

**“THE RIGHT TO REST”:
POSTWAR VACATIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION**

Diane P. Koenker
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



The National Council for Eurasian and East European Research
2601 Fourth Avenue
Suite 310
Seattle, WA 98121

TITLE VIII PROGRAM

Project Information*

Principal Investigator: Diane P. Koenker
NCEEER Contract Number: 822-06g
Date: March 13, 2008

Copyright Information

Individual researchers retain the copyright on their work products derived from research funded through a contract or grant from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER). However, the NCEEER and the United States Government have the right to duplicate and disseminate, in written and electronic form, reports submitted to NCEEER to fulfill Contract or Grant Agreements either (a) for NCEEER's own internal use, or (b) for use by the United States Government, and as follows: (1) for further dissemination to domestic, international, and foreign governments, entities and/or individuals to serve official United States Government purposes or (2) for dissemination in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act or other law or policy of the United States Government granting the public access to documents held by the United States Government. Neither NCEEER nor the United States Government nor any recipient of this Report may use it for commercial sale.

* The work leading to this report was supported in part by contract or grant funds provided by the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, funds which were made available by the U.S. Department of State under Title VIII (The Soviet-East European Research and Training Act of 1983, as amended). The analysis and interpretations contained herein are those of the author.

Executive Summary

The normative Soviet vacation arose from a belief that the primary purpose of vacation was therapeutic, to help individual working people recover from the exertions of work. So the Soviet vacation was originally meant to be taken alone. Yet among Soviet citizens, there was strong sentiment in favor of families vacationing together. Looking at the Soviet family vacation in the 1950s and 1960s, this paper argues that the issue of vacations underlines fundamental ambivalences about the role of the family in the Soviet Union; that discussions of family vacations illustrate the tension in postwar Soviet life between production and consumption, between state interests and citizens' interests; and it shows how the Soviet economic system inhibited innovative responses to consumer demand. Late into the Soviet period, vacation choices remained constrained by the pattern established in the early years of industrial mobilization: the capital-intensive, medicalized, stationary, and solo Soviet holiday.

Introduction

A system based on the labor theory of value, the Soviet Union privileged production as the foundation of wealth, personal worth, and the path to a society of abundance for all. Work – physical or mental – was the obligation of all citizens. But work took its toll on the human organism, and along with creating the necessary incentives and conditions for productive labor, a socialist system would also include reproductive rest as an integral element of its economy. The eight-hour work day, a weekly day off from work, and an annual vacation constituted the triad of restorative and healthful rest opportunities in the emerging Soviet system.

Of these three, the annual vacation was the most revolutionary contribution of Soviet socialism to promoting the welfare of its work force. Its labor code of 1922 stipulated that all workers with at least five-and-a-half months' work tenure were entitled to an annual two-week vacation. And as early as 1920, Soviet leaders began to create a series of vacation institutions that would maximize the benefit of workers' annual breaks from production and labor. Rest homes and health resorts would become "workshops for the repair of toilers," offering structured rest and medical therapies that would allow workers to recover their strength and energy for the work year to come. The Soviet vacation did not provide an escape from the mobilization of citizens toward the common goal; from its beginning it was a continuation of that mobilization by other means.

The primary purpose of the Soviet vacation was therapeutic, the recovery and restoration of individual working units: the body and mind of the Soviet laboring person. So the Soviet vacation was meant to be taken alone, without the drag or extra expense of family members, whose own individual needs were likely to be different. Children had their own networks of sanatoria and pioneer camps; and scarce resources dictated that only the most medically needy

could spend their vacations in the health palaces of the sanatoria system. Working husbands and wives were each entitled to a paid vacation, but they were not entitled to spend that vacation together. If you have ever wondered why there were no double beds in Soviet hotels, this is part of the explanation.

Some individuals preferred this practice of separate vacations, but there is also ample evidence that most Soviet citizens wished to spend their rightful vacations with spouses and family. In Soviet vacation terminology, a “family” was a married couple; “parents and children” included one or two parents plus kids. The two were often used interchangeably, but it should be remembered that travel even by married couples was uncommon. This right to family-centered rest met with resistance from the Soviet health and tourism authorities, who were extremely slow to respond to popular demand.

In this paper, I examine the evolution of the Soviet family vacation in the 1950s and 1960s in order to explore three key issues in postwar Soviet history. In the first place, the problem of family vacations underlines fundamental ambivalences about the role of the family and the role of sex in the Soviet Union. Secondly, discussions of family vacations illustrate the tension in postwar Soviet life between production and consumption, between state interests and citizens’ interests, between subjectivity and citizenship. The utilitarian and solitary vacation served the productive interests of the state; turning a vacation into a family’s shared experience privileged consumers, who demanded that state resources be allocated to promote their private interests.

Finally, although state authorities would eventually acknowledge the validity of its citizens’ claims to the right to rest when and with whom they chose, the Soviet economic system inhibited innovative responses to consumer demand. Officials monotonously followed the

patterns that had been established in the central plan years of the 1930s, unable or unwilling to imagine either Disneyland or a double bed. This is the legacy with which a post-communist tourist industry must contend.

The Right to Rest

The 1936 Soviet constitution guaranteed citizens, among many other benefits of the most democratic country in the world, the “right to rest.” This mantra found its way into much of the propaganda and education about cultured leisure and the superiority of socialism. It also fueled state spending for vacation facilities, which increased significantly from 1936 to 1941.¹ Wartime destruction left many sanatoria, rest homes, and tourist bases in ruins, but by 1950, the regime was mounting a major campaign to restore and expand the opportunities for its laboring people to take their annual rest (or vacation) in comfortable, cultured, and curative circumstances.² Over the next two decades, the regime would spend millions of rubles on reconstruction and would extend the range of vacation opportunities available to its laboring people.

Soviet citizens could take their annual rest in a number of locations, but I am most interested in the phenomenon of travel to designated vacation spots, travel for the purpose of being elsewhere, to encounter unfamiliar surroundings and new sets of people. Such vacation

¹ *Trud*, 11 April 1937; *Trud*, 9 April 1940.

² The “all-union review” (*smotr*) of resorts, sanatoria and rest homes generated reams of reports, e.g., Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), f. 9493 (Tsentral’noe upravlenie kurortami, sanatoriami i domami otdykha), op. 3, d. 2012 (Stenogramma zasedanii Tsentral’noi smotrovoi komissii, 24 marta 1950, 20 aprelia 1950); Tsentral’nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Moskovskogo oblasti (TsGAMO), f. 7223 (Moskovskoe upravlenie kurortami, sanatoriami i domami otdykha), op. 1, d. 576 (on the review in Moscow oblast facilities).

travel in the Soviet Union can be divided into two distinct types. A person could travel to a particular destination and remain there for the duration of the vacation: travel to rest. Or a person could travel along an itinerary for the purpose of seeing sights: travel to see and do, or *turizm*. Both were deemed to be medically, culturally, and socially beneficial, and they increasingly shared similar characteristics as all Soviet vacations became less purposeful and more fun.

The first choice in travel to rest was the health spa (*kurort*), with its constellation of sanatoria, medical facilities, scenery, and services. Although the 1967 guide to trade union health spas would enumerate 183 of them all over the country, the oldest and most prestigious spas were located in the Caucasus Mineral Waters towns, particularly Kislovodsk, in Crimea, and along the Black Sea coast of the Caucasus range from Sochi to Sukhumi.³ In theory, spa vacations were reserved for the most medically needy, and vacationers (“patients”) required a doctor’s certificate in order to receive a place.

The “kurort regime” involved medical tests and prescribed procedures, including mineral water baths, sun baths (monitored by a beachside nurse), sea water baths, massages, “dosed walking,” particular diets suited to the patient’s medical needs, and the obligatory “dead hour” for naptime. Recreational possibilities included sports and excursions to local attractions, some even involving a modest amount of hiking or climbing. Evenings offered cultured entertainment such as lectures, performances of folk music by amateur ensembles, films, concerts and plays performed by visiting artists, and much dancing, whether to a record player, accordion, or jazz

³ *Zdravnitsy profsoiuzov SSSR*, 3d. ed. (Moscow, 1967), ed. I. I. Kozlov. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1964 godu: Statisticheskii ezhegodnik* (Moscow, 1965), p. 601, reports 2,139 sanatoria in 1963, with a total of 366,000 beds.

orchestra.⁴

This spa vacation set the standard, but it was a very expensive standard, given the capital and service requirements of its medical infrastructure. Vacationers who could not obtain a scarce place in a sanatorium had several alternatives. They could find lodging in a private home, *pansionat*, or hotel in a kurort location, and receive a course of medical treatment (*kursovka*) through a central polyclinic. Or they could obtain lodging in a *pansionat* without treatment, and take the sun and the waters as they chose.

The rest home (*dom otdykha*) was a junior version of the kurort, offering shorter stays (10-12 days was the norm), less extensive medical treatment, and simpler, smaller facilities. Many rest homes belonged to particular enterprises, institutions, or trade unions, and they were located in natural settings along rivers and lakes relatively close to the population centers they served. The regime here was more relaxed than in a kurort; the most common medical condition for rest home vacationers was “overtiredness,” and success in treatment was measured by how much weight the patient had gained. Chess, checkers, and newspapers could be found in cozily furnished club rooms; evenings offered occasional films and amateur concerts, and by later in the 1950s, television.⁵

Neither kurorts nor rest homes could accommodate all who wished to spend their vacations there, and toward the end of the 1950s, a new hybrid form of vacation destination emerged: the “tourist-health camp,” sometimes called a “rest base” or “sports camp.” These

⁴ This description is based on materials from conferences and annual reports of sanatorium head doctors located in GARF, f. 9493, and TsGAMO, f. 7223.

⁵ This description is based on annual reports in 1950 and 1959 for Moscow oblast rest homes, which include photographs. TsGAMO, f. 7223, op. 1, d. 679, d. 1567.

vacation centers were even simpler and more autonomous than the rest home.⁶ Most camps consisted entirely of tents, providing cots and mattresses, but no dining room. Vacationers brought their own provisions to prepare in a central cooking area. They offered daily activities such as morning calisthenics, swimming, and sports, and tourist events such as sightseeing excursions or overnight camping trips.⁷

Access to any of these vacation destinations required the procurement of a voucher, or *putevka*. These were allocated by central authorities to trade union organizations who could then distribute them to their members through local enterprise committees. A certain percentage of *putevki* were reserved as rewards for meritorious service or exceptional need and handed out for free.⁸ The rest of them were subsidized by the trade union social insurance fund, so that recipients paid only 30 percent of the face value of the *putevka*. (Prices for the standard terms of treatment were listed in the published annual guides to vacation destinations.)

Unclaimed *putevki* (most common for off-peak times before July and after August and for less desirable locations) could be purchased at their full value. It was very difficult for a married couple working in different enterprises to acquire two *putevki* for the same location and time, and almost impossible to acquire two identical subsidized vouchers. To travel as a family was even more difficult, because most rest homes and *kurorty* explicitly forbade admission of children. If children needed medical treatment, they could be served in one of the country's specialized children's sanatoria: 1,142 of them in 1963, with 129,000 beds, compared to 2,139

⁶ GARF, f. 9559 (All-union council of voluntary sports societies), op. 1, d. 860 (Stenogramma seminar nachal'nikov ozdorovitel'nykh lagerei krupneishikh predpriatii, vuzov i tekhnikumov strany, 14 apreliia 1966), l. 113.

⁷ GARF, f. 9559, op. 1, d., d. 860, 980 (Spravki o rabote sportivno-ozdorovitel'nykh lagerei i baz otdykha DSO profsoiuzov za 1967 g.).

⁸ V. I. Azar, *Otdykh trudiashchikhsia SSSR* (Moscow, 1972), 11.

for adults.⁹ For more active rest, children could be sent to summer-long pioneer camps.

Active vacations for adults – tourism – were even less suitable for parents traveling with children. Organized tourism had begun to develop in the Soviet Union at the end of the 1920s, with the creation of a joint-stock firm, “Sovetskii Turist,” that arranged group travel to cities or scenic regions of the Soviet south. In 1936, the trade unions assumed the stewardship of Soviet tourism, administering a series of tourist bases and organizing specified itineraries (*marshruty*) for tourist travel. A tourist vacation was recommended for healthy adults who wished to expand their horizons and strengthen their physiques in relatively rigorous travel. Many tourist itineraries involved some hiking through the nature reserves of the Caucasus or Crimea before concluding with several days’ stay at a seaside tourist base.

The ticket to these tours also came in the form of a putevka handed out or sold through trade union organizations at the workplace. Many tourists sought these putevki as more accessible tickets to a pseudo-spa vacation. They failed to read the fine print on those vouchers that explained that the journey would be accomplished on foot, and that the tourist should bring a knapsack, comfortable clothes, and sturdy shoes with low heels.¹⁰

Some tourist routes provided less rugged exposure to the natural beauties of the Soviet land: Itinerary Number 28 in 1956 offered a twenty-day bus trip along the Black Sea coastline from Sukhumi to Sochi, with four-day stays in five different coastal towns. A tourist could also purchase a putevka for a twenty-day tourist experience in a single tourist base, with the opportunity to take day trips to local attractions.¹¹ This very popular option most closely replicated the model sanatorium vacation. Like the sanatoria and rest homes, tourist bases

⁹ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1964*, 601.

¹⁰ Complaints like this arose already in the 1930s, and were endemic in the 1950s and 1960s. A particularly good discussion can be found in GARF, f. 7576, op. 14, d. 123.

¹¹ *Turistskie marshruty po SSSR* (Moscow, 1956), 134-50, 160, 282.

provided food, lodging, recreation (volleyball), and evening entertainment (dancing). The accommodations, however, were more primitive: large stationary tents provided the bulk of the sleeping spaces at Soviet tourist bases until late in the 1960s.¹²

Soviet tourist facilities expanded significantly in the postwar years, from a low of 81 tourist bases in 1950, with 9,000 beds, to 611 in 1970, with 160,000 beds.¹³ Travel by river boat proved to be another popular vacation activity, with ten to twenty-day *putevki* available for cruises on the Volga, from Leningrad to Lake Onega, and “along five rivers” from Moscow to Ufa and back. River travel was expensive: a first-class cabin for a twenty-day cruise from Moscow to Astrakhan and back cost 1,315 rubles in 1956, and even third-class cost 955 rubles.

By comparison, a twenty-day *putevka* to the Yalta tour base cost 562 rubles.¹⁴ Railway tourism began in 1960. Tourists traveled in specially reserved trains, which provided all meals, living arrangements, and guides. At stops along the way, tourists visited local attractions and took scenic hikes and excursions. In 1962, 56 tourist trains carried 22,215 passengers; by 1965 the number of trains had grown to 250, with tourist trains setting out from dozens of cities across the Soviet Union. Significantly, many of these itineraries took travelers from their home cities to Black Sea destinations and back (“Tomsk-Caucasus-Tomsk”).¹⁵

Tourists continued to emulate the *kurort* vacationers and sought the well-traveled route to the south. Ocean cruises along the Black Sea coast from Odessa to Sukhumi expanded in the

¹² GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 361 (Dokladnye zapiski o rabote turistskikh baz po obsluzhivaniiu turistov v 1958 godu); GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 750 (Pervyi plenum Tsentral'nogo Soveta po turizmu vtorgo sozyva 25 maia 1965 g.), ll. 51-55.

¹³ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR 1922-1972 gg. Iubileinyi statisticheskii ezhegodnik* (Moscow, 1972), p. 461.

¹⁴ *Turistskie marshruty 1956*, 282, 288.

¹⁵ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 750, l. 40; Tsentral'nyi arkhiv goroda Moskvy (TsAGM), f. 28 (Moskovskii gorodskoi sovet po turizmu i ekskursiiam), op. 1, d. 9 (Plan i otchet o rezul'tatakh provedeniia 187 marshruta turistskogo poezda v 1960 g.), ll. 14-14ob.; GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1061 (Stenogramma I

1960s as well, with twelve liners operating by 1967: more lively than the “floating rest homes” on Soviet rivers, putevki for these cruises sold out quickly.¹⁶ Such trips combined seascapes, rest, and pleasure, such as beauty contests, amateur concerts, and an orchestra for dancing.¹⁷ Tourist officials learned through experience that even train travel was difficult for older people who needed help getting on and off the train; the train coupés were generally too confining for children. River and ocean cruises offered only limited possibilities for family travel, in part because of safety concerns but also because there was excess adult demand: the liner “Shevchenko” reserved just 30 of its 1,652 places for children for its summer 1966 sailings.¹⁸

Soviet citizens began to be able to travel abroad in the mid-1950s, and foreign trips, both to eastern European countries and beyond, were highly prized. In 1956, 560,000 Soviet citizens traveled abroad, according to one source, a number that had increased to 1,850,000 by 1970.¹⁹ Despite this significant growth, married couples seldom received permission to travel together, and children almost never.²⁰

As this survey of the expanding forms of Soviet vacation travel indicates, such travel

Plenuma Tsentral'nogo Soveta po turizmu i ekskursiim (tret'ego sozyva), 7 June 1967), l. 21; *Turistskie marshruty na 1967 god* (Moscow, 1967), pp. 97-126,

¹⁶ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 525 (Protokoly II Plenuma TsS po turizmu 5 apreliia 1963 goda), l. 53.

¹⁷ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1061, l. 22; Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv goroda Sochi (GAGS), f. R-261 (Sochinskoe biuro putestvii i ekskursii krasnodarskogo soveta po turizmu VTsSPS), op. 1, d. 41 (Kniga zapisi otzyvov i predlozhenii o turistikh reisakh na turbo-elektrokhod “Abkhaziia” i “Ukraina” za 1967-1969 gody)

¹⁸ GAGS, f. R-261, op. 1, d. 154 (Otchetnye materialy turistikh kruizov po Chernomu moriu na dizel'-elektrokhode “Rossiia” za 1970 godu), l. 59; d. 29 (Godovoi otchet po osnovnoi deiatel'nosti Sochinskoi ekskursionnoi bazy za 1966 g.), l. 15.

¹⁹ Anne E. Gorsuch, “Time Travelers: Soviet Tourists to Eastern Europe,” in *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism*, ed. Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker (Ithaca, 2006), 205-26; Azar, *Otdykh trudiashchikhsia*, p. 41, citing E. N. Faitel'son, *Osnovy ekonomiki inostrannogo turizma v SSSR* (Moscow, 1971), p. 14. John Bushnell, using international tourist data, calculated 112,000 foreign travelers in 1960, 838,000 in 1970. “The ‘New Soviet Man’ Turns Pessimist,” in *The Soviet Union since Stalin*, ed. Stephen F. Cohen, Alexander Rabinowitch, and Robert Sharlet (Bloomington, 1980), p.192.

²⁰ This observation is based on extensive reading of reports of group leaders accompanying these foreign trips, located in GARF, f. 9520, op. 1.

became accessible to increasing numbers of Soviet citizens in the postwar years. The total number of vacationers in sanatoria, rest homes, pansionats, and tourist bases increased from 3.7 million in 1950 to 16.8 million in 1970, with the years after 1965 seeing the greatest rate of expansion.²¹ Still, even in 1965, as trade union officials pointed out, vacation places per thousand citizens had not returned to prewar levels. Capacity had increased, but it had not kept up with the growth of the population.²² The increase in tourist facilities accounted for most of this growth in the 1960s. In 1950, sanatoria accounted for 46 percent of vacationers, and rest homes 51 percent. In 1970, 26 percent of vacationers sojourned in sanatoria, 32 percent in rest homes, and 42 percent in tourist and so-called “rest” bases.²³ Demand for vacations would only increase after 1968, when a new law shortened the standard work week to five days and extended the official paid vacation from twelve to fifteen working days.²⁴

What Did the People Want?

Soviet officials paid considerable attention to the demands and needs of the public in monitoring the growing demand for vacation travel and for assessing what kinds of services, destinations, and methods appealed most to the Soviet tourist. This was true even in the 1930s, at the same time that vacation officials emphasized recuperative rest. This practice continued into the 1950s and 1960s. At the end of each vacation season, local officials reviewed the written comments of their guests, paying particular attention to complaints, and they passed

²¹ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1965* (Moscow, 1966), p. 607; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo v 1974* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 616-17.

²² GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 751 (second plenum of Central Soviet for Tourism, 28 October 1965), l. 12.

²³ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1965*, p. 607; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo v 1974*, pp. 616-17.

²⁴ Azar, *Otdykh trudiashchikhsia*, 6-8.

along their findings to the central authorities.

Many of these comments reflected joy, wonder, and gratitude for the opportunity to see another part of the country. Coming to Sochi from Uzbekistan's Fergana valley, with its fruit orchards, roses, and cotton fields, one tourist had believed "there was nowhere as beautiful as the Fergana valley. Alas! I was wrong... I was especially captivated by the extraordinary beauty of the landscape along the Black Sea coast of the Caucasus mountains."²⁵ More pragmatically, tourists demanded better food and more attentive service, as well as clean and cozy accommodations.²⁶

Starting in the 1960s, public opinion polling also provided advice to officials about the vacation preferences of the Soviet people. Such polls suggest an admission that consumer-driven preferences were as important in economic planning as the needs of enterprises to regenerate the work abilities of their employees. The Soviet citizen's role as consumer was now just as vital as the role of producer. An Institute of Public Opinion had been organized under the auspices of the newspaper *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* in 1960 by the sociologist Boris Grushin. In 1963, the scientific institute for health spa planning commissioned a survey to determine how Soviet citizens actually vacationed and how they wished to vacation.²⁷ Readers of *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* were invited to respond to a questionnaire published in the paper in June 1966; over 12,000 readers replied.

From these respondents, a more scientific sample was constructed, with results that surprised the investigators. When asked about their ideal vacation, 19 percent of the respondents said they would like to travel to one location and rest there (the traditional spa or

²⁵ GAGS, f. R-261, op. 1, d. 1 (Kniga otzyvov i predlozhenii Turistskogo poezda Kuban'-4 N 189/190 1964), l. 81.

²⁶ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 631 (Protokol III Plenuma TsS po turizmu 7 apreliia 1964), ll. 34-36.

rest home vacation), but a stunning 72 percent expressed the “Oneginesque desire” to travel from one place to another. More than half of the respondents preferred that their vacations be organized through the putevka system, rather than making their own arrangements. As for the family vacation, 45 percent of the survey preferred to vacation with their families, 41 percent with friends or co-workers, 15 percent with strangers.²⁸ A study conducted for the Crimea in 1969 showed that while 55 percent of vacationers there were married with children, only 27 percent of vacationers actually came with their families; 17 percent of them were single parents with children; 20 percent were married couples without their children.²⁹

These data suggest a strong but not a resounding preference for the Soviet family vacation. Some of the reasons for this ambivalence can be found in the debates and commentary about the family vacation among providers and consumers of leisure travel in the Soviet Union. The origin of the Soviet vacation lay in its purposefulness, in its medical necessity to counteract the rigors and exhaustion of the normal working year. Experts in the 1930s even proposed that once the scientific organization of work had been perfected, vacations would no longer be necessary because workers would never need “repair.”³⁰ This minority view failed to win adherents, but the link between work and vacation remained central.

Since the state was unable to provide healthful vacations for all of its citizens, priority had to go to those who were most medically needy and those who were most deserving of this state benefit: production workers. “In the summer months when there is a critical shortage of putevki, we have at our resorts too many nonworking family members and housewives. Health

²⁷ B.A. Grushin, *Chetyre zhizni Rossii v zerkale oprosov obshchestvennogo mneniia. Epokha Brezhneva* (chast' 1) (Moscow, 2003), 136.

²⁸ Grushin, *Chetyre zhizni*, 154, 165, 158.

²⁹ Azar, *Otdykh trudiashchikhsia*, 46-47.

resorts ought to provide treatment and rest to the producers of our material good – workers and collective farm workers,” argued the central administration for trade union health facilities in 1955.³¹ The vacation was for the good of the producer, not the producer’s spouse or children.

The medical basis of the Soviet vacation also contributed to the pattern of individual rather than family rest. Health spa vacations in particular had been tied to the particular needs of producers, treating the medical conditions created by the nature of work. The mental strain of intellectual work required primarily a change of scenery and routine, which sand, sea, or mountains could easily provide. Physiological conditions like lung or heart diseases required more specialized treatments. In assigning putevki to their workers, factory authorities were expected to consult the staff doctor and select the appropriate destination for their vacationing workers’ conditions, using the annual guide to kurorty, which listed the medical specialties of each institution.

Even putevki to less specialized rest home vacations were meant to be reserved for those most in need of this form of quiet rest. Children not only threatened to violate the calm required for effective treatment, they also introduced further medical risk.³² A small number of health facilities had been established for mothers to rest together with their children, and for pregnant women, but in these cases too, the goal was to promote the health and well-being of the woman, not to satisfy their affective needs.³³ With no way to care for their children, mothers in need of

³⁰ GARF, f. 5528 (Tsentral’noe upravlenie sotsial’nogo strakhovaniia pri Narkomtrude SSSR) , op. 4, d. 132 (Stenogramma soveshchaniia po rabochemu otdykh pri Tsusstrakhe SSSR ot 19 maia 1932 g.), l. 11, 81-82..

³¹ GARF, f. 9228 (Ministerstvo zdravookhraneniia SSSR. Glavnoe upravlenie kurortov i sanatoriev), op. 1, d. 916 (Materialy vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia upravlaiushchikh kurortnykh kontor i direktorov kurortnykh biuro. 24-28 March 1955), l. 26.

³² GARF, f. 9493, op. 3, d. 1955 (Stenogramma i doklad vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia rabotnikov sanatoriev i domov otdykha profsoiuza rabochikh khimicheskoi promyshlennosti ob itogakh raboty za 1954 i zadachakh za 1955 god, 24-26 ianvaria 1955), l. 75.

³³ GARF, f. 9228, op. 1, d. 916, l. 34.

medical vacations refused to take them unless they could bring their children along with them.³⁴ Rest homes for mothers-to-be were meant to serve as schools for motherhood, not for fun.³⁵

Some parents (and spouses) actively sought the opportunity to escape from the drudgery and routine of their family circumstances.³⁶ “It is a fiction that a mother wants to spend a month with her child,” insisted the head of the Yalta kurort district in 1965. “There is absolutely no basis in this.”³⁷ Children interfered with certain types of behaviors peculiar to the kurort environment: “a person on vacation does not behave as he does at work.”³⁸ Since the 1920s, the health spa had been a symbol of extra-marital dalliance.³⁹ Films in the 1930s and later reinforced this image of the health spa vacation as an opportunity for casual sex without responsibility.⁴⁰

For some observers, the family vacation seemed inappropriate for a socialist society. The system of separate vacation facilities for adults and children reflected both utopian dreams of the withering away of the family and utilitarian visions of the rationalization of rest. The socialist state would provide individuals, young and old, with vacation conditions appropriate to their

³⁴ GARF, f. 5528, op. 4, d. 132, l. 88; GAGS, f. R-24 (Sochinskoe sanatorno-kurortnoe ob”edinenie “Sochikurort”), op. 1, d. 498 (Perepiski s redaktsiei gazety “Krasnoe znamia” o proverke materialov opublikovannykh v pechati za 1954 g.), l. 120 (letter to newspaper *Krasnoe znamia*, 16 May 1954).

³⁵ TsGAMO, f. 7223, op. 1, d. 1252 (Stenogramma sobraniia aktiva rabotnikov sanatoriev i domov otdykha, 6 marta 1956), ll. 41-43.

³⁶ *Znamia trekhgorka*, 20 June 1964, letter from A. Antonenkova: “I was especially glad to rest away from all my domestic troubles.”

³⁷ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 698, l. 109.

³⁸ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 698, l. 116.

³⁹ Stories in printers’ trade union journals illustrate this. See Diane P. Koenker, *Republic of Labor: Russian Printers and Soviet Socialism, 1918-1930* (Ithaca, 2005), 275-76. See also Mary M. Leder, *My Life in Soviet Russia: An American Woman Looks Back* (Bloomington, 2001), 132-33.

⁴⁰ See, for example, the 1939 Mikhail Verner film, *Devushka speshit na svidanii*, in which a henpecked professor, having lost his identity papers, enjoys the attentions of pretty young women in Essentuki. By 1973, in *Staryi steny* (dir. Viktor Tregubovich) the kurort romance has become a normal (if covert) part of the vacation, conveyed by a scene in which multiple women slip into their sanatorium rooms after a night spent someplace else. In *Liubov’ i golubi* (dir. Vladimir Menshov, 1984), a rural man lonely in his marriage is swept away by an affair with a state official he meets while taking a cure.

needs. The official restoration of Soviet family values in the 1930s did not necessarily promote the family as an affective unit, and as Frances Bernstein argues, “Conjugal pleasures of the flesh were even more out of place in the 1930s.”⁴¹ Soviet tour groups in the 1950s and 1960s brought together individual adults in new collectives, reinforcing work-based identities and developing friendships that transcended local or family loyalties.⁴²

Finally, a Soviet family vacation (husbands and wives together, or parents with children) may have smacked too much of bourgeois pleasures. Given that most families could not afford to purchase *putevki* for a vacation together, there was envy and resentment toward those who could: to show up in Sochi with a child in tow risked incurring the wrath of local (and low-paid) medical people resentful of the “big ruble” that permitted such luxury.⁴³

Nonetheless, the logistical and physical constraints of the vacation system itself, rather than ideology or attitudes, constituted the biggest obstacle to a Soviet family vacation. But these too were the product of the medicalized and individualized approach to the public health needs of Soviet citizens. Since *putevki* were issued to individuals by their place of work, it was very difficult for a married couple to arrange to receive two identical *putevki*.⁴⁴ In many cases, aspiring family vacationers with a single *putevka* arrived at their destination *en famille*, hoping to negotiate places on the spot. “We have an unpleasant picture, especially in summer,” reported a rest home director in 1955. “Papa or mama arrives with children and we won’t take them. They raise a fuss, there are tears, pleading, they’ve spent money already for the trip, they say that the

⁴¹ Frances Lee Bernstein, *The Dictatorship of Sex: Lifestyle Advice for the Soviet Masses* (DeKalb, 2007), 191.

⁴² *Martenovka*, 11 May 1954; *Znamia trekhgorki*, 16 August 1960; TsAGM, f. 28, op. 2, d. 151 (Kniga otzyvov i predlozhenii po “Aleksei Tolstoi” turistskoi bazy 1956 g.), l. 62.

⁴³ GAGS, f. R-24, op. 1, d. 1044 (Stat’i i zametki iz gazet o Sochinskom kurorte [vyrezki iz gazet] za 1960 god), l. 46 (letter to *Krasnoe Znamia*, 21 August 1960).

⁴⁴ GAGS, f. R-24, op. 1, d. 845 (Stat’i i zametki iz gazet o Sochinskom kurorte [vyrezki iz gazet] za 1958 god), l. 50.

factory committee chairman said, ‘Just go, they won’t chase you away.’ But the children cannot be accommodated.”⁴⁵ Even if parents had purchased adult putevki for their children, they would be refused accommodation.⁴⁶

Soviet health facilities had always been constructed on the principle of sex segregation. In the 1950s, most establishments, whether sanatoria, rest homes, or tour bases, lodged their guests in large rooms or tents holding six to twelve people; married couples had to lodge apart from one another. Even where two-person rooms could accommodate a couple, there was no room for children.⁴⁷ The entire regime of the Soviet vacation establishment had been organized around the interests and needs of adults. Children needed their own level of cultural activities, different nutritional norms, and more supervision, insisted health officials.⁴⁸ Other people’s children impeded the normal rest of Soviet adults. Nude sunbathing was permissible among adults, but not in the presence of teenagers, and the Yalta resort director reported many complaints on this score. Experts believed children and young people were better off with their own age cohorts.⁴⁹

As the polling data suggests, Soviet parents tended not to agree with the experts. For many different reasons, they preferred to spend their annual vacation together, not apart. Some parents would not be able to travel at all unless they could bring their children along. Others actively preferred to spend their holidays together.⁵⁰ Parents and children could bond together over a tourist campfire like in no other setting, wrote one factory worker; the magic of the

⁴⁵ GARF, f. 9493, op. 3, d. 1955, l. 56.

⁴⁶ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 698, l. 107-108, 117-118, 128-29, 142.

⁴⁷ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 428 (Stenogramma soveshchaniia aktiva rabotnikov sanatorno-kurortnykh uchrezhdenii profsoiuzov 10 apreliia 1963 goda), l. 111.

⁴⁸ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 428, l. 79; f. 9493, op. 8, d. 698, l. 108-109; GAGS, f. R-24, op. 1, d. 498 (16 May 1954 letter to *Krasnoe znamia*).

⁴⁹ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 698, l. 109.

⁵⁰ *Znamia trekhgorka*, 20 June 1964.

campfire overcame shyness and encouraged sharing secret thoughts.⁵¹ Vacationing together strengthened family bonds.⁵²

A growing demand for the opportunity for families to vacation together also reflected a more assertive Soviet consumer, insisting on the right to choose how they spent their money. “Life has become better, life has become more fun,” said the trade union secretary Shevchenko (not especially originally) in 1961. “Laboring people have lots of money and they can buy a *putevka* with their own savings.”⁵³ The expansion of tourist facilities – especially the tourist-health camps -- represented an important concession to consumer demand, since tourist *putevki* could be bought outright for cash; they did not require the intervention of a medical board or an award from the factory committee for good work.⁵⁴

Increasing access to private automobiles meant that families could travel south for vacation “in their own car – this is the very best vacation!”⁵⁵ Exposure to alternate vacation regimes in Eastern Europe also propelled a growing demand for family vacations. As Soviet citizens vacationed abroad, they noticed that families often vacationed together in Bulgarian and Romanian health resorts, and they wondered why the same conditions could not obtain at home.⁵⁶ Propaganda films celebrated the family vacation: a 1958 film, “On the Tourist Trails of Crimea,” included scenes of a nuclear family happily motoring down to Yalta; even a flat tire

⁵¹ *Skorokhodovskii rabochii*, 25 June 1970.

⁵² GARF f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1910 (Stenogramma vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia o khode vypolneniia postanovleniia TsK KPSS, SM SSSR i VTsSPS ot 30.05.69 “O merakh po dal’neishemu razvitiuu turizma i ekskursii v strane.” 2-3 dekabria 1974 goda), ll. 132-33.

⁵³ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 238 (Stenogramma mezhdunarodnogo soveshchaniia po obmenu opytoi raboty profsoiuzov sotsialisticheskikh stran v oblasti razvitiia sanatorno-kurortnogo dela i organizatsii lechenii i otdykha trudiashchikhsia 19 July-27 July 1961), l. 173.

⁵⁴ *Martenovka*, 14 May 1960; 30 June 1960; 26 July 1960. See also N. B. Leбина and A. N. Chistikov, *Obyvatel’ i reformy: Kartiny povsednevnoi zhizni gorozhan* (St. Petersburg, 2003), 282-83.

⁵⁵ *Znamia trekhgorki*, 28 May 1960.

could not dampen their spirits. At journey's end, the family drove up to their little cabin at the Pansionat "Primorskaia," eager to begin their holiday.⁵⁷ But the evidence indicates that this Potemkin vacation was far from common.

By 1960, trade union officials acknowledged that they must address this growing demand for family vacations, by expanding the number of facilities and by designating a greater proportion of putevki for cash purchase. Still, the parameters of expansion largely reflected the traditional pattern: the proposed plan for 1960-1965 called for an overall expansion of the capacities of sanatoria, rest homes, and pansionats, with more rest homes designated for youth, mothers and children, and pregnant women. This year, however, special rest homes for families also appeared on the list.⁵⁸ Over the next two decades, improvements in facilities and access for families would make slow and often grudging, but measurable progress.

"We need to take in children... life compels us to respond to the desires of the people," admitted a kurort official in 1965, but in the same breath he insisted that children were better off in separate facilities.⁵⁹ New types of vacation destinations such as the tourist camps could be more adaptable to family vacations. By the mid-1960s, they were replacing their stationary tents with small "Finnish cabins," each of whose four rooms could accommodate a family.⁶⁰ In addition to the standard volleyball and boating stations, these camps added children's

⁵⁶ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 866 (Otchety rukovoditelei grupp o poezdke v Narodnuiu respubliku Bolgariiu. Ch. 1. 1965), l. 18; GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 592 (Otchety o rabote rukovoditelei grupp o poezdke v Germanskuiu Demokraticeskuiu Respubliku. 1963), l. 22.

⁵⁷ "Po turistskim tropam Kryma," 1958 color film, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv kino-fotodokumentov (RGAKFD), N 15473.

⁵⁸ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 4 (Dokladnaia zapiska v TsK KPSS i perepiska s soveta ministrov SSSR i RSFSR i dr organizatsii o sostoianii, perspektivakh razvitiia kurortov, July-December 1960), l. 14 (20 July 1960 letter to Council of Ministers from Trade Union chief Grishin).

⁵⁹ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 698, l. 108.

⁶⁰ GARF, f. 9559, op. 1, d. 977 (Stenogramma seminara nachal'nikov ozdorovitel'nykh lagerei, 25 apreliia 1967), ll. 26-28.

playgrounds to their lists of amenities.⁶¹

Tourism organizations also tried to respond to the changing demands of Soviet families. Still acknowledging the purists' ("the older generation's") idea of tourism as "travel with a rucksack on your shoulders," the head of the trade union tourism administration insisted in 1965 that softer forms of tourism would be more attractive to families and contemporary adults alike: trips on buses, river boats, trains, and by car. Tourist bases needed to replace their tent camps with multistory hotels.⁶²

In 1968 – eight years after trade union chairman Viktor Grishin had called for the expansion of family vacation facilities, the Central Trade Union Council ordered tourist bases to accommodate parents and school-age children. Yet the tourist administration director said nothing about family tourism in his 1969 address that seemed to have been a carbon copy of his earlier annual reports. The director of one of six such bases in 1969 criticized the tourism leadership for failing to respond. "In my opinion, this new form of organization of rest – family tourism, deserves much attention and all possible approval. Unfortunately, the report said nothing about it. The desire of parents to rest together with their children is natural."⁶³

The health resort administration pledged in 1972 to expand its places for families and parents and children to 54,000 in the next plan period, up from 28,000 at the end of the 1960s. At a time when the system offered 475,000 places in sanatoria and 320,000 in rest homes, this promised expansion scarcely met the needs of 44 percent of the population who wished to vacation together with their families. And even in 1972, the kurort administration head warned

⁶¹ GARF, f. 9559, op. 1, d. 1193 (Spravki, otchety o rabote sportivno-ozdorovitel'nykh lagerei DSO profsoizoiv za 1969), ll. 76, 88,105.

⁶² GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 750, ll. 21-22, 38.

⁶³ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1272 (Stenogramma III Plenuma Tsentral'nogo soveta po turizmu i ekskursiiami.16 iulia 1969 goda), ll. 9-52 (keynote report by chairman A. Kh. Abukov), 151 (remarks by S. I. Pisarev, director of Evpatoriia tourist base for parents and children).

that any further expansion of family vacations would require “huge preparatory work.”⁶⁴

Well into the 1970s, despite official instructions from above, tourist administrators would still lament that “it was time” to resolve the question of family tourism, to build new bases that would adapt to the needs of children.⁶⁵ The number of bases and itineraries taking children had expanded by 1974, with 300,000 parents and children traveling on all-union routes. But in the same year, a total of 13,218,000 travelers used tourist base facilities.⁶⁶ Moreover, the pricing structure for tourist putevki continued to discriminate against the family vacation. The head of the Ukraine tourism council described the case in Yalta in which an “autotourist” arrived at the base, registered his documents, and received his key. Only then did he open his trunk, and “out popped two children, hidden there during the registration process.”⁶⁷

A small number of facilities demonstrated how Soviet tourist bases could be restructured to meet the demand for affordable family vacations. The tourist base in Evpatoriia, on the less fashionable western side of the Crimean peninsula, provided a model for a new “Club Red.” Located near a sandy beach, the base offered greenery, sports, and games for parents and children between the ages of seven and sixteen. Vacationers lived in tents, but the stolovaia provided four meals a day for children, three for their parents. During the days, families could sign up for bus tours to “places of military, revolutionary, and labor glory” (new themes for 1960s tourist itineraries) such as Sevastopol’; or they could take trips along the southern shore of Crimea (the most desirable vacation destination) and learn, with the help of a skilled guide, about

⁶⁴ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 1669 (Stenogramma vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia aktiva rabotnikov sanatorno-kurortnykh uchrezhdenii profsoiuzov ob itogakh raboty XV s’ezda profsoiuzov i zadachakh sanatorno-kurortnykh uchrezhdenii. g. Moskva. 24 apreliia 1972 g.), l. 30. Total sanatoria figures from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1973 godu* (Moscow, 1974), p. 642.

⁶⁵ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1910, l. 316.

⁶⁶ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 2077 (Stenogramma zasedaniia Tsentral’nogo soveta po turizmu i ekskursiiami. 16 April 1975), l. 20; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1974 godu* (Moscow, 1975), p. 617.

⁶⁷ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 2077, l. 57.

the flora, fauna, and military history of the region.

During the twenty-day stay, adults and children could sign up for overnight hikes of ten to fifteen kilometers and learn tourist skills. Evening activities included literary quizzes, structured debates, sports contests, and films.⁶⁸

Sochi began to build pansionats for parents and children in 1968, constructing new high-rise sleeping buildings and offering kid-friendly activities such as swimming and crafts lessons, musical activities, hiking, games, and sports. Families dined together three times a day, but with special dishes offered for the children. Specially trained medical personnel supervised the waterfront. Still in the planning stages in 1976 were a swimming pool, children's dining room, library, and children's amusement park.⁶⁹ Significantly, these concessions to family vacations came only in the form of stationary rest, harkening back to the normative spa vacation of the 1930s. Although Soviet consumers had expressed strong preference for real ("Oneginesque") travel, opportunities for organized family tourism, a vacation on the road, remained scarce.

The ability of the Soviet vacation system to accommodate the demand for any kind of family vacations remained extremely limited even into the 1970s. As indicated, many parents tried to circumvent these constraints by showing up at a resort or tour base, with or without an adequate number of putevki, with or without children hidden in the trunk, and hope for the best. "Whether we like it or not, laboring people are coming here with their families."⁷⁰ Those without putevki came as "unorganized" or "wild" vacationers, especially to the seaside resort

⁶⁸ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1272, ll. 150-155; *Turistskie marshruty na 1967*, 82. The purposefulness of this family-centered vacation contrasts markedly with the dominant ethos of the contemporaneous Club Méditerranée, founded in 1950 to feature "self-indulgent physical pleasure and a break from habitual social relations" (Ellen Furlough, "Packaging Pleasures: Club Méditerranée and French Consumer Culture, 1950-1968," *French Historical Studies*, 18, no. 1 [Spring 1993], 66.)

⁶⁹ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 2303 (Protokol N 1 stenogramma i postanovleniia zasedaniia Tsentral'nogo soveta po upravleniiu kurortami profsoiuzov ot 20 ianvaria 1976 g.), 106-109.

areas of Crimea and the Black Sea coast. They arrived by train or by car with their families, living in their own tents, or renting rooms from private individuals. In 1960, 1,400,000 people spent their vacations in Crimea, but only 560,000 traveled with a putevka.⁷¹ The Krasnodar region reported that it served 170,000 vacationers on putevka in 1961, but an additional 1.5 million people came as unorganized vacationers, outside the plan.⁷² Officials recognized their obligation to these unorganized vacationers, who needed somehow to be housed and fed. “The right to a healthy vacation belongs even to those Soviet people who do not manage to receive a putevka – and they are the majority.”⁷³

Christian Noack has examined the economies and practices of wild tourists in the 1970s, focusing on the Black Sea resort town of Anapa.⁷⁴ Despite the attempts of trade union officials to regulate the rental market there, most vacationers negotiated for lodging privately, using private networks of information to contact reliable or available landlords. Access to food was more difficult to arrange privately. Wild vacationers could shop locally, paying either high prices for provisions at local markets, or waiting in long lines at state food stores. Long waits for tables in stolovaiias, restaurants, and cafes also characterized the wild tourist experience, especially in the peak summer months of July and August.⁷⁵ Small wonder that opinion polls indicated a strong preference for organized rest, with putevki that would guarantee meals and lodging, allowing all family members to fully enjoy their time away from home.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 326 (Stenogramma soveshchaniia aktiva rabotnikov kurortov, sanatoriev i domov otdykha profsoiuzov 30-31 ianvaria 1962 goda), l. 164-65.

⁷¹ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 227 (Stenogramma vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia aktiva rabotnikov sanatorno-kurortnykh uchrezhdenii i domov otdykha 27-28 fevralia 1961 g.), l. 23, 91-92.

⁷² GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 326, l. 165.

⁷³ GARF, f. 9493, op. 8, d. 2303, l. 53 (opening report by chairman I. I. Kozlov)

⁷⁴ Christian Noack, “Coping with the Tourist: Planned and ‘Wild’ Mass Tourism on the Soviet Black Sea Coast,” in Gorsuch and Koenker, eds., *Turizm*, 281-304.

⁷⁵ Grushin, *Chetyre zhizni*, 144, 148, 154; Azar, *Otdykh trudiashchikhsia*, 51-52.

⁷⁶ Azar, *Otdykh trudiashchikhsia*, 15,

Conclusion

The head of the Soviet tourism council, A. Kh. Abukov, had to remind his associates in 1969 that, “We are supposed to serve the tourist, the tourist is not there to serve us. The words ‘no’ and ‘be patient’ must disappear from our lexicon.”⁷⁷ As the Soviet Union evolved from a society predicated on production to one in which the success of socialism was measured by levels of consumption, the role of vacations had changed as well. Vacations had become popularized in the 1930s as a medical respite designed to renew a laborer’s work capacity and as a reward for good work. The 1936 constitution turned that reward into a “right.” In the postwar period, the right to rest was promoted as the entitlement of every socialist citizen, but the utilitarian tradition continued to shape the way public health and tourism officials thought about organizing vacations for Soviet people.

The rise in popularity of the family vacation symbolizes, I think, the triumph of the idea of popular consumption over purposeful production. Once the vacation was seen as leisure, rather than a necessary element in the reproduction of one’s work capability, the state now existed for the consumer, rather than the producer existing for the state. The resistance of state officials to acknowledge the strength of a Soviet consumerism is both stunning and symptomatic of long-held prejudices about the role of leisure in a socialist society. In official ideology, leisure should be public, collective, regulated, educational, and morally uplifting. This made concessions to any kind of private life, including all kinds of sexuality, even conjugal, difficult for these officials to contemplate.

⁷⁷ GARF, f. 9520, op. 1, d. 1272, l. 33.

The inability of Soviet officials to respond to the obvious demands for family vacations also illustrates some well-known deficiencies of the command economy. The economy of shortages made innovation difficult: there were no spare resources to experiment with new vacation forms except the most very basic, such as the tourist camps. Fear of failure dictated that officials stayed close to familiar templates: the package tour, expanding the existing forms of leisure travel rather than diversifying the range (and the cost) of what was available.

Abukov could write in 1983 that the eleventh five-year plan would develop family tourism, “a new, progressive form of the organization of the rest of laboring people, which has huge social and educational significance.”⁷⁸ In fact, his annual reports repeated almost verbatim the achievements and problems he had announced in years before; only the examples selected for shame changed each year. Capital construction received much more attention than improving services. The preference for monumental architecture and the idea that Soviet resorts should be showplaces of socialism required that new construction be grandiose, expensive, and inefficient.⁷⁹ Central control was designed to produce economies of scale, but the ability to respond to local conditions became a casualty of this process. Centralized plans for tour base and kurort construction received scathing criticism for their lack of variety and imagination.⁸⁰ Central control over resources led to irresponsible local implementation: the vacation industry became one more locus of the “dolgostroiki” of the late Soviet period. Admissions of construction delays appear throughout official discussions in the late 1960s and 1970s, and one

⁷⁸ A. Kh. Abukov, *Turizm na novom etape: sotsial'nye aspekty razvitiia turizma v SSSR* (Moscow, 1983), 86.

⁷⁹ Soviet planners insisted on allowing for 350-500 square meters per vacationer, compared to 150 at Bulgaria's best resort complex, and 85 in Romanian resorts. V. I. Azar, *Ekonomika i organizatsiia turizma (Metodologicheskie voprosy)* (Moscow, 1972), 162. On kurort architecture, see L. A. Kuznetsova, “Provintsial'naia arkhitektura ‘Bol'shogo stilia’ kak sotsiokul'turnoe iavlenie na primere goroda Permi i kurorta Ust'-Kachka,” diploma thesis, Perm State University, 2006, chap. 3.

⁸⁰ GARF f. 9493, op. 8, d. 227, l. 129.

needs only to fly into today's Sochi-Adler airport to see a legacy of Soviet tourism planning: the half-built "new" terminal, abandoned since the mid-1980s.

The Soviet vacation had begun in the spirit of mobilization, a trumpeted benefit of state socialism that reaped even greater benefits for the state as a whole: the recuperated worker ready to resume production. The producer state gave way to a consumer society in the 1950s and 1960s, and the Soviet consumer gained significant economic power and some freedom of choice in the prosperous years of the postwar. In the realm of vacations, including family vacations, these choices remained constrained by the pattern established in the hard years of industrial mobilization: the normative, capital-intensive, medicalized, stationary, and solo Soviet holiday.