THE APPLICABILITY OF CORPORATIST MODELS TO THE STUDY OF SOVIET POLITICS: THE CASE OF THE TRADE UNIONS

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Most Western specialists of Soviet affairs trained after 1960 have come to reject the totalitarian model of Soviet politics. The attack on the totalitarian portrayal of the Soviet polity has been sustained for nearly two decades with numerous alternative approaches to the study of Soviet politics coming to the fore. Among the most importance of these new research strategies have been the attempts of H. Gordon Skilling to introduce interest group theory to the study of Soviet political processes[1] and of Jerry Hough to present an image of "institutional pluralism."[2] Both Skilling and Hough seek to analyze Soviet politics in terms comparable to political systems elsewhere; both seek to integrate Soviet studies and political science.

More recently, Valerie Bunce and John M. Echols III have sought the same end by advocating a corporatist model of Soviet political mechanisms.[3] According to Bunce and Echols, the Soviet system during the Brezhnev era developed in conformity with a corporatist image "in which major functional interest groups are incorporated into the policy process by the state and its leaders."[4] Drawing from the work of Leo Panitch, Bunce and Echols maintain that the corporatist approach is preferable to a pluralist model because it is not based upon "unwieldly assumptions" of group multiplicity, "passive state behavior" and systemic stability.[5] Neither Skilling nor Hough assume that a pluralist model resembling that criticized by Panitch applies to the Soviet Union, so that Bunce and Echols offer a corporatist strategy as preferable to a misrepresentation of competing techniques. Nevertheless, their introduction of corporatist theory to the study of Soviet politics marks another important attempt to bring together political science and the study of Soviet politics.

The function of trade unions in the Soviet Union provides a particularly appropriate case study for determining the possible applicability of corporatist theory to the study of Soviet politics. The largest single social organization in the USSR, the unions articulate the interests of at least some segments of the Soviet working class to government and Communist party officials while simultaneously functioning as a fully integrated component of state authority. For this reason, a study of the union allows an examination of the main elements present in any corporatist arrangement. Nevertheless, any effort to apply corporatist models to the Soviet scene immediately confronts the confused and ambiguous state of writing on corporatism itself.

Phillippe Schmitter has been as instrumental as anyone in the reemergence of the concept of corporatism (or, more precisely, neo-corporatism) in recent years. Schmitter defined the concept in his seminal article "Still a Century of Corporatism?" as:

> a system of interest intermediation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered, and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports.[6]

Schmitter subsequently further refined his notion of corporatism by differentiating between societal corporatism -- which contains within it relatively autonomous, competitive and ideologically varied subunits -- and state corporatism -- which tends to be associated with centralized, one-party, ideologically exclusive state systems.[7] Gerhard Lehmbruch has also elaborated upon the possibilities for corporatist arrangements in interest articulation by developing a concept of liberal corporatism, which entails:

> an institutionalized pattern of policy-formation in which large interest organizations cooperate with each other and with public authorities not only in the articulation (or even 'intermediation') of interests, but -- in its developed forms -- in the 'authoritative allocation of values' and in the implementation of such policies.[8]

As a consequence of this continuing discussion over the very definition of corporatism, any scholar wishing to apply the corporatist concepts of interest articulation to the Soviet political system confronts the rather inconvenient problem of deciding precisely which corporatist model to apply to what Soviet institution. In the case of the trade unions, it turns out, Schmitter's concept of state corporatism and Lehmbruch's liberal corporatist approach both shed light upon the nature of Soviet trade union activity. Interestingly, the light they each shed is somewhat different, improving our knowledge and understanding of Soviet trade union activities in slightly contrasting ways. In order to understand how this is so, one must first digress from a discussion of corporatist theory and examine the history and organization of Soviet trade union institutions.

THE CONCEPT OF DUAL FUNCTIONING TRADE UNIONISM

Any examination of Soviet trade union activity must begin with a discussion of the Leninist concept of dual functioning unionism. That concept emerged from the turmoil of revolution and civil war.[9] Bolshevik leaders heatedly debated the role of the unions within the new Soviet state during the Tenth Party Congress in March, 1921. Before the congress a wide variety of conflicting views on the subject were narrowed to three contesting resolutions on the trade union question. A. Shliapnikov, A. Kollontai and the Workers' Opposition presented a syndicalist approach to the national economy according to which the unions would administer major sectors of the national economy. Trotsky and Bukharin advocated the complete subjugation of the unions to the

state. To their minds, the unions should manage compulsory labor programs and enforce labor discipline. The "Group of Ten," including in their number both Lenin and union leader Mikhail Tomsky, presented a third compromise proposition which ultimately carried the day. This last resolution proved less consistent internally. In presenting his position, Lenin conceded to Trotsky that the unions must help raise productivity and discipline workers. However, he continued, the unions as social organizations could not use coercion, which remains a prerogative of the state. Instead, union leaders must persuade and educate workers and develop their unions into "a school of administration, a school of economic management, a school of communism."

The 1921 discussion of the trade union question proved important because Lenin himself stated a position on the unions, a solution to the problem they presented to the young Soviet state. Furthermore, a Party Congress ratified that position. As Lenin became canonized, discussion of the role of the unions or practical suggestions as to how their work might be improved had to take Lenin's 1921 position into account. In recent years, Lenin's views have been reflected in the statements of Party and union leaders as well as academic theorists who have argued that improved labor productivity is beneficial to the entire Soviet population. Increased production, they suggest, expands the national wealth which, in turn, improves the material and cultural well-being of the entire population, the workers included. Nevertheless, such a system does not function perfectly. Soviet labor law specialist R. Z. Livshits notes that dissatisfaction with labor generated by such factors as poor working conditions and irregular work cycles, combines with manpower shortages and an imperfect wage system to contribute to a less than satisfactory relationship between the worker and his or her work.[10] As a result, the trade unions must defend the worker against the "bureaucratism" of

economic administrators. Soviet trade unions must seek increased productivity while attempting to defend the worker "not between classes, but within a class."

The concept of dual functioning trade unionism, then, rests upon an assumed mutuality of interest on the part of the workers and the workers' state. As the policies of that state are, by definition, in the interest of the working class, labor organizations need not concern themselves with the systematic violation of workers' rights by that state. Rather, union leaders can legitimately oppose only individual violations of those rights as such rights are defined by state law and Party pronouncement. In this manner, the unions conform to Schmitter's initial definition of corporatism as they have been incorporated into a system of interest intermediation in which the state and Communist Party grant a representational monopoly in return for union support of state and Party programs and activities. The resulting delegitimation of industrial conflict inhibits union articulation of workers' group interests as it relegates behavior not beneficial to workers, both as a group and as individuals, to a status of exceptional occurrences. The area for labor-management discord thus becomes severely constricted by fundamental definitions and basic assumptions.

This definitional trivialization of labor grievances often obscures broad policy concerns underlying specific complaints and labor law violations. For example, female industrial workers tend to be segregated by function and by industry.[11] Female-dominated shops, plants and industries are less frequent recipients of capital investment, while traditionally female occupations are not as highly compensated as a rule as are male dominated professions. This discriminatory pattern is not one of overt state and Party favoritism. A Soviet woman working at the same job in the same industry as a man receives

the same pay. Rather, the pattern results from social and cultural definitions of female roles which perhaps inadvertently, but nonetheless effectively, reduce employment opportunities for women. To official eyes, no discrimination exists, therefore, women have no reason to complain other than to protest specific inequitable situations.

In late January, 1983, Iurii Andropov visited the Moscow Machine Tool Plant.[12] Following a tour of the plant's facilities, the General Secretary addressed a factory meeting. At that meeting T.A. Komarova, a foreman from the factory's Decoration Shop, observed that men never work very long in her shop as they move along as quickly as possible while the women stay behind. The result is a permanently female workforce. The shop's workers have an exemplary disciplinary record despite some problems with family connected absenteeism. The work is tedious, relying primarily upon the hand application of lacquer to various tool parts. The shop, therefore, could benefit greatly from automation. Indeed, Komarova indicated that the introduction of some new machines had increased productivity substantially. Here was a case where capital investment and technological innovation could dramatically improve both the shop's productivity record and the working conditions of the shop's employees at the same time. During the entire discussion neither Komarova nor, more significantly, Andropov suggested that there might be broader policy issues at stake beyond the immediate difficulties at the Decoration Shop of the Moscow Machine Tool Plant.

Such individualization of industrial shortcomings to a specific time and place severely limits the effectiveness of Soviet trade union organizations. It minimizes the need of union officials to communicate with each other as every managerial failure becomes, by definition, unique. Soviet trade unions can protect workers against specific abuses by industrial managers; they can

not defend those same workers against overarching but perhaps equally damaging policies approved by the Party and state. As such, they would appear to conform to Schmitter's notion of state corporatism in which units of interest articulation are encapsulated by a centralized, one-party, ideologically exclusive state system. This phenomenon has led East German dissident and former Communist Party member Rudof Bahro to speculate that unions in socialist systems are even more powerless in institutional terms than before socialist political and economic forms were established as workers are atomized even within associations which are organized for them rather than by them.[13]

THE ORGANIZATION AND HISTORY OF SOVIET TRADE UNIONS

In order to fulfill their dual functions, Soviet trade unions organize themselves on the basis of the so-called production principle and the principle of democratic centralism. According to the first, all employees in a given economic sector can be members of the same union, regardless of profession. At present, there are 32 such unions with over 130 million members, approximately 98 percent of the Soviet work force (See Tables I & II). According to the principle of democratic centralism, policies are viewed as having been democratically conceived in that rank-and-file union members may suggest policy alternatives and centralist in so far central insitutions dictate policy direction once priorities have been established.[14] These two organizational principles combine to create an extraordinarily complex hierarchy of intra-union committees and regional inter-union councils according to which each union official becomes subject to both individual sector unions and the regional inter-union councils (See Figure I).[15].

Precisely how Soviet trade unions have attempted to fulfill their assigned functions has evolved over the years. E. H. Carr once observed that

Soviet labor relations theory is marked by a desire to integrate the unions into the workers' state, for "the organs of the workers and the organs of the workers and the organs of the workers' state could not go their separate ways."[16] During the 1920s, "not going their separate ways" could still mean that union representatives defended the rights of workers against neglectful managers. Strikes occurred throughout much of decade even at state operated enterprises.[17] Once the Communist Party and Soviet government launched the First Five Year Plan in 1929, the unions "turned their face towards production." By 1940, absenteeism and truancy had become criminal offenses, and those union officers who were reluctant to enforce the new regulations found themselves subject to prosecution.[18] While the unions participated in what Lehmbruch might identify as the authoritative allocation of values, they were denied any meaningful possibility of articulating worker interest before public authority. The nadir of Soviet unionism -- a time during which the application of Schmitter's state corporatist model would be the most appropriate -- probably came during the Second World War when union agencies simply ceased operations in many regions. In 1944, V. V. Kuznetsov, currently the First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, assumed the AUCCTU chairmanship and launched a program of "normalization" within the unions.[19]. A few years later, criminal sanctions against labor discipline violaters were reduced and in 1956 removed altogether.[20]

In December 1957, the Communist Party's Central Committee reaffirmed the concept of dual-functioning unions.[21] The Central Committee's resolution on the unions did not renounce increased labor productivity as a central union concern, nor did it challenge the union's subordination to the Communist Party. Nevertheless, the Central Committee endorsed a policy which, for the first time in decades, allowed a potentially significant union role in

Table I: Membership of Soviet Trade Unions, 1976-1982

(in millions, on January 1)

	1976	1980	1982
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	109.6	127.3	131.2
Blue & White Collar Workers	98.3	106.6	110.2
Collective Farmers	3.2	11.7	11.9
Students in Institutions of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education	5.4	5.8	3.3
Students in Professional Technical Schools	2.7	3.2	3.3

Source: Tsentral'noe statisticheskoe upravlenie SSSR, Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR: 1922-1982 (Moscow: Finansy i Statistika, 1982), p. 50.

Table II: Total Number of Elected Officials in Trade Union Agencies, 1982

Level of Organization	Number of Elected Officials
All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions	590
Central Committees of Branch Unions and Auditing Commissions	5,357
Republican, Krai and Oblast [Regional] Councils and Auditing Commissions	23,245
Republican, Krai and Oblast [Regional] and Territorial Committees and Auditing Commissions	196,460
District and City Committees and Auditing Commissions	688,178
Primary Committees, Auditing Commissions and Organizers	7,044,395

Source: Tsentral'noe statisticheskoe upravlenie SSSR, Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR: 1922-1982 (Moscow: Finansy i Statistika, 1982), p. 50

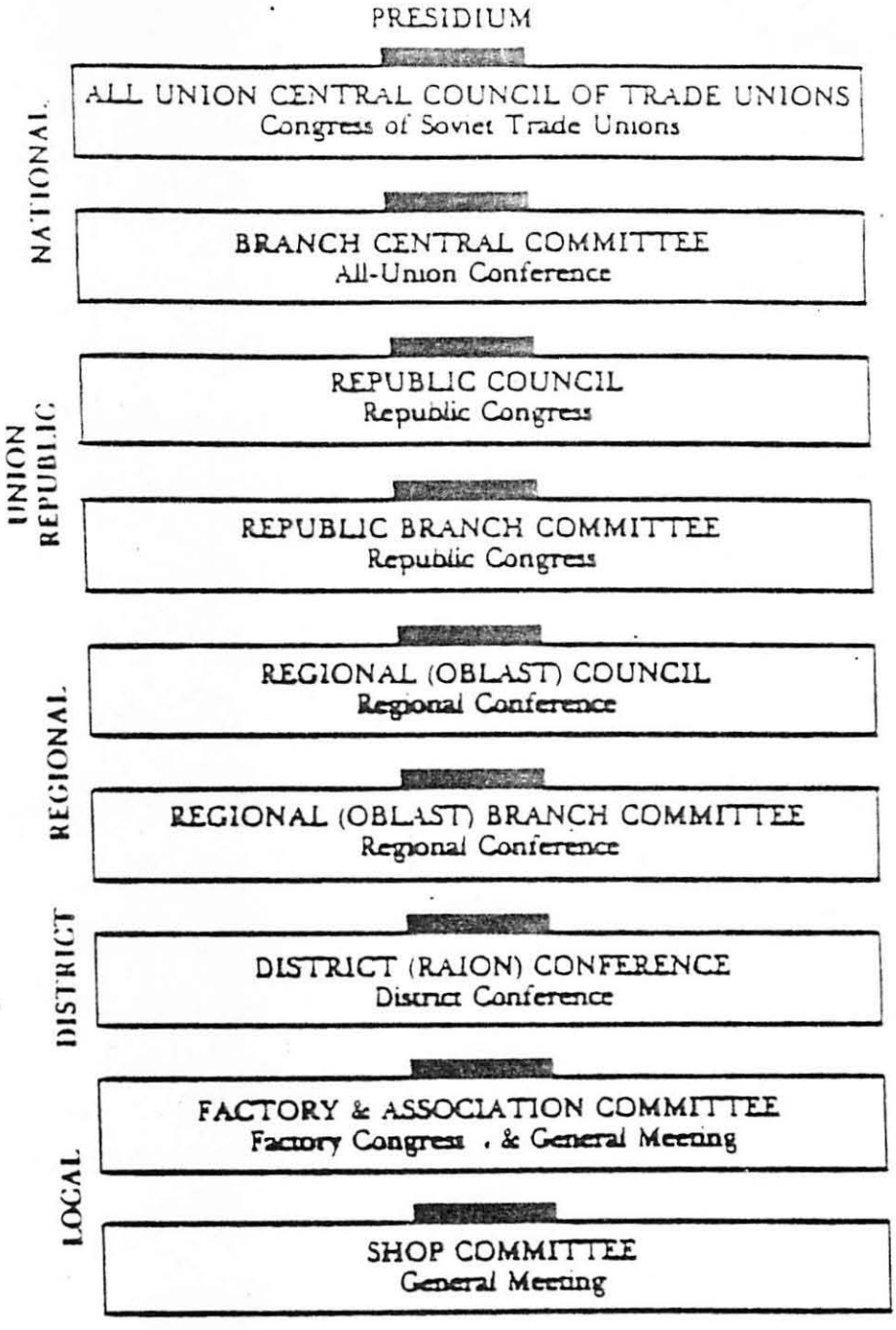

Figure 1. Soviet trade union organization.

Source: Blair A. Ruble, Soviet Trade Unions: Their Development in the 1970s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 48.

managerial decision-making. The Party's highest agency thereby empowered the unions to articulate workers' interests before Soviet public authority. In so doing, it redefined a Stalinist policy towards the unions which had sought to deactivate once quasi-independent labor organizations through coercion. Instead, the Central Committee created an opportunity for the already re-structured unions to become integrated components of the political process. As a result, the union's function as an interest articulator expanded markedly (a development of considerable significance for corporatism theory).

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE UNIONS AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY

No Soviet trade union official openly challenges the unions' subordination to the Communist Party. Indeed, many enthusiastically endorse that relationship. In March 1981, more than a half-year after the formation of the independent Polish trade union Solidarity, Aleksei Shibaev, then Chairman of the Soviet All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU), defined the role of trade unions in a socialist society for an article in Kommunist, the theoretical and ideological journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[22] In his article, Shibaev attacked the notion that trade unions in socialist societies could fail to acknowledge the leadership of the Communist Party. Such ideas were generated, he suggested, by "opponents of socialism" who have frequently sought to "free" the unions from Party influence. The proponents of such views, Shibaev continued, do not understand the fundamental differences between the function of trade unions under capitalism -- where laborers are fighting against monopolies and the power of the bourgeois, exploitative state -- and socialism -- where the workers are themselves the masters of their own country. The subtleties of this relationship between Party and union -- and through that relationship, union efforts to articular workers' interests -- begin to become apparent through an examination of Soviet trade union election procedures.

At the beginning of the election process, an auditing commission of leading union and Communist Party officials establishes a list of candidates equal in number of openings on a given union council.[23] The commission offers that list, which is usually drawn from voluntary union activists and lower-ranking union officials, to a general meeting of factory workers. Next, the workers are asked to accept or reject the entire list of candidates by an open voice vote. During a subsequent secret ballot, union members have an opportunity to vote "for" or "against" each individual candidate on the list. If a nominee receives a single majority affirmative vote of those present, he or she is elected to the union shop or factory committee. Should a candidate fail to gain such approval (not a frequent occurrence but one known to happen in unusual situations), the meeting would immediately nominate a new candidate for the position in question. Finally, the newly elected council convenes to select its officers.

The system of auditing commissions combines with the unions' nomenklatura personnel structure to predetermine the outcome of union elections. Under the nomenklatura, salaried union officers are placed under the supervision of a specified superior agency.[24] That agency, in turn, maintains the right of confirmation for all personnel actions within its list of subordinate positions, or nomenklatura. No one can be removed from or selected for any nomenklatura position without the prior knowledge and consent of the appropriate higher agency. Moreover, each union position is assigned to a union agency according to their relative importance. Under this system, a union's central committee selects the union chairman at an enterprise of national significance prior to that officer's formal election, whereas a union's regional committee selects union officers at an enterprise of regional significance. Factory union chairmen become accountable to higher unions --

and ultimately Communist Party -- institutions, with the future career of a chairman depending more upon the evaluation of his or her union superiors than upon that of the workers he or she claims to represent. This situation helps to explain the vehemence with which the Solidarity trade unions attacked the nomenklatura system in Poland.

The confining nature of such Communist Party supervision is readily apparent from the opposition to such domination voiced by the Solidarity trade unions in Poland and by Soviet dissidents who have attempted to organize independent unions in the USSR.[25] Such condemnation overshadows the lavish verbiage of Soviet officials at solemn union rituals and in official publications.

The Communist Party generally exerts its influence over the trade unions through broad policy guidelines rather than crude intrusion. As one Soviet union officer explains, "the Party does not bother with small change."[26] Membership in the Communist Party requires that all cardholders attempt to implement Party policies so that union officers who are already Party members must enforce Party preference within their labor organizations. Since many junior and most senior union officials are members of the Communist Party, Party policies on various issues find ready expression in union programs. Party hegemony appears to be largely accepted as merely a fact of Soviet industrial life; it is axiomatic.

Nevertheless, Soviet trade union officials articulate group interests and advocate policy positions rejected by no-less official agencies. Moreover, union representatives frequently disagree among themselves over the optimal course of policy development. In this manner, union behavior begins to conform to some precepts of Western liberal corporatism. Such tendencies are apparent in the unions' positions concerning wage policies and labor

discipline, two areas which demonstrate more than a modicum of union participation in the policy process.

WAGE POLICIES AND INCOME DISTRIBUTION

Management calculates the wage of an individual worker according to base rates (stavki) found in the United Wage Qualifications Handbook for Mass Professions and from additional coefficients reflecting skill levels, geographic location and working conditions.[27] The base rates themselves are established on an industry-wide basis by the USSR State Committee on Labor and Social Questions, which seeks to determine the optional variation in minimum and maximum wages in a given branch of the national economy. Over the course of the past quarter century, major wage reforms supported by the unions reduced wage differentials and increased the official average monthly industrial wage to 180 rubles by 1979.[28]

Beyond monetary wages, an extensive system of union administered and state supported social welfare programs provide industrial workers with transfer payments, goods and services valued in 1979 at 69 rubles a month.[29] Some variation occurs in the value of such benefits from factory to factory and industry to industry (the value of the payments for the national economy as a whole is only 61 rubles each month).[30] Apparently, not all of this differentiation is planned.

An editorial appearing in the May 18, 1980 edition of the AUCCTU daily newspaper Trud concludes a comparison of the efficient and pleasant factory recreation bases clustered across the river from Rostov-na-Donu with the run down and poorly managed recreation bases near Krasnodar by stating:

> Several leaders of enterprises and trade union organizations undervalue the role of their recreational bases. They forget that well-organized leisure is conducive to the improved health of laborers, raising their living tone.[31]

A similar comparison of sports facilities in the Donbas region of the Ukraine appeared in Trud less than six weeks later found equally glaring disparities among local factory stadiums and gymnasiums.[32]

Discrepancies in recreational programs might be more systematic than these reports would make them appear. Some Soviet social scientists have noted that small enterprises in light industry frequently lack sufficient resources to adequately implement social, educational, housing, recreational and medical programs.[33] As a result, significant differentiation frequently exists in the quality of those services offered to workers in heavy industry and in light industry.

Some of these differences, such as those resulting from contrasts in physical location, occur independently from policy choices. Others, such as those described in the Trud editorial cited above, are related to the varied managerial skills of local officials. Still others, such as the shortage of funds available to enterprises in light industry, are the consequence of choices made by union, government and Party officials. Their net impact is much the same: workers at major heavy industrial sites frequently have at their disposal what by Soviet standards can only be considered impressive medical, housing and recreational facilities. Meanwhile, many Soviet workers are employed by plants without the most basic social amenities.

By the mid-1970s, Leningrad union and city officials were seeking to reduce such differences among industrial sectors.[34] The Leningrad Regional Trade Union Council has tried to bring pressure to bear on individual factory trade union committees to share their resort facilities with workers from other plants. These efforts have met with opposition from plant and sector union officials who seek to protect their control over access to various enterprise social and cultural services. Beyond Leningrad, L. Petrov,

Chairman of the Moscow City Council of Trade Unions, reported in a February 1982 edition of the AUCCTU journal Sovetskie Profsoiuzy that his organization had come together with the capital's city soviet to improve the working conditions, labor safety and sanitary-health facilities of local industry.[35] Petrov noted, for example, that 295 factory cafeterias were to have been built in Moscow during the Tenth Five Year Plan, but many were never completed. Some of those which did open were not even equipped to serve hot meals. Petrov concluded that Moscow trade union officials must act because productivity will increase and labor turnover decline only if social conditions in industry improve.

Issues of income distribution have not been resolved in the Soviet Union. Disagreement continues over the size and nature of non-monetary benefits as well as over the more traditional issue of wage differentiation. As prime distribution agents for such benefits, trade union officials at all levels have become involved in these disputes either through their administration of various programs -- as is the case at the local level -- or through direct participation in policy discussions at the national level. Union officials form part of an institutionaized pattern of policy formulation in which they cooperate in the creation and implementation of public policy, much as Lehmbruch's concept of liberal corporatism would suggest that they might. Yet, the unions themselves do not present a united front on such questions. Frequently, sector and factory union officers seek to protect their own prerogatives and oppose efforts to equalize the level of social services. They can do so either by directly refusing to share resources or, more often, by simply failing to implement proposals to do so issued by their own superiors. Meanwhile, some national and many regional inter-union councils have attempted to force more equal participation in union social and cultural programs.

LABOR DISCIPLINE AND CONDITIONS

Since the late 1950s, Soviet managers have been faced with a dilemma: no longer armed with harsh criminal sanctions, they have sought to motivate workers through material and psychological rewards. Yet, the Soviet economy has not produced adequate rewards to spur sufficiently higher levels of productivity. Rather, a new sort of freedom has developed in recent years, the "freedom not to work too hard." This indifferent attitude towards work among some Soviet citizens has developed at the same time as the need for increased labor productivity has become more pronounced. By the late 1970s, two differing views had emerged on how best to deal with the labor discipline "problem." On the one hand, there were those such as AUCCTU Chairman Shibaev who argued that only the creation of a "healthy moral-psychological climate" could ultimately increase productivity.[36] On the other, there were those such as Politburo member Arvid Pel'she who wrote of the need to "strengthen the individual responsibility of cadres for assigned work."[37] In both instances, the unions are exhorted to participate in the authoritative allocation of values.[38]

The emphasis placed by Shibaev and others on psychological and social factors affecting working conditions reflects the interest among Soviet union officials and labor specialists in less punitive approaches to labor discipline. This interest is in part a result of the efforts of legal experts to apply sociological methodologies in their examination of labor law violations.[39] The findings of their research suggest that undisciplined behavior has social causes and can be ameliorated only by a healthy work environment. Hence, the scholars argue, any expenditure for improved "moral-psychological climates" may be offset by improved worker morale and increased productivity.[40]

This viewpoint gained wide acceptance in recent years and supports union efforts to upgrade working conditions. In 1978, an AUCCTU plenum examining poor attendance records and a high incidence of petty theft in the heavy machine construction industry concluded by urging that the "socio-living conditions" of the industry's workers be improved.[41] Numerous senior Party leaders openly support attempts to upgrade working conditions as the most effective means for increasing industrial productivity. Brezhnev, for example, reminded several Party and trade union convocations that factory trade union officials must protect workers against abusive managerial practices as part of their general effort to increase labor productivity.[42] Furthermore, the Party's Central Committee has instructed factory Party officials to side with unions and workers and not with managers in disputes over conditions.

The creation of an appropriate "social climate" depends upon the ability of local union officials to guarantee safe working conditions. Yet, union performance in this area falls below even Soviet norms. A December 1981 Trud editorial complained that some union leaders "forget" to enforce norms designed to protect workers.[43] A week later, AUCCTU Secretary A. Biriukova noted that conditions at "individual enterprises" did not meet "contemporary demands" concerning safety.[44] Then, in January 1982, the paper's editors urged upcoming inter-union regional conferences to consider this problem in their deliberations.[45]

Many speakers at the regional conferences, which convened to select delegates to the national trade union congress held in March 1982 as well as to elect regional union officers, spoke directly about union failures on the safety front. B. A. Fastova, a brigade leader from Volgogradgidrostroi, was joined by other speakers at the Volgograd Regional Inter-Union Conference in

denouncing "passive" attitudes among enterprise union committees on the issue of safety.[46] Meanwhile, delegates to the Saratov Regional Inter-Union Conference complained of high levels of illness leading to an average daily loss of 43,000 work days in the Saratov Region alone,[47] and V. P. Mikita, director of the Omsknefteorgintez Industrial Association, endorsed more forceful union defense of worker rights in remarks at the Omsk Regional Inter-Union Conference.[48]

Reports from the republican inter-union congresses held during the same period indicate a similar level of concern. At the Turkmen Republican Trade Union Congress, speakers implied that many enterprise union officials enter into collusion with factory administrators on collective agreements with the result that working conditions in the republic have not necessarily been improving as they should have been.[49] Delegates to the Georgian Republican Trade Union Congress heard "sharp" criticisms leveled at several branch unions and industries for their inactivity on the safety issue. Specifically speakers noted that conditions in handicraft industries had not significantly improved in over two decades.[50] Particularly outspoken discussion also took place at the Uzbek Republican Trade Union Congress, where complaints were voiced against a "formal" relationship on the part of some union officials toward labor safety.[51] Reports from the Uzbek Congress noted distressingly high levels of industrial trauma in the auto transport, tractor and agricultural machine construction, energy production and construction industries.

Comments such as these demonstrate an awareness that the conditions deemed necessary for improved productivity do not exist in many enterprises. In order to change this situation, the unions can request the removal of particularly recalcitrant administrators. The data currently available on

such action are incomplete, unsystematic and contradictory. In 1976, some 10,000 administrators were allegedly dismissed at union request; if true, this is a significant number.[52] Yet, AUCCTU Deputy Chairman V. Prokhorov has reported that 6,174 economic managers faced administrative sanctions in 1979, with only 146 actually being removed from office.[53] According to a Moscow Radio broadcast of December 26, 1981, 3,093 industrial managers were disciplined in 1980 with 200 being removed from their posts.[54]

One of the few systematic reviews of labor safety indicates that the problem may have reached alarming proportions. A 1980 decree of the RSFSR Ministry of Education reported that a survey of only 5% of the establishments within that ministry's jurisdiction identified more than 30,000 labor safety violations during 1978 and 1979. In 1979, 149 administrators at educational institutions were fined for such violations, as were 175 during the first half of 1980, with 21 officials being dismissed during the same 18 month period.[55]

This state of affairs in but a tiny proportion of enterprises from a non-industrial sector raises serious questions about the practical importance of the very real and profound changes taking place over the last three decades in attitudes regarding labor discipline and the work environment. Union officers as a group, together with many labor relations specialist and politicians, have come to advocate positive reinforcement for motivating workers. In this manner, their actions would appear to conform to behavior predicted by concepts of liberal corporatism. Yet, this new emphasis upon positive reward in management is heavily dependent upon the ability of union officials to upgrade the work environment, an area in which Soviet union leaders remain undistinguished.

Simultaneously with the apparent failure of a human relations approach to end labor discipline problems, some Soviet managers, politicans and labor

specialists have begun to demand that increasingly severe sanctions be introduced at the work place. Such concerns are evident in a major decree of December 13, 1979 on labor discipline and labor turnover.[56]

The December 1979 decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU, "On the Further Strengthening of Labor Discipline and the Reduction of Labor Turnover in the National Economy," did not give Soviet workers a propitious start on the new decade. Citing the tremendous costs to the Soviet economy of unproductive behavior among Soviet workers, the decree initially calls to mind the more repressive labor policies of the past. Certainly, the decision to lengthen the required waiting period for leaving one's job following the submission of written notice from two weeks to one month can hardly be considered a liberalizing gesture.

Nevertheless, upon closer examination, the decree suggests that the trends towards less punitive approaches to labor discipline violations have left their unmistakable mark. Aside from tightening the regulations governing the submission of written notice, the measures taken or recommended by the decree focus upon rewards for good -- rather than punishment for bad -- performance. Even more in line with the emergent human relations approach, economic managers, Party and union officials as well as municipal governments are chided for contributing to the poor performance of Soviet workers. Finally, the USSR State Committee on Labor and Social Questions and the AUCCTU are to join with research institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences to encourage the systematic study and analysis of the effectiveness of various economic, social and legal measures that may be employed to strengthen labor discipline. It is precisely such study that led to the more sophisticated approaches to labor discipline in the first place, as well as to a fuller

appreciation that union officials must be in a position to enforce labor safety norms in order to foster a proper social climate if productivity is ever to be consistently and steadily increased.

The December 1979 decree, then, represents the kind of compromise one might expect in a more liberal corporatist system of interest articulation. Advocates of less punitive approaches to labor discipline are able to point to the system of rewards contained in the final document; proponents of a harder line can choose to emphasize the extension of the waiting period to leave one's job from two weeks to a month. These differing views also can be seen in an early 1980 survey of attitudes towards labor discipline published in September 1981 by the Novosibirsk-based journal Eko--Ekonomika i organizatsiia promyshlennogo proizvodstva (Eko--Economics and Organization of Industrial Production).[57]

The Eko analysis is based upon the responses of some 200 factory administrators, academic specialists and workers throughout the Soviet Union, although most surveyed were apparently primarily from Siberia and the Far East. The 200 respondents were self-selected in that the journal distributed more than 800 questionnaires to subscribers and participants in management seminars in Vladivostok, Omsk, Cheliabinsk and Barnaul'. The survey's results suggest that, despite a significant decline in labor turnover rates and amounts of worktime lost to non-work activities throughout the 1970s, many of the respondents perceived just the opposite. An underlying sense of unease over a lack of labor discipline is evident in many of the comments selected for publication. These sentiments appear to be more pronounced among workers

who joined the labor force during the more orderly days of the post-War Stalinist labor regime.

In general, labor discipline is viewed as a problem of youth and of the inability of existing educational programs to instill an appropriate attitude toward work. Alcohol, a decline in pride of workmanship, maladjustment of rural migrants to industrial life and a lack of knowledge of managerial science on the part of factory administrators are also mentioned as contributing factors. The general tenor of the responses is not at variance with the position of various union and academic advocates of less punitive approaches to labor discipline violations. Moreover, many respondents noted that current labor shortages contribute to the discipline problem. Implicit in this view is the notion that only the threat of unemployment would be sufficient to significantly reduce labor discipline violations. Finally, "less than a third of the respondents were inclined to transfer the reasons for a decline in labor discipline to the legal realm: laws are excessively soft."[58]

The demand for tough laws is important even if only "less than a third" of the respondents were advocates of this position. The degree of emotional commitment among adherents to this position appears to be more intense than that of the vast majority putting forward more intricate and complex policy responses to labor discipline violations. Such support for a hard line on labor discipline suggests that discussions over labor discipline policies remain unresolved. This irresolute state of affairs represents one of many factors, which must be considered when evaluating the applicability of various corporatist approaches to the contemporary Soviet political scene.

PRELIMINARY COMPARISONS WITH CORPORATIST MODELS

The discussion over wage policies and labor discipline indicates that Soviet trade unions put forward policy positions at variance to those advocated by other agencies. In so doing, they serve as an agency of interest articulation. The subordination of the unions to the Communist Party suggests that they have become fully integrated components of political authority in the USSR. The concept of dual functioning trade unionism, with its emphasis on labor mobilization, provides for a union role in the "authoritative allocation of values." In short, all of the features of liberal corporatism identified by Lehmbruch appear pertinent to an examination of the role of trade unions in Soviet economic and political life.

If this is the case, how is it possible to differentiate the relationship of organized interests in the Soviet state from that of organized interests in the liberal corporatist state?

Bunce and Echols address this question in their discussion of emergent corporatism of the Brezhnev era by noting:

> Corporatism in liberal western politics is a voluntary arrangement, one which unions in particular can and indeed have broken in some cases. There is no question in the Soviet Union of the trade union federation or any other major association breaking off from the system.[59]

As Lehmbruch has noted, such severing of ties between union and state has occurred in Holland and may take place elsewhere in Western Europe.[60] In the Soviet case, the formal institutional breaking off of the partnership between union and Communist Party -- as opposed to the anti-productive behavior of individual workers or union officials -- necessitates a direct assault upon the concept of dual functioning trade unionism. Moreover, the liberal assumption of a quid pro quo for labor cooperation with the state appears to

be absent. Whatever Soviet unions can gain from their relationship with state and Party agencies depends far more upon the largess of the state and Party than upon the independent authority of the unions.

The participation of organized interests in the Soviet political process also differs from the liberal pattern by the degree to which such participation is proscribed. On both wage policies and the question of labor discipline, Soviet trade unions actively participate in the implementation of policy programs. Moreover, variation in patterns of such policy implementation has resulted in incremental change in the impact of the policies themselves. For example, discrepancies in social programs from factory to factory and sector to sector have had the accumulated affect of altering the distribution pattern of non-monetary income throughout the Soviet economy. In addition, the reluctance or inability of some Soviet trade union officials to strictly enforce labor safety norms has contributed to the failure of attempts to develop less punitive responses to labor discipline violations. Nevertheless, union participation in the formulation of national policy goals concerning labor remains illusive.

An attempt to analyze the activities of Soviet trade unions within the framework of liberal corporatist models of interest articulation focuses attention upon various aspects of Soviet trade union activity which are frequently overlooked when viewed in isolation. The extent to which union officials advocate policy positions opposed by no less official personages and participate with other Soviet institutions in the implementation of labor policies appears more pronounced than conventional Western images of Soviet trade union activities might suggest. Moreover, union attempts to instill official values in the workforce take on distinctly different meaning when

viewed from a liberal corporatist conception of interest articulation than when analyzed from either a pluralist or a totalitarian perspective.

In addition to identifying certain similarities between Soviet and liberal corporatist experience, the model's application also highlights several important differences. The inter-associational rules of the game defined by liberal corporatist models and Lenin's concept of dual functioning trade unionism remain markedly different. In an introductory essay to her recent volume Organizing Interests in Western Europe, Suzanne Berger noted that contributors to the collection accepted as a common point of departure "the observation that societies contain an indefinite number of potential interests."[61] The intellectual underpinnings of the Soviet political process largely preclude the possibility of new configurations of interest articulation. Unlike the situation in West European industrial democracies, the number of potential interests is, in theory if not always in practice, finite. As a result, the devolution of state authority to private organizations apparent in liberal corporatist arrangements simply does not occur in the USSR.

If this is the case, does Schmitter's notion of state corporatism demonstrate greater explanatory power in the Soviet context?

Schmitter's emphasis upon central bureaucratic power, plebiscitary elections, single party domination and ideological exclusivity undoubtedly addresses the finite nature of legitimate interests within the Soviet political system more directly than do various concepts of liberal corporatism.[62] In this sense, then, a state corporatist approach would appear to be most relevant to an examination of the Soviet polity. Such an approach runs the risk, however, of de-emphasizing the very elements of the Soviet policy process highlighted by liberal corporatist models in an examination of

Soviet trade union activities; namely, the unions' ability to advocate policy options opposed by equally official political actors; the unions' ability to effect new policy outcomes through variations in policy implementation; and, the unions' ability to disagree among themselves over appropriate policy positions on any given issue. While such fine points are not excluded by definition from a state corporatist framework, they are eclipsed by an image of awesome central authority and ideoogical exclusivity.

Variations upon the state corporatist model may be even more helpful in discerning the nature of interest articulation in the Soviet Union. The work of Alfred Stepan on Peruvian politics, for example, offers a sophisticated and subtle presentation of state corporatist theory in reference to a non-European political system.[63] Stepan seeks to refine Schmitter's concept of state corporatism through an examination of Latin American corporatist regimes. In so doing he observes:

> On analytic grounds alone we can distinguish the policy poles within state corporatism. Near the 'inclusionary pole' the state elite can attempt to forge a new state-society equilibrium by policies aimed at incorporating salient working-class groups into the new economic and political model. Near the 'exclusionary pole' the attempt to forge a new state-society equilibrium can rely heavily on coercive policies to deactivate and then restructure salient working class groups.[64]

Stepan's distinction between inclusionary and exclusionary state corporatis orporation offers a useful analytical device for evaluating changes in the status of trade unions throughout Soviet history. Policies towards the unions during the 1930s may be characterized as attempting to deactivate and restructure the unions largely through coercion. The current status of the unions as unequal participants (but participants nonetheless) in the formulation of positions concerning policy implementations on such issues as

wage policies and labor discipline reflects an attempt to incorporate those restructured unions into the political process. Interestingly, the shift from exclusionary state corporatism toward inclusionary is precisely the opposite pattern from that Stepan predicted in the Latin American context.[65] The history of Soviet trade union development takes on new significance when viewed through Stepan's work on Peruvian politics.

As the above attempt to introduce Stepan's concept of inclusionary and exclusionary state corporatism indicates, Stepan's, Schmitter's and Lehmbruch's differing notions of corporatism all help to elucidate various aspects of trade union activities in the USSR. Taken individually or in concert, however, they fail to posit a definitive new model of Soviet trade unionism (let alone a definitive new model of the Soviet political system in its entirety). Rather, each in its own way facilitates comparative discussion of political phenomena within the Soviet Union; phenomena which, at first blush, might appear sui generis. The corporatist model in both its liberal and statist variants provides a powerful heuristic device which, as Bunce and Echols correctly suggest, further refines our understanding of the nature of the Soviet political system. Such approaches render the Soviet system comprehensible in a broader, comparative context. In so doing, they enrich the political scientist's appreciation of the place of organized interests in the Soviet political system as well as the place of that system within a broader global context.

NOTES

An earlier version of this paper was presented at one of two separate sessions examining the related themes of "Organized Interests in Western and East Europe" and "The New Corporatism" organized by the Committee on Political Science for the International Political Science Association World Congress, held at Rio de Janiero, Brazil on August 8-14, 1982. Four of the accompanying papers presented at those panels have appeared in abbreviated form in the International Political Science Review, Volume 4, Number 2 (1983). I would like to express my appreciation to the organizors of the sessions -- Gerhard Lehmbruch of the University of Konstanz and Jack Hayward of the University of Hull -- as well as the other participants (both included on the official program and those who joined in the discussion from the floor) for their many useful comments and suggestions for revision. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the helpful recommendations of Victor Gibean and Barbara Chotiner of the University of Alabama during the preparation of the paper. Finally, I would like to thank the American Political Science Association and the National Science Foundation for providing travel funds to enable me to participate in the panel.

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4. V. Bunce, J.M. Echols III, "Soviet Politics," p. 3.

5. Ibid., p. 4.

6. Philippe Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" Review of Politics, Vol. 36 (January 1974), pp. 85-131: 93-94.

7. Philippe Schmitter, "Models of Interest Intermediation and Models of Societal Change in Western Europe," Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 10, No. 1 (April 1977), pp. 7-38:11.

8. Gerhard Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," in Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch (eds.), Trends Towards Corporatist Intermediation (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979), p. 150.

9. Various accounts of this debate are available in such works as: O. Anweiler, The Soviets: The Russian Workers' Peasants' and Soldiers' Councils: 1905-1921, trans. R. Hein (New York: Random House-Pantheon, 1973), pp. 244-253; M. Dewar, Labour Policy in the USSR (New York/London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, (1956), pp. 82-86; F. Kaplan, Bolshevik Ideology and the Ethics of Labor (New York: Philosophical Library, 1968); and, Carmen Sirianni, Workers Control & Socialist Democracy: The Soviet Experience (London: Verso, 1982), pp. 230-239. For a recent Soviet discussion, see L.S. Leonova, N.V. Savinchenko, "X s"ezd RKP(b) i ego istoricheskoe znachenie," Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta, (seriia 9 - istoriia), 1982, No. 1, 3-14.

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15. L.M. Pavlova, A.S. Protopovov, "Profsoiuznoe dvizhenie v SSSR na etape razvitotgo sotsializma," Istoriia SSSR, 1979, No. 4, p. 13.

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17. M. McAuley, Labour Disputes in Soviet Russia, 1957-1965 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), pp. 9-39.

18. S. Schwarz, Labor in the Soviet Union (New York: Praeger, 1952), pp. 100-115.

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20. Ibid., pp. 103-108.

21. KPSS o profsoiuzakh (Moscow: Profizdat, 1963), pp. 71-84.

22. A. Shibaev, "Samaia massovaia organizatsiia trudiashchikhsia," Kommunist, 1981, No. 4, pp. 72-83. Shibaev's subsequent removal from office and later reprimand for illegal financial dealings appear to have been the result of a general effort to improve the image of the unions. For a discussion of the policy significance of his removal, see Blair A. Ruble,

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23. Spavochnik profsoiuznogo rabotnika (Moscow: Profizdat, 1974), pp. 21-29. This account of union elections is also based upon interviews with trade union officials, 1974-1975.

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32. Iur. Van'iat, N. Mokrishchev, "Sportivnyi shag Donbassa," Trud, July 1, 1980, p. 4.

33. See, for example, N.P. Firsova and V.S. Ertov, "Sovershenstvovanie sistemy torgovli v plane sotsial'nogo razvitiia territorial'no -- administrativnykh edinits," in A.S. Pashkov, M.N. Mezhevich (eds.), Problemy sotsial'nogo planirovaniia v gorode i regione. Chelovek i obshchestvo (Uchenye zapiski -- vyp. XV) (Leningrad: NIIKSI LGU, 1976), pp. 88-93.

34. B.A. Ruble, Soviet Trade Unions: Their Development in the 1970s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 104-118.

35. L. Petrov, "Rabota v radost'," Sovetskie profsoiuzy, 1982, No. 4, pp. 36-37.

36. A. Shibaev, "Samaia massovaia organizatsiia."

37. A. Pel'she, "O trebovate'nosti i distsipline," Kommunist, 1980, No. 2, 19-32, p. 20.

38. G. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p. 150.

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40. See, for example, V.N. Smirnov, Vnutrennii trudovoi rasporiadok na predpriiatii (Leningrad: LGU, 1980).

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52. L.M. Pavlova, A.S. Protopov, "Profsoiuznoie dvizhenie," p. 12.

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