of obedient servants, but a labour force that freely identified its interests as being the same as those defined by the party.

That the party had no desire to give up centralised leadership and influence over the organisational structure can be seen in the revised Charter of the Communist party, ratified by the Politburo in December 1925, which made only minor additions to the chapter on the function of party fractions in non-party organisations (Chapter 15). It still ordered the formation of party fractions at all congresses, meetings, and in all organs where there were three or more party members. The fractions were still
assigned the task of universally strengthening the party's influence, implementing its policies among the non-party circle and ensuring party control over the work of all institutions and organisations. The Charter continued to stipulate that all fractions were totally subordinate to their corresponding party organisations and were obligated to "uphold their decisions strictly and without divergence". Every issue of principal importance, to be decided by the organ in which the fraction operated, had to be discussed in advance by the fraction; and all issues of political significance had to be discussed in the presence of a representative of the superior party committee. Finally, candidates for all important posts were still to be nominated by the fraction jointly with their superior party organ, and all party members were still obligated to vote unanimously in non-party organs for party-sponsored resolutions and candidates.

The circular issued by the Moscow Party Committee of March 1925, cited earlier, did not reject party leadership and control. What was being demanded was a more sophisticated approach in securing this leadership and control. While the party advocated greater distribution of official responsibilities among both party and non-party workers, and the expansion of participation in organisational life, the party and union leadership devoted even greater attention to the subject of organisational instruction. Similarly, while the party leadership issued instructions to reduce the numerical domination of non-party organs by party members, the party was not advocating the relinquishing of official functions and organisational positions to whomever was thrown up by the 'worker masses'. The party still advocated the promotion of only those candidates who met the party's approval: "the best workers, those who are closest to the party". The party sought to involve the most 'proletarian conscious' element in its organisational network so as to cultivate a growing 'aktiv'
of 'like-minded' workers around the party cell, which, it was hoped, would then also yield new members for the party. As can be seen in the accounts of strikes, workers who possessed 'proletarian consciousness' were deemed to be those who shared the views of the party leadership, while those who opposed party policy were deemed to be 'anti-Soviet'.

*Vestnik Truda* pointed out that the measures adopted by the VI Trade Unions Congress were not to be "understood as a condemnation of union discipline and centralisation of leadership". Immediately after recommending the relaxation of "regimentation" of union life the Congress reminded that mandatory fulfilment of decrees of higher union and inter-union bodies for all union organs was to continue as before. The necessity for systematic and greater planning in all organisational work, preparation of issues for discussion at meetings, supervision of lower bodies, proper reporting, and 'strengthening of party work' was constantly transmitted from the centre to the locales.

While encouraging a growth in worker participation, the Organisational Department of the Central Committee was advocating an actual increase in the regimentation of the organisational structure. Specific norms were set by the party for the activities of all organisational bodies. These included not only minimum quotas for frequency of meetings, but, more interestingly, also set limits for both the number of times any organ was allowed to meet and the maximum duration of a meeting (three hours). Meetings also had to finish no later than 10:00 p.m., and were banned between 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays and 9:00 a.m. on Mondays. The party leadership was concerned to prevent non-party or lower party bodies eclipsing their superior party organs. By limiting their activities the party leadership was trying to ensure that all such activities could be properly supervised by the party. Mass voluntary societies, which
probably had the greatest potential for evolving into competing interest groups, were set the strictest limits. They were limited to only one meeting of any society in any given month, and a maximum of one meeting of any specific society every three months.

Organisational changes introduced in 1924 and 1925, also served to tighten up party leadership. The launch of shop party cells, and the expansion of party membership created the opportunity for more direct and structured leadership and supervision of both party and non-party organisational work in the shops. Prior to the creation of shop cells, a single party shop organiser would have been responsible for monitoring all activity in the shop, with no formal powers of instruction. Shop cells were seen by the central leadership as providing "more thorough ties between the party and its rank-and-file members", facilitating more regular reporting and instruction.

With the advocacy of 'individual' elections, the leadership did not abandon the aim of having party organs pre-decide the composition of all other organisational bodies, or the desire for party organs to dominate and lead all organisational life. What the leadership was now demanding was that the election of the candidates selected by party organs be achieved by 'democratic' means. Local party organs were still instructed to prepare party-approved lists of candidates in advance of elections to local organs (see the new party Charter cited above). The new challenge for local party organs was to achieve the election of the entire list on an individual-by-individual basis.

_Vestnik Truda_ even condemned local trade union and party bodies which declined to take the initiative in elections. It cited the Bryansk works where, in June 1925, the factory committee and the party cell refused to publish lists of recommended candidates, or propose or publicize its own
candidates, believing that under the 'démocratisation' campaign workers should elect whom they wished. *Vestnik Truda* described this as "swinging the pendulum too far back in the opposite direction", and as shirking by the unions and party of their duty to provide guidance and leadership". The Odessa Regional Union Bureau was similarly condemned for instructing all 'responsible' (occupying an executive post) union workers not to act as chairmen of election commissions, and to remain aloof from election commissions altogether. *Vestnik Truda* ended its commentary by stating "it is already beyond question that the union must maintain the general leadership of election commissions".

Maintenance of party leadership took precedence over the principles of 'démocratisation'. The Politburo even endorsed 'undemocratic' interference in elections, if this was the only way in which party leadership and authority could be preserved. This is clearly shown by the resolutions of a Politburo commission, appointed to investigate strikes in the textile industry in the spring and early summer of 1925, which were ratified by the Politburo itself. The resolution on elections to union bodies instructed union and party organs to:

> ... pay special attention to guarantee free election of union organisations, strictly limiting interference and pressure by party organs to within the limits necessary to guarantee the required party leadership and authority of the given elected organ.

The Central Committee of the party certainly did not consider itself bound by its own directives on internal party democracy. Between the XIII Party Congress (May 1924) and September 1925, of the 104 changes in provincial party secretaries across 74 provinces (in 18 provinces there was more than one change during this period), 30 of the new secretaries were "sent" by the Central Committee.

Decreasing its numerical domination of key non-party
organs, did not mean that the party was prepared to occupy a minority position within these organs. The party leadership still advocated maintaining a party majority in key organs so as to be able to ensure the implementation of the party line. The directive of the Nenzensk Party Committee on re-elections of trade union organs, issued in the autumn of 1925, provides an illustration: it instructed local party organs to raise non-party membership of these bodies to 40% - still leaving the party firmly in charge.

While the 'new' election methods were more 'democratic', the balance remained tipped in favour of the party. New election procedures stipulated that elections be conducted by an electoral commission. While this commission was to be elected by a general meeting it was also stipulated that it be "under the leadership of the regional union committee" and was to include "official representatives of the regional committee". As the electoral commission was charged with convening shop meetings at which nominees were accepted and drawing up candidate lists, this gave the party and union hierarchy some opportunity to 'discourage' the nomination of 'undesirable' candidates, or even refuse to accept the nomination of a candidate by a specific shop.

Party fractions may have lost the right to dictate the future composition of factory committees, but the factory committee still had the right to "propose a draft-orientational list of candidates" which was given to the election commission for "discussion" in shops and departments. This meant that the starting point for election campaigns was the factory committee candidate list. In most instances this was, of course, the party list imposed upon the factory committee by the party fraction. Any nominations from the 'factory floor' were thus inclined to be perceived as public challenges to the authority of the party and union establishment, encouraging workers to think twice before taking such action.
The election procedures also stipulated for "references" (kharakteristiki) of all nominated candidates to be displayed in the factory wall-paper or in special advertisements, and at election meetings. As the granting of such 'references' was the prerogative of the factory committee and party cell, and as factory wall-papers were, theoretically, under the control of the party cell, this measure made it easy to discredit 'undesirable' candidates. At the same time, given the level of state control control and the ban on independent organisational activity, 'populist' candidates would find it difficult to have leaflets printed or hold rallies to drum up support.

The limits of the party's commitment to 'democratic' elections was recognised by many workers. An OGPU summary for 22-26 October 1925 cited the following complaints by highly-skilled workers in the Tula ammunition works:

What you are implementing is curtailed democracy, if you retain the right to nominate and drum up [support for your candidate], then permit us to organise cells out of non-party workers and drum up [our] workers, just like you do members of your own cells.

The workers also asked when secret balloting would be introduced. "Some workers", the summary continued, "regard broad democracy as an attempt to flush-out [workers], 'to fish out those workers who speak against the authorities'."

Nationwide, the first elections conducted under the new methods took place in the autumn of 1925, although they did occur earlier in individual cases. Unsurprisingly, many local party and union organs were unable to exert their influence on the electorate with the sophistication demanded by the Politburo. Similarly, fear of and resistance to 'worker democracy' by local party and union organs was widespread. The Moscow Provincial Trade Unions Council, for example, decided not to elect electoral commissions, leaving all electoral matters in the hands of the existing factory committees. This, according to
*Vestnik Truda*, was common in many regions. The Moscow Regional Committee of the Metal Workers' Union, in a special instruction to factory committees on the eve of the election campaign in the autumn of 1925, authorized "voting by lists" if "the [election] meeting wishes".

In the Bryansk biscuit bakery after a party candidate was defeated in re-elections of the factory committee in the autumn of 1925, the representative from the Bryansk Provincial Committee of the Food-Processors' Union demanded a new, second, ballot. Half of the workers walked out of the meeting in protest. Then the representative declared that the union "has the right to abolish the resolution of the meeting and select desirable persons". After this, more workers abandoned the hall saying "You can elect whom you wish" - the previously defeated communist was duly 'elected' to the factory committee.

Despite such defects, the new election procedures resulted in an immediate increase in participation in elections which became "notable for their liveliness" - workers "came and stayed to the end of the shop and factory meetings". Attendance at election meetings in November 1925 for all textile union enterprises in Ivanovo-Voznesensk (employing over 120,000) averaged 68.6% of the workforce, and ranged from a low of 59% (at an enterprise with over 7,021 union members) to 99% (at an enterprise with 2,830 union members).

Far more significantly, the election campaign resulted in wide-scale renewal of the membership of factory committees. In the Tula ammunition works candidates nominated by the party cell were rejected in many shops and in some shops non-party members put forward their own lists of candidates. Among the textile enterprises of Ivanovo-Voznesensk, the non-party element in factory committees increased from an average of 33.7% to 41%. Far more
revealing, however, is that 75% of those elected had never previously held any official union post; individual cases existed in the province where the entire composition of the factory committee was new; in 16 out of 21 factory committees for which data was available, the chairman was renewed. In Nizhnii Novgorod province, in elections across 13 unions during the first half of 1925, 50-82% of the newly elected factory committee members had not served before.

The significance of this data, however, needs to be assessed with caution. It would be too optimistic to conclude that rank-and-file workers regained control over their factory committees. This is not borne out by the behaviour of the new factory committees. Before attempting to qualify the impact of these results, firstly it must be noted that the party officially encouraged cells to renew the members on its nomination lists, so as to expand the total number of party members with organisational experience. Secondly, central union organs also encouraged factory committees and other union bodies to grow in size, in theory to involve a wider stratum of the workforce in union work. A contributing factor to the growth in membership of factory committees may have been allowances made to accommodate candidates nominated from the 'shop-floor'. Where details are available it appears that in the cases where party-sponsored nomination lists encountered resistance, additional candidates, nominated from the shop floor, would be accommodated until workers were placated. The party could tolerate the presence of a few 'renegades' as long as it continued to maintain majority control over the factory committee.

In Ivanovo-Voznesensk factory committees grew by an average of 11.2% and all other elected bodies by an average of 17%. In Nizhnii Novgorod province total membership of factory committees was expanded by an average of 28%.
Tver' province, while 66.5% of union provincial committee members had not served before, the total number of members grew by 18%. In factory committees 60.1% of the newly elected membership had not served on the outgoing factory committee, but the total number of members also grew by 19\%.

Although the party and union leadership suffered setbacks, their grip was not fragile. The party rarely lost majority control over key bodies. In Tver', the non-party element increased in union provincial committees (across 16 unions) from 27.5% to 40.5%. In factory committees the non-party element increased from an average of 48.8% to 54.3%, but in large-scale industrial enterprises the figures were lower, with the non-party element increasing from 34.6% to 39.8%, leaving the party in control of key enterprises. Similarly, when it came to the most crucial positions within the union organisational structure - the fulltime posts where workers were released from all other obligations, party entrenchment remained firm. In Tver' province the non-party element among fulltime factory committee members thus grew only from 29.9% to 32.4%; and among union provincial committees it actually fell from 14.7% to 13.2%.

Accounts of later individual elections reveal that procedures soon reverted to old habits, and workers lost interest. An OGPU summary for February 1927 names four factory committees where party recommended lists were rejected in part or in full, but makes clear that these were isolated and rare incidents. The main problem, cited across the nation, was worker passivity, with low attendance at election meetings. Difficulties of gathering even a quorum for elections were constantly being reported. The report thus summarizes the mood of workers: "How many times have we re-elected the factory committee, it's all
the same - there is little benefit, we do not see any
defence [of our interests], our requests remain ignored".63

An OGPU report from September 1927 complained that in
Ivanovo-Voznesensk there were great difficulties in
gathering quorums for meetings. "In a series of cases, workers refuse to go to meetings, declaring: 'We will not
go to your re-elections of the factory committee, until you
supply us with enough white flour and other produce'".
"Cases are noted where former party members publicly speak
out against the election of communists to the factory
committee and 'demand the creation of non-party factions
within the factory committee'".64

In the Iaroslavl' Krasnyi Perekop textile mill in the
autumn of 1928, despite high levels of 'tensions' running
through the mill, factory committee election meetings had
to be cancelled because of a lack of a quorum. Candidates
continued to be nominated from above. In shops with 1,000
workers, only 100-150 appeared for election meetings, and
when enough workers did turn up only 6-7 people would
participate in debates65. A Central Committee report on
individual elections of lower party organs in the autumn of
1928 concluded that the common practice was for lower party
organs to accept the candidates "recommended" by their
superior party bodies with minimal discussion or debate66.

Of greater consequences in the regime's various attempts to
bridge the 'gulf' was the re-launch of production meetings
and commissions, with the specific targeting of management,
at the end of 1925 and start of 1926 (on the re-launch see
chapter 4). Attendance and participation in production
meetings reportedly again initially increased significantly
as workers were permitted to attack management. But, once
again, while the party leadership was keen to channel
worker hostility, it did not advocate relinquishing control
to the factory floor. At the same time as encouraging
workers to attack management, the structure of production meetings and commissions was strictly regimented, continuing to deter worker participation (see chapter 4).

The official focus on the manner in which production was being managed legitimised workers' venting of their grievances against 'bourgeois' specialists and factory directors. This evolved into the 'anti-specialist' waves that marked the final years of the NEP. Throughout the various intensification and rationalisation campaigns workers increasingly resorted to venting their anger and frustration at the immediate source of reductions to their wages - against norm-setters, foremen, managers, and even fellow workers who were willing to accept changes to the terms of work.

Workers launched verbal attacks against management at meetings and in 'wall-papers', demanded dismissals, and even resorted to physical assaults. An Informotdel report on workers' moods, dated 3 March 1925, reported that worker dissatisfaction over delays in the payment of wages or increases in output norms was manifested "in a series of places, by the beating of directors and foremen". Following reductions in rates at the Klimov machine-building factory in Moscow in August 1926, workers adopted a resolution demanding the removal of the head of the Tariff-Norm Bureau (TNB), threatening to strike if their resolution was not implemented. In the Libknekht mine in Kuzbass in August 1926, workers broke down the door to the offices of the administration, intending to 'wheelbarrow' the head of the mine (the practice of ritualistically expelling an individual from the territory of the mine or factory in a wheelbarrow, accompanied by verbal and sometimes physical abuse, often ending with the individual being dumped in the nearest river or stream). The specialists declared to the trade union that if they were not protected against such excesses, they would all leave
the mine in one month". In the Mariupol' metalworks (Iugostal') in November 1926, the workers of the sheet-rolling shop threatened to put the technical personnel through the steel-cutters for introducing higher norms. The engineers formally disassociated themselves from the increases, declaring "that they have no intention of giving up their lives over norms that have been introduced by the TNB". In Leninsk-Kuznetsk, during the Collective Agreement Campaign of 1927/28, no less than a member of the party beat up the norm-setter in front of workers over the rates he had set.

Desperately requiring the services of Russia's pre-revolutionary technical intelligentsia central organs denounced such 'spets-baiting'. In August 1925 the Politburo, alarmed by growing tensions between specialists and workers on the factory floor, examined the issue in depth. It assigned a special commission to develop "Practical recommendations for the creation of normal working conditions for specialists in industry, agriculture, transport and other branches of economic and governmental work". The recommendations and resolutions adopted by the Politburo are, in themselves, revealing of the problems being experienced on the ground. After recognising that "... raising labour productivity, expanding production, rationalising it, achieving economic growth, requires the active participation of specialists", the Politburo declared that it was "... essential to struggle decisively against unsubstantiated general criticism of specialists in the party and trade union press as well as the press of other organs, and similarly in newspapers and wall-papers ...". The Politburo called for "improvements in living conditions for specialists - awarding of greater bonuses for concrete achievements; increasing wages; awarding higher wages for enterprises isolated from cultural centres etc." (to attract specialists). More indicative of the discrimination
already being applied to specialists were the Politburo's resolutions to:

1) Consider it essential to ensure that places are given in educational institutions to children of specialists;

and 2) Consider it essential to issue a special directive via party channels to communists working in economic organs and provincial committees, prohibiting the replacing of old specialists with young communist specialists who just finished Higher Educational Institutions, simply because they were members of the party and the others were not, which is being practised sometimes”.

The Politburo's attitude towards 'bourgeois' specialists was, however, contradictory. While it denounced 'spets-baiting', central policies were themselves to blame for the escalation of tensions between workers and management. The leadership exploited worker hostility towards specialists and management to vent and deflect worker dissatisfaction away from the originators of economic policy to its implementors. The party's public blaming of 'bourgeois', 'anti-Soviet', and even 'counter-revolutionary' managers and specialists for 'defects', 'errors', and failings of the various intensification and rationalisation campaigns legitimised worker assaults upon management”. This can be seen in practice in an Informotdel summary of August 1928 which recorded how attacks against specialists increased in the immediate aftermath of the Shakhty trial”.

Worker assaults upon management have been depicted, both by Soviet and Western sources, as evidence of genuine class conflict and hostility. The party leadership's sanction of such attacks is seen by Chase as leading to a reunification of the party and worker masses at the end of the NEP in the battle against the 'class enemy'. Certainly workers were prepared to exploit whatever opportunities were given to them to improve their position and party hostility to 'bourgeois' specialists permitted workers to pressure management to minimise the impact of intensification and rationalisation campaigns. But the material presented in
this study should leave the reader in no doubt that workers were fully aware of the actual source of the campaigns. This is confirmed by the persistence of the gulf between, on the one hand, the worker masses and on the other, union and party organs. At the end of the NEP accounts of wide-scale dissatisfaction, worker disenchantment, defeatism, and estrangement from the regime continued to fill reports forwarded to the Politburo.

While the expansion of the party, union and state organisational web over the nation's workforce throughout the 1920s failed to reunite the party with the worker masses, it helped mitigate the efficacy of worker militancy. On the one hand, the party's growing central domination over all institutions and means of communication made it increasingly difficult for workers to organise or offer any sort of coordinated opposition. On the other hand, the continuous growth in party, union, and state organs offered large numbers of workers attractive opportunities to leave the factory floor, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

The trade union bureaucracy, at the start of 1925, had between one fulltime paid employee for every 500 union members to one for every 1,000 (depending on the union). In Moscow the figure was estimated to be approximately one fulltime union official for every 100 union members. This excludes the SPS and those freed from work for performing union functions within factories, such as freed members of the factory committee. Officially, one member of the factory committee would be freed from performing his or her regular working duties in factories employing 50-300, two in factories employing 300-1,000, three in those employing 1,000-5,000, and five in those employing over 5,000. A study of factory committees across 19 provinces in July 1924 gave an average figure of one free factory committee member for every 308 workers (and an overall
average of one factory committee member for every 73 workers). In addition, many workers would be freed for shorter periods to serve as members of RKKs, on various commissions, or as delegates to conferences and congresses. A VTsSPS inspection of trade union work in the province of Archangel uncovered that from October 1923 to October 1924 a total of 17,677.5 workdays were spent on various union work, congresses, conferences and meetings in the enterprises of the Severoles trust, representing 5.8% of all workdays for the year.

To those freed from work for performing union functions one needs to add those freed to perform party duties, which roughly doubled the number of workers benefiting. Officially, in cells with 50 or more members or candidate members, or in cells in enterprises employing 750 or more workers, the party paid for one fulltime official; this increased by increments to four fulltime officials in cells with over 500 members, or in cells in enterprises employing over 5,000 workers. An Orgraspred report produced in December 1924 for Stalin, however, noted that in addition to those officials being paid directly by the party many party members were working full or part-time for their party cells while continuing to be paid by their enterprises. As an example, the report provides a figure of 556 fulltime party officials being paid by the railways, and this figure is incomplete as the Northern, Transcaucases, Siberian, Ryazan'-Ural and South-Western Railways were excluded for lack of data. The report is unable to give any further figures for other industrial sectors also through lack of data, but concludes that the level of party members drawing salaries from their enterprises was unlikely to be any lower.

With regard to the personnel staffing state bureaucracies, although the overthrow of the 'bourgeois capitalists' in charge of the nation's economy and industries was a driving
force of the revolution, the Bolshevik leadership quickly found that it needed the very same 'bourgeois' managers and engineers to keep the economy and enterprises functioning. Nevertheless, the aim of replacing representatives of the 'enemy classes' with cadres from the shop floor remained and throughout the 1920s there was extensive promotion of industrial workers up the ranks of brigade leaders, shop foremen, technical/engineering specialists, and administrative managerial positions.

While the total percentage of the workforce benefiting from promotion off the shop floor into party, union and state bureaucracies was small, perhaps no more than 5%, candidates for such posts were naturally sought from among the factories' most experienced, 'proletarian', dynamic, intelligent and able workers. This meant that shop floors were continually drained of those elements most likely to carry on the revolutionary heritage and offer organised resistance. It is also necessary to look beyond just the number of posts that liberated workers from their regular duties. It would have been obvious to all that prior to attaining promotion to a fulltime party, union or state post, one needed to build up organisational experience in some of the more minor positions within the party, union or state organisational web. Some of the posts workers could pick from included: union dues collector; heads of hobby circles; membership of labour-safety, agitational-propaganda, cooperative, work among women, cultural, housing, or revisional commissions; editorial collegiums of 'wall-papers', or worker-correspondents for the local and national press; Zhenotdel, shop, union, or local soviet delegates; or membership of the bureaus of the Bezbozhnik, 'Down with Illiteracy', or 'Leadership over the Village' ('Shefstvo') cells. While, of course, not all organs existed in every enterprise, there was a vast selection to choose from. A survey of the party cell of the Dinamo factory (Moscow) in January 1925, found the 206
members active in over 63 various bodies and organisations. In the second-half of the NEP the opportunities for entry into the organisational web or promotion off the factory floor only increased. The establishment of production commissions, with some fulltime members, growth in activity of RKI organs, and expansion in the size of local union and party organs freed additional workers from the shop floor. Similarly the expansion in factory committee membership, establishment of shop party cells, and bodies such as Circles for the Scientific Organisation of Labour (NOT circles), increased the number of posts available to entice workers to start their trek up the promotional ladder.

The immense number of party, union and state posts held out a tangible and visible promise of possible promotion off the factory floor in front of large numbers of workers. This moderated their behaviour as it was obvious to all that because of hierarchical and party domination of the organisational network progress off the factory floor could be aided or accelerated by membership of the party and endorsement of policy emanating from above. Similarly, opposition or mere resistance to central doctrine could seriously hamper one's prospects for promotion. These factors, when combined with the authoritarianism of the state which raised the cost and futility of expressing public opposition, were largely successful in neutralising worker militancy by the end of the NEP.

(ii) Conclusion

The expansion of union, party and state organisational structures and the desire to increase the percentage of party members of 'working-class' origin created extensive opportunities for workers. This served as an important valve to syphon off the natural 'vanguard' of the nation's
workforce. Tight centralised and hierarchical control of these organisational structures prevented workers from climbing up these bureaucracies unless they endorsed the agenda being promoted from the centre. Workers who took advantage of these opportunities were thus forced to break with the shop-floor and should not be regarded as free representatives of the nation's workers. Within the context of state control of media and communications, and the ban on independent organisation and factionalism, the 'démocratisation' of party, union, and state organs remained a sham. It did arouse worker interest and the party and union establishment suffered setbacks, but no fundamental changes in party-worker relations resulted.

Among the bulk of workers, hostility towards the economic policies pursued by the state remained. While workers took advantage of party attacks on 'bourgeois' specialists and management, this should not be equated with the reunification of the party and the worker masses as a whole. The continued campaigns of intensification, of increases in norms and reductions in rates, were met with discontent. At the end of the NEP the 'gulf' remained as wide as ever.
1. "Doklad biuro fraktsii VTsSPS v TsK RKP(b) o sostoyanii i perspektivakh zarpayty", circa July 1924, RTsKhlDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 661, l. 13.


3. See the CheKa daily summaries from August 1921 onwards (RTsKhlDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623+) for repeated reports of large scale resignations from the party in 1921. For specific cases see, for example: "Gosinfsvodka Informatsionnogo otдела VeCheKa", 25 August 1921, RTsKhlDNI, F. 5, op. 1, d. 2623, l. 63 - which attributed continued resignations from the party in Petrograd to the "upcoming review of the party ranks, exhaustion of individual members and weak links between the communists and the masses"; Ibid., 30 August 1921, l. 80 - which attributed resignations in Kaluga province to "failure to provide members materially, long to getting on with domestic, household responsibilities, and unwillingness to be transferred to other areas"; Ibid., 5 October 1921, d. 2624, l. 12 - which reported that in Yaroslavl, 90 members of the Communist party organization in the Bol'shaya Manufaktura cotton mill, having passed the party review, voluntarily resigned; Ibid., 5 & 6 November 1921, d. 2625, l. 5 - which reported that among the railway workers of Chelyabinsk, 195 out of a total of 846 communist party members had resigned voluntarily.

4. "O rabote profsoiuzov (po materialam mestnykh partorgnov)", marked for Stalin and "Secret", 10 August 1925, RTsKhlDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 907, l. 48.

5. "Informatsionno-direktivnoe pis'mo VTsSPS No. 7 ot 18/VII/1925 g.", pp. 3-28 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, p. 5.

6. V. Ptentsov, "Ob obshchikh sobraniyakh", pp. 57-64 in Vestnik Truda, No. 8-9, August-September 1925, pp. 58, 60; "V TsK RKP - Obzor vnutrennego politicheskogo polozheniya RSFSR po dannym Gospolitupravleniya za oktyabr' 1922 goda", RTsKhlDNI F. 17, op. 84, d. 296, l. 30.


9. "Vypiska iz spets inform doklada PPOGPU v LVO 6/X-25 g.", 26 October 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 1004, 1. 191-193.

10. Ibid.


17. A. Dogadov, "Itogi i perspektivi VI S'ezd Soiuzov SSSR", pp. 7-17 in Vestnik Truda, No. 1, January 1925, p. 16.


20. Rabinovich, pp. 147-149.


22. See, for example, "Postanovleniya i rezolutsii soveshchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami Gubkomov, Obkomov, i Kraikomov, sostoyavshegosya pri TsK RKP(b) 11-18 maya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 893, 1. 49.

23. "Nizovye ...", 1. 91-92. In the autumn of 1925, the Nenzensk Provincial Party Committee instructed local party organs that in the re-elections of the
leadership of trade union organs they must raise the proportion of non-party members to 40% - "Informatsionno-politicheskaya svodka No. 109 ot 17 oktyabrya 1925 goda. Spetsial'no - o perevyborakh sovetov, fabzav mestkomov, partorganov, delegatok otdelov rabotnits i krest'yanok", produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 27, l. 7.

24. "Vsem raikomam, ukomam, yacheikam RKP(b) Moskovskoi organizatsii - No. 7", from the Moscow Party Committee, 25 March 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 787, l. 131.

25. "Postanovleniya ... soveshchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami", l. 49.

26. "Dobavlenie k vyvodam o nastroeniyakh", appended to "O nastroeniyakh v rabochikh massakh", produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, circa 20 March 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 903, l. 66.

27. See, for example, "Doklad o kampanii po podnyatiyu proizvoditel'nosti truda (po materialam Informotdela OGPU s noyabrya-24g. po 1 marta-25g.)", 23 March 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 922, l. 57.

28. "Obzor polit-ekonomicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za mart 1925 goda (po dannym OGPU SSSR)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 181, l. 72.

29. Report on passivity of workers in the metalworking sector, produced by the Informotdel of the OGPU, circa summer 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 787, l. 179.

30. Ibid.


32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., p. 160.

34. "Obzor No. 23 informotdela TsK o proizvodstvennykh komissiyakh i sobraniyakh", 16 October 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 57, l. 1.

35. B. Kozelev, "Zdorovaya rabochaya demokratiya v profsoiuzakh (Ob izmenenii metodov vybornosti nizovykh soiuznykh organizatsii)", pp. 9-20 in Vestnik Truda, No. 11, November 1925.


38. "Vsem . . . Moskovskoi organizatsii - No. 7", l. 131; "Nizovye . . .", l. 91-92; "Postanovleniya . . . sovishchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami", l. 49.


40. See, for example: "Postanovleniya . . . sovishchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami", l. 45; "Doklad Orgraspreda TsK po voprosu organizatsionnoi rabote s novymi kadrami partii (Leninskim prizyvom)", circa March 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 895, l. 141; "O partiinoi i professional'noi rabote na predpriyatiyakh tkstil'noi promyshlennosti (Utverzhdeno Politbiuro TsK RKP(b) 8/VII/1925 goda)", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 510, l. 10-11; "Nizovye . . .", l. 96.

41. "Postanovleniya . . . sovishchaniya zaveduiushchikh orgotdelami", l. 48-51 - which set the following maximum limits for meetings:
- party cell bureaus - 1 per week;
- party cell commissions - 1 per week each and no more than 2 meetings of core commissions in any one week;
- factory party cells - 1 per month;
- shop party cells - 2 per month;
- komsomol cell bureaus - 1 per week;
- komsomol cells - 1 per fortnight;
- komsomol aktiv - 1 per month;
- factory committees - 1 per week;
- factory committee commissions - 1 per week each and no more than 2 meetings of core commissions in any one week;
- general meetings (of the workforce) - 1 per month;
- union delegates - 1 per fortnight;
- factory or shop production meetings - 1 per month;
- members or plenipotentiaries of co-operatives - 1 every 3 months;
- bureaus of mass voluntary societies - 1 per fortnight.

42. "Nizovye . . .", l. 93, 97.
44. Ibid., p. 19.
45. "Protokol No. 70 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 8 iiulya 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 510, item 8; "O partiinoi ... rabote ...", l. 10-11.
46. "Dokladnaya zapiska o vybornosti gubernskikh i uezdnykh rukovodyashchikh partiinykh, sovetskikh, professional'nykh i kooperativnykh organov i otdel'nykh rukovodyashchikh rabotnikov etikh organov", produced by the Orgotdel of the Central Committee, circa September 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 32, d. 18, l. 69.
47. "Informatsionno-politicheskaya svodka No. 109 ...", l. 7.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. "Svodka No. 53/138 Informatsionnogo otdela OGPU za vremya s 30/VI po 7/VII-25g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 197, l. 51.
52. Kozelev, "Zdorovaya ...", pp. 9, 18.
53. "Informatsionno-politicheskaya svodka No. 109 ...", l. 8.
54. Kozelev, "Zdorovaya ...", pp. 9, 15, 16. In the Tula ammunition works, attendances of 70-90% were reported for re-election meetings in October 1925 - "Svodka No. 53/138 Informatsionnogo otdela OGPU ...", l. 51.
56. "Svodka No. 53/138 Informatsionnogo otdela OGPU ...", l. 51.
57. Panov, p. 176.

62. Ibid.

63. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za yanvar' mesyats 1927g. (po dannym OGPU)", 27 February 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 201, l. 4, 16-17.

64. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 46 (167) informotdel TsK VKP(b) o nastroeniyakh rabochikh i krest'yan", 24 September 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 217, l. 71.

65. A. Grinevich, Responsible Instructor of the Central Committee, "V Sekretariat TsK VKP", circa December 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 325, l. 40-41.

66. "Svodka informatsionnogo otdela TsK VKP(b) o predvaritel'nykh itogakh perevyborakh biuro fabricchno-zavodskikh yacheek", 10 December 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 309, l. 13.

67. In Verkhne-Seredsk mill (Ivanovo-Voznesensk), for example, women workers sent by the labour exchange to work according to a "new rationalised system" were beaten by the other workers and they had to be sent back - "Spravka po Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi gubernii (za 1928 god): Prilozhenie No. 1 - ratsionalizatsiya proizvodstva", produced by the OGPU, 15 September 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, l. 10.

68. "Materialy o nastroenii rabochikh mass i otnoshenie ikh k partii i sovvlasti (Po materialam Informotdel TsK i OGPU za period s 1 noyabrya 1924g. po 15 fevralya 1925g.)", 3 March 1925, produced by the Informotdel of the Central Committee, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 904, l. 56; see also "V Tsentral'nyi Komitet RKP(b)", 13 September 1925, marked "Top Secret", from Kassior, Secretary of SibKrai Party Committee, d. 946, l. 29.

69. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za avgust mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 29 September 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, l. 40.

70. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za iiul' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 27 Aug 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, l. 5.

71. "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za noyabr' mesyats 1926g. (po dannym OGPU)", 24 December 1926, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 9200, l. 156.
72. "Itogi koldogovornoi kampanii 1927-1928 gg. - svodka informatsionnogo otdela TsK VKP(b)", 13 September 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 308, 1. 11.

73. "Protokol No. 75 - zasedaniya politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ot 13 avusta 1925g.", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 3, d. 515, item 11 & appendix 5.

74. See, for example, Bykin, Secretary of the Yaroslavl Provincial Party Committee, "O polozhenii so spetsalistami na 'Krasnom Perekope'", letter addressed to the Secretariat of the Central Committee, 30 December 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 325, 1. 23-27.

75. "Informatsionnaya svodka No. 10 (179) informotdela TsK VKP(b)", 7 August 1928, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 311, 1. 117-118. The Shakhty Trials in 1928 of a group of engineers who were accused on trumped-up charges of sabotage were a forerunner of the purges and show trials of the 1930s.

76. See, for example: "Obzor politicheskogo sostoyaniya SSSR za fevral' mesyats 1927 g. (po dannym OGPU)", 7 April 1927, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 87, d. 201, 1. 43; "Itogi koldogovornoi ...", 1. 22; "Protokol - soveshchaniya sekretarei partkollektivov, predsedatelei fabkomov i direktorov tekstil'nykh fabrik gor. Ivanovo-Voznesenske, sozvannogo Gubkomom VKP(b) 14-go Marta 1928 goda", RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 85, d. 236, 1. 64-69.


80. "Dokladnaya zapiska v sekretariat TsK po voprosy ob oplate sekretarei-organizatorov proizvodstvennykh yacheek", marked for Stalin, produced by the Orgraspred department of the Central Committee, 12 December 1924, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 668, 1. 14-15.
81. "Rezul'taty obsledovaniya nekotorykh proizvodstvennykh yacheek Moskovskoi organizatsii po vyysneniiu stepeni vovlecheniya shirokikh partiinyakh kadrov v prakticheskuuiu obschestvennuuiu rabotu i stepeni nagruzki otdel'nykh partiitsev", marked for the attention of Stalin, 12 February 1925, RTsKhIDNI, F. 17, op. 84, d. 895, l. 36.
Conclusion

While improvements occurred during the 1920s in working and living conditions for the worker masses over the starvation and subsistence levels at the start of the decade, gains over pre-revolutionary levels were small (even if they existed at all). Although official figures claim an increase in real average wages by 1928 of around 15-20% over 1913 levels, once the shortage of goods at official state prices and the deterioration in the quality of both consumer goods and produce are taken into consideration the gains become negligible or non-existent. The depopulation of cities before and during the Civil War and the redistribution of 'bourgeois' housing did result in an initial increase in average living space for workers, but this increase was negated during the NEP by the influx of people into the cities, the dilapidation of the housing stock, and the meagreness of state housing construction. At the end of the decade a large proportion of the workforce were still living in factory barracks, mud huts, dugouts and shantytowns.

A similar situation existed in the factories themselves. Again initial gains were made in working conditions during the first years of the NEP from the sorry state at the start of the decade. In 1921, owing to shortages of fuel and lack of maintenance, workers often had to endure freezing conditions in unheated factories, exposed to the elements as broken windows and leaking roofs remained unrepaired. This was rectified in the early stages of recovery, but later, under the pressures of central economic policy, shop floors became increasingly hazardous. As economic growth was based on recovery, on placing existing enterprises and machinery back into production, workers found themselves working ever older and worn-out machinery in more and more crowded conditions. With machinery being accelerated in response to central demands
for intensification, danger levels grew. The transition to three-shift work in many enterprises in the last years of the NEP meant that there was now little opportunity for the workplace to cool or the dust to settle, adding to the hazards. The preeminence attached by the government to increasing output and reducing costs, combined with state ownership of the bulk of industry, meant that labour safety inspectors had great difficulty in securing the implementation of their directives. All this was reflected in rapidly escalating accident rates during the second half of the decade, attesting to worsening working conditions. By the end of the NEP, accident rates had increased three-fold over those recorded in the last years of the Tsarist regime, when factories were straining under the demands of war production which had swelled the workforce by a third.

By the end of the NEP, the worker masses had little cause to rejoice as the attainment of their revolutionary agenda of 1917 remained as distant as ever. Equitable sharing of the responsibilities and wealth generated by their enterprises had given way to the continuation of traditional managerial structures and of large differentials in pay and benefits between workers and specialists. Beyond the factory walls, workers continued to be affronted by Nepmen and privileged elites (including those of the party, state and 'bourgeois' specialists) enjoying conspicuous levels of consumption, while they themselves faced shortages of the most basic produce and commodities. The 'workers' republic had even failed to banish the dreaded spectre of unemployment that continued to haunt industrial quarters.

The failure of the Bolshevik state to implement the workers' agenda raises the question of why it did not face a revolutionary challenge to its authority as it had in 1921 and as its predecessors had in 1905, and again in February and October 1917. The absence of this challenge
was not the result of an absence of worker grievances or hostility towards the regime. As this study has shown, strikes and other manifestations of worker dissatisfaction remained a feature of industrial life throughout the NEP, and even escalated during and after 1925. Despite this escalation, however, the nature of worker militancy did change, whereby it failed to directly challenge the regime. Throughout the NEP strikes became smaller in size and shorter in duration as workers lost the ability to organise and co-ordinate their actions effectively.

This loss of worker ability to offer effective opposition can be partially explained by the authoritarianism of the regime. With growing state central control over all aspects of factory life and all forms of communication, and the ban on independent organisational activity, it became ever more difficult for workers to plan and coordinate collective action. At the same time the state's willingness to use police and legal organs against labour activists and the equating of economic protest with 'anti-Soviet' or treasonous activity, raised the predictable cost of individual involvement.

The regime did, however, pay a price for its authoritarianism and for the economic pressures it placed on the workforce to increase output at less cost (i.e. for less income). This price was manifested in continuing worker alienation from the regime and the maintenance of a 'gulf' between the party leadership and the worker masses. This 'gulf', and the persistence of strikes, was a cause of great concern for the regime, not just because of its negative impact on output, but, more importantly, because the party looked to the worker masses as the source of its own regeneration and expansion. In the first years of the NEP, survival of the regime took precedence and the effort exerted to bridge this 'gulf' was limited. From 1924 onwards, increasing urgency was ascribed to the
reunification of the party leadership with the worker masses. The party leadership recognised that authoritarian measures were effective in mitigating worker militancy only in the short-term and that it needed to tackle worker alienation. The party responded to this challenge by seeking forcibly to increase worker involvement in the institutional life of the USSR. It did this by expanding party, union, and state organs, escalating their activity, and 'democratisation'. The party leadership sought to compel party, union and state organs to be more attentive to worker concerns by instigating so-called 'democratisation' of election procedures and attempting to force greater interaction between workers and party, union and state organs.

This 'democratisation' and interaction should not be misinterpreted as a desire by the centre to increase worker influence and direction over party, union and state organs, or a desire to increase worker involvement in determining national priorities. This was condemned as 'khvostizm' - where the leaders (the party) follow their 'followers' (the worker masses), reneging on their historic responsibility to act as the vanguard of the working class. At the same time as advocating 'democratisation' and greater worker involvement, the party leadership continually insisted that higher party, union and state organs must direct this process and maintain leadership over the worker masses. At no point did the leadership question the party's role as the vanguard of the worker masses or the validity of the party's assessments of the true interests of the 'working class'. Hence, parallel with promoting 'democratisation', 'attentiveness' to worker concerns, and the 'livening' of organisational work, the centre incessantly demanded tightening of hierarchical party control over all aspects of factory life.
The creation and expansion of party, union, and state organs, while failing to reunify the party with the worker masses, did, however, play a vital role in diminishing the efficacy of worker militancy. There was no precedent, either in Russia or the West, for the organisational complexity, scope and numerical weight of institutions and bodies that evolved in the USSR during the 1920s for the management of industry and its labour force. This, combined with the leadership's desire to increase 'working class' representation within party, union and state organs, and to alter the class basis of the USSR's specialists, offered extensive opportunities to workers for promotion off the factory floor. While only a minority may have actually succeeded in attaining promotion into fulltime bureaucratic or managerial posts, the large quantity of voluntary official posts available within factories held out a tangible prospect of promotion for virtually any worker with a minimum of organisational ability or initiative. As party and hierarchical control of the organisational network was obvious to all, workers were well aware that their prospects for promotion would be aided by membership of the party and endorsement of official policy and objectives. Similarly, any public criticism of or opposition to central aims was likely, at the very least, to impede promotion, if not result in dismissal or the attention of the OGPU. The 1920s thus gave birth to the new Soviet 'schizophrenic' man and woman, compelled to suppress their true thoughts, whether consciously or subconsciously, and encouraged to profess unquestioning belief in the ideology of the state.

This is not to deny that the ideology of the state continued to be attractive to many workers. Many maintained their belief in the Revolution and the party, particularly those that benefited from the party's patronage of the 'working class'. But the determination to maintain and increase party hierarchical control over the
organisational network, and to harness it to the economic and political objectives of the centre, did little to endear the bulk of worker masses. Some workers even began to believe that the Revolution was being betrayed somewhere on the organisational ladder and continued to profess their allegiance to 'communism', 'Bolshevism' and even 'the party' while actively opposing or resisting the implementation of central policy. The bulk of rank-and-file workers realised that 'democratisation' was a sham and the party had no ambitions to relinquish its dominance over the workplace. Mass worker alienation and estrangement from the regime was as prominent a feature at the end of the NEP as at its start.

Naturally, those that benefited from promotion tended to be the most able and skilled workers - the elements who traditionally constituted the vanguard of the 'working class', the guardians of its organisational and revolutionary heritage. The party, unions and state thus continuously siphoned off or moderated the behaviour of those individuals who would have been most likely to organise and offer effective opposition. By depriving worker opposition of its natural vanguard, organisational expansion played a fundamental role in limiting the ability of workers to launch effective organised protest against the state's economic polices. The personal advancement offered to this new elite encouraged workers with initiative, organisational, managerial or technical skills to suppress any personal objections that they might have to the regime and participate in its evolution. The alternative - active opposition against the state, with its unlimited forces of economic and physical oppression - must have seemed futile.

The access to entry into the new elite extended by the regime to the 'working class' has been interpreted by some scholars as the creation of a state led by 'workers'. Such
an analysis is simply incorrect. Entry and elevation in the national elites compelled individuals to break their allegiance to the shop floor. The coerced alliance between the party and a new elite of 'working class' origin cannot be equated with a reunification of the party and the 'working class' as a whole. A 'gulf' between the party leadership and the worker masses remained.

This is not to claim that everyone that joined the party or advanced up the institutional hierarchy cynically turned their back on their 'working class' heritage, or their personal morality. As the last remnants of non-Bolshevik parties were extinguished, and the one-party state consolidated, the centre of gravity of criticism and opposition to official policy shifted to within the Bolshevik party itself. The party leadership was shocked to discover that shop-floor protest was not being led by 'anti-Soviet', 'counter-revolutionary', or even 'anti-Bolshevik' elements, but by current or former party and komsomol members, or by the very same 'proletarian', skilled, and long-serving workers which the party regarded as its constituency. Throughout the 1920s the most vocal criticism and damaging condemnation of central industrial and economic policy came from party and komsomol members within the party, union and state hierarchy. Attacks on central policy could be found at every level, from the lowest party cell in the factory to the Central Committee. The X Party Congress' ban on party factions, forbidding such opposition from organising itself within the party, and party discipline, however, limited the effectiveness of such criticism. Ultimately party members were faced with the choice of resigning (and some did), or bowing to party discipline and accepting decisions passed down from above. For many individuals this choice was not just one of personal courage: within the context of a one-party, authoritarian state, resignation meant ending all involvement with the party of power and any possibility of
influencing or shaping future policy. This equated with turning one's back on the Revolution solely because its ideals had become contaminated. Surely it was better to remain a participant of the Revolution in order to try to steer it back onto course, rather than abandon it?

The party leadership not only had to contend with criticism and opposition from within its own ranks, but it also had to contend with the undermining of its policies in the locales, and resentment and resistance to hierarchical and external domination at every level. The extent of misinformation of superiors by their subordinates, and feeble implementation of some aspects of central policy illustrates the weakness of central authority when opposed by its own organisational structures. It also illustrates that the hierarchical authoritarianism of the regime was dependent upon and required the endorsement of the membership of party, union and state organs. While there were officials at every level who were willing to voice criticism of the actions of the regime, or resisted their own subordination to external or superior party organs, the very same officials not only accepted but also enforced party and hierarchical domination of organs that were subordinate to themselves. This was not simply the result of central coercion - a political system had evolved where party and hierarchical domination, allocation of posts by party fractions, subordination of lower organs to higher organs, all benefited the membership of each stratum of the organisational hierarchy with respect to the membership of the stratum directly below it. The membership of each stratum in this organisational hierarchy thus developed an inherent interest in preserving and consolidating this political system.

Once again, this political culture cannot be attributed simply to individual lust for power, or selfish desires on the part of individuals to protect and enhance their
privileges. It was also shaped by the ideological dream of the revolution. Hierarchical and central domination were essential if the vanguard was successfully to impose its vision on an 'unenlightened' mass. The 'bureaucratisation' of the revolution was not the result of the 'infiltration' into and 'corruption' of the Bolshevik party by a 'careerist' element or the 'disintegration' of the 'proletariat' during the Civil War. The 'bureaucratisation' was a direct product of Bolshevik political culture, of its belief and obsession with organisational solutions, mobilisation and confidence in its own vision and leadership.

The extraordinarily complex and burdensome organisational structures were disastrous for the economy. This negative impact extended beyond the sheer cost of supporting the growing armies of officials. The regime created parallel channels of communication and parallel lines for the execution of central policy. In Moscow, the Central Committee and Politburo had to reconcile conflicting reports emanating from regional and local party committees, trade unions, state ministries (commissariats), the Central Control Commission and Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, and the OGPU. As the regime was not averse to punishing or rewarding individual state, union and party officials for the performance of industries or the implementation of central directives, these conflicting channels found themselves in competition with each other to curry favour with their superiors. Having deprived itself of market forces to gauge the efficiency and state of the economy, let alone an independent press, the leadership found itself increasingly reliant on information tainted by the attempts of authors to please.

Government, management, union and party organs were also forced into a situation where they competed with each other in the implementation of central policy. As the regime
derided institutional procedural order and legality as 'bourgeois', it was not concerned as to which organ achieved central objectives or whether institutional and legal boundaries had been overstepped, if this provided results. The situation was exacerbated by the leadership's confidence in itself, pro-party bias, and class-based suspicion of management and specialists. Having attained and secured power against seemingly insurmountable odds, the leadership began genuinely to believe that with sufficient determination any bastion could be stormed, whether political, social, or economic. In the last instance this was manifested by belief that through mobilisation, intensification and rationalisation, industrial output could be increased and costs reduced by large fractions in short periods of time. The party leadership's suspicion of 'bourgeois' specialists led them to reject management criticism of central economic policy and pass leadership of economic campaigns to party organs. This was a fundamental error in Bolshevik economic policy. By granting a leading role to party organs, the economic campaigns were bound to become politicised. Party officials and RKI inspectors were placed into a situation where they were encouraged to reveal spectacular 'waste' by management and advocate the possibility of immediate dramatic increases in output.

The leadership's growing frustration with the failure of its economic policies to generate the capital surpluses required to finance industrialisation, combined with its bias against 'bourgeois' specialists and party and RKI 'revelations' of mismanagement, led it increasingly to believe that the managerial sector was guilty of sabotage. Confronted by conflicting reports reaching the centre on every economic aspect, including inflation, wages, output, costs, and opportunities for growth, central economic planning drifted towards bullying enterprises through unrealistic targets to maximise output and minimise costs.
Management and workers were forced to respond to the demands for dramatic increases in output or face accusations of being 'anti-Soviet' or 'counter-revolutionary'. They responded to this pressure by decreasing their attention to quality and resorting to 'creative accounting'. Management and workers colluded in maximising worker income, passing defective product as fit and exaggerating output. Defective output at each stage of the production chain had a spiralling negative impact on production further down the chain, with disastrous consequences for the efficiency of the entire economy. In sectors where the opportunities for such machinations or collusion were limited (such as seasonal sectors), the state found it increasingly difficult to recruit labour.

By the end of the NEP, the leadership had exhausted its ideas on raising capital within the framework of the 'smychka' between town and country - the voluntary market-based exchange of grain for goods. While the leadership was successful in neutralising the immediate threat to its own hold on power posed by worker militancy, it recognised that its attempts to bridge the 'gulf' within the context of the NEP were failing. At the same time growing militancy among the unemployed also worried the regime. The 'revolution' needed to be re-launched or the breach would become fatal. The combination of all these factors would have propelled the regime to abandon the last pretences of a mixed-market economy and launch all-out industrialisation, financed by forcible extraction of grain from the countryside. The leadership was thus compelled to end the 'smychka', even if it was forced into this position by its own mismanagement of the economy. The promises such an option held out of ending unemployment, mobilising the workforce, and accelerating the fulfilment of the revolutionary agenda would have made this option all the more attractive.
The NEP had been doomed by the regime's continuation of the underlying principles of War Communism. It was doomed by the leadership's 'class' antagonisms towards 'bourgeois' specialists, by its belief in and willingness to resort to mobilisation and coercion, and by the eagerness of the party to interfere wherever it saw fit. While the NEP is differentiated from War Communism by organisational changes, these changes were dictated in 1921 by the regime's lack of capacity to manage the Soviet Republic rather than by any commitment, even temporary, to the principles of laissez-faire upon which the NEP was supposedly based. From the first days of the NEP, organs of the Central Committee and the party had no reservations about dictating output of individual factories, setting wages, managing the workforce, and specifying development programmes.

Similarly, many of the processes and characteristics of the 1930s, identified by scholars such as S. Fitzpatrick, D. Filtzer, and S. Kotkin, were present or initiated during the 1920s or even during the Civil War. The new elite made up of the children of workers and peasants which Fitzpatrick identifies as emerging in the 1930s and which was to last into the 1980s, began its climb in the 1920s by attaining its first exposure to and experiences of party, union and state organisational activity. The function that upward mobility played in securing support for the Stalinist and Soviet regime, described by Fitzpatrick, is already a factor in the 1920s'. Management-worker collusion to maximise worker incomes and meet targets with its damaging effects on the economy, described by Filtzer, is well under way in the 1920s. Similarly, increasing worker resort to attempting to mitigate the pressures upon them through individual responses, whether it be by seeking promotion, reducing quality of output, damaging machinery or product, job-flitting, absenteeism, alcoholism, or defeatism, also identified by Filtzer', were established
features of the industrial life of the NEP. The "jurisdictional rivalries and jealousies" and the "multiplicity of responsible organisations [leading] to a vacuum of responsibility", identified by Kotkin in Magnitogorsk, were created before the launch of the First Five-Year Plan. The 1920s saw the evolution of the system for managing the economy and relations between state and society that underlay the whole Soviet period, and to a more limited extent, continue to influence relations between state and society to this day.
Notes: Conclusion


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