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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although it may seem obvious to Western observers that there has been a narrowly defined and almost neo-Stalinist consensus on labor policy in the Soviet Union since 1979, quite the opposite is true. Based on an extensive analysis of Soviet publications, this report contends that a fundamental philosophical and policy division between conservative and reformist alternatives has emerged over labor issues in the Soviet Union. The report analyzes the nature of the conflict in terms of the specific rationales and options which have currently come to be identified with a distinctive reformist alternative. The reformist alternative advocates a relaxation of administrative regulation and controls over workers, greater choice in their terms of employment, and even some worker participation in industrial decision-making within enterprises.

Illusory Consensus over Soviet Labor Policy

Over the past decade, the highly visible priority assigned to labor issues by all Soviet officials seemed to reflect a narrow consensus in their approach to domestic labor problems. By consensus, all Soviet officials and policy specialists concede the irrefutable signs of problems evident in the decade-long decline in the rate of growth for Soviet labor productivity and the sense of malaise characteristic of more Soviet workers, for whom absenteeism, job-flitting, alcoholism, and theft have become almost the rule rather than the exception. A series of related policy measures adopted in various stages over the past few years to correct these labor problems have struck some Western observers as almost a throwback to the Stalin era. Concurrent with the campaigns mounted in 1982-1984 by Andropov against official corruption and hard-core offenders in the workforce and by Gorbachev in 1985 against alcoholism, the political tenor of these cumulative measures appeared to return Soviet labor policy to a pre-1953 punitive and Draconian approach to workers, restricting their freedom to change jobs on their own initiative and toughening disciplinary sanctions against workers cited for alleged labor violations.

Any presumed consensus on labor issues among Soviet officials, or monolithic neo-Stalinist tenor underlying recent measures, are more apparent than real. It is the major finding of the research supported by this grant that an extensive reading and analysis of Soviet publications of the past decade reveal a significant difference of opinion in the Soviet policy establishment. Soviet officials and policy specialists on labor issues agree on the existence of problems, but on little else. A subtle, but still very clear, philosophical and policy division among officials and specialists can be reconstructed on the basis of these Soviet publications. Nor is the division particular to labor as an isolated issue in Soviet politics. The division originates in
more basic policy disputes between conservative and reformist policy orientations which have marked the contradictory course of Soviet economic policy and failed reform efforts for at least the past three decades. This report outlines the parameters of the policy division in terms of differing approaches to labor issues, and in terms of some of the academic-governmental institutes and political leaders currently most visibly identifiable in advocating the reformist alternative.

The conflict between a conservative and reformist policy orientation within the leadership and policy community mirrors true differences in their overall vision of Soviet reality and the underlying impulse to change. While both tendencies recognize problems, remain committed to preserving the Soviet system in its essential features, and advocate change consistent with their basic commitment to that system, the conservative orientation rejects changes departing very much in spirit or kind from those of the past. The past for the conservative orientation embodies those orthodox procedures, institutional forms, and premises of policy which have guided Soviet economic development from its pre-1953 origins. The keystone of the conservative vision is a Soviet system which may be flawed, but is basically correct in its authoritarian features and neo-Stalinist stereotypes about social reality and human behavior underpinning past policies. Its impulse to change stems from an instinctive and unquestioned preference for reforms and experiments promising greater efficiency in maintaining the system's control, regimentation of society, and predictability of results based on the past.

In contrast, the reformist tendency is more truly a break from the past. Its advocates are more willing to rethink and even reject dogmatic tenets and procedures of the Soviet past, still revered by the conservative orientation, in attempting to fathom and resolve new and more complex realities of the Soviet present. The reformist orientation argues that precedent is as much a hindrance as a reliable guide under these changed circumstances. When they do invoke precedent as a direction for Soviet policy, it is more likely to take the forms of socio-economic policies in the Soviet Union pre-Stalin, the less rigidly centralized and controlled economy of the NEP in the 1920s, economic experiments relaxing central controls and allowing great play of market mechanisms in East European states since the late 1960s, or even current workplace reforms in the ideologically disparaged, but most comparable to the Soviet economy, highly industrialized giants of Western capitalism. The reformist perspective is more likely to recognize a certain universality in socio-economic problems and the nature of human behavior and motivation across both capitalist and socialist systems. As an impulse to change, the reformist tendency seems more concerned about improving the long-term effectiveness of Soviet production than viscerally obsessed with control and regimentation for their own sake, or to make the current unproductive system more internally efficient. The reformist
alternative also seems more tolerant of ambiguity in advocating new approaches and procedures whose innovativeness, at least from the opposing neo-Stalinist conservative vision of Soviet reality, cannot guarantee safe, predictable results.

The Reformist Challenge: Advocates and Issues

Even within the highly politicized context of Soviet labor policy during the past few years, as the officially set line has seemingly reverted to conservative biases and neo-Stalinist stereotypes about human motivation, a reformist challenge has emerged, has redefined the nature of labor problems, and has even reinterpreted the policy implications of ostensibly punitive measures more in line with its own outlooks and priorities. The reformist perspective on labor problems has been most consistently reflected in articles appearing in the monthly, bimonthly and quarterly publications of the State Committee for Labor and Social Questions, the Institute of Economics and the Organization of Industrial Production in Novosibirsk, and the Institutes of Sociology, State and Law, and the International Workers' Movement in the USSR Academy of Sciences. Yet, even if less consistently sounded, their rationales and arguments have also appeared in articles in such more traditionally conservative forums as the State Planning Committee, the Institute of Economics, and the newspapers Pravda and Izvestiya.

The reformist perspective on labor problems challenges the conservative view from the 1930s of a homogenous Soviet workforce motivated solely by regimentation, discipline, indoctrination and intimidation. Its common theme is the need to institute flexibility, adaptation and differentiation in organizing, motivating and treating highly educated and distinctly different subgroup within the Soviet workforce of the 1980s as the only prospective solution to current labor problems. Its vision of Soviet reality encompasses complex, systemic roots of problems for which declining productivity and worker motivation must be seen as the symptoms rather than as the causes. For the reformist orientation, the basic problem is not deviant human behavior and insufficient worker commitment, but the perpetuation of an outdated and over-regulated system which irrationally wastes potential human talents and needlessly constrains the full realization of the "human factor" in Soviet production. Its codewords to distinguish its orientation embrace such terms as "labor potentials," "qualitative" aspects of the labor force, "job enrichment," the "complex" origins and "integrated" solution of labor problems, and the "human" or "personality" factor of Soviet production.

One major group among the advocates of a reformist alternative in Soviet labor policy might be termed the differentialists. These are policy advocates whose backgrounds in sociology, demography and ethnography would not specifically relate them to national labor policy concerns per se, but more to their areas of
expertise on women, pensioners, ethnic nationalities and general social policy in the USSR. Yet a subtle change in the past few years has seen them more frequently and visibly speaking out on general labor problems from the particular focus of their group concerns. In doing so, they have redefined labor policy to include the different characteristics and unique needs of their specific groups as objective realities and subgroups in the national labor force. In the new focus on their analyses, Soviet labor policy must undertake measures to adapt the production process and the distribution of jobs to account for the special demands and personal traits of these diverse subgroups. The "labor potentials" of the Soviet workforce denote, for this group, those features inherent in workers because of their gender, age and ethnicity requiring policies designed to optimize the labor contribution of these distinctive subgroups.

Members of this group have contributed a crucial counterargument against the neo-Stalinist conservative line which presumes all Soviet workers to be akin to young Russian males, and hence to be similarly controlled and motivated. As a result, the discussion of labor policy in the USSR has been increasingly linked to other issues, including those concerning the problems and status of women, family-demographic concerns, pensioners and social security-health policies, and ethnic groups and nationalities.

Another group of advocates of the reformist alternative might be termed the industrial human-relations advocates, who place the real locus of most Soviet labor problems at the micro-level of labor-management relations within the enterprise. For them, working conditions which affect productivity and morale include intangible socio-psychological factors. The core problem is the retention of a rigidly hierarchical and autocratic style of leadership and decision-making within many Soviet enterprises. The problem has become more acute in past years with the emergence of what they have termed a "new type" of worker prevalent among the current younger generation in the USSR. Not only are younger Soviet workers generally more highly educated and skilled than any past Soviet generations, but, because of their backgrounds, more independent toward authority. Resentful of traditionally overbearing Soviet managers and distraught by their inability to participate meaningfully and affect their own work environment, they are less motivated than past Soviet generations by intimidation or wages. They are motivated more by their perceived opportunities for advancement, sense of self-fulfillment in the creative aspects of their jobs, and such intangibles as the degree of trust, openness and respect shown them by superiors at work.

As a consequence, old measures and conservative policy assumptions will not prove effective. The only long-term solution to many interrelated labor problems, according to these analysts, are those which are sociopsychological in nature. Reforms must be instituted within Soviet enterprises to satisfy the aspirations of
workers, reduce frictions in leader-subordinate relations due to overbearing managers, and even, to some extent, to democratize the workplace. Democratization for this group means primarily "job enrichment." Workers should be provided creative forms of work, delegated more responsibility for the completion of whole assignments, invested with greater independence and personal responsibility in determining their own future earnings, and awarded promotions into higher-paying and more technically demanding positions by actual demonstrated growth in their skills.

Democratization also means expanded opportunities for direct and representative participation by workers in enterprise decision-making and even some indirect voice in the selection and replacement of such immediate administrative superiors as foremen and shop chiefs. Soviet "human relations" advocates have supported changes in this regard parallel to workplace participatory reforms evolving in Western firms. They have urged a related revamping of the traditionally narrow technical training of Soviet managers to include more courses on modern Western management techniques, organizational theory and personnel science. And while Mikhail Gorbachev has taken no unqualified stand on the issue of democratic workplace reforms, it is perhaps significant that he has in the past been an open advocate of somewhat parallel reforms in Soviet agriculture, and that in his first major speech after acceding to General Secretary on April 12, 1985, before a gathering of agricultural and industrial executives, he strongly criticized the failures of management to involve workers more actively in production decisions.

Another group supporting the reformist alternative since the death of Brezhnev in 1982 has linked the discussion of labor problems to technological changes in both capitalist and socialist systems. They may be termed the technocrats. In an increasing number of articles, they have advocated structural reforms to reduce hierarchical controls in the workplace, and a more fluid national labor market, as necessities dictated by the new technological era evolving in both capitalism and socialism. For the technocrats, the real issues of debate over Soviet labor problems should be modern high technology, a highly mobile workforce and an image of a future computerized Soviet enterprise, and not, as implied in the conservative orientation, traditional conveyor lines, a regimented workforce bound to the same jobs and factories their entire lives, and an image of semi-skilled workers from the 1930s inspired by Stakhanovite and socialist competition campaigns. For them, the attempt to resurrect the kind of work discipline associated with Soviet industry in the 1930s is flawed in its very conception, in view of the unprecedented new economic realities of the USSR in the 1980s. It fails to appreciate how outmoded and even counterproductive to economic effectiveness that kind of discipline has become for the third industrial revolution into which the Soviet economy is evolving.
As do some Western structural economists, these Soviet analysts contend that the new era of high technology and automated production systems cannot operate efficiently and reach full economic potential without basic reforms to dilute authority relations in the workplace. No longer can tasks be standardized and workers treated as cogs, as might have been true with traditional assembly-line manufacturing and Taylorism. The new technology operates by probabilistic and innovative cycles in which tasks cannot be routinized beforehand. It requires the continuous active independent initiative and flexible adaptation of management and workers alike, in teams, to changing and unforeseen circumstances in the entire production flow. Whereas conservative views in the past decade have assumed that the problem is too high a rate of job mobility and turnover, for these analysts, the real issue has become almost too much stability and job security. Like workers in the West, Soviet workers must become motivated to learn new vocations and alter their careers with the unprecedented scale of technological innovations forthcoming in each decade in this new third industrial era. A life-long pattern of continuous reeducation and occupational mobility has become even more functionally necessary for a workforce in this new era.

The Future: Obstacles to Reform

With the election of Gorbachev as General Secretary, a man openly committed to economic reform, concerned with the USSR's evident technological lag in civilian and military production behind the West, and sympathetic to their rationales and their vision of a high-tech Soviet future, advocates of a reformist alternative may already form the new cosensual paradigm to define labor issues and solutions on the national political level. If they represent the new official policy consensus, however, they must still contend with an array of highly influential groups in Soviet politics whose deep-seated opposition to the reformist alternative can be predicted out of both their immediate self-interest and ideological hostility.

First, the proposals to democratize labor-management relations within Soviet enterprises have now become so indelibly linked with general reforms to decentralize the economy and reduce the authority of economic ministries and the Party bureaucracy that the natural opposition of ministers and Party bureaucrats to general reforms would carry over into their logical resistance to any real workplace reforms. Ministers and Party bureaucrats, to stem the tide of reform, would have good reasons to oppose workplace reforms as the first steps intended to erode their influence. Added to their self-interested opposition would be a visceral ideological resistance by hardline Party-state officials. For them, the principle of hierarchical control of enterprises under managers has almost become equated with singleparty rule as an unquestionable tenet of Communist legitimacy in the USSR. Any proposed diminution of management control has become stigma-
tized as "anarcho-syndicalism" and an attack on communist rule, such as with the demands for worker self-management in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and in Poland in 1980-1981. Despite assertions by reform advocates that a new majority of younger enterprise directors would be willing to relax controls and involve workers in management decision-making, surveys and published articles disclose what is probably an even larger hard-core opposition by Soviet directors to having management share decision-making power with rank-and-file workers.

Second, reformist advocates must also convince the top Soviet leadership that the proposed changes would not directly undermine the stability of the Soviet system or the essential authoritarian features of control through the Party. The greater problem for advocates may be exactly this area of uncertainty surrounding their proposals. One must consider that they are proposing nothing less than an independence and participatory role for workers totally unparalleled in Soviet history and totally incongruent with the pattern of hierarchical authority endemic to all levels of Soviet society. The adage that being half-free is like being half-pregnant may seem fitting for some in the leadership who would otherwise see merit in the reforms, but might wonder how labor-management relations in Soviet enterprises could be democratized without creating an irreversible logic to democratize the entire political system. However pragmatic the rationalizations favoring workplace reforms, their unprecedented nature and unpredictability of results based on any past experience in the USSR work against them politically. If reform advocates prevail, they must overcome not only vested interests, but also widespread hierarchical sentiment throughout the Soviet bureaucracy. That sentiment rules instinctively against innovation in favor of the familiar and against long-term effectiveness in favor of short-term efficiency and control.
The Reformist Alternative In Soviet Labor Policy, 1979-1985

No other policy area in Soviet domestic politics in the past few years has generated as much concern or reflected as much leadership vacillation in pursuing simultaneously contradictory policy lines as has the range of actions intended to resolve problems associated with the Soviet workforce. Even given the degree to which labor issues have become critical for the viability of the Soviet economy, no other policy area better illustrates, by the extent of seeming tolerance for divergent views and options, long-term evolutionary changes in Soviet politics. Such changes as the fading of dogma in defining an acceptable range of alternatives, the participatory role of many interests and institutions outside a narrow Party-state stratum, and the open airing in Soviet publications of differences over major issues have become almost normal aspects of policy making in the still authoritarian system.

In addition, no other policy area better substantiates the decline of reflexive paranoia as the principal response of Soviet elites when directly threatened. Despite challenges posed during the past decade by dissident trade unionists in the USSR in 1977-1978, unconfirmed reports of work stoppages and strikes in Soviet locales since 1979, and the Polish Solidarity movement of 1980-1981, reformist and unorthodox viewpoints on labor problems have continued to hold their ground within the Soviet policy establishment through 1985. Although officials have posed labor problems in highly emotional and simplistic terms at times during the past few years in the
Soviet Union, reformist viewpoints advocating changes in the system have continued to appear in Soviet publications through 1985. In their premises, these changes echo some of the rethinking about labor-management relations and structural reforms in the workplace found in Western capitalist countries during the past decade, and have even resembled some of the measures to democratize the workplace associated with Solidarity and dissident Soviet trade unionists.

**Illusory Consensus over Soviet Labor Policy**

At first appearances, Soviet labor policy may seem the least appropriate area in which to analyze differences of opinion or open conflict over major issues in the past few years. During these years, the highly visible priority assigned to labor problems by all Soviet officials from Brezhnev through Chernenko seemed to reflect a quite narrow and harsh consensus in their thinking. By consensus, all Soviet officials and policy specialists concede major problems in current procedures by which Soviet wage-earners are educated, trained, paid, promoted, organized, treated at work, and shifted between jobs. All perceive, to varying degrees, the irrefutable direct consequences of these problems in the form of a decade-long precipitous decline in the growth rate of labor productivity throughout the economy, along with other disturbing signs of malaise among Soviet wage-earners, for whom absenteeism, turnover, indolence, alcoholism and theft have become increasingly prevalent.¹

A series of related policy measures adopted in the past few years to solve these problems, with their watchword of reinstil-
ling "discipline" at work, have struck some Western observers as an ominous throwback to the political tenor of the Stalin era.\(^2\) The common denominator underlying all these policy measures seemed to be to blame all Soviet labor problems, from declining productivity to work violations, on the defective character and motivations of wage-earners, and to seek an ultimate solution merely in limiting their options in the labor market and their independence in the workplace. The one-dimensional measures would restrict the freedom of wage-earners to change jobs at their initiative, punish indolent wage-earners by forcibly assigning them to jobs or by increasing wage differentials favoring the more disciplined and skilled workers, and generally toughen both the scope and actual enforcement of sanctions against those cited for alleged labor violations.\(^3\)

Although a clearly repressive shift in policy toward workers characterizes some of the most publicized recent policy measures, any presumed consensus on labor issues among Soviet officials or monolithic neo-Stalinist spirit in the Soviet policy establishment is more superficial than real. More careful analysis of the policy measures themselves, the contradictory justifications offered for them, and the general disagreements over labor problems in Soviet publications since 1979 reveals a wide gamut of opinion. There is a subtle, but very clear, philosophical and policy division among party-state officials and policy specialists, who may agree on the existence of problems in the Soviet workforce, but on very little else. The policy divergency mirrors fundamental disagreements in understanding human behavior and motivation, in comprehending the
causes of labor problems, in relating labor as a policy issue to other problem areas and social priorities, and in advancing changes logically derived from a perceived link of labor with these other problem areas and priorities. Nor is the division peculiar to labor as an isolated issue in Soviet politics. The division originates in more basic disputes between conservative and reformist policy orientations which have marked the contradictory course of Soviet economic policy in general and failed reform efforts in particular for at least the past three decades.

As such Western Sovietologists as Stephen Cohen and Timothy Colton have contended in recent studies of Soviet policymaking and current Soviet policy problems, the conflict between a conservative and reformist policy orientation within the top Soviet leadership and policy establishment mirrors deeper differences in their overall vision of Soviet reality and in their underlying impulse to change. While both orientations recognize the existence of problems, remain committed to preserving the Soviet system in its essential features, and advocate change consistent with their inherent support of the system per se, the conservative orientation rejects changes which depart very much from those of the past. The past for the conservative orientation embodies those orthodox procedures, institutional forms, and premises of policy which have guided Soviet economic development from its pre-1953 origins. The keystone of the conservative vision is a Soviet system which may be flawed, but is basically correct in its authoritarian features and neo-Stalinist stereotypes about social reality and human behavior.
underpinning past policies. The conservative vision presumes that individuals cannot be trusted independently to pursue self interests which would ultimately contribute to the greater economic collective good, but that they must be closely monitored to undertake actions consistent with long-term policy goals prescribed in detail. The conservative impulse to change stems from an instinctive and unquestioned preference for reforms and experiments promising greater efficiency in achieving those goals while maintaining the system's control, detailed regimentation of society, and predictability of results based on the past.

In contrast, the reformist orientation is more truly progressive as a break from the past. Its advocates are more willing to rethink and even to reject dogmatic tenets and procedures of the Soviet past in attempting to fathom and resolve new and more complex realities of the Soviet present. Representatives of the reformist alternative view precedent to be as much a hindrance as a reliable guide under these changed circumstances. When they do invoke precedent as a guide for Soviet policy, they are more likely to refer to socio-economic policies in the USSR before Stalin's rule, and to the less rigidly centralized economy of the NEP during the 1920s, or to economic experiments relaxing central controls and encouraging greater play of market mechanisms in East European states since the late 1960s, or even to current reforms in the workplace in Western capitalism.

The reformist vision is likely to incorporate a certain universality in socio-economic problems and the nature of human motivation
across both capitalist and socialist systems. Being less fearful of alien influences from the West than the doctrinaire conservatives, reformists will rely on Lenin's writings of the 1920s, when he openly praised certain positive features of capitalist efficiency, to defend selective borrowing from the West in the 1980s. As an impulse to change, the reformist orientation seems more concerned about improving the long-term effectiveness of Soviet production than with either regimentation and control or the minimum goal of making the current unproductive economic system more efficient. The reformist alternative seems to allow greater play for self interests and to be more tolerant of ambiguity in advocating new approaches and procedures whose innovations cannot guarantee safe and predictable results.

In Cohen's view, the policy division between conservatives and reformists in the 1980s originates in relatively consistent differences of opinion characteristic of Soviet politics since the fundamental conflicts over economic policy in the 1920s before the 1st Five Year Plan. Colton considers the policy division in the 1980s a distinct by-product of the oligarchical Brezhnev regime, conditioned by political temperament to pursue internally contradictory reformist and conservative lines to placate bureaucratic interests and maintain central leadership stability. Cohen and Colton agree that reforms in and of themselves are neither exclusively reformist or conservative in their implications. They may potentially embody both impulses. It is possible to decipher which impulse has prevailed only by studying the highly nuanced differences of meaning and significance which contending policy orientations
attribute to them during the actual formulation and implementation of decisions. The dominant orientation in shaping decisions or actions may fluctuate at any one time, depending on shifts within the top leadership and the machinations of internal bureaucratic conflict.

Thus, decisions or actions may assume quite a different policy significance as either conservative or reformist in the course of their enactment. Western observers often fail to take discussions in Soviet publications seriously, or alternatively, often assume a narrow band of policy views and intentions for all Soviet officials and policy specialists and thus have tended to overlook clear evidence of differing opinions consistently conveyed in published Soviet sources. Policy conflict is not so much evident in decisions passed or administrative actions initiated as in the contest of attributed implications prior to their introduction and by the spirit in when they are ultimately implemented.

A reformist challenge has emerged and redefined the nature of labor problems within the highly politicized context of Soviet labor policy during the past few years. Reformists have gone so far as to reinterpret the policy implications of ostensibly conservative reforms more in line with their own outlook and priorities. The reformist perspective on labor problems has most consistently appeared in the monthly, bimonthly and quarterly specialized publications of the State Committee for Labor and Social Questions (Goskomtrud), the Institute of Economics and the Organization of Industrial Production (EKO) in Novosibirsk, and the Institutes of State and Law (IGPAN), Sociology, and the International Workers' Movement in the
USSR Academy of Sciences. Reformists have also published their arguments in such forums as the State Planning Committee (Gosplan), the Institute of Economics, and in Pravda and Izvestiya, which are presumedly more traditional and conservative. In turn, authors of reformist articles tend to be affiliated with the same complex of institutes and departments in Party, trade union, and state organs whose general policy line in labor issues would identify them as reformist in the Soviet context. These include the Academy of Social Sciences in the Party Central Committee, the Central Economics-Mathematical Institute and Institute of Social-Economic Problems in the Academy of Sciences, the Scientific Research Department of the All-Union Council of Ministers, and numerous regional affiliates in Leningrad, Kiev, Ufa, and Tallinn.

The reformist perspective of labor problems challenges the conservative image of an undifferentiated Soviet workforce which dates to the 1930s, viewed as motivated solely by regimentation, discipline, indoctrination and intimidation. Its common theme is the need to institute flexibility, adaptation and differentiation in organizing, motivating and treating highly educated and distinctly different subgroups within the Soviet workforce of the 1980s as the only solution to current labor problems. The reformist solution for labor problems calls for restructuring the production process from the traditional assembly-line format and for adapting the work environment to the varying needs and demands of a variegated workforce. It supports not the limiting of options for wage-earners, but the enrichment of their variety and choice in terms of alternative
forms of employment, hours of work, and some real control over their work environment.

Reformists choose as their point of reference production methods which have proven effective in the recent experience of other highly industrialized societies, both capitalist and socialist, as they have begun to modify hierarchical assembly-line procedures. Their code-words include "labor potentials," the "qualitative" aspects of the workforce, "job enrichment," the "complex" nature and solution of labor problems, and the "human" or "personality" factor of Soviet production. Their vision of Soviet reality encompasses complex and systemic roots or problems; declining productivity and motivation are thus seen as the symptoms of, rather than as the causes of those problems. A common refrain in the reformist orientation contends that the real problem has never been deviant human behavior and insufficient worker conformity. Rather, the blame lies with the perpetuation of an outdated and overregulated system that irrationally wastes potential human talents and needlessly constrains the full realization of the "human factor" in Soviet production.

The increasing participation in policy formation by interests and sectors outside the normal mainstream of Party-state and labor officialdom, which has traditionally monopolized legitimacy to speak out on these issues, has encouraged the emergence of a reformist perspective. The scope of policy conflict over labor issues has come to embrace a much wider diversity of policy sectors and subissues. These include law, health, technological modernization, industrial sociology and psychology, trade and commerce, agriculture, women,
pensioners, and national minorities. The participation of specialists and policy advocates representing these diverse perspectives and interests has broadened the range of views and options in the explanation of labor problems. These participants have linked Soviet labor policy to general problems and priorities in their policy domains, making labor policy an overlapping issue of law, health, technology, the quality of life for consumers, agriculture, relations between the sexes and family life, social security, and nationality issues.

The 1979 and 1983 Resolutions

The influence of these divergent perspectives in shifting the focus of debate over labor problems to a more reformist orientation has been most clear during the discussion and implementation of the appropriate policy to follow from Party-state resolutions adopted in December 1979 and August 1983. These resolutions tightened restrictions on the normal freedom of Soviet wage-earners to change jobs at will and toughened administrative sanctions against labor violations. According to these resolutions, wage-earners must now provide their employer two months notice of their intent to quit; the number of voluntary job transfers permitted each year without "valid reasons" has been variously limited; and the time to find new employment for wage-earners quitting on their own has been cut to 21 days. Workers violating any of these provisions are subject to losing their uninterrupted employment service record and seniority benefits for housing allocations, vacations, pensions, and other material
perquisites tied to their length of uninterrupted employment. The extreme expression of these resolutions is that local militia have been encouraged to charge violators as criminals under somewhat revised and more stringent interpretations of the "parasite" statutes. Worker liability for damaging equipment while inebriated at work has increased through provisions docking a larger proportion of their monthly wages at the sole discretion of management. Managers can also demote so-called "malicious" violators of labor regulations to lower-paid jobs in their place of work for up to two months, can deny their right to quit during that time, as well as their right to bonuses and other benefits in new jobs if fired by their previous employer. The Soviet Minister of Justice, Terbilov, did little but reaffirm the obvious impression about these measures both in Soviet society and in the West in August 1983, when he testily refuted as "malicious" attempts overseas to depict them as "violations of human rights" and "emergency" acts reversing legal guarantees for Soviet workers, formally provided in the 1977 Constitution. 6

Despite the fact that these resolutions seem consistent with the general conservative shift in Soviet labor policy since 1979, several Soviet officials in key labor-related state committees and research institutes which share responsibility for their implementation have drawn different implications from their content. They argue that the resolutions do not intentionally represent any abrupt movement back to solely punitive measures, do not justify administrative punishments except as a last resort in correcting disciplinary-turnover problems, and actually endorse implementing a
wide range of "human relations" and "industrial democracy" reforms in the Soviet workplace to motivate Soviet wage-earners. In their view, the resolutions justify measures to reinstill a sense of "positive responsibility" currently lacking among wage-earners through improved work conditions, an easing of economically counterproductive and petty constraints in the workplace, and even some enhanced participatory role for wage-earners. In the words of even Yuri Andropov, the chief architect of the conservative line in 1982-1984, discipline should mean creating conditions for workers to be employed effectively on the job, not just "unremitting administrative control over the presence of everyone at his workplace from starting to quitting time," or "catching late-comers at the factory gate." 7

One group of officials and specialists who have consistently drawn reformist conclusions relative to the 1979 and 1983 resolutions are those whose policy responsibilities overlap issues of health, industrial management, industrial sociology and psychology, and labor law. They see discipline and turnover in their broader context as being issues of the low priority and ineffectiveness of national health-care policies, the inadequate enforcement of industrial health and safety legislation by unions and ministries, and the insensitivity of enterprise directors and ministries alike to the effects of work conditions both in the material and the psychological sense on labor morale and motivation. In numerous articles based on surveys of Soviet wage-earners, they contend that the major cause of lost work-hours nationally is forced absenteeism from job-related illnesses and accidents, and not the deviant attitudes or
lazy behavior of wage-earners. Despite the conventional wisdom in angry letters to the editor in Pravda and Izvestiya from workers outraged by management indulgence of their lazy fellow workers, surveys of both workers and management in the reform-oriented Soviet publications portray a different reality in which poor working conditions have become the most commonly recognized cause of labor violations and high turnover. A persistent theme in these publications is that Soviet labor problems are complex in their origin and resolution. They refute the notion implicit in the political tenor of the 1979 and 1983 resolutions that labor problems are reducible solely to some allegedly defective character of workers, and argue that problems are not comprehensible apart from the objective factors in the workplace and society which affect attitudes and behavior. Disciplinary-morale problems are actually the by-products of problems originating at other levels of Soviet society for which workers have become more the victims of circumstance or indifference than the culprits.

In the redefinition in reform-oriented publications, labor problems in the workplace actually stem from broader health-care problems in Soviet society. They reflect the problems of alcoholism as a national health epidemic, accounting for most labor violations, and can be corrected not by penalizing drunken workers, but only by financing concerted programs of reeducation, prevention and detoxification. They mirror general failures in the quality of health care provided to the Soviet population and the inadequacies of measures to reduce environmental pollution, which together with
alcoholism account for increasing job-induced illnesses, rising absenteeism, labor turnover, lower labor productivity, and the declining number of effective work years among adults. Reformists also argue that disciplinary-turnover problems also result from the overly centralized and inefficient economy and poorly managed enterprises. Totally dependent on the uncertainties of administered supplies, managers pressure their workers into working overtime and on days off to meet quotas during the "storming" at the end of the month or quarter when the supplies finally arrive. In turn, they ignore health and safety standards by exposing their workers to dangerous conditions around overworked machinery to achieve production goals at any cost. Their contribution to labor problems becomes the perpetual outflow of sick workers absent from the job, others leaving in despair, and yet others prematurely retired with lifelong injuries or illnesses contracted at work. The logical conclusion is that the cause of the "lack of rhythm" (as it is euphemistically described) and resulting health problems is the centrally administered economy. Disciplinary-turnover problems even relate to problems of chronically sick infants, who contract their illnesses at underfinanced and unhealthy preschool nurseries prevalent throughout the nation and force their working mothers to be absent for days at a time.

Some jurists and trade union officials, who reinterpret the implications of the 1979 and 1983 resolutions to promote their own agenda, present the prohibitions on workers quitting jobs without "valid reasons" as actually enhancing rather than weakening the legal
rights of workers and the legal force of management compliance with yearly collective agreements signed with local trade union committees. From their perspective, "valid reasons" for leaving enterprises without loss of seniority rights include the failure of management to satisfy health, safety and overtime provisions stipulated in yearly agreements. By failing to satisfy provisions, management invalidates the legal force of the work contract, any legal obligation of workers to their enterprises, and any administrative sanctions applied against them for quitting without a "valid reason." Following this logic, the 1979 and 1983 resolutions oblige management to create and maintain adequate working conditions so that workers do not resort to labor violations and turnover.

Numerous articles in this vein (particularly in the monthly publication of IGPAN, Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo) have argued that the 1979 and 1983 resolutions, by intent, support more vigorous enforcement of health and safety standards by management and unions, prohibit arbitrary and illegal actions by management in firing workers or depriving them of earned bonuses, and legitimate the actions of workers who petition through their unions for the removal of managers who fail to comply with yearly agreements or violate labor rights. Thus, for jurists and union officials, the onus for disciplinary problems has shifted from wage-earners to management.

Sotsialisticheskii trud, the monthly journal of Goskomtrud, has consistently advocated reformist approaches to problems of labor discipline and turnover since 1980. Western Sovietologists have indentified Goskomtrud as a dominant institution in the policy
complex shaping labor policy nationally in the Soviet Union, along with the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and related labor departments in Gosplan, the Komsomol, and the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee.\textsuperscript{16} It is therefore significant to note the types of articles and reformist views which have appeared monthly in \textit{Sotsialisticheskii trud} since 1979 during the apparent conservative swing in official national labor policy.

Through articles in the journal in 1981, jurists from the Russian Republic promoted labor dispute commissions, worker-based councils for preventing labor violations by workers and management alike, and enterprise jurisconsuls to engender more positive work attitudes through greater respect for both legal obligations and rights in labor collectives.\textsuperscript{17} In 1982, the director of the Institute for Social-Economic Problems of the Academy of Sciences voiced concern in the journal about standardized central policies to improve working conditions which fail to consider the extraordinary "complexity" and diversity of factors affecting labor morale. He proposed more discretion and more accountability for local management in improving labor issues. He also pointed to occupational health and safety as major priorities in the attempt to improve the overall climate of working conditions and to resolve the actual cause for most disciplinary problems.\textsuperscript{18} By the end of 1982, one jurist from IGPAN, in an article on measures to intensify labor discipline and lower labor turnover since 1979, criticized the policy shift toward punitive measures.\textsuperscript{19} In his opinion, the measures were unnecessary, ineffective if not counterproductive in punishing the real violators,
and irrelevant to the root causes of most problems, in the absence of adequate positive incentives for workers. This jurist argued that ministries should allocate adequate funds to enterprises without stipulating their specific use, but should then hold the enterprises accountable for using the funds in a manner which improves the overall working climate and resolves the diverse problems of morale and discipline at the local level.

In 1983-1984, members of the legal department of a Moscow industrial association urged a "complex approach" to disciplinary problems, including increased expenditures by enterprises for preschool institutions, clinics for workers and their families located within enterprises, and counseling of workers intending to leave enterprises because of their dissatisfaction with superiors or overall working conditions. They argue that the view that labor discipline can be improved merely by strict enforcement of administrative-criminal sanctions fails to appreciate the more essential issue of creating positive worker attitudes. The deputy general director for personnel in a major Leningrad association reported that measures to induce a more positive socio-psychological climate for workers through improved preschool facilities, health clinics, and flexible work schedules proved successful in resolving most disciplinary problems in his own association. He went on to attribute national disciplinary problems to breakdowns in supplies, to poor sanitary-consumer conditions, and to management's excessive resort to storming and overtime. Finally, the director of the department for working conditions in Goskomtrud criticized ministries and unions
alike for understaffing departments of labor inspectors, assigning incompetent personnel to them, and bureaucratically suffocating the departments by locating them under subdivisions where they receive little priority and lack direct access to central officials.\textsuperscript{22}

**Soviet Technocrats**

At the end of 1984, B. Mil'ner, deputy director of a research institute in the State Committee for Science and Technology (GKNT), and G. Kh. Popov, a prominent "iconoclastic" economics professor at Moscow State University, wrote consecutive articles in the journal refuting the very logic of the 1979 and 1983 resolutions. They pointed out that the resolutions were based on the assumption that it was desirable to regulate the behavior of workers more strictly under the pretext of discipline, while new highly automated technology requires less monitoring of labor and greater independent initiative on the part of workers to be used effectively.\textsuperscript{23}

Both Mil'ner and Popov consider the attempt to resurrect the kind of neo-Stalinist discipline associated with Soviet industry in the 1930s to be flawed in its conception and its historical view of the unprecedented economic realities confronting the USSR in the 1980s. They argue that it fails to appreciate how outmoded and counterproductive to long-term effectiveness that kind of discipline has become for the third industrial revolution into which the Soviet economy should be emerging. No longer can tasks be standardized and workers treated as cogs, as might have been true with traditional assembly-line manufacturing and Taylorism. The new technology operates by
probabilistic and innovative cycles in which tasks cannot be routinized as easily beforehand. It requires constant creativity, independent judgment and initiative, and a flexible adaptation of management and workers alike to changing and unforeseen circumstances. Workers and management must both have an integral sense of how their individual roles relate to the entire production flow. It almost seems that the real issue for Mil'ner and Popov in the Soviet labor market is too much stability and job security. Soviet workers must become motivated to learn new vocations and alter their careers to follow the unprecedented technological innovations forthcoming in each decade of this third industrial revolution. A lifelong pattern of continuous reeducation and occupational mobility has become more necessary for a workforce in this new era.

The perspective of Mil'ner and Popov has not been exceptional in Soviet publications in the past few years. Since Brezhnev's death in late 1982, an increasing number of articles in Soviet specialized publications and mass-circulation newspapers have advocated a re-examination of such issues as labor discipline and turnover in light of the new requirements placed on workers by high technology. Like Western structural economists whose views they have borrowed and now tend to cite quite objectively, these Soviet analysts reason that the new era of high technology of robotics, computers, and fully automated production systems cannot be used efficiently without parallel structural reforms to dilute authority relations in the Soviet workplace. Expanded worker autonomy and initiative, reduced administrative monitoring of workers, and more horizontal group
interaction among workers across areas of an enterprise have become the universal prerequisites in production relations.

For these analysts, who might be termed the technocrats, the real issues of debate over Soviet labor problems appear to be modern high technology, a highly mobile workforce, and an image of a future computerized Soviet factory. This counters the conservative orientation toward traditional conveyor lines, a regimented workforce bound to the same jobs their entire lives, and an image of semi-skilled workers from the 1930s inspired by Stakhanovite campaigns. Thus, V. Vasil'ev, director of management in CKMT, argues that the only feasible alternative for Soviet economic growth lies in emulating experience and instituting fully automated production lines, and that the successful integration of these lines also requires related changes in organizing, paying, and educating Soviet workers along the trends unfolding in current Western industrial practices.25

Soviet Differentialists

The reformist approach in Soviet labor policy philosophically assigns a higher priority by advocates of adapting jobs and working conditions to the Soviet workforce rather than to forcing workers to conform to production needs or to resign themselves to the present. It advocates flexibility in altering the production process and job conditions to the demands of workers, an awareness of general societal conditions outside the workplace, and a sensitivity in tying
production units to the "labor potentials" and physical and emotional state of workers.

**Differentialists** among Soviet policy advocates on labor issues are those whose background in sociology, demography, and ethnography and institutional affiliations would not, in the past, have normally tied them to national labor policy concerns, but more to their areas of expertise in women, pensioners, ethnic nationalities, and general social policy in the Soviet Union. In the past decade, they have become more visible and have more frequently spoken out on general labor issues from the perspective of their group concerns. In doing so, they have redefined general labor policy to consider and include the different characteristics and needs of their specific groups as distinct interests in the national workforce.

The contribution of the differentialists has been to inject a pivotal counterargument to the otherwise conservative policy line presuming all Soviet wage-earners to be something akin to young Russian males, uniformly controlled and motivated. Because of their contribution, the discussion of labor policy in the USSR has been increasingly linked to other issues, becoming an issue of women's problems and family-demographic policies, pensioners and social security policy, and ethnic nationalities and the socio-cultural issues identified with a nationalities policy.

One clear example has been the emerging stratum of policy specialists on women's issues in the Soviet Union over the past two decades. Western scholars who have studied their impact on policy formation in the USSR have noted especially the wide range of views
among these specialists on problems affecting women in the Soviet family and workforce. One can find the entire spectrum of positions on women's issues, from traditional to androgynous, represented to some extent among their publications.26 Even among specialists on women's issues within the same institute, long standing disagreements have been aired over the effects and desirability of such reforms as alternative work schedules, designed specifically for Soviet women.27

What is more striking than the diversity of views among specialists on women's issues is the commonality of their perspective as a group. Whatever their internal disagreements about the best course of action, the specialists have shifted the focus of the debate as a unified whole. All have explicitly contended that women, who make up 51% of the Soviet workforce, experience unique employment problems in training, job opportunities, promotions, and salaries. At a minimum, the general acceptance of their perspective has forced Soviet policymakers to distinguish general labor decisions from those especially designed to aid women as a distinct group in the workforce. At a maximum, by emphasizing the so-called "female" aspect of social-labor problems, they have legitimated the discussion of the interests of different groups as objective realities to which Soviet labor policy must respond.

Women specialists have been especially emphatic in making a case for the impact of societal factors on work performance (e.g. the double burden of homemaking and work), but they have also implicitly
challenged the assumption of a homogenous male workforce amenable to change simply through punitive measures.

Since 1980, policy decisions to reduce physically arduous jobs and manual labor, and generally to improve occupational health and safety for workers have been seen as a legitimate response to the particular interests of women as a workgroup, because many women have traditionally held the jobs which are now being phased out or made safer. The insertion of women as a group interest in labor policy has led to a linkage of issues surrounding the quality of family life, the sharing of household and childrearing responsibilities between the sexes, and the adequacy of daycare facilities for preschool children. Similarly, fairness and equality in employment opportunities have also become issues in national labor policy. Specialists on women's issues have emphasized the national losses in productivity that result from the occupational segregation of women by trades and industrial branches. They have also pointed to underemployment of many highly educated professional women in low-skill jobs as only the most obvious manifestation of a more general problem of wasting labor potentials throughout the Soviet economy.

The same impact on policy formation can be attributed to those whose group concerns involve different age groups as labor potentials in the Soviet economy. Specialists on problems of the handicapped and older citizens have urged more investments and increased sensitivity in developing programs for work rehabilitation on a limited basis, and they have foreseen significant long-term economic benefits and a larger potential labor pool merely through devising a more
humane policy to hire and employ both groups in special work settings. Specialists on pensioners and social security issues have supported reforms in pension benefits designed to raise payments to actual cost-of-living needs of older Soviet citizens, have called for allowances for more Soviet pensioners to keep their full pensions with salaries in part-time jobs, and suggested a greater range of alternative work opportunities in special hours and settings to encourage more pensioners to continue working past their retirement age. One Soviet analyst has gone so far as to advocate the formation of a special organization to represent the interests of pensioners in Soviet labor policy. As a senior research associate of the Economic Research Institute of Gosplan remarked in an article on the work capabilities and attitudes of varying age groups in the Soviet Union:

Raising the effectiveness of labor in the national economy even more will be determined by how fully the objective demands of divergent socio-demographic groups of the population toward the conditions and character of employment are considered... As a whole, changes in the economic and social spheres are leading to the growth of the role of the human factor in the development of the economy. If earlier the interrelations of a person and production was set so that the person should have adapted himself to production, now all efforts must be directed to the adaptation of production to the person...
Age as a group interest has not been limited to pensioners in the Soviet workforce. One of the most intriguing new groups of concern to Soviet analysts have been workers in the 40-49 cohort. Many of them have high-paying but low-skill manual jobs in industrial branches which provide additional pay through bonuses. But these workers are also the ones most likely to be laid off by enterprises which implement policies to reduce manual labor and incorporate new automated machinery and technology. In terms which echo the concern in the United States over unemployed steel workers, Soviet analysts have begun to worry about the willingness or ability of highly productive workers in this age cohort to undergo the occupational change, relocation, and retraining that accompany technical advances in such branches of industry as machine building. Initial surveys of the 40-49 year-old workers displaced by technology from their former jobs have found many losing benefits that accrued over a long period in their previous jobs, others experiencing a decline in their take-home pay in their new jobs after retraining, and yet others suffering health problems contracted from chemicals in their new work settings. As a consequence, many of those in this age cohort who remain in their manual jobs have voiced reluctance to undergo retraining and move into new positions. The Soviet analysts have proposed a slow-down in phasing out manual jobs in those industries, such as machine building, where these workers predominate, until the workers retire or leave enterprises on their own initiative. Thus, economic-labor policies intended to reduce manual labor have been recast in terms of how they are likely to affect the particular
interests and status of this distinct 40-49 age cohort in Soviet industry.

Ethnographers from the Soviet Institute of Ethnography have also directed increased attention to the ethnic-cultural characteristics of distinct groups as labor potentials in the economy. In the ethnographers' view, varying ethnic nationalities in the USSR possess different national work habits and culturally rooted predispositions to certain kinds of occupations and certain ways of organizing them effectively at work. They see a direct linkage between any effective national labor policy and a sensitive nationalities policy. The kinds of industries sited in union republics cannot be determined solely by narrow economic criteria, nor can patterns of organizing labor be prescribed nationally for all workers, irrespective of ethnicity. Both must take into account the different cultural "ethnos" toward work and specific vocations characteristic of certain ethnic groups. The ethnographers have even coined such new terms as "ethno-sociology" and "economic anthropology" to suggest a new policy orientation in labor issues, attuned to the distinctive ethnic cultural patterns of work in the USSR. Another hallmark of the reformist orientation has been their willingness to refer to explicit parallels in a universal behavioral phenomenon by which ethnic groups in other countries, including the United States, have historically identified with certain kinds of occupations and trades.
Other analysts, principally sociologists and psychologists, identify the locus of most Soviet labor problems at the microlevel of leader-subordinate relations within Soviet labor collectives. For them, working conditions include intangible socio-psychological factors. The core problem is the retention of a rigidly hierarchical and autocratic style of leadership and decision-making within many Soviet enterprises. The problem has become more acute in past years with the emergence of what they term a "new type" of worker prevalent among the current younger generation of the Soviet workforce.

On the basis of surveys addressing general problems of labor discipline and productivity, these sociologists and psychologists contend that the current younger generation is uniquely different from all past Soviet generations. Not only are they more highly educated and skilled than any past Soviet generations, but, because of their background, they are also more independent-minded, more effective, more personally demanding, and less automatically deferential toward authority. Resentful of traditionally overbearing Soviet managers and distraught by their inability to participate meaningfully and affect their work environment, they are less motivated by intimidation or higher promised wages than past Soviet generations to work hard and stay with their employer. They are motivated more by their perceived opportunities for advancement in their careers, sense of self-fulfillment in the creative aspects of their jobs, and by such intangibles as the degree of trust, openness and respect shown them by superiors at work. They are more likely to be willing to complain openly about poor working conditions, to
challenge rules or management illegalities, and to vent their ultimate frustration at the arrogant indifference of superiors by quitting. They are the workers who consistently cite poor interrelations at work with superiors and monotonous unfulfilling jobs unrelated to their formal skills and education as the principal reasons for their job dissatisfaction or their decision to leave enterprises.

For sociologists and psychologists, the rebellious attitude of this younger generation is not the source of many labor problems but the potential solution. They view these attitudes of independence, assertiveness, initiative, ambition, and impatience with the status-quo as the very positive "labor potentials" which are needed to resolve most economic and labor problems in the Soviet Union. These highly effective workers are depicted in surveys as the most productive and conscientious employees, while those identified as "satisfied" with their level of participation and poor working conditions are depicted as the least productive and conscientious. The satisfaction of the latter is more indicative of their "underdeveloped personalities. 39 It turns out that the least effective enterprises, those with the greatest losses of worktime, turnover, and violations, are those with the fewest skilled and actively involved workers, and with the lowest level of demonstrated participation in plant decision-making by rank-and-file workers. Sociologists and psychologists identify the problem as being enterprise executives who stifle initiative by their subordinates and almost seem to prefer less productive, but more docile unskilled workers. The docile workers predominate among those drinking on the job,
stealing from their workbenches, and failing to show up for work. For enterprise executives, their compensating virtues are that they do not complain about poor working conditions, they accept monotonous jobs with unsafe and technically outmoded machinery, and do not challenge management prerogatives or authority.

V. A. Yadov, chairman of the Leningrad sociological association and sector head of the Institute of Social-Economic Problems in the Academy of Sciences, exemplifies those policy specialists advocating a change in leader-subordinate relations to become more responsive to the younger generation. Yadov's surveys of Leningrad workers in 1962 and 1976 show clear evidence of the change in attitudes within the current younger generation and the related necessity for democratic reforms in the Soviet workplace:

As a whole, the process of self-regulation signifies that among wage-earners, especially young people, a healthy critical foundation is developing and that they are beginning to relate in a more demanding way to the organization of work, the methods and style of management, and the qualities of the job... In productive life, they have become more independent, non-dependent, and rational...preconditions for their more active involvement in management...Here we are referring primarily to the objective necessity of raising the participation, even direct, of the masses in management. It is difficult not to see the relationship of all the rooted problems of the national economy in the democrat-
ization of production. To a significant degree, this is already consciously felt by wage-earners. Judging by surveys conducted, the majority of them consider their participation in management necessary, and, in some questions, in their opinion, the decisive word should be left to the wage-earners... Even among Soviet enterprise managers and administrative personnel, there has been an awareness, conveyed in surveys of their opinions since 1980 on the source of labor problems, that the solution lies in reducing management regimentation of workers and in expanding opportunities for workers to participate and shape their work environment.

The most significant cause of worsening labor discipline is insufficient knowledge of the science of management by a great number of our leaders...I am not the exception... Enterprise executives almost completely do not understand and, perhaps, some of them do not want to understand the fundamental changes in the general educational level of today's wage-earners. The intellectual potential of the collective at times is higher than it is among executives...We require knowledge of the theory of human relations more than many executives right now possess. It is precisely because of their lack of knowledge that they depend upon coercion and administrative methods. This dependency diminishes the initiative of the labor collective and gives rise to indifference toward public life and increases the number of dissatisfied workers... A poor or simply commonplace executive is incapable of gaining a high degree of labor discipline even
with the strictest formal control over the observance of rules of internal order...the epoch of administrative-disciplinary measures has irretrievably lost its influence...

The worker today is not the same as 20 years ago, and you cannot get the same discipline from him, even if you pound your fist on the table...What is needed is sensitivity and a knowledge of social psychology...

The reform-oriented journal EKO in Novosibirsk has probably been the most prominent and consistent advocate of incorporating modern management procedures and reforms in Soviet industry to improve leader-subordinate relations. Over the past decade, the journal has published numerous articles on successful management reforms in the Soviet Union, in such East European countries as Hungary, and even in Western capitalist firms. Articles in the journal state that labor disciplinary problems in the USSR stem from complex objective and subjective causes, but they always emphasize that one significant contributing factor is a breakdown in communication between workers and management. The breakdown is seen to reflect a basic lack of knowledge of or sensitivity by managers to human interdynamics at work. Consistent with this policy line, the editorial policy of the journal has provided a forum in the past decade where the professions of enterprise sociologists, psychologists, and personnel directors have been extolled as the future key administrative prototypes to resolve labor problems; and the journal has urged a revamping of the
traditionally narrow technical training of future Soviet managers by including more courses on Western management techniques, organizational theory and personnel science.\textsuperscript{44}

A recent series of articles in EKO on the emergence of management consultants as a profession in Soviet industry vividly illustrated learning from the West.\textsuperscript{45} The founder of management consultancy in the Soviet Union is a deputy director of management systems analysis in Estonia; he was originally trained and still maintains contacts with a professional management consulting firm in Finland. In turn, he considered it logical to propose making the EKO Institute a national training center and disseminator of management training techniques throughout Soviet industry.

There is also indirect cumulative evidence suggesting that the position of overall economic-labor problems advocated by the journal has been favorably received by at least a certain segment of the top Soviet political leadership. The journal has received authorization to increase its press-run by more than 100\% since 1979, and now publishes 143,000 issues monthly for its subscribers, whom the journal characterized in published surveys as being primarily a highly educated younger stratum of Soviet professional managers and administrative personnel.\textsuperscript{46} The editorial staff of the journal received a national prize in August of 1984 as the top Soviet publication in the field of economics and management. This came only a few months after an April resolution of the Party Central Committee had strongly criticized the editorial staff of the conservative Voprosy ekonomiki, the monthly journal of the Institute of Economics
Furthermore, T. I. Zaslavskaya, a member of the editorial board of EKO, authored the secret memorandum on national economic reform presented at a closed Moscow seminar in 1983 attended by top economic officials from the Central Committee, Gosplan, and the Academy of Sciences. The memorandum is widely assumed to reflect the uncensored views of her reform-minded colleagues in the Institute and particularly those of the relatively outspoken former director of the Institute and editor of the journal, Abel Aganbegyan*, whose own articles have appeared with increasing frequency in such national forums as Izvestiya, Kommunist, and Trud over recent years. In more blunt terms than published articles on similar themes in such journals as EKO, the memorandum criticized the self-serving institutional interests and policy biases which have perpetuated the inefficient over-centralized Soviet economy and wrongly presumed that greater regimentation and administrative controls of workers were economically desirable. 48

An article by Zaslavskaya in EKO in January of 1980 may have anticipated the ideas of the secret memorandum. 49 Significantly, after the 1983 secret memorandum, her 1980 article became something of a political symbol. The article seems to have become more widely recognized and cited by reform-oriented Soviet policy analysts in print as an Aesopian gesture in support of the more wide-ranging critical views and proposals expounded in the unpublished 1983

*Late in 1985, Academician Aganbegyan was appointed Chairman of the Commission on Productive Forces of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences, and is reputed to be an influential advisor to General Secretary Gorbachev.
The political symbolism of the 1980 article is even more noteworthy in that a reported attempt was made by the KGB to find and arrest the individual responsible for leaking a copy of the secret memorandum to Dusko Doder of the Washington Post. Nonetheless, by the end of 1984, Zaslavskaya was appointed editor of a new journal on economic sociology amidst other signs of the growing support for the positions espoused by the EKO Institute on the national political level.

Workplace Reforms

In the opinion of sociologists, psychologists, managers, economists, and jurists whose image of labor problems conforms to the secret memorandum and Zaslavskaya's 1980 article, old measures and conservative policy assumptions will not prove effective. They consider the only long-term solutions to many interrelated labor problems to be those socio-psychological in their nature. Reforms must be instituted within Soviet enterprises to satisfy the aspirations of workers, reduce the frictions in leader-subordinate relations resulting from overbearing managers, and even, to some extent, to democratize the workplace. Here, democratization primarily means "job enrichment." The system should provide workers creative forms of work, delegate more responsibility for the completion of whole assignments (rather than for the repetition of isolated routines), invest greater independence and personal responsibility to the workers for determining their future earnings, and award promotions into high-paying and technically demanding positions when they
demonstrate growth in their skills, rather than offer awards for seniority and uninterrupted years of work at the same enterprise. Democratization also includes expanded opportunities for direct and representative participation by workers in enterprise decision-making, and even some voice in the selection and replacement of immediate administrative superiors (foremen, shop superintendents).

Policy advocates of industrial democracy have tended to embrace relatively similar reforms and proposals. These included collective contractual work brigades or teams in Soviet industry and agriculture, flexible work schedules, and moonlighting. They also encourage the privatization of more construction work and consumer-service sector employment, the contracting out of orders by state industrial enterprises to collective farms as non-state workshop communes, and even the electability (vybornost') of state workers in industrial enterprises. All the reforms and proposals are synonymous with granting Soviet wage-earners greater options in employment and reducing administrative controls over them as state workers and employees. As one recent article on moonlighting in Pravda generalized: "Excessive regulation on many labor issues is doubtless one of the causes for the country's labor 'shortage.' Perhaps senseless barriers to the utilization of labor resources should be done away with...."

These advocates of industrial democracy believe that the difference between legally established and illegal, but tacitly encouraged, forms of employment has broken down in the past decade.
Not only has there been some fudging of the difference; there has also been some questioning of the reasons from the past proscribing all but state employment. To cite one example: up to four-fifths of all construction work in Siberia is completed by private gangs of self-employed workers who ship out on their own during the summer from collective-state farms, arrange to acquire needed materials, and distribute the profits within their groups on their own initiative, and complete the work better and sooner than do the notoriously inefficient state construction brigades. Soviet critics have dubbed the private construction workers unprincipled "money-grubbers," who steal materials from state warehouses to complete their contracts and contribute to a general atmosphere of immorality in the Soviet countryside.

Nevertheless, these private seasonal construction gangs resemble, in many features, the state-organized tour-of-duty construction gangs more widely employed in such major construction projects as BAM in Siberia. The private gangs also represent only one facet of semi-private employment which has become more apparent in other sectors of the Soviet economy in the last decade. Some of these semi-private forms of employment, such as family-run roadside cafes in Georgia and family-run farms in Estonia, have even received public praise in the national media as positive experiments. As one bemused Soviet observer noted in comparing the success of illegal private construction workers in Siberia to some recent official labor reforms, "Consider the irony that shabashniki (the seasonal private construction workers) working with as few (men) as necessary and
tying their wages to final results through contracts are precisely an uncontrolled version of brigade contracts and the Shchekino method underlining economic orientations...." 57

At a minimum, all the various reforms and proposals advocated by proponents of industrial democracy Soviet-style are linked to the immediate diluting of authority in the national economy and motivating Soviet wage-earners not through rules and regulations, but through appealing to their material self-interest. At a maximum, they make up the first and logical evolutionary stage for wage-earners and a labor market in a more fullscale reform of the economy. Such a reform would decentralized the economy, eliminate central ministries or limit their authority over industrial enterprises and associations, and institute market mechanisms for enterprises acting under the general policy guidelines of ministries in a manner somewhat parallel to the subdivisions of Western national corporations.

Some of the workplace reforms, such as flexible work schedules and work brigades of a "new type", clearly fall within the orthodox conservative mainstream to intensify pressures on Soviet wage-earners during the past few years. The significance is that reformists have invested latently conservative reforms with quite different implications. They promote the reforms not solely or even principally for their economic benefits of increasing productivity or discipline in the short-term. They defend them equally as part of a long-term initiative committed to provide more meaningful outlets for worker participation in enterprise decision-making or socio-psychological...
inducements to give greater trust and responsibility to highly effective, younger wage-earners. Often the reformists draw explicit parallels to prove their effectiveness and future promise with similar reforms of the past two decades in Western capitalism.

Careful observers of the policy line of certain reform-oriented Soviet journals and institutes may read Aesopian meanings into the moderately favorable and objective appraisal of these Western reforms conveyed in articles during recent years.58

One clear example of a workplace reform which has met with reformist interpretation is the institution of the work brigade. Work brigades have figured prominently in all central policy directives on the Soviet economy or labor issues since the reform of the economic mechanism passed in July of 1979. All Soviet industrial workers are supposed to be reorganized into these semi-autonomous groups through this one major reform of production relations within Soviet enterprises this decade.59

In their ideal variant, as presented in the Soviet policy literature, the new Soviet brigades are to be relatively independent economic and political decision-making units within the enterprises.

The new brigades have the authority to contract with enterprise managers over their unit assignments and distribute material benefits among their members. As a channel for expanded political participation by workers in the production process, the new brigades are supposed to make their decisions at meetings of the collective membership or through their elected brigade councils. In their most developed form, the new brigades decide the specific work assignments
of their members, the admission and release of their members (with
the formal concurrence of enterprise executives and in conformity
with Soviet labor laws), the skill-grade promotions awarded members
(through petitions filed with the enterprise certification commis-
sions on skill grades), and the "work contribution indices"
(koeffitsient trudogo uchastiva) assigned members as the numerical
weight for their share of the collective brigade wages and bonuses.
On the enterprise level, as a Soviet form of worker co-participation
in management decision-making, a council of brigadiers has been set
up to represent the interests of all brigades as the major production
subunits of enterprise management.

Initially, the new brigades were supposed to have the right of
electing their own leader or brigadier, rather than having the
position appointed as an administrative extension of management in
enterprises; and individual cases of model enterprises do exist where
this practice has been instituted. Furthermore, there is extensive
disagreement in Soviet policy literature over whether the expanded
authority of the new brigades justifies the elimination of foremen in
enterprises as the traditional first-line extension of management
control over workers in enterprises.60

None of this suggests that the ideals of new work brigades have
been or could ever be fully realized in the authoritarian context of
power in the Soviet Union. Western skeptics who assume an instinc-
tive impulse by Soviet leaders to sacrifice economic effectiveness
for political control might dismiss outright the sincerity in which
the brigade reform has been promoted by Soviet advocates as a mean-
ingful departure in the direction of democratic rights and autonomy for workers in Soviet enterprises. This skepticism is supported by the fact that proponents of the work brigades have also defended the reform as a more effective means of instilling social control and labor discipline in the enterprise. This reasoning argues that workers should have a more direct financial incentive than management to reprimand labor violators in their midst. They would be quicker to punish their peers who fail to contribute in producing finished products by docking their pay proportionately to their drinking on the job, absenteeism, and tardiness.

Even the most visible architects of the reform, including the sociologists and management specialists of the Leningrad Voznesenskii Financial-Economic Institute, have admitted in frustration that the reform has failed to be implemented as originally conceived. In many instances, new brigades resemble old brigades, and many of these brigades lack the authority to contract with enterprise management to allocate necessary supplies in a timely fashion, which is essential for them to operate effectively as self-sufficient economic units. Workers and management continue to follow traditional patterns of narrow task delegation and hierarchical subordination to superiors in the enterprises. In addition, the reform has met with widespread resistance by skilled workers and foremen who fear a loss in their earnings and status. Perhaps the most telling indictment against the reform by its own advocates is that it has not made much difference from an economic standpoint. The performance of enterprises which have transferred to a brigade organization of work differs only
marginally in output and productivity from those remaining on the old production relations of narrow assembly-line production and task assignments. The only defense raised by advocates is their insistence that the complete version of the model reform as they envisaged it still has not been implemented, and they blame ministries and management for foot-dragging.

We should not lose sight, however, of the standards and goals set forth by advocates of these new brigades. They have designed and rationalized an outlet for worker participation in enterprise decision-making that is not dissimilar to those emerging in Western firms in the past two decades, with the shift from traditional Taylor assembly-line procedures to group-based production units and wages. Soviet articles recognize this similarity. In both Western capitalism and the Soviet Union, the reasoning goes, the work brigades have become necessary because of changes in the values and attitudes of the younger generation of workers and by the evolution in industrial technology. A new breed of industrial workers in both capitalist and socialist societies is rebelling against traditional assembly-line production methods; and, as those whom we have labelled technocrats in the Soviet context would add, the increasing use of robotics and computers in production is rendering old methods of organizing, motivating, and paying workers by standardized tasks obsolete.

Law on Labor Collectives
In addition to linking the new brigades with comparable reforms arising from technological necessity in the West, Soviet analysts have promoted them as the most fully-developed of several recent reforms and proposals expressing a common underlying purpose and policy goals. All of these related reforms are explicitly intended to reduce authoritarian controls in the Soviet workplace, to expand direct and representative participation by Soviet workers in enterprise management, and to hold enterprise executives more openly accountable for their actions to their labor collectives. Soviet policy argues that changes are required because current Soviet procedures and official outlets for workers are now flawed and discredited in the eyes of many workers. The reforms are necessary to generate a socio-psychological atmosphere conducive to mutual trust and enthusiasm among wage-earners and executives in Soviet enterprises. Policy makers believe that this atmosphere is the essential precondition to the resolution of most problems of declining labor productivity and discipline in the past decade.

Perhaps the most extreme of these proposals has been one advocating that workers elect their own enterprise executives. Proponents have contended since 1979 that a wide range of enterprise positions should be legally "elected" by workers or at least "selected" by them in open enterprise-wide meetings. State organs would continue to appoint executives, but they would conform with the choice expressed by workers through their elections or consultative resolutions. Such elected or selected positions would include direct administrative superiors (foremen and brigadiers), middle-line person-
nel (shop superintendents), and even the enterprise director. Role models have appeared in Soviet literature in the form of isolated reforms in some localities where workers vote on their administrative superiors, and where open competition and promotion of rank-and-file workers are encouraged for executive positions vacated routinely every few years in the enterprises.64 Even Kommunist, the theoretical journal of the Party Central committee, found some merit in these local electoral reforms in enterprises, and endorsed them in a 1983 editorial on labor discipline which was otherwise noteworthy for its overall hard-line appeal to intensify administrative disciplinary actions against labor violators.65

Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo (Soviet State and Law), the monthly journal of the USSR Institute for State and Law in the Academy of Sciences (IGPAN), has been the most prominent and consistent advocate of an expanded legal basis for worker participation in enterprise management since 1978. The ratification of the new Soviet Constitution in 1977 prompted the journal's increased emphasis on worker participation as its particular contribution to the national discussion of general labor policy. Article 8 of the Constitution established, for the first time in Soviet history since the early 1920s, constitutional rights and responsibilities of Soviet labor collectives as political entities in society. In December 1977, the Council of Ministers assigned IGPAN the responsibility of drafting a law and legal norms detailing the manner in which these new rights and responsibilities of labor collectives could be realized. The result was the passage of a Law on Labor Collectives in 1983.
Between 1978 and the passage of the law in 1983, the journal set out its distinctive and reformist approach to the issues of worker control and participation. Not only did articles advocate and debate specific changes. They also openly criticized the lack of meaningful participation for workers in such current official outlets as enterprise trade union committees (FZMK) and monthly permanent production conferences. The journal endorsed the direct election, or open consultative selection, by workers of almost all enterprise executive ranks. The justification for election of enterprise executives was that "an atmosphere of mutual understanding and trust is established more quickly, if the director is a person elected by the collective" and "if not all of them immediately (in the sense of nomenklatura), then gradually the electability of directors of production should be established based on our experience."

Articles also proposed creating a directly elected or at least virtually representative "labor collective council" in enterprises. The council was to be separate in membership from and with powers potentially greater than the traditional FZMK. The proponents were vague about the exact composition of the council, its means of selection or election, and specific powers relative to management, but there was consensus that the new councils would have both consultative and imperative decision-making authority on questions of managing the enterprises. Some even suggested that the councils would have the legal power to elect and remove the enterprise directors. The precedent for such an enterprise-wide labor collective council was the new brigade council at the floor level of the enter-
prise, with the authority to decide on wages, work assignments, and skill grades for its collective membership. Advocates in the journal warned that, unless the proposed labor collective councils held a degree of authority comparable to that of brigade councils, "people very soon (will) understand that they are involved simply in a management game." 70

In a third area of reform, the journal endorsed two proposals. The first was to expand the rights of the FZMK, without bringing them into conflict with those granted to the labor collective councils. The second was the creation of new labor courts similar to those in some East European countries which review appeals by workers who allege a violation of their rights by management. 71 Authors considered these new special courts necessary because the regular Soviet courts had shown lack of impartiality in the past decade, ruling less frequently in favor of workers. At the same time, the FZMK had become less vigilant in defending their own workers who accused management of wrong-doing or illegalities.

Even the conservative shift in 1982-1984 under Andropov which emphasized national mobilization campaigns against official corruption and slack worker discipline did not daunt proponents of worker control and participation. Articles appeared in Soviet State and Law, which linked the persistence of official corruption and protectionism to the inability of workers to participate in enterprise decision-making. The articles argued that official corruption and protectionism were by-products of the arbitrary discretion invested in managers through the administrative-legal principle of "едино-
nachalie" (one-person management of Soviet enterprises under the final authority of the director). They stated that any decline in official abuse and corruption would be relative to the weakening of edinonachalie and the strengthening of the workers' ability, under the law on labor collectives, to hold their managers accountable for their actions through periodic reviews at workers' meetings.72

Western skeptics would have good reason to question the sincerity of these proposals of democratization in the Soviet workplace. The final version of the 1983 Law on Labor Collectives had very little in common with either the specifics or spirit of the proposals broached in such journals as Soviet State and Law prior to 1983. There was no reference in the law to the election of enterprise executives, any newly-empowered labor collective council, or any new special labor courts to hear appeals of workers in labor disputes. The new law endorsed only the principle that workers' opinions should be considered in selecting and removing executives through their FZMK. The principle seems rather hollow in that the leadership of the FZMK traditionally is part of the establishment "quadrangle" (enterprise director, leaders of the FZMK, Party committee, and Komsomol) and in that Soviet journals had published criticism of the FZMK for failing to represent rank-and-file concerns prior to 1983. The principles of unified administrative control of enterprises under directors and the appointment of all officials in Soviet society through nomenklatura remain unchallenged in the 1983 Law.

Darrell Slider's recent analysis of the debate preceding the law's passage and its final form is probably correct.73 The refor-
mist potentials in the law were derailed by a combination of elements. Trade union officials are likely to have objected to the proposed new labor collective councils as an infringement on their authority through the FZMK in the enterprises. The conservative policy line adopted by Andropov in 1982–1983 to intensify pressures against workers undermined any support at higher political levels for those advocating greater worker control and participation in enterprises. Subsequent debate in 1983 over the law prior to its enactment seemed to stress only those features intended to encourage punitive sanctions, peer pressure against violators, and worker conformity with labor regulations. Finally, the reformist potentials in any law fell victim to the general bureaucratic stalemate in Soviet leadership preceding and following Andropov’s limited tenure.

Western skeptics may also point to those advocates who, prior to 1983, found a role model for their proposed industrial worker democracy in the “democratic” features associated with Soviet collective farms.74

Nonetheless, there are reasons to accept as sincere the stated intentions of those who prior to 1983 advocated ideas to provide some meaningful opportunities for worker control and participation in enterprise decision-making. The various options raised prior to 1983 seem to reflect a real reformist alternative in Soviet labor policy, thwarted in the conservative version of the law passed in 1983, but which could still be revived through future Soviet legislation.

Worker control or self-management is not an isolated single issue raised by proponents, but is logically tied to their general
image of current labor issues and general solutions of national economic problems. It is true that the underlying motivation and goals of those advocating worker control in the USSR bear little semblance to reasons behind similar reforms in the West in the past two decades or in Poland by Solidarity during 1981. Those who have advocated these reforms in the Soviet Union have motives completely unrelated to democratizing their society or abolishing single-party rule. Their intent is to reform the economy. Precisely because worker control and participation are closely linked to their overall rationale for reforming the economy, their advocacy must be taken seriously. They recognize that the dilution of authority within enterprises logically extends the principles of mutual accountability and contractual relations between workers and management. They hope to see these principles implemented between enterprises and national economic organs under a general reform of the Soviet economy.

The explicit linkage between worker control and participation and general economic reform has been most clearly evident in two recent articles by B.P. Kurashvili, a sector head in the Institute of State and Law, and A. G. Aganbegyan, the former director of the Institute in Novosibirsk and editor of EKO. In a 1982 article published by Soviet State and Law, concurrent with several other articles on the pending new law on labor collectives, Kurashvili proposed nothing less than a model of economic reform in which the decentralization of the Soviet economy would be directly tied to expanded participation by workers in enterprise decision-making. Kurashvili refuted the current inefficient "command system of economic management" as an
outmoded by-product of the "extraordinary circumstances" confronting the USSR in the 1930s and 1940s. His use of the term "command" was in itself symbolic, because Soviet usage rejects the term as hostile in Western parlance in characterizing their economy. Kurashvili instead advocated a "reflexive" or "stimulative" system of economic management to unleash what he termed the "creative initiative" of enterprises and workers alike in the Soviet Union. Under his model, enterprises would be provided only general production targets or goals by national economic organs, but the specific means by which the enterprises accomplished those goals would be left solely to the entrepreneurial initiative of management.

Kurashvili identified three interconnected principles in his model of reform. Enterprises would have full economic accountability, including the right to hire and pay workers as they deemed economically desirable as long as they met such national standards as minimum wages. Enterprises would also have almost complete organizational independence, and Kurashvili envisaged economically related enterprises merging through contractual ties as subdivisions of a larger corporate-like association. The association would be governed by a board of directors, representing both the contractually independent enterprises and the workers in these enterprises. The third principle was the possibility that enterprises could become almost completely self-managed entities. Kurashvili believed that this third principle would both necessitate and facilitate greater worker participation in enterprise decision-making through a labor council. Because enterprises would
be economically accountable and organizationally independent, management would have a greater incentive to enlist the cooperation of its own workers through collective council. Workers, in turn, would have a greater motivation to participate in managing the affairs of the enterprise, because their continued employment and the size of their wages would be directly dependent on the economic success of the enterprise.

Kurashvili's article has been cited by some Western Sovietologists as an extreme example of the type of policy advocacy evident in such reform-oriented institutes as IGPAN over the past decade. Zaslavskaya cited the article explicitly in her secret Novosibirsk memorandum as but a "small fragment" in print of a more extensive original research report which she described as a "rather serious undertaking" in developing a detailed model for economic reform.

Kurashvili himself had cited A. G. Aganbegyan as one of the sources for his model of economic reform. As director of the EKO Institute in Novosibirsk, Aganbegyan emerged in recent years as a prominent Soviet advocate of reform premised on both diluting authority within enterprises and decentralizing the economy. He defined the logical connection of these two types of reform most clearly in a two-part article in Trud, the daily newspaper of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. Aganbegyan's central thesis is that for economic reforms to be successful in the Soviet Union, they must be instituted across the board and "organically interconnected" for all levels of the economy, from worker-management
relations to the relations between enterprises and ministries. He criticizes past reform efforts as doomed to failure, because they were partial attempts to correct problems at one level without considering the fuller dimensions of the problem. Thus, the brigade reform has failed because, although workers and management now operate by contractual relations, the management and enterprises are still locked into a centrally administered economy. Pointing to experiments with contractual links on Siberian collective farms and enterprise-wide collective brigades in Novosibirsk, Aganbegyan called for similar market principles and contractual relations as the basis for all economic activity throughout the Soviet Union. Aganbegyan argued that freeing workers on farms and enterprises from administrative dictates by management had a logical counterpart and could itself succeed only if market contractual principles were established also for enterprises, freed of petty tutelage by ministries.

Thus, to the extent that such policy advocates as Kurashvili and Aganbegyan have been persuasive, worker control and participation may have become so indelibly linked with general reform of the economy in the minds of Soviet political leaders that any projected changes will be conceived to allow both greater autonomy for enterprises and greater opportunities for worker participation. For Aganbehyan and others like him, the significance of the 1983 Law on Labor Collectives was its timing in reflecting a consistent shift in economic policymaking. The 1983 law to enhance worker participation in enterprises was enacted at the same time a decision
was made by the Politburo to institute an industrial experiment in 1984-1985. That experiment granted increased authority and autonomy from ministerial control to enterprises in five ministries.

A second testimony to the genuine intentions of those advocating worker control and participation is the timing of their defense. Readers need only recall the circumstances surrounding both the Solidarity Congress in September of 1981 and the storm of vitriolic denunciation in the Soviet media of anything associated with the democratic trade union movement in Poland. At the Solidarity Congress, the delegates had approved a compromise with the Polish government by which enterprise managers were to be jointly appointed by the government and democratically elected workers' councils in enterprises. The workers' councils were also to participate in overall enterprise decision-making. The workers' councils and rights of workers to elect managers were two of the major platforms in the Solidarity program which its leaders presented as common goals around which the working classes of Eastern Europe were urged to join in an appeal issued at the beginning of the Congress.79

Throughout September and October of 1981, the Soviet media were flooded with bitter attacks against Solidarity and its program, in which the concepts of self-management and the election of plant officials were denounced as anti-socialist and anti-Soviet ploys to restore capitalism.80 Therefore, Soviet advocates had good reason in 1981 to distance themselves from reforms which made them politically suspect. The timing of the following articles from 1981 thus becomes all the more significant.
Ironically, in the spring of 1981, Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir published an article calling for greater direct participation by workers in production decisions and criticizing current procedures. The article pointed out that, at most, one-fourth of Soviet workers actively participate, which a high percentage of those surveyed considered very unsatisfactory in affecting enterprise operations.81

In the fall of 1981, a frequent contributor on the issue of worker participation in the quarterly journal of the USSR Institute of Sociology published an article advocating some diminution in the traditional authority assigned Soviet managers and for an expanded role for worker-based councils similar to those in Hungary.82

The issue of Soviet State and Law for August 1981, when the Solidarity Congress was meeting in Gdansk and its program was being vilified as anti-Soviet in Pravda and Izvestiya, a research associate from IGPAN supported the concepts of the election of enterprise executives by workers and the formation of a labor council with powers somewhat equivalent to those allegedly invested in the model new brigade councils.83

This is not to say that the publication of these articles in 1981 suggested that political leaders of the Soviet Union had not noticed the identification of Solidarity with electing enterprise managers and forming a workers' council, or that that identification did not affect the shape of the law in its final form in 1983. It is probably far from accidental that the concepts of elected executives and independent council were both dropped in the 1983 version of the law. Opposition to these reforms could only have benefited by the
ability to stigmatize them by their association with ostensibly similar measures in the Solidarity program. Some Western observers dismissed these ideas about workplace democracy from 1980-1981, as well as attempts to improve the image of trade unions, as mere cosmetics by the Soviet leadership intended to pacify Soviet workers who might otherwise have been attracted to the democratic changes occurring in Poland. 84

An article in the January 1983 issue of Soviet State and Law by A. A. Maslennikov, who appears to have headed the group in IGPAN responsible for drafting the law in 1983, indicates that he anticipated the change in the political climate. In contrast to his previous articles from 1979 and 1980 on worker participation, this article omitted any strong endorsement for the principle of elected executives and offered a watered-down version of worker representation through the standard permanent production conferences, which Maslennikov argued could somehow be transformed into a quasi-council. While his articles from 1979 and 1980 had seemed to endorse decision-making powers of workers to elect executives and influence enterprise decisions as "imperative", his 1983 article viewed the workers' role as "consultative", at best. 85

Yet, as much as the Solidarity movement and the campaign mounted by Andropov to tighten labor discipline in 1982-1983 may have discredited democratic workplace reforms in the Soviet Union by 1984-1985, the issue is far from dead politically. Those who have in the past advocated workers' participation or the election of enterprise executives have not conceded that the law of 1983 represents
the final word. Maslennikov himself, in an assessment of the meaning attributed to the 1983 law three months after its passage, sounded a theme which has continued to appear in Soviet policy literature in the past two years. He argued that the 1983 law should be interpreted as only a first step in defining the sphere of worker rights rather than as the final form of any rights. He stated:

"...the purpose of the 1983 law does not consist in regulating in detail the organization and activities of labor collectives, but, by making the Constitutional norms concrete and legalizing the experiment of participation by labor collectives in management it creates a legal basis and defines a social perspective for the further democratization of mass relations in this sphere... therefore, by its adoption, by no means has the process of legal mediation of this sphere of mass relations ended..." 86

Responding to alleged "Western bourgeois critics", Maslennikov denied that the 1983 law reaffirmed as absolute the authority of management over workers in Soviet enterprises. On the contrary, he argued that even the consultative nature of powers granted to general worker meetings in the 1983 law should not be dismissed as meaningless. Much depended on the willingness of Soviet managers to be receptive to proposals expressed by workers at such general meetings, although Maslennikov admitted that the willingness to listen was far from commonplace among Soviet managers. 87 Maslennikov continued to take heart from Andropov's speech to the Party Central Committee plenum prior to the passage of the 1983 law, in which he seemed to endorse
implementation of the reformist spirit in the law as reflected in the debate that had preceded it. 88

Maslennikov has not been alone. In March of 1984, a senior instructor of the Law Faculty at Moscow State University also drew upon Andropov’s remarks at the June 1983 plenum to find his own implications in the 1983 law. A. M. Kurennoi argued that the law should be seen as only the foundation rather than as the final form of worker rights. He noted that Andropov had promised in his speech that the theme of "democratic principles" in production should take up a significant place in the new edition of the CPSU Program, which was to be drafted for the forthcoming XXVII Party Congress. 89

Kurennoi expected those "democratic principles" to include the right of workers to elect enterprise executives. While he conceded that the election of association-enterprise directors might be "unnecessary" at the present time, Kurennoi still foresaw the universal election by workers of junior and middle-line personnel as a "completely real possibility." 90 Kurennoi also proposed some form of worker representation at the enterprise-wide level and criminal liability for enterprise management for any attempts to obstruct the participation of workers through this representative organ. He saw the legal precedent in the criminal statutes in certain union republics which hold management directly accountable for interfering with the formal rights of Soviet trade unions in enterprises. 91

Kurennai accurately reflects the views of his fellow law faculty of Moscow State University. Mikhail Gorbachev is himself a graduate of the Law Faculty at Moscow State University in 1955. He has taken
no unqualified stand on the issue of democratic reforms in the workplace, but Western observers have gathered evidence from his published speeches of his support for the policy stance most clearly identified with such reform-oriented institutes as EKO and IGPAN.92

In the past, Gorbachev has endorsed the general principles of greater worker autonomy and participation in Soviet agriculture through his sponsorship of collective contractual brigades on Soviet farms. In his first major speech after acceding to General Secretary, Gorbachev strongly criticized the failure of Soviet management to involve workers more in production decisions and identified himself with the "principles of self-management" before a gathering of agricultural and industrial executives.93

Within a few months after Gorbachev's election, Zasalvskaya openly reiterated her theme that group interests in Soviet ministries were resisting economic change, which had been the most sensitive political issue in the 1983 secret memorandum. She did so in a lengthy interview in Izvestiya and in a lead article on conflicting group interests in the Soviet economy in EKO.94 In turn, Kurazhvili also published a more detailed version with an extended political justification of his reform proposals in EKO. Kurashvili's reform entails both economic decentralization and worker self-management, with the labor collective gaining the right to set both the wages and the number of employees in the enterprise.95

CONCLUSION
Given the election of a General Secretary who is openly committed to economic reform, concerned with the USSR's evident lag behind civil and military production in the West, and sympathetic to their vision of a high-tech Soviet future, advocates of a reformist alternative may already form the new consensual paradigm to define labor issues and solutions on the national political level. Even so, they must still contend with an array of highly influential groups in Soviet politics whose deep-seated opposition to the reformist alternative results from both their immediate self-interest and ideological hostility.

As Zaslavskaya warned in both her 1983 secret memorandum and statements in 1985, the crucial determinant of success for economic reform in the Soviet Union is the political will. A sufficient coalition of groups committed to change and convinced of their personal future advantage must be mobilized, while the actions of those groups negatively affected by reforms and capable of obstructing them must be neutralized. It is clear that there will be self-interested opposition from those whose authority and status would be directly threatened through a full-scale implementation of the reformist alternative.

First, the proposals to democratize worker-management relations have become so closely linked with general reforms to decentralize the economy and to reduce the authority of economic ministries and the Party bureaucracy that the natural opposition of ministers and Party bureaucrats to general reforms will carry over into their resistance to real workplace reforms.
Second, despite contentions by reform-oriented journals that a new majority of younger enterprise directors is willing to relax controls and involve workers in management decision-making, surveys and articles hint at a more hard-core opposition by Soviet directors to the sharing of decisionmaking power with rank-and-file workers.\textsuperscript{96} The opposition of Soviet directors to the very notion and value of workplace democracy does not appear openly as such. Rather, the issue is more euphemistically posed. Directors support the concept as an ideal but express doubt about the ability of the average worker to make informed judgments, because they lack professional administrative training or the technical knowledge to manage the more highly sophisticated machinery in modern Soviet enterprises.

Nor would Soviet directors be the only enterprise executives likely to have a direct reason to oppose the reformist alternative. If work brigades ever became completely self-administered, it would mean the elimination of many middle-line executives in Soviet enterprises. The latters' opposition to the reforms is logical.\textsuperscript{97} Trade union officials might also be less than sanguine about their immediate political prospects, were non-union labor councils and semi-autonomous work brigades ever instituted in Soviet enterprises. Their opposition to the concept of a labor council was prominently discussed in \textit{Soviet State and Law} prior to the passage of the 1983 Law on Labor Collectives.

Visceral ideological resistance by hardline Party-state officials would be added to the opposition of self-interest groups. They view the principle of hierarchical control of Soviet enterprises
under managers as equal to single-party rule and as unquestionable tenets of Communist legitimacy in the USSR. Any lessening of management control has become associated with the "anarcho-syndicalism" and with attacks on Communist rule through demands for worker self-management in Czechoslovakia of 1968 or Poland of 1980-81. The opposition has proven influential enough to eliminate most of the original reformist ideas from 1978-1982 in the Law on Labor Collectives passed in 1983; and they have undermined or blocked implementation of the reform to devolve real authority to workers through industrial work brigades of the new type.

Finally, the reformers must convince potential supporters in the Soviet leadership that the proposed changes would not directly undermine the stability of the Soviet system or the essential authoritarian features of control from the top through the Party. This is the greater problem for the advocates of reform. For they are proposing nothing less than an independence and participatory role for workers totally unparalleled in Soviet history since the defeat of the Workers' Opposition in 1921, and totally incongruent with the pattern of hierarchical authority endemic to all levels of Soviet society. Some members of the leadership who would otherwise see merit in the reforms may well wonder how labor-management relations in Soviet enterprises could be democratized without creating a logical expectation for democratization of the entire political system.

It should be clear that democratization of Soviet society in a Western sense has never been what advocates of workplace reforms have
in mind, but the unprecedented nature of their reforms and the unpredictability of results based on past experience in the USSR work against them politically. Adoption of the reforms characterized in this article as the reformist alternative would represent a real departure in form and philosophy from past Soviet labor policy. For reform advocates to prevail, they must overcome not only vested interests but also a dominant conservative sentiment that runs throughout the Soviet bureaucracy. That sentiment rules instinctively against innovation in favor of the familiar, and against long-term effectiveness in favor of short-term efficiency and control.


3 Goodman and Schliefer and Ruble, in *Soviet Economy in the 1980's*.


See Andropov's speech before Party veterans, his last formal public address before his death, in Pravda, August 16, 1983.


See, for example, the roundtable discussion in SG&P, No. 12 (December, 1980), pp. 112-38; M. Ya. Sonin, EKO, No. 5 (May, 1981), pp. 77-78; and roundtable discussion in EKO, No. 11 (November, 1983), pp. 44-45.


See, for example, the conclusions on the need to tie disciplinary measures to economic reforms noted by the directors participating in the roundtable discussion organized by EKO, No. 5 (May, 1984), pp. 3-62.


See, for example, L. Yu. Bugrov, SG&P, No. 5 (May, 1981), pp. 22-28; V. V. Zhgorov,


R.Livshits, ST, No. 11 (November, 1982), pp. 74-81.

E. Vashil'chikov and V. Shkatulla, ST, No. 6 (June, 1983), pp. 15-19.

A. Tyagushev, ST, No. 9 (September, 1983), pp. 10-17.

L. Sharikov, ST, No. 2 (February, 1984), pp. 80-87.

B. Mill'ner, ST, No. 11 (November, 1984), pp. 7-17, and G. Popov, ST, No. 11 (November, 1984), pp. 18-28. Popov is "iconoclastic" in the sense that he has publicly advocated Soviet consumers building an automotive plant with their own money and receiving the cars produced as their "stock dividends" (Pravda, May 24, 1980), unemployment compensation by enterprises for workers displaced through technology who would then be temporarily hired by city governments as street and farm workers (Pravda, December 27, 1980), and the almost complete abolition of state price-formation, with prices to be determined by the supply and demand decisions of relatively independent and directly linked enterprises (EKO, No. 7, 1984, pp. 20-31).

In particular, see Yu. Yakovets, ST, No. 1 (January, 1984), pp. 8-16; Yu. Shiryaev and V. Voropaev, ST, No. 12 (December, 1984), pp. 67-78; N. Blinov, PKh, No. 6 (June, 1984),


26 See, for example, Gail W. Lapidus, "The Female Industrial Labor Force: Dilemmas, Reassessments, and Options," in Kahan and Ruble, Industrial Labor in the U.S.S.R., pp. 232-7

27 See, for example, the critique by E. P. Blinova of her own colleagues in the USSR Institute of the International Workers' Movement for their advocacy of part-time jobs for Soviet women in RK&SM, No. 3 (May-June, 1983), pp. 171-75, her similar criticism of part-time female employment as exploitative in capitalist countries in RK&SM, No. 6 (November-December, 1981), pp. 61-65, and the quite opposite position supportive of part-time jobs for Soviet women by her colleagues E. B. Gruzdeva and E. S. Chertikhina in RK&SM, No. 6 (November-December, 1975), pp. 133-47, and No. 6 (November-December, 1982), pp. 110-17


29 See, for example, Yu. B. Ryurikov, EKO, No. 10 (October, 1982), pp. 149-70.


31 See, for example, M. Kravchenko, ST, No. 12 (December, 1983), pp. 7-16.


34 L. Chizhova, VE, No. 5 (May, 1983), pp. 61-69 [quotes from pages 64 and 69].

35 See, for example, the discussion of technical progress and personnel displacement by L. Danilov and V. Karev, ST, No. 5 (May, 1983), pp. 100-04, and the rebuttal by N. Tokaev, SI, No. 1 (January, 1984), pp. 38-42. On the underlying importance and concern over potential unemployment from the technical displacement of Soviet workers and their probable influence on Soviet labor policy since 1965, see Hauslohner, "Managing the Soviet Labor Market...," esp. pp. 545-662.


38 On the changes in the socio-psychological composition of the Soviet labor force, especially the younger generation, see the detailed studies published by RK&SM over the past few years: A. K. Nazimova, No. 1 (January-February, 1981), pp. 49-60; L. A. Gordon et al., No. 3 (March-April, 1981), pp. 13-23; idem., No. 4 (July-August, 1981), pp. 59-73; and idem., No. 3 (May-June, 1983), pp. 59-72. For a popular rendering of this theme by someone whose book reportedly caused quite a stir of controversy among Muscovite professionals sympathetic with his views of a less deferential younger generation, see Vladimir Kantorovich, "I'm and you" (vchera i segodnya v usloviyakh nauchno-tekhnicheskoi revolyutsii) (Moscow: Sovetskaya Rossiya, 1974).


41 EKO, No. 9 (September, 1981), pp. 17-45 [quotes from pages 29 and 42].

42 EKO, No. 5 (May, 1984), pp. 47-48 [quote by a young enterprise director of a shoe factory and the co-leader of a "club of directors" organized by EKO to discuss various facets of labor disciplinary problems].


44 See, for example, the following articles in EKO: Yu. N. Udovichenko, No. 10 (October, 1980), pp. 31-37; V. I. Geichikov and R. V. Rybkina, No. 3 (March, 1983), pp. 80-102; V. Ya. Belen'kii and G. V. Shchekin, No. 9 (September, 1984), pp. 81-97; and A. K. Zaitsev, No. 8 (August, 1984), pp. 125-37.


46 See the editorial and characterization of typical journal subscribers in the journal's 100th commemorative issue, No. 10 (October, 1982), pp. 3-18. When the journal began as only a bi-monthly in 1970, it had an official press-run of 8.5 thousand, and the editorial indicated an intent to publish even more articles on economic reforms and the organization of industrial production in the Comecon countries, Yugoslavia, and developed capitalist countries.
47 See the inside cover page announcing the award in EKO, No. 8 (August, 1984), and the Central Committee resolution critical of the Institute of Economics in Izvestiya, April 27, 1984.


53 See, for example, B. P. Kutyrev et al., EKO, No. 7 (July, 1979), pp. 43-65; V. I. Myasnikov, EKO, No. 7 (July, 1980), pp. 74-88; Ye. P. Starodubtseva, EKO, No. 11 (November, 1980), pp. 67-77; V. Ruik et al., ST, No. 6 (June, 1982), pp. 33-38; B. P. Kurashvili, SG&P, No. 6 (June, 1982), pp. 38-48; and V. S. Magun, SI, No. 4 (October-December, 1983), pp. 64-71. Typical of recent Soviet monographs advancing human relations approaches in industrial management are B. S. Mar’enko et al., Optimizatsiya trudovoi deyatel’nosti proizvodstvennogo kollektiva (sotsial’no-psikhologicheskii aspekt) (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1983), and A. I. Kitov, Psikhologiya khozyaistvennogo upravleniya (Moscow: Profizdat, 1984).


See, for example, the exactly parallel articles on alternative work schedules as workplace reforms in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the West in ST: A. Nikiforova, No. 4 (April, 1983), pp. 101-08; E. Danilov, No. 10 (October, 1983), pp. 46-51; A. Kurskii et al., No. 6 (June, 1984), pp. 68-77; E. Fabremova, No. 6 (June, 1984), pp. 87-92; and M. Grachev, No. 6 (June, 1984), pp. 93-97. In what could be interpreted as an Aesopian airing of somewhat similar Soviet problems and concerns prompting their initiation as workplace reforms in the USSR, also see the relatively positive evaluation of the benefits resulting from Western industrial democracy and human relations reforms under capitalism in RK&SM: B. I. Dubson, No. 5 (September-October, 1983), pp. 92-106; E. D. Yil'khovchenko, No. 5 (September-October, 1984), pp. 72-78; and S. A. Yershov, No. 6 (November-December, 1984), pp. 96-113.

See, for example, P. M. Baltaksä, EKO, No. 5 (May, 1984), pp. 63-78; A. A. Sarno et al., Sl, No. 2 (April-June, 1983), pp. 96-102; Ye. I. Kirishchev, Sl, No. 3 (July-September, 1984), pp. 51-58; N. Lobanov et al., Pkh, No. 1 (January, 1981), pp. 82-87; and V. Cherevan, VE, No. 2 (February, 1984), pp. 43-53.

The most recent resolution on the model form of new brigades, issued jointly by Goskomtrud and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, affirmed a conservative line that the brigade leader should continue to be "appointed with (pri)" the consent of the brigade leader.
collective council and the foreman retaining his title could become a member of the brigade but then subject to its criteria in setting his wages: ST, No. 8 (August, 1984), pp. 126-28. That the disagreement still rages was evident after the resolution was issued from a published report on the foreman question for new brigades in the non-ferrous metallurgy industry: ST, No. 12 (December, 1984), pp. 47-54.


62 See, for example, Y. P. Batalin, ST, No. 6 (June, 1984), pp. 7-19, and V. Volkov, ST, No. 5 (May, 1985), pp. 42-51.

63 See, for example, the generally laudatory and factual Soviet analyses of the Volvo brigade experiment and Japanese work groups and the same terminology and consequences used to characterize new Soviet work brigades in EKO: I. I. Dakhno and M. N. Kapralova, No. 4 (April, 1980), pp. 172-84; B. I. Milner, No. 7 (July, 1984), pp. 162-78; and P. M. Baitaksa, No. 5 (May, 1984), pp. 63-78.


65 Kommunist, No. 14 (September, 1983), pp. 3-12 [positive reference to election of middle-line personnel on p. 7].


68 See, for example, the following articles in SG&P: V. A. Maslennikov, No. 1 (January, 1979), pp. 40-47; idem., No. 1 (January, 1980), pp. 131-39; idem., No. 1 (January, 1983),
Among those in SG&P who particularly emphasized an expansion of powers for the labor collective council through the FZMK rather than through a separate and newly constituted labor council, see S. A. Ivanov and R. Z. Livshits, No. 4 (April, 1978), pp. 14-24, and Yu. P. Orlovskii, No. 4 (April, 1979), pp. 64-72. On the policy conflict within the Institute between those advocating an expansion of powers for the FZMK or a newly formed labor council, see A. I. Tsepin, SG&P, No. 8 (August, 1981), p. 52; on the proposed labor courts, see Ivanov and Livshits, pp. 23-24.


"The Novosibirsk Report," loc cit., p. 101. In turn, Kurashvili had previously cited as a source Zaslavskaya's own published 1980 article in 1980, with such mutual citations suggesting a basic commonality of views and the attempt to demonstrate a similar "opinion group" in Soviet bureaucratic politics.


 Ibid., pp. 6-8.

 Ibid., p. 9.


 Ibid., pp. 86-87.

 Ibid., p. 88.

See, for example, the assessment of Gorbachëv by Archie Brown, "Gorbachëv: New Man in
the Kremlin," Problems of Communism, Vol. 34, No. 3 (May-June, 1985), esp. pp. 11, 13, and 17-20, as Brown notes parallels between the ideas advocated by Gorbachev and those identified with reform-oriented institutes like EKO and IGPAN in the USSR.

93 M. S. Gorbachev, Pravda, April 12, 1985.

94 See her interview in Izvestiia, June 1, 1985, and her lead article in EKO, No. 7 (July, 1985), pp. 3-22 (esp. pp. 20-22 on political groups opposed to economic reforms).

95 B. P. Kurashvili, EKO, No. 5 (May, 1985), pp. 59-79.


97 See, for example, B. Rakitskii, ST, No. 6 (June, 1984), p. 22; V. Koryagin, ST, No. 7 (July, 1984), pp. 13-17; and G. Popov, ST, No. 11 (November, 1984), pp. 27-28.

98 See, for example, V. Mrachkovskaya, VE, No. 5 (May, 1978), pp. 111-22; V. Rudyk, VE, No. 7 (July, 1983), pp. 133-48; Ye. Torkanovskii, Kommunist, No. 8 (May, 1983), pp. 36-46; and idem., VE, No. 6 (June, 1984), pp. 6-13.