WORKERS' CONTROL AND CENTRALIZATION IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION: THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY OF THE CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL REGION, 1917-1920

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Western scholars have recently re-evaluated their understanding of workers' control and, by extension, of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. Current students no longer regard workers' control as an un-coordinated, syndicalist seizure of the factories that the Bolsheviks exploited politically and later subordinated[1] during what William H. Chamberlin described as "one of the most leaderless, spontaneous, anonymous revolutions of all time."[2] Rather, recent treatments present workers' control as a defensive economic measure of accounting and supervision initially intended to protect jobs and ensure the continuity of production. In this schema, the politicization of workers' control in the second half of 1917 resulted not from elemental radicalism but from the workers' experience both in society and at the workplace. Scholars instrumental in developing this explanation have paid special attention to the events of 1917-1918 and to the activities of the highly skilled Petrograd metal-workers,[3] although they have by no means ignored the less active and less politically conscious unskilled workers.[4] With respect to the workers' political activity, recent works have understandably focused on organized ventures in which skilled workers predominated, and in this regard some have argued that a strong impulse toward economic centralization in 1917-1918 came "from below," that is, from the factory

rank-and-file and their representatives on the factory committees.[5]

The purpose of this paper is neither to resurrect the interpretation that views workers' control as "syndicalist" nor to extend further the study of the most politically conscious stratum of the Russian workforce. Rather, this essay will argue that, despite the early success of workers' control in Petrograd, a large degree of centralization "from above" was also implicit in the revolutionary process in Russia. Once one looks beyond the most professionally skilled and politically astute workers--what Soviet scholars refer to as the "vanguard of the proletariat"--and at events after the middle of 1918, one sees little evidence of the broadly based economic competence necessary to guide a transition to a mixed or state-owned industrial economy. Inherited economic problems and the outbreak of the civil war in mid-1918 played a major role in the disruption of the national economy, to be sure. In light of the early success of the Petrograd factory committees against the obstructionist tactics of the factory proprietors in 1917, however, economic factors alone cannot fully explain the absence of vitality and effectiveness in local economic organs throughout the 1917-1920 period. Centralization resulted in large measure from the fact that the revolution thrust numerous workers into situations for which they were neither professionally trained nor psychologically prepared.

For the Bolsheviks, who viewed themselves as opponents of utopian theorizing, transforming Russia's economy was to be an exercise in coordinating central supervision with local economic initiatives. Most in the party generally agreed with Lenin's view that Russia would need to experience a period of transition after the seizure of political office before the revolutionary state could construct a socialist socio-economic order. They disagreed widely, however, on the timetable for such a transition period and on the methods of economic reconstruction. Consequently, as the party formulated its economic slogans before October 1917, those slogans reflected both a general support for workers' control, which the party added to its rhetoric in May 1917, and a very broad range of implicit definitions by those who employed the term.

In order to formulate and execute economic policy immediately after the October Revolution, therefore, the party needed both to clarify and resolve the conflicting perceptions of workers' control and, on a more practical level, to define concretely the division of authority among the institutions charged with its implementation. This was no small task. Factory committees, particularly in Petrograd, had already begun to work out their own understanding of workers' control based on experiences gained while combating the owners' economic warfare after, and in some cases before, the February Revolution. When the Bolsheviks began utilizing the term in May, therefore, the variegated experiences that the factory committees had already

undergone in attempting to keep factories open and operating strongly influenced what workers' control could mean. In the most extreme cases, this amounted to the factory committee accepting full responsibility for plant operations. In addition to this view, anarcho-syndicalists publicized their own version of workers' control as the direct confiscation of the factories by the workers. Also, the Mensheviks--in keeping with their view that the revolutionary events of 1917 could lead only to a period of further capitalist development before a socialist revolution would take place at an unspecified moment in the future--counterposed the concept of "state control" to workers' control. In the Menshevik view, existing capitalists would play the leading role in the economy for an extended period of time. Among the Bolsheviks, at least three versions of workers' control coexisted: the immediate subordination of the factory committees within a centrally directed economy; the establishment of an independent national hierarchy of factory committees; the transfer of state power to the soviets and the creation of a workers' control apparatus within that state structure.[6]

Lenin supported the latter course, and his assessments of workers' control stressed acccounting, supervision, and bookkeeping rather than confiscation. In this regard, we need to remind ourselves not only that the Bolsheviks fully expected their seizure of political office to generate an international proletarian revolution, but also that the economic model Lenin bore firmly in mind for the transition period was that of wartime

Germany. In affirming the feasibility of a socialist revolution in "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?," completed at the end of September 1917, he wrote:

> When the proletariat is victorious it will do the following: it will set economists, engineers, agronomists and so forth under the control [pod kontrolem] of the workers' organizations to work on drawing up a 'plan,' on verifying it, on devising the simplest, cheapest, most convenient and universal methods and measures of control. For this we shall pay the economists, statisticians and technicians good money ... but we shall not give them anything to eat if they do not perform this work conscientiously and entirely in the interests of the working people.[7]

> The chief difficulty facing the proletarian revolution is the establishment of the most conscientious accounting and control [osushchestvlenie ucheta i kontrolia] on a national scale, of workers' control of the production and distribution of goods.[8]

> When we say: 'workers' control,' always juxtaposing this slogan to the dictatorship of the proletariat, always putting it immediately after the latter, we thereby explain what kind of state we mean. The state is the organ of class domination. Of which class? ... If it is of the proletariat, if we are speaking of a proletarian state, that is, of the proletarian dictatorship, then workers' control can become the nationwide, all-encompassing, omnipresent, most precise and most conscientious accounting [uchet] of the production and distribution of goods.[9]

Thus, in Lenin's formulation, the initiatives of workers' organizations at the factory level were vital in establishing a nationally coordinated program of accounting and supervision.

In this way, centralization did not connote the rigid subordination of regional organs and local factories to a centrally formulated plan, but rather the coordination of local initiatives by the top of an administrative apparatus which worked in the interests of the workers as a class. This

definition of "centralization" was no mere ideological abstraction. As already mentioned, the factory committee movement in Petrograd in 1917 evinced sympathy for this kind of "centralization from below."[10] Expanding upon his earlier thoughts, Lenin wrote in "State and Revolution" that:

> We, the workers, shall organize large-scale production on the basis of what capitalism has already created, relying on our own experience as workers, establishing strict, iron discipline backed up by the state power of the armed workers. We shall reduce the role of state officials to that of simply carrying out our instructions as responsible, revocable, modestly paid 'foremen and accountants' (of course, with the aid of technicians of all sorts, types and degrees). This is our proletarian task, this is what we can and must start with in accomplishing the proletarian revolution.[11]

Thus, workers voting in general meetings would elect their own factory committees which would then coordinate their efforts on a regional and national scale. They would not exclude existing managers and technical personnel immediately from the factories. On the contrary, existing management personnel would continue to direct production under the supervision and discipline of the workers' representatives for the duration of the transition period.

The separation of authority among working class organizations was not as clearly defined. In practice, the reinvigorated trade unions that reappeared after the February Revolution vied with the factory committees for the right to speak for the workers. Local soviets also established their own organs of economic administration which aspired to the leading

role in deciding the course of the economic transition. Moreover, owners and managers, in many cases, remained in the enterprises and frequently attempted to direct production while opposing workers' control. When the First All-Russian Conference of Factory Committees met in Petrograd in October 1917, it voted to expand workers' control gradually into the total regulation of the economy by creating a state system composed of representatives of unions, soviets, and factory committees. This resolution, however, offered no prescription for implementation. When the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom) issued its Decree On Worker's Control on November 14, 1917, it also failed to address the major question of jurisdiction and, consequently, failed to resolve the issue of multiple responsibility. On December 1, Sovnarkom and the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets created the Supreme Council of the National Economy (VSNKh) to assume full responsibility for the entire economy. VSNKh immediately absorbed the All-Russian Council on Workers' Control,[12] but it never fulfilled its mandate of complete responsibility for the economy.[13]

Thus, workers' control continued to appear in a number of competing forms, a situation which was not fully resolved throughout 1917-1920. Between October 1917 and March 1918, during what Lenin referred to euphemistically as the "Red Guard Attack On Capital," many factory committees directly expropriated enterprises. During the late spring of 1918, in fact, the Left Communists in the party criticized Lenin for his oppositon to

accelerating the transfer of management functions to the workers in the plants. The outbreak of the Russian Civil War in May-June 1918 exacerbated the situation further. Sovnarkom issued a general Decree on Nationalization on June 28, 1918, which transferred legal ownership of large-scale factories to the state, but did nothing in itself to organize production and distribution. As the crisis of the civil war deepened, the government relied more and more on emergency measures which attempted to subordinate local organs and factories to decisions formulated at the top. Centralization then became more an exercise in subordination than in coordination. In 1919-1920, in fact, the state turned to improving labor discipline and raising production for the war effort through the reintroduction of piece rates and, eventually, the partial replacement of collegial responsibility with authority in the hands of a single individual.

Throughout 1917-1920, worker activists in the factories differed significantly from ordinary workers. Even among the most advanced workers of Petrograd, those who served on the factory committees and held trade union offices were more sophisticated politically than the worker on the factory floor.[14] Outside Petrograd and in industries in which unskilled workers predominated, this gap became critical when the revolution, and later the civil war, shifted a good deal of the responsibility for the regulation of production to officials at the enterprise level. On the one hand, local concerns and a desire for an immediate improvement in material conditions frequently did, in

fact, dominate factory meetings and make coordinated activity in industry difficult. In other instances, however, local officials turned to central organs for instructions and personnel, only to be told that none would be forthcoming. Many local officials thus utilized their own devices, not so much out of "syndicalism" as from a lack of alternatives. In response to both conditions, the national political leadership and the central institutions responsible for establishing new forms of economic regulation turned to the concentration of decision-making authority at the top of the administrative apparatus. This solution gained support when local actions did not meet expectations at the center, as a compensatory measure for the shortage of qualified local personnel, and, in a larger sense, as an alternative to the defeat of the revolution.

This was certainly the case in the textile industry of the Central Industrial Region[15] where the directing board of the Union of Textile Workers displayed a strong proclivity to assume full authority in the industry as early as the first half of 1917. Among the Moscow textile workers, the factory committee movement failed to stop factory closings long before October 1917. Thus, by early 1918, the Union of Textile Workers itself was the main organization battling the textile magnates directly for hegemony in the industry. In its dealings with workers' representatives, the union leadership pushed simultaneously for central regulation against the proponents of localized administration. By the time the advocates of centralized

decision-making won their point at the end of 1918, however, local institutions in the industry were foundering for the lack of qualified personnel. Authority, therefore, was concentrated at the top of an apparatus in which coordination was virtually absent. Between 1918 and the end of 1920, the further concentratrion of decision-making authority as compensation for the lack of qualified personnel became the hallmark of administration in the industry.

Establishing new forms of regulation and administration in the textile industry was particularly important in reorienting and revitalizing the post-revolutionary national economy. The textile industry was the leading light industry in the country as well as the major employer of unskilled workers, underage workers, and women. In 1913, the industry accounted for 21.4 percent of Imperial Russia's gross industrial production and employed 29 percent of the total industrial workforce.[16] By the beginning of 1917, the industry's share of the industrial workforce had grown to 33.2 percent, of whom 65.6 percent were women. To state matters differently, over half the women who worked in industry were textile workers, and female textile workers comprised 21.7 percent of the total industrial workforce. Women working in the manufacture of cotton cloth alone made up 15.2 percent of Russia's industrial workers.[17] Such women worked chiefly at jobs that did not enable them to develop general industrial skills,[18] and their literacy rate lagged significantly behind that of male workers in the industry.[19] In 1908, for

example, 72.5 percent of the men working in the cotton industry were literate. A decade later, the general literacy rate for females throughout the textile industry was still but 37.5 percent,[20] and this figure reflected a recent rise due to a literacy rate among young girls entering the industry about double that of their older fellow workers.[21] Since control entailed accounting and supervisory functions, the absence of a large proportion of literate workers significantly reduced the textile workers' potential to establish workers' control.

Such a concentration of unskilled workers in this key industry was significant because skilled workers were simply more conscious and active politically. Unskilled workers, especially women, proved to be passive and indifferent to public life,[22] and in general skilled workers displayed a higher degree of self-discipline.[23] Even among the Petrograd metal-workers, the difference in political sophistication between those who worked at skilled jobs and the unskilled was significant.[24] Between 1895 and 1916, Petrograd metal-workers had participated in strikes at a rate significantly higher than that of Moscow textile workers.[25] In 1917, the Moscow textile worker was less likely to participate in strikes than were workers in other industries,[26] was more prone to strike for higher wages than for political issues or control of the factories,[27] and even passed fewer resolutions than did workers in other major industries.[28] Despite their numbers, textile workers only comprised about 12 percent of the working class delegates to the Moscow Soviet.[29]

Female textile workers showed themselves capable of volatile actions such as the "carting out" of owners, managers, and foremen, but they were poor candidates for sustained political action.[30]

Other factors also inhibited workers' control in the industry even though the need to protect jobs and production through workers' control was felt at least as strongly there as in other spheres of production. The textile industry was physically removed from the Petrograd political climate because it was concentrated principally in the Central Industrial Region. About 85 percent of the textile enterprises in what is now the Soviet Union were found in areas continuously under Bolshevik rule in 1919-1920, mostly in provinces surrounding Moscow.[31] This eliminated the frequent interruptions and reversals of policy that took place in industries that passed continuously from Red to White hands during the civil war, but it did nothing in itself to protect production. Moreover, the industry had not previously experienced the formation of extensive production and distribution combines that could be taken over and run under new leadership, as was attempted, for example, in state ministries.[32] In reality, the textile industry in 1913 was characterized by the lowest degree of vertical and horizontal organization of any major Russian industry and was the only one of the country's leading industries less concentrated than its German counterpart.[33]

The previous pattern of management also worked against any hope of a rapid coordination of the industry after the

revolution. Vladimir P. Riabushinskii, a pioneering textile magnate of the 1840s who ran both his family and business according to religious and patriarchal principles, had proudly characterized himself and his colleagues as "'nothing but trading muzhiks.'"[34] In the twentieth century, the Riabushinskii family still clung to the patriarchal model as its basic philosophy of management,[35] and by World War I the guiding principle throughout the industry remained the will of the individual proprietor.[36] Moreover, the textile factory owners participated actively in the opposition to workers' control. As early as 1905, textile magnates dominated owners' organizations in the Central Industrial Region that protected proprietors' prerogatives.[37] In 1917, a member of the Riabushinskii family, in fact, chaired the First Congress of the All-Russian Union of Trade and Industry, an owners' organization that resisted workers' control while fearing the Provisional Government's tendencies toward establishing state monopolies.[38] In June 1917, the representatives of the textile factory owners formed a regulatory organ for the industry, Centro-Cloth, which ostensibly set up a state monopoly in cotton cloth. Centro-Cloth specifically excluded workers' representatives. In practice, however, it was up to individual producers to surrender their cloth voluntarily to Centro-Cloth. By September 22, 1917, the organ noted that under this arrangement it was receiving only 50-60 percent of the cloth available for the free market,[39] a situation that gave rise to charges of speculation by the individual owners.

Workers' control achieved its highest coordination in Petrograd. Emerging first in state owned factories where workers' committees organized to maintain war production after the February Revolution, the movement spread into privately held concerns. Factory committees had, in fact, begun to take shape before February 1917, and they became the workers' principal weapon for defending themselves against closings and lockouts. The committees were closest to the mood in the factories and outstripped even the soviets in influence in the first half of 1917. Petrograd factory committees, in part to cocrdinate their defense against the owners' economic warfare, held their first city conference at the end of May and elected a permanent Central Council of Factory Committees. Subsequent conferences took place in August, September, and mid-October, the latter serving as a prelude to the First All-Russian Conference of Factory Committees of October 17-22, 1917. Moreover, the Petrograd factory committees asserted a great deal of independence from the trade unions, especially when the unions began to try to subordinate them in mid-1917. The factory committees did not support Bolshevism from the outset, but like the trade unions became "bolshevized" in the late summer and fall of 1917. One should note that not all factory committees in Petrograd practiced workers' control, and the two terms should not be equated. Nevertheless, although a numerical majority of factories did not institute workers' control in Petrograd by October, 74 percent of

the industrial workforce of the city did work in factories that practiced workers' control.[40]

The goals of protecting jobs and production were the same in Moscow and the Central Industrial Region, but the factory committees' implementation of workers' control evinced less institutional cohesiveness and independence there. As in Petrograd, workers' control entailed the transfer of authority for accounting and supervision of production to workers' representatives, but not jurisdiction over actual production decisions. The First Conference of Factory Committees in Moscow did not meet until July 24-28, 1917, almost two months after the initial Petrograd conference. Nevertheless, the Moscow conference resolved that establishing control over production was necessary to counteract the owners' economic warfare upon the workers, a resolution fully compatible with the mood in the capital.[41] As in Petrograd, the Bolsheviks did not initially exert a strong influence over the factory committees but predominated by September. In contrast to the movement in Petrograd, however, the Moscow committees never established a body analagous to the Petrograd Central Council of Factory Committees. Unlike the Petrograd factory committees, moreover, the Moscow Conference of Factory Committees did not strongly resist formal subordination to the trade unions. After the Third All-Russian Conference of Trade Unions (June 20-28, 1917) resolved that the unions should assume primary responsibility for directing the economic activity of the working class, the July

conference of factory committees in Moscow passed a congruous resolution confirming that the factory committees were the local organizations of the trade unions.[42]

This lack of independence, at least at the level of the conference resolution, was more a manifestation of the greater interaction among factory committees, trade unions, and soviets in the Moscow region than it was a sign of weakness. In Ivanovo-Kineshma region,[43] the local soviet and the factory committees tried to coordinate their goals, organizations, and activities as early as April 1917.[44] When a series of factory owners in the town of Serpukhov (Moscow province) began to claim shortages of fuel and materials as a rationale for closing factories, it was the Serpukhov Soviet that encouraged the factory committees to elect three-to-seven member control commissions, united under a single soviet control commission, to investigate. In June, when this commission disclosed that supplies for several months' additional production existed, the owners rescinded their threat to close factories still in operation.[45] When the Union of Textile Workers of Ivanov-Kineshma Oblast' met on June 10-12, the conference not only called for workers' control as the alternative to catastrophe, but it also advocated widening the scope of control to include banking and finance and endorsed "the transfer of all state power to the soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies."[46] When the Kuvaev Factory worked out instructions for its delegate to the upcoming conference of factory committees of the town of

Ivanovo-Voznesensk, those instructions included a demand for close contacts with the trade unions and conformity with directives of the soviets, but not those of the Provisional Government.[47] On July 2, the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Soviet resolved to fight closings by coordinating the efforts of the soviets with those of the factory committees.[48] Outside Petrograd, in short, group action by various working class organizations was much more common than in the capital itself.

The limitations of the efficacy of workers' control in the textile industry were not a question of the scope of the activity of the factory committees within the enterprise, but rather of the limited coordination of the movement on the scale of the whole industry. In individual textile enterprises, factory committees, working largely on an ad hoc basis, took up issues similar to those addressed by their counterparts in other industries. These included, for example, the reinstitution of workers dismissed for participation in pre-February strikes. The act of raising such issues was enough to call forth longstanding resentments of managerial abuses of the workforce.[49] In some instances, the committees combined battles to halt closings with a broader appeal to transfer power to the soviets,[50] but the main emphasis of factory committee activity in the textile industry in 1917 focused on the issue of continuing production within the plant. In one notable case, four thousand lost their jobs when S. A. Smirnov began withholding materials in April and closed his Likino Mill in Vladimir province on September 2 rather than

accede to workers' control and the demand for an eight-hour workday.[51] In Rostokino village (Moscow district, Moscow province), V. V. Ferman stopped operations at his dye-works on May 6 and put 250 out of work. When a factory inspectorate resolved two days later that Ferman should pay two weeks' severance, the crisis deepened. He eventually paid half the amount. The workers' attempts to influence the management of the plant to keep it in operation dominated the history of the enterprise throughout the remainder of 1917.[52] On November 17, the factory committee in the Smirnov Mill triumphed when Sovnarkom made the Likino Mill the first industrial enterprise to be nationalized officially by the Soviet government.[53] On January 4, 1918, Sovnarkom nationalized the Ferman Rostokino Dye-Works as well.[54]

Actions of this type, concerned with specific local circumstances, neither halted the closings of textile factories in a significant way nor achieved the coordination of production and distribution on a broad scale. By one count, 33 of 97 Moscow textile enterprises surveyed in June 1917 had closed by October, many of them large-scale plants. Only 25 of 48 plants which employed more than 100 workers in June remained open by the time of the November revolution.[55] On a national scale, 20 percent of the textile factories closed by October 1917.[56] This did not, however, lead to a large number of early transfers of authority to individual factory committees well coordinated with each other. In fact, according to government figures compiled in

1919, only nine textile factories had been nationalized with the approval of the center by as late as June 1918.[57] The Soviet scholar V. Z. Drobizhev has published higher totals but still shows that only eight of 1,059 firms were taken over as late as November-December 1917 and an additional 21 were added in January-March 1918.[58] Thus, even if additional, unregistered seizures of enterprises by factory committees took place,[59] the ad hoc actions taken by local factory committees neither achieved a high degree of administrative coordination in the industry nor significantly halted textile factory closings.

Amid the economic dislocation of the period, there is no way to determine precisely how many of the closings resulted from actual shortages of fuel and materials, as owners claimed, and how many such crises they manufactured, as workers' resolutions frequently declared. We do know that production dropped sharply in all spheres of textile production between 1916 and 1917. In terms of 1913 ruble values, cotton production stood at 80.5 percent of the pre-war level in 1916 and only 54.7 percent in 1917. Silk production fell to 70.4 percent in 1916 before dropping again to 46 percent in 1917. Wool production held firm at 95.3 percent in 1916 before plummeting to 66.7 percent a year later. In flax production, the figures were 118 percent and 77.9 percent respectively, and for hemp production 114.4 percent in 1916 and 81.1 percent in 1917.[60] The textile industry was not the only sphere to experience such fluctuations, of course. The index for all industry in Moscow province stood at 107.3 percent

of its 1913 level in 1916, but only at 49.9 percent a year later. Textile output in Moscow province, however, was only 83.9 percent of its 1913 level in 1916, and stood at only 41.5 percent in 1917.[61]

One cannot, of course, attribute the decline in 1917 only to the owners' actions, but one can say with assurance that the Union of Textile Workers perceived most closings as the product of the owners' duplicity. Union communications argued vigorously that most closings were unnecessary and that the number of legitimate closings could be reduced by a rational redistribution of available supplies. By June 1917, union resolutions routinely addressed the protection of production in this way.[62] Other Moscow working class organizations agreed with the union's assessment of the closings. In July, the Moscow Soviet informed the union leaders that only the Moscow Raion Bureau of Provisions could authorize a factory closing, and then only when the factory committee involved verified the existence of an actual shortage.[63] As a result, by late summer an official union journal did report legitimate closings in the Zamoskvorets, Lefortovo, and Krasnaia Presnia sections of Moscow as well as in the Shchelkov, Iakhroma, Alexandrov, and Lefortovo regions outside the city.[64] Indicative of the prevalent feeling, however, was the declaration that the union leadership "had reached the conclusion that [in most cases] the factory owners are consciously closing their factories."[65] In short, actual shortages caused a number of legitimate closings. Nevertheless,

the trade union leaders operated on the premise that, if they could overcome the owners' resistance, the union and the factory committees could maintain most production.

The union was not, however, the sole organ to speak for the workers. At the July conference of trade unions in Petrograd, representatives of the Union of Textile Workers publicly advocated restraining the excesses of other elements of the workers' movement by declaring that workers should not seize factories "like bandits."[66] This could hardly be construed as the voice of the whole industry. As recently as the time of the February Revolution, the union itself counted only 64 reliable members.[67] By late September, nominal union membership grew to 312,000,[68] but this by no means translated immediately into direct support for positions taken by the union leadership. In fact, in the early weeks of the new regime both the factory committees and the local unions agitated for a voice in Centro-Cloth specifically and in the running of the industry in general.[69] On November 18, 1917, a conference of factory committees from the textile enterprises of Moscow proposed changing representation in Centro-Cloth so that workers would share authority in proportion to their representation in the industry, and they circulated this plan for the consideration of general workers' meetings in the textile factories of the city.[70]

During the subsequent two weeks, various groups, in addition to the managing board of the Union of Textile Workers, intensified their efforts to become the chief decision-making

organ in the textile industry. Consistent with its earlier position, the union leadership pursued a greater concentration of authority in its own hands. The Council of the Union of Textile Workers, under the chairmanship of the seasoned Bolshevik Ian Rudzutak, prepared for the economic struggle by resolving, on November 26, 1917, to coordinate the activities of all union branches on a national scale. Those who favored creating a centrally directed national union temporarily prevailed over those who championed an organization in which regional bodies would play the leading role.[71] On November 28, however, a meeting of the factory committees of Moscow's textile enterprises proposed an alternative to union direction. According to this plan, the Economic Department [otdel] of the Moscow Soviet would govern local industrial production. M. I. Movshovich, who would subsequently play a leading part in representing the workers in Centro-Cloth, was one who advocated this concentration of power in the Economic Department, although the meeting itself resolved to retain for the union the right to review the Department's actions.[72]

When Centro-Cloth rejected all such measures, a meeting of the factory committees of Moscow's cotton mills resolved on December 7 that the workers themselves should take over Centro-Cloth's organs of distribution.[73] At the same time, workers at the factory level retaliated against the owners' non-cooperation by bringing troublesome industrialists before the general meetings of workers in the factories. If this failed to

intimidate the owners, workers would halt production until the owner recognized workers' control. Simultaneously, the Union of Textile Workers in Moscow began to seize textile output and established three wholesale and numerous retail outlets to distribute the goods.[74]

In the face of this variegated pressure, Centro-Cloth admitted a nine-member Workers' Group on December 10. In response, employees[75] threatened to stop work in Centro-Cloth when the workers' representatives first appeared, and for the most part the representatives of the owners simply ignored the Workers' Group. What is more important, the owners and employees were able to retain the so-called parity principle of decision-making in Centro-Cloth. Under this system, each group--owners, employees, workers--voted as an estate, and the owners and employees closed ranks to outvote the workers.[76] Consequently, the All-Russian Council of the Union of Textile Workers and the Workers' Group of Centro-Cloth held a joint meeting on December 13, 1917 and decided to convene a national congress of the union to discuss the condition of the industry, regulation, workers' control, and especially the reorganization of Centro-Cloth.[77]

The First All-Russian Congress of the Union of Textile Workers (January 29-February 2, 1918) took charge of reorganizing regulation in the textile industry. Ostensibly the principal purpose of the congress was to reconstruct Centro-Cloth in a manner that would give greater voice to the workers.[78] In the

keynote address, however, Rudzutak broadened that purpose when he directed the congress "to speak on all questions of the regulation of the textile industry in conjunction with the transformation of the entire national economy."[79] At the evening session of January 29, the Bolshevik A. S. Kiselev, the chairman of the Workers' Group of Centro-Cloth, translated this into a specific call for the replacement of Centro-Cloth with a completely new organ, Centro-Textile (Tsentrotekstil').[80] No delegate defended Centro-Cloth, and its dissolution became an accomplished fact.[81]

The congress issued "Regulations" [Polozhenie] that defined the duties and responsibilities of Centro-Textile. The "Regulations" subordinated the new organ directly to VSNKh and put it in complete charge of the textile industry. Centro-Textile superseded all additional existing regulatory organs (Centro-Yarn, Centro-Wool, etc.) that previously fell outside the jurisdiction of Centro-Cloth, and it had the authority to create new regulatory organs for each branch of textile production. Moreover, Centro-Textile was to create its own bodies to purchase new materials, distribute materials and semi-finished goods, and confiscate and run individual textile plants where necessary. Since neither the owners nor the union representatives held a clear advantage in their struggle, the "Regulations" divided authority within Centro-Textile between a Plenum, which the Workers' Group dominated numerically, and a Presidium, in which the owners' representatives held nine of the

eleven positions. Finally, the "Regulations" stipulated that the Workers' Group in Centro-Textile and those in the subordinate Raion-Textiles follow explicitly the directives of the Union of the Textile Workers.[82]

As the "Regulations" suggest, this arrangement did not end the competition between the union, the owners, and other organs for the direction of the textile industry, but merely gave the struggle a new, institutional form. Bringing owners' representatives and union appointees into the same organ only ensured that the internal politics of Centro-Textile would replicate the struggle for authority that was taking place within practically every textile factory at the time. Thus, the activity of this institution was dominated by the owners' attempt to retain full authority over their factories, on the one hand, and the attempt of the leadership of the Union of Textile Workers to supersede both the owners and organs representing the workers, on the other. From the outset, the actions of the union leadership suggested that they viewed participation in Centro-Textile as only an intermediate phase in the centralization of the industry by the Union of Textile Workers.

Centro-Textile began to function immediately, at least on paper. At the close of the union congress, a special conference convened on February 2 to define more clearly the lines of authority within the factories. Since the factory committees had in theory become the basic unit of the union by the resolutions of the First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions and the Sixth

All-Russian Conference of Factory Committees in January 1918, the union conference further decided to subordinate the recently created factory control commmissions to the factory committees.[83] Also on February 2, the Workers' Group of Centro-Textile met under the chairmanship of the Bolshevik A. S. Bubnov and elected a provisional Presidium. This Presidium began immediately to discuss creating a state monopoly on cloth, and later in the month the Workers' Group forbade the removal of cloth from the factories without permission from Centro-Textile. On March 1, a joint meeting of the Workers' Group Centro-Textile and the Presidium of the Union of Textile Workers began to plan the formation of the regional organs of Centro-Textile.[84] In March, the VSNKh Presidium approved the "Regulations" of the union congress,[85] and on April 1 VSNKh issued its own "Regulations." The VSNKh version affirmed the formation of Centro-Textile and, in addition to previous stipulations, reserved for the workers two-thirds of the votes on any question in Centro-Textile regardless of the proportion of their attendance at any given meeting.[86]

This arrangement did not end the conflicts between the owners' and workers' representatives, and it failed to harness the energies of the factory committees in a systematic fashion. Debate at the First Congress of the Union of Textile Workers had shown that not every representative of the textile factory committees would accept subordination to the union, but in general the committees lacked both the material and human

resources to resist by any other means than non-cooperation.[87] Within Centro-Textile, it was the union-appointed Workers' Group that constantly battled the owners' representatives for hegemony. By mid-1918, in fact, the union leadership carried its attempt to take charge of the industry to the point of launching a campaign to discredit Centro-Textile, the very institution it had brought into existence only a few months earlier. Rudzutak, Asatkin, and others publicly decried the inability of Centro-Textile to establish any reliable form of accounting, its excessively bureaucratic character, and its ignorance of even simple data such as how many factories were under its jurisdiction.[88] On July 25, Rudzutak excoriated Centro-Textile for its lack of a regularized apparatus and for its failure to create "anything positive in the sense of a plan for its future work."[89] On the following day, regional representatives took the charges a step further when they complained that Centro-Textile deliberately neglected its own local organs in order to enhance its own power by dealing with each factory directly.[90] In August, Tekstil'shchik, the official journal of the union, openly demanded the dissolution of Centro-Textile and its replacement with a workers' (that is, union-appointed) organ.[91] In November, the future head of the nationalized textile industry, V. P. Nogin, succeeded in making this the official position of the union.[92]

In late 1918, the union leadership carried its effort to replace Centro-Textile beyond verbal criticism. On October 17,

1918, the All-Russian Council of the Union of Textile Workers voted to merge Centro-Textile with the VSNKh Department of Fibrous Substances, ostensibly to facilitate the implementation of the nationalization decree of June 28. While this measure left the power of Centro-Textile largely intact,[93] the union leadership soon began to impinge directly upon Centro-Textile's prerogatives. In meetings held November 13-14, the All-Russian Council of the union resolved to create an additional organ, the Central Management [Glavnoe pravlenie], with authority over all nationalized textile factories. This body, whose members were union appointees, was to be directly subordinate to VSNKh and to carry out functions of supply, finance, regulation, and organization formerly reserved for Centro-Textile. In addition, the Central Management would challenge Centro-Textile at the local level by organizing the nationalized factories under its authority into production groups.[94] VSNKh accepted only part of the union resolution. On November 16, 1918, the VSNKh Presidium approved the creation of a Central Management, known also as Glav-Textile and National-Cloth, and appointed to it the seven figures nominated by the union leadership two days earlier: Nogin, Rudzutak, Korolev, A. A. Ganshin, N. I. Lebedev, M. V. Rykunov, and N. M. Matveev.[95] To the chagrin of Glav-Textile, however, VSNKh subordinated the new institution not to itself but to Centro-Textile.[96]

From the time of its first public communication, which appeared December 2, Glav-Textile made clear that it intended

nothing short of assuming full direction of the textile industry. Its declaration, "To All Workers of the Textile Industry," appropriated tasks formerly assigned to Centro-Textile and added new assertions as well.

> The principal aim of the Management is the elimination of the anarchy in production which was characteristic of the capitalist order and which still persists. To introduce a systematic character into the work of the factories, to coordinate them with the general economic plan of a communist society, to organize production--these are the immediate tasks of the Management.
>
> Such systematic organization is necessary not only because the Management desires it--it is inevitable, it is the only way out of the condition in which the textile industry, along with the rest of Russian industry finds itself....
>
> The shortages of raw materials and other supplies, the difficulties with transportation, the flight of the former owners and managers from their factories [and] the absence of a plan of production urgently demand the immediate transition from the anarchy of production to an organized economy enveloping all large-scale, healthy textile enterprises[97]

Tekstil'shchik supported this by calling for the upcoming Second Congress of the Union of Textile Workers to designate "a single regulatory organ" for the industry and by enumerating once again the failure of Centro-Textile to establish links between the center and the local areas.[98]

In the first half of 1919, Glav-Textile effectively underminded and surpassed its nominally superordinate body, Centro-Textile. The initial open challenge occurred in early January over the issue of financing nationalized factories, which had formerly been within Centro-Textile's jurisdiction but which Glav-Textile now claimed as its own.[99] Later in the month,

Nogin reopened the issue of subordinating Glav-Textile directly to VSNKh. He argued that Centro-Textile could not administrate nationalized factories itself, but it inhibited Glav-Textile from doing so by treating the latter as just another department of Centro-Textile.[100] When the Second Congress of the Union of Textile Workers met in February, however, it did not comply with the union leadership's proposal to disband Centro-Textile and to centralize all administration in the industry under Glav-Textile.[101] In the aftermath of the congress, the leadership nevertheless acted as if it had received such a mandate, and it continued to widen the authority of Glav-Textile.[102]

The real key to the success of Glav-Textile against Centro-Textile was its ability to nationalize large numbers of textile enterprises and, therefore, to transfer them to its own jurisdiction. According to Glav-Textile's records, it nationalized 428 additional textile factories between 1918 and July 1919, or more than 80 percent of all textile enterprises nationalized between 1917 and the end of 1920.[103] Quite obviously, this broadened Glav-Textile's sphere of influence at the expense of Centro-Textile, but this is only half the story. Glav-Textile also assigned the nationalized factories to production groups directly subordinate to itself. A five-to-nine member administration headed each group. Factory committees in the member enterprises elected one-third of the total, while the union and the local council of the national economy also elected

one-third each. Between January and the end of July 1919, Glav-Textile and the Union of Textile Workers organized forty-four such groups, or all but two of the production groups organized in the textile industry by the end of the civil war.[104] On a national scale, this meant that 80.7 percent of all textile factories were members of production groups. This exceeded the rate of other industries, and about 26 percent of all Soviet factories affiliated with production groups by mid-1919 were textile enterprises.[105]

Transforming the principal organ of central regulation in the industry, however, established neither control nor management at the factory level. The scope of workers' control and its aims changed after the October Revolution. As Kakhtyn', a member of the Central Council of Factory Committees, told the Sixth All-Russian Council of Factory Committees on January 24, 1918,

> We cannot speak of control [kontrol'] only in the literal narrow meaning of the word; we must imply something broader and necessarily deeper; this is the regulation and organization of the whole economy, of all industry, of all production.[106]

> For us workers' control is not control in the direct meaning of the word, for us workers' control is something more. It is active intervention [vmeshatel'stvo], it is management [rasporiaditel'stvo], it is the principle of working class administration of all industry, and together with the peasants of our whole economic life.[107]

Fellow Central Council member Zhivotov summed up what had become the reality of the situation. Control could not remain, he said, simply a kind of bookkeeping function over the flow of goods and money but had to include the workers' participation in production

decisions.[108] In short, workers' control would have to become management.

Early in 1918, neither central nor local actors appreciated the complexity of this step, but the experience of trying to transform management and administration soon demonstrated to them the disparity between such rhetoric and reality in the textile industry. On January 24, Kakhtyn' argued that "it is necessary to create the highest organs from above. And at the bottom the organs need do nothing other than transmit information, various data, figures, and so forth."[109] By May, however, M. Rykunov of the union leadership reported that workers' control in the industry remained largely a paper measure. Plans continually superseded one another, and multiple organs came into existence to perform the same tasks.[110] In June, a conference of factory committees of the textile enterprises of Moscow, Tver', Vladimir, and Iaroslavl' provinces criticized "the total disorganization within the enterprises and the absence of any kind of organizational and labor discipline."[111] By the end of the year, the journal diagnosed the problem as something even more fundamental: the total lack of "comradely solidarity and discipline."[112] In late 1918,

> the factory committees, which received with the nationalization of the factories the right to supervise production and the right to sell cloth, sold the output of their factories without any sort of control, taking into account only their own factory and, in optimum cases, regional interests.[113]

Thus, neither control nor management was instituted, and the factory committees themselves were speculating in cloth in a manner considered "sabotage" when carried out by owners.

Compliance was so slight that central organs continually repeated the same instructions. Even after the enterprises of the industry had technically been nationalized in June 1918, central union organs attempted to acquire even the most basic accounting information. In addition to being asked to account for equipment on hand, textile factories in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, for example, were asked to describe their apparatus for carrying out educational work and even if a factory committee, a control commission, and a factory management were already established.[114] By the end of 1919, the Union of Textile Workers found it necessary to issue a special directive which explained once again what the duties of a factory committee in the industry were,[115] information that in theory had been in force since November 1917. Other directives at the time went so far as to remind local union organs and factory committees to hold monthly meetings and that official actions could be taken on behalf of the union only when signed by persons authorized to issue such orders.[116]

Thus, if the revolution had transformed the objectives of workers' control from accounting and inspection to something resembling actual factory management, this transformation did not bear results on a broad scale in the textile industry. Former owners and directors still occupied places on the factory management collegia after the nationalization of individual

mills, and union records show that they frequently worked against the revolution and workers' control.[117] When left to their own devices, workers' commissions could not carry out the functions formerly performed by technical and managerial personnel. In numerous cases, commissions ceased to operate almost as quickly as they came into being, and often an operating "commission" consisted of a single person performing all of the functions.[118] For the period of May-June 1919, one entire production group virtually ceased operations when the head of the group administration fell ill with typhus.[119] In April 1919, the Administrative Sub-Department of Glav-Textile's Department of Wool could not perform even routine tasks such as processing the payroll when the department head contracted typhus and his assistant was away on family business.[120] When one member of a technical commission of a Simbirsk group administration died of typhus and two others were injured in a train wreck in 1919, the target date for arriving at a production plan for the group was moved back several months to the beginning of 1920.[121]

These were not isolated examples. Assessing the situation on the scale of the whole industry in mid-1919, Tekstil'shchik bemoaned a widespread absence of reliable and consistent administration.

> Thus, for example, one [group] administration, immediately upon its election, firmly and resolutely approached its work with a clear understanding of the tasks required; another went through a period of some indecisiveness and undertook its work only after the Glavnoe pravlenie exerted definite pressure on it. One can name a whole series of such administrations.[122]

Thus, as one organization began work,

> another, often created no more recently than the first, did nothing, as if expecting time to take care of the work assigned to it.
>
> The very same thing is observed in the establishment of relations with the local organizations, especially with the factory committees and trade unions. One administration, from the first days of its existence, carried out its work in close collaboration with them [while] others, unfortunately, stood aside, having themselves forfeited their source of help and support.[123]

In short, it would be incorrect to claim that local administration foundered in every case. It is more accurate to note that the coordination of control and management on a broad scale failed to take root because of the inconsistency with which local organizations carried out assigned tasks.

The central problem was that workers at the enterprise level could not coordinate even the rudimentary tasks of control and management on a broad scale. To state this is not simply to repeat the familiar complaint by the tsarist bureaucracy that government foundered due to a shortage of "cultured" forces in the country. Rather, the textile industry faced two dilemmas in 1917-1920. It could not retain the personnel already performing the desired functions in sufficient numbers even though the absolute size of the industry was contracting. In addition, the new administrative apparatus could not find or train replacements quickly enough. This is not to ignore the considerable toll that the civil war took on the industry, where output contracted at rates that exceeded the already high national average. The war alone, however, does not explain completely the absence of

effective control and management in the approximately 10 percent of the textile factories still operating at the end of 1920. As Glav-Textile chairman Nogin noted in 1919, materials did not circulate effectively even within the same production group. Plants with fuel would close because they lacked materials, while other nearby enterprises in the same group would close because they had materials but no fuel.[124]

The textile industry lost qualifed people both to emigration and by defection to other industries. As the union noted at its second congress at the beginning of 1919, a large number of specialists in the industry, particularly engineers, left the country immediately after the October Revolution and ordinary workers replaced them on the job.[125] On a national scale, the industrial census of 1918 showed that the pool of available specialists gravitated both toward urban areas and toward the most developed spheres of industry. Only 10 percent of the industrial workforce were employed in Petrograd, for example. At the same time, however, 12 percent of the available employees located there as did 26 percent of what the census classified as highly qualified specialists and 34 percent of people working in industry who had completed a higher education. The textile industry employed 40 percent of the workers at the time of the census but only 31 percent of the available specialists and production managers.[126] Tekstil'shchik, in fact, decried a shortage of bookkeepers, technicians, engineers, and instructors even to work in the central offices of Glav-Textile.[127] VSNKh

complained of a shortage of specialists in textile centers such as Ivanovo-Voznesensk.[128] Moreover, the problem grew more acute when both VSNKh and Glav-Textile consciously began to remove politically unreliable specialists from their organs.[129] Even above the factory level, as noted in the annual report for 1919 of the Trade Department of Glav-Textile, only inexperienced workers drawn largely from the less literate female portion of the workforce were available to step in.[130] At the factory level, illiterates served on factory committees in some instances, even within the city of Moscow.[131]

The textile industry found it particularly difficult to cope with this situation because its female majority had previously been excluded professionally from skilled work and politically from activist roles in the union. Thus, mobilizations for the Red Army hit the industry particularly hard. Since male workers were represented in the skilled work of the industry in numbers disproportionate to their weight in the industry, the loss of skilled workers was especially acute. The other side of the issue, of course, was that it proved largely impossible to exempt the skilled textile workers from service since no significant pool of unskilled, adult males existed in the industry to fill military levies. Moreover, the textile workers distinguished themselves by overfulfilling their mobilization obligations. In the massive 1919 levy, the textile workers of Moscow <u>oblast'</u> exceeded their quota by 10,000.[132] Even when mobilization affected an insignificant number of male workers, the results

could be catastrophic. As one Petrograd textile factory complained, the few males drafted in October 1919 happened to be those who knew how to operate the plant's steam equipment. The result of their departure was a closing of the factory.[133] By May 1920, VSNKh found it necessary to exempt key factories from future mobilizations for this reason.[134]

After the revolution, therefore, the industry came to feel acutely problems inherent in the treatment of women in the industry in the tsarist period. Low wages, poor living and working conditions, and a lack of status plagued all unskilled workers in pre-revolutionary Russia, but the fact that the large numbers of unskilled workers in the textile industry were female tended to perpetuate these conditions in the industry. Unlike her male, unskilled counterpart, the female unskilled worker stood virtually no chance of receiving the requisite training to alter her status. Moreover, whether as a prerequisite to acquiring a skill or as a result of training, literacy loomed as an important component of skill, and we have already seen that the female majority in the textile industry lacked a high percentage of the literate. Despite lower pay, heavy and demanding work, and substandard conditions, unskilled female workers rarely carried out sustained political activity before the revolution. They brought with them from the culture of their peasant beginnings a lack of consciousness in the face of exploitation, a belief that the most prized attribute of the woman was her ability to work, and a legacy of subordination. In

short, the problems of women in the textile workforce were an outgrowth of the position of women in society. With regard to political activity, women did participate in clandestine educational and political circles in the 1890s, but when the scope of these circles broadened to mass agitation female participation was no longer cultivated. Male activists, in fact, discouraged female participation in politics, after 1905 the trade unions largely ignored females, and male workers in the factories looked down upon women and treated them with disrespect.[135]

This was certainly the pattern in the textile industry both before and after the revolution. By its own account, the Union of Textile Workers had made the general welfare of the female worker a low priority at the time of the revolution and thereafter.[136] By the end of 1919, local communications continued to reach the central union leadership that the union had done little to accelerate its organizational efforts among female textile workers.[137] In April 1920, only 24 of the 358 delegates to the Third All-Russian Congress of the Union of Textile Workers were women,[138] and by the end of 1920 women constituted 57.9 percent of the union membership but held only 8.2 percent of the leadership positions at the section level or above.[139] Women did not, therefore, take over the factory committees, factory managements, and group administrations, but we have already seen examples of circumstances that put women in a position to carry out the responsibilities of their male

superiors. Even the Supreme Council of the National Economy found itself in the position of employing large numbers of inexperienced females in its offices,[140] and the situation in the textile industry was the same. A lack of experience and preparation, however, prohibited these unskilled women from discharging the tasks required of them successfully. In complaints about this situation voiced in union communications, "women" and "inexperienced staff" were used roughly as synonyms.[141]

Thus, if the industry could not attract new talent, the task of the union was to fill the administrative positions largely by raising the consciousness of those who remained. In the early months of Soviet power, textile workers had not yet internalized the work habits of an industrial labor force. Workers left their place of employment without authorization, and in extreme cases extended their lunch break to as long as five hours.[142] In May 1918, a conference of factory committees and union representatives found it necessary to reiterate such basic aspects of industrial life as the need to refrain from drunkenness and card playing on the job, and to stop mistreating equipment.[143] The official cultural-educational departments designed to rectify this condition still did not exist below the raion level as late as November 1918.[144] Tekstil'shchik, in fact, complained that local factory committees would ignore circulars enlisting their participation in this work.[145] By 1919, it was evident that the problem was circular. The union

felt it could not combat inefficiency and incompetence without gathering data on literacy and demographics. In the conditions of the period, however, the level of literacy and competence in local offices was so low that union reports complained that such statistical work could not be carried out. Local officials regularly sent imprecise, incomplete, and illegible data.[146]

In practice, cultural-educational work amounted to establishing any kind of sympathetic link possible between the union and the workers. As early as February 1918, the union's Central Commission of Cultural-Educational Work realized that the workers simply did not understand the educational overtures already made to them and that such work would have to be "popularized" in the future if it were to succeed.[147] The idea was to modify the political content of this work and to appeal first on a recreational basis by establishing a series of workers' clubs. Workers would be provided with a place to relax, play cards, and drink tea. Taking advantage of political literature provided in a reading room would be optional. If lectures were given, their duration should be strictly limited.[148] A lack of qualified instructors stymied such work throughout this period, and as the end of the civil war approached educational work became a euphemism for directing the workers' social activities. As an official reported from the Iakovlev Cloth Factory in Gomel' at the end of 1920, the union staged two dramatic performances per week, but the workers seldom attended, and they absolutely never attended lectures or

meetings. In fact, "any interest in cultural work is absent among the working masses, [but] the evening dances attract a significant number of workers."[149] Other union sections shared the experience of Gomel'. All sections of the union held 1,823 meetings and presented 880 lectures in 1920 while also presenting 432 concerts, 1,980 performances, and showing 1,082 films.[150]

Economic disruption and displacement alone cannot explain why the economic organs turned a greater concentration of decision-making at the center in the first three years following the revolution. Famine, war, and the disruption of supply and distribution figure directly, of course, in the significant contraction of production. These factors, however, cannot entirely account for the inability of those present in the factories to control or manage effectively. Previously, Western scholars have argued that such management did function.[151] When one looks beyond the heavy industries vital to the war effort, we cannot accept this as the common experience.

Workers' control was to provide what Bolshevik rhetoric of the time referred to as a "school" for socialism, but outside major industries possessing a critical mass of skilled, politically conscious workers this school could not strike root. Not only did the unskilled workers lack the basic skills that would enable them to perform administrative, not to mention managerial, functions effectively, they lacked the broader consciousness required to enable them to coordinate their efforts on the necessary scale with other factories. Factory committees

may have pushed their representatives to undertake greater responsibility during the volatile year of 1917--the impulse for "centralization from below"--but they could not carry through this impulse independently. To the mass of unskilled workers, the steps needed for coordination of the working class could be only abstractions. The revolution presented not so much an opportunity to reach a pre-ordained end as an opportunity to work out matters independently. In the conditions of the civil war, however, this frequently took the form of formulating expedient measures for simple survival. The revolution thrust upon the rank-and-file worker new and largely unanticipated responsibilities. What the experience of 1917-1920 illustrates is that "centralization from above" was also part of the revolutionary process from the outset. Central organs would either compensate as best they could for unmanageability of the local economy or resign themselves to the defeat of the revolution.

NOTES

1. Paul Avrich, The Russian Revolution and the Factory Committees (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1961), 196-97 and passim; idem., "The Bolshevik Revolution and Workers' Control in Industry," Slavic Review, 22 (March 1963), 47-63; Frederick Kaplan, Bolshevik Ideology and the Ethics of Soviet Labor (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1968), 128, 173, 177-82, 310 and passim.

2. William H. Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, I (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1935), 73.

3. Steven A. Smith, Red Petrograd: Revolution In the Factories, 1917-1918 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 140-42, 145-47, 149, 181-82 and passim; David Mandel, The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime: From the February Revolution to the July Days, 1917 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 11, 63-66, 103, 109, 180 and passim; William G. Rosenberg, "Workers and Workers' Control in the Russian Revolution," History Workshop, 5 (Spring 1978), 89-97, especially 92; Carmen J. Sirianni, Workers' Control and Socialist Democracy: The Soviet Experience (London: Verso Editions, 1982), 27-34. See also Diane Koenker, Moscow Workers and the 1917 Revolution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 151-52.

4. Smith, 190-91, 193, 198-99, 235, 260; Mandel, 11, 17, 23-33, 47, 49, 88, 164; idem, The Petrograd Workers and the Soviet Seizure of Power: From the July Days to July 1918 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 226.

5. Smith, 82-83, 227; Mandel, The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime, 103, 156.

6. For this division of definitions, see Avrich, The Russian Revolution and the Factory Committees, 162-66. For a different version, see Smith, 158.

7. Vladimir I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochineniia [hereafter cited as PSS], 5th edition, vol. XXXIV (Moscow: Gosudarstvenoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1962), 320. Italics and ellipses in the original. See also ibid, 311-12.

8. Ibid., 305-06. Italics in the original.

9. Ibid., 306. Italics in the original.

10. Refer to footnote 5.

11. Lenin, PSS, vol. XXXIII, 49. Italics in the original.

12. In addition to works cited in footnote 6, the discussion of workers' control just completed has drawn upon Avrich, "The Bolshevik Revolution and Workers' Control in Industry;" Maurice Brinton, "Factory Committees and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," Critique, 4 (Spring 1975); E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, vol. II (London: The Macmillan Company, 1952); Chris Goodey, "Factory Committees and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat (1918)," Critique, 3 (Autumn 1974); Thomas Remington, "Institution Building in Bolshevik Russia: The Case of State Kontrol'", Slavic Review, 41 (Spring 1982); William Rosenberg, "Workers and Workers' Control in the Russian Revolution," History Workshop, 5 (Spring 1978).

13. For a full discussion of VSNKh in this period, see Herbert Ray Buchanan, Soviet Economic Policy For the Transition Period: The Supreme Council of the National Economy, 1917-1920 (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1972).

14. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, The February Revolution: Petrograd 1917 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), 75-76, 101, 571-72 and passim; Victoria E. Bonnell, Roots of Rebellion: Workers' Politics and Organizations in St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1900-1914 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), chapter 3; Sirianni, 30-34.

15. The following provinces comprised the Central Industrial Region: Moscow, Vladimir, Kostroma, Iaroslavl', Tver', Kaluga, Tula, Riazan, Tambov, Nizhegorod, Orlov, Kursk, and Voronezh.

16. K. I. Bobkov, "Iz istorii organizatsii upravleniia promyshlennost'iu v pervye gody sovetskoi vlasti (1917-1920 gg.) (Na materialakh tekstil'noi promyshlennosti)," Voprosy istorii, 4 (April 1957), 119.

17. "Tablitsy o chislennosti i sostave rabochego klassa v 1917-1918 gg. Svedeniia Tsentral'nogo statisticheskogo upravleniia RSFSR po materialam fabrichnoi inspektsii o chislennosti, vozrastnopolovom sostave i raspredelenni po gruppam proizvodstv rabochikh Rossii na 1 ianvaria 1917 g.," Statisticheskii sbornik za 1913-1917 gg.: Trudy TsSU, vol. III (Moscow: TsSU, 1921), 39, reprinted in Rabochii klass Sovetskoi Rossii v pervyi god diktatury proletariata: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1964), 151.

18. Robert E. Johnson, Peasant and Proletarian: The Working Class of Moscow in the Late Nineteenth Century (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1979), 24, 71.

19. For an explanation of the significance of literacy see Rose L. Glickman, Russian Factory Women: Workplace and Society, 1880-1914 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 110-11.

20. Rose L. Glickman, "The Russian Factory Woman, 1880-1914," in Dorothy Atkinson, Alexander Dallin, and Gail Lapidus, eds., Women in Russia (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977), 73.

21. Tekstil'shchik, 9-10 (December 25, 1918), 9.

22. Mandel, The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime 23, 26; Smith, 190-91.

23. Mandel, The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime, 88.

24. Ibid, 11.

25. Koenker, 76-77.

26. Ibid., 198.

27. Ibid., 211.

28. Ibid., 257-58.

29. Ibid., 104.

30. Smith, 198-99.

31. V. Z. Drobizhev, Glavnyi shtab sotsialisticheskoi promyshlennosti: Ocherkii istorii VSNKh, 1917-1932 (Moscow: Mysl', 1966), 24. For data on the high degree of geographic concentration in the industry, see Margaret Miller, The Economic Development of Russia, 1905-1914, 2nd edition (London: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1967), 287.

32. T. H. Rigby, Lenin's Government: Sovnarkom, 1917-1922 (Cambridge University Press, 1979), 12-13 and passim.

33. L. E. Ankudinova, Natsionalizatsiia promyshlennosti v SSSR (1917-1920 gg.) (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1963), 12.

34. Quoted in Thomas C. Owen, Capitalism and Politics in Russia: A Social History of the Moscow Merchants, 1855-1905 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 9.

35. Ibid., 151.

36. Glavtekstil': Kratkii otchet glavnogo pravleniia tekstil'nykh predpriiatii RSFSR (Moscow: [n.p.] 1920), 5. See also G. S. Ignat'ev, Moskva v pervyi god proletarskoi diktatury (Moscow: Izdatel'stovo Nauka, 1975), 46.

37. Bonnell, 283.

38. Lewis H. Siegelbaum, The Politics of Industrial Mobilization in Russia, 1914-1917: A Study of the War Industry Committees (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 201.

39. V. Ia. Laverychev, "Sozdanie tsentral'nykh gosudarstvennykh organov upravleniia tekstil'noi promyshlennosti v 1918 g. (iz istorii 'Tsentrotekstilia')," in M. I. Stishov et al., eds., Iz istorii Velikoi Oktiabr'skoi sotsialisticheskoi revoliutsii: Sbornik statei (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1957), 116.

40. On the final point see Smith, 185.

41. "A Resolution on Lockouts By the Conference of Factory Committees in Moscow. July 24-28, 1917," in Robert Paul Browder and Alexander F. Kerensky, eds., The Russian Provisional Government, vol. II (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), 765-66.

42. Koenker, 168-70.

43. This was part of Kostroma province. During an administrative reorganization of June 20, 1918 it became part of Ivanovo-Voznesensk province.

44. Materialy po istsorii SSSR, III: Rabochii kontrol' v promyshlennosti Ivanovo-Voznesenskoi gubernii (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo akademii nauk SSSR, 1956), 23-24.

45. "Soobshchenie ob ustanovlenii rabochego kontrolia na predpriiakh g. Serpukhova (Moskovskoi gubernii). 28 fevralia 1918 g.," Uprochenie Sovetskoi vlasti v Moskve i Moskovskoi gubernii: dokumenty i materialy (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1958), 201-02.

46. Materialy po istorii SSSR, 34-36.

47. Ibid., 37-38.

48. Ibid., 42-43.

49. Ibid., 39-40.

50. Ibid., 46.

51. V. Petrova, "Likinskie tekstil'shchiki," Za vlast' sovetov (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1957), 418-19.

52. Tekstil'shchik, 1-2 (April 9/22, 1918), 28.

53. "Postanovlenie Soveta narodnykh komissarov o natsionalizatsii fabriki tovarishchestva Likinskoi manufaktury A.

V. Smirnova. 17 noiabria 1917 g.," Sobranie uzakonenii i raspriazshenii rabochago krest'ianskago pravitel'stva, 37 (May 27, 1918), 458.

54. I. A. Gladkov, ed., Natsionalizatsiia promyshlennosti v SSSR: sbornik dokumentov i materialov, 1917-1920 gg. (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1954), 303-04.

55. L. V. Strakhov, "Natsionalizatsiia krupnoi promyshlennosti goroda Moskvy," Uchenye zapiski Moskovskogo pedagogicheskogo instituta im. V. I. Lenina, 200 (1964), 267.

56. F. A. Romanov, Tekstil'shchiki Moskovskoi oblasti v gody grazhdanskoi voiny (Moscow: Profizdat, 1939), 48.

57. Natsionalizatsiia promyshlennosti v SSSR, 472-74.

58. Drobizhev, 97.

59. As argued in Thomas F. Remington, Building Socialism in Bolshevik Russia: Ideology and Industrial Organization, 1917-1921 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984), 56-58.

60. A. M. Korneev, Tekstil'naia promyshlennost' SSSR i puti ee razvitiia (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo literatury po legkoi promyshlennosti, 1957), 55.

61. Romanov, 48.

62. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 1, d. 54, l. 1.

63. Ibid., 1. 5.

64. Tekstil'nyi rabochii, 1 (September 5, 1917), 9-11

65. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 1, d. 54, l. 3.

66. Tekstil'nyi rabochii, 1 (September 5, 1917), 3.

67. Ibid., 7-8.

68. Tekstil'nyi rabochii, 3 (October 26, 1917), 2.

69. "'Tsentrotkan' i 'Tsentrotekstil'. Doklad tov. Kiseleva predstavit. raboch. gruppy tesntrotkani," Protokoly I-go Vserossiiskago S"ezda Professional'nykh Soiuzov Tekstil'shchikov i fabrichnykh komitetov (Moscow: Izdanie Vserossiiskago Soveta Professional'nykh Soiuzov Tekstil'shchikov, 1918), 18.

70. Laverychev, 120.

71. Tekstil'nyi rabochii, 5 (December 20, 1917), 10-11.

72. Ibid., 15-16.

73. Laverychev, 120.

74. Romanov, 48-50.

75. In Russian, an important distinction exists between the word "employee" [sluzhashchii] and the term "worker" [rabochii]. An employee does not work directly in the production process, and he earns a wage or salary. Thus, various occupations--bookkeepers, foremen, and engineers--are all "employees." The term "worker" refers only to those directly involved in production. L. I. Vas'kina, "Rabochii klass SSSR po materialam vsesoiuzny perepisi naseleniia 1926 g.," Istoricheskie zapiski, 92 (1973), 10.

76. Laverychev, 120-21.

77. Tekstil'nyi rabochii, 5 (December 20, 1917), 1.

78. Tekstil'nyi rabochii, 7 (February 14/27, 1918), 3.

79. Protokoly I-go s"ezda soizuov tekstil'shchikov, 3. My italics.

80. Ibid., 18-19.

81. Ibid., 21-23.

82. Glavtekstil', 19-22; Protokoly I-go s"ezda soiuzov tekstil'shchikov, 61-63; Rabochii krai, 245 (September 19, 1918), 1.

83. Romanov, 51-55.

84. Tekstil'shchik, 1-2 (April 9/22, 1918), 14; Romanov, 56; Laverychev, 125; A. V. Venediktov, Organizatsiia gosudarstvennoi promyshlennosti v SSSR (1917-1920), tom I (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1957), 286.

85. Tekstil'shchik, 7-8 (October 25, 1918), 11.

86. Romanov, 56.

87. Prostokoly I-go s"ezda soiuza tekstil'shchikov, 39, 63.

88. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 2, d. 5, l. 10.

89. Ibid., l. 33.

90. Ibid., 11. 40-41.

91. Tekstil'shchik, 5-6 (August 1, 1918), 2-4.

92. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 2, d. 5, 1. 66.

93. Tekstil'shchik, 9-10 (December 25, 1918), 18.

94. Ibid., 19.

95. TsGANKh, f. 3429, op. 1, d. 162, 1. 53.

96. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 1, 1. 20.

97. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 602, 1. 132.

98. Tekstil'shchik, 9-10 (December 25, 1918), 4-5.

99. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 602, 1. 92.

100. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 1, 11. 100-101.

101. TsGAOR, op. 4, d. 1, 11. 9-10; TsGAOR, op. 3, d. 27, 1. 1; Tekstil'shchik, 11-12 (April 20, 1919), 15.

102. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 10, 1. 3.

103. Natsionalizatsiia promyshlennosti, 472-74. Some of these may simply have been to register nationalizations carried out earlier but not reported. The widespread registration at this time, however, denotes the emergence of a coordinated administrative vigor previously absent.

104. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 56, 1. 1.

105. Iu. K. Avdakov and V. V. Borodin, Proizvodstvennye ob"edineniia i ikh rol' v organizatsii sovetskoi promyshennosti'iu (1917-1921 gg.) (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1973), 16, 20-21.

106. TsGAOR, f. 472, op. 1, d. 7, 1. 181.

107. Ibid., 1. 183.

108. Ibid., 1. 39.

109. Ibid., 1. 185. My italics.

110. Tekstil'shchik, 3-4 (May 12, 1918), 6.

111. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 2, d. 3, 1. 18.

112. Tekstil'shchik, 9-10 (December 25, 1918), 11; see also Narodnoe khoziaistvo, 4 (April 1919), 16-19.

113. Tekstil'shchik, 7-8 (October 25, 1918), 6.

114. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 2, d. 5, l. 1.

115. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 29, l. 12.

116. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 13, l,. 51.

117. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 13, l. 26; Rabochii klass sovetskoi Rossii v pervyi god diktatory proletariata: sbornik dokumentov (Moscow: Nauka, 1964), 132.

118. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 2, d. 24, l. 1.

119. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 57, l. 1.

120. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 463, l. 24.

121. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 465, ll. 14-15.

122. Tekstil'shchik, 13-14 (July 1919), 8.

123. Ibid.

124. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 598, l. 14.

125. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 1, l. 106.

126. O. V. Naumov, L. S. Petrosian, A. K. Sokolov, "Kadry rukovoditelei, spetsialistov i obsluzhivaiushchego personala promyshlennykh predpriiatii po dannym prefessional'noi perepisi 1918 goda," Istoriia SSSR, 6 (November-December 1981), 98.

127. Tekstil'shchik, 11-12 (April 20, 1919), 11.

128. Narodnoe khoziaistvo, 4 (April 1919), 66.

129. Narodnoe khoziaistvo, 11 (November 1918), 45.

130. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 602, l. 1.

131. TsGAgM, f. 673, op. 1, d. 1125, ll. 13, 34.

132. Romanov, 64.

133. TsGAOR SSL, f. 1724, op. 1, d. 67, l. 61.

134. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 4, d. 5, l. 57.

135. Glickman, Russian Factory Women, 23-25, 56-57, 103, 110, 145-46, 171, 182-84, 195, 202-05, 215-18 and passim.

136. Tekstil'shchik, 9-10 (December 26, 1918), 9.

137. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 17, l. 94.

138. Tekstil'shchik, 15-16 (April-May 1920), 8.

139. Tekstil'shchik, 23 (December 1920), 8.

140. Remington, 149.

141. TsGANKh, f. 3338, op. 1, d. 602, l. 1.

142. Natsionalizatsiia promyshlennosti, 256-57.

143. Rabochii klass: sbornik dokumentov, 152.

144. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 2, d. 7, l. 93.

145. Tekstil'shchik, 9-10 (December 25, 1918), 23.

146. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 3, d. 17, ll. 60, 79.

147. Rabochii klass: sbornik dokumentov, 288-89.

148. Tekstil'shchik, 1-2 (April 9/22, 1918), 7-8.

149. TsGAOR, f. 5457, op. 4, d. 3, l. 9.

150. Tekstil'shchik, 22 (November 7, 1920), 10.

151. J.L.H. Keep, for example, writes that by 1921 "what remained of Russian industry was militarized and subjected to rigid state control." The Russian Revolution: A Study in Mass Mobilization (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1976), 269-70.