

Education and Social
Mobility in the
Soviet Union
1921–1934

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I

Education and Soviet society

In October 1917, the Bolsheviks had taken power in the name of the proletariat and toiling peasantry, against the almost unanimous opposition of Russian educated society. Education, the Bolsheviks perceived, was one of the traditional prerogatives of the privileged classes. If a small minority of those who had received secondary or higher education under the old regime had embraced the cause of proletarian revolution, the great majority had remained 'class enemies' of the proletariat. It might be necessary for the new regime to employ the 'bourgeois' professionals and 'petty-bourgeois' clerks and office workers trained under Tsarism, but the best that could be expected of them in political terms was passive neutrality.

From these premises, two policy conclusions could be drawn. In the first place, the workers' and peasants' state must provide basic education for the masses of the population. This posed no problem of principle for the Bolsheviks, though there was room for argument on the size of the investment which, in the short term, the state could afford to make in primary education and adult literacy teaching.

The second policy conclusion which seemed to follow naturally from Bolshevik premises was that the new regime must create its own 'proletarian intelligentsia' – an administrative and specialist group drawn from the lower classes of society, trained in Soviet VUZy* and giving whole-hearted allegiance to Soviet power. Such a policy seems to have been instinctively endorsed by Bolsheviks and their working-class and peasant sympathizers from the moment of the revolution, yet at the same time it raised major practical and theoretical problems.

* There are no concise English equivalents for the Soviet acronyms VUZ (higher educational institution) and VTUZ (higher technical educational institution), so, with apologies to the reader, these terms have been used in the text. 'University' is used only for the Russian '*universitet*' – a particular type of VUZ including faculties of science and mathematics and the humanities, usually long-established and highly respected.

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The practical problems lay in the low educational level of workers and peasants and the regime's immediate need to conciliate the bourgeois specialists. In order to create a proletarian intelligentsia, it was necessary to give working-class and peasant students preferential access to secondary and higher education. But this was likely to mean lowering educational standards; and it was certain to offend the professional and white-collar parents who wanted their own children to receive an education qualifying them for high-status jobs.

In addition, as the regime quickly discovered, there were real difficulties in implementing admissions policies which discriminated on the basis of social class.¹ For the Bolsheviks, social class was defined both by basic occupation and by 'consciousness', which was essentially a political criterion. But it was by no means obvious how these definitions could be applied to children and adolescents, or even how to prevent undesirable applicants from disguising their 'real' class affiliation.

On the theoretical level, Marxist intellectuals found the policy hard to justify. A proletarian intelligentsia meant an elite, created by a process of upward social mobility sponsored and encouraged by the regime. But Marxists did not accept the concept of 'good' – that is, non-exploiting – elites, except in the transitional period of proletarian dictatorship; and the proletarian dictatorship was conceived as the dictatorship of the proletariat *as a class* (however far that might be from Soviet political reality), not by its upwardly mobile representatives.

The concept of social mobility, similarly, scarcely existed in Marxist sociology. In the classless society, with the abolition of the specialization of labour, social mobility would be meaningless. Under capitalism, and during the transitional period of proletarian dictatorship, the working class had an historic mission; and the highest aim of an individual worker should presumably be to raise the level of his 'proletarian consciousness' rather than to improve his social status.

Yet, even with these theoretical reservations, the Bolsheviks had to devise policies for the transitional period. As rulers, they quickly found a term for the kind of upward social mobility which was obviously useful and necessary for the regime – the *vydvizhenie* (promotion) of workers and peasants into administrative and white-collar jobs or into higher education. From the Civil War years, *vydvizhenie* of workers provided a substantial proportion of Soviet industrial managers and party cadres.

Workers were also sent to higher education from as early as 1918, when the first *rabfaks* (workers' faculties) were established to prepare

them for the VUZy. But this was a relatively minor aspect of Soviet education policy until 1928. The Bolshevik educational leaders were sensitive to the possibility that educational opportunities might be monopolized by the bourgeoisie, but their main attention in the early years was focussed on other problems. The revolution, they believed, had given *all* classes and individuals the right to the best possible education. Their first duty, therefore, was to decide what the best possible form of education would be.

Theoretical bases: Marx, Lenin and progressive education

The basic Marxist legacy was the concept of 'polytechnical' education. This concept, unfortunately, provided a most ambiguous guide to Soviet educators, since Marx and Engels were mainly concerned with the education of working-class children who were to remain workers, or, on a more theoretical level, with the education appropriate to a classless socialist society. In the simplest terms, the polytechnical school was one which taught a variety of practical skills – the antithesis of the 'academic' school exemplified by the Tsarist gymnasium. But beyond that there was no agreement on the interpretation of the polytechnical principle and, in particular, on its implications for the relationship of the state and the individual in the period of proletarian dictatorship.

Marx and Engels believed that rigid professional specialization was one of the dehumanizing effects of the capitalist division of labour which would disappear sometime after the proletarian revolution. Under Communism, Engels wrote,

The division of labour... which makes one person a peasant, another a bootmaker, a third a factory worker and a fourth a speculator on the stock exchange will disappear completely. Education will give young people the chance of quickly attaining a practical mastery of the whole system of production. It will allow them to transfer in turn from one branch of production to another, in response to the requirements of society or their own personal inclinations. Education will consequently free them from that one-sidedness which the contemporary division of labour forces on each individual.²

For one group of Soviet educators, this meant that the essential purpose of the polytechnical school was liberation of the individual. The Soviet school should therefore offer a broad general education, avoiding narrow specialization and premature limitation of occupational choice. In practice – since the new Soviet secondary school had to build on some existing foundation – it meant preferring the

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traditional general-educational schools (even the academic gymnasium) over the old trade schools. The schools would become polytechnical by including training in practical skills and study of industrial production in the curriculum; and they would also, of course, open their doors to students from all social classes instead of recruiting them primarily from the privileged groups of society. But they would not be vocational schools; and all students with the desire and aptitude to go on to higher education would have the opportunity to do so.

However, there was another plausible interpretation of the Marxist legacy. Marx, like Engels, had emphasized that polytechnical education should acquaint the students with a variety of technical and practical skills. But, writing specifically about the situation of working-class children under capitalism, Marx had implied that *polytechnicalism* had a utilitarian justification: workers with one narrow skill were peculiarly vulnerable because their skill might become obsolete, whereas workers educated in 'the basic principles of all processes of production' and with 'skills to handle the simplest tools of all production' were not in similar danger.³

From this, it could be concluded that Marx's emphasis on the acquiring of a *variety* of industrial skills was a response to a particular historical situation. That meant that the universally applicable Marxist principle was not educational breadth, but the technical and industrial orientation of education. It was this orientation which essentially distinguished the ideal industrial trade school described by Marx from the existing 'academic' schools for children of the privileged classes; and Marx claimed that such a school would 'raise the working class significantly above the level of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie'.⁴

The practical implication for the Soviet school was that it should be *technical* above all, and preferably linked with a factory environment. The Soviet educators who held this view were in effect arguing for a vocational secondary school for children of all social classes; and they usually justified this in terms of the economic interests of the Soviet state as well as faithfulness to Marx's precepts. Engels, in the passage quoted above, had left open the question of whether individual occupation should be determined primarily by 'the requirements of society' or by 'personal inclinations'. The Soviet pro-vocational theorists unhesitatingly subordinated personal inclinations to the requirements of the proletarian state, and considered that those who held the opposite view had succumbed to a 'bourgeois liberal' conception of the relationship of state and individual.

There was, undoubtedly, some reason to accuse Soviet educational theorists of bourgeois liberal tendencies in the early years, since all of them were greatly influenced by the Western progressive education movement of the period. The progressive education theorists saw the primary purpose of education as the realization of individual potential. In practice (though not in principle) they also thought in terms of a socially privileged child – one whose parents were non-utilitarian in their attitude to education, and did not see it exclusively as a preparation for earning a living or as a means of social advancement.

Following progressive principles, Soviet education theorists of the 1920s assumed almost without question that examinations, homework and punishment had no place in the Soviet school, and that rote learning and old-fashioned drilling on the ‘three Rs’ were equally inappropriate. They also assumed that all children should go to the same kind of school (whether general-educational or vocational); and that a single and comprehensive education system would, in the long run, automatically provide all children with equal educational opportunity, regardless of their social background.

Soviet educators derived the polytechnical principle from Marx; but their exposition of it often seemed to owe less to Marx than to the American education theorist of the ‘activity school’, John Dewey. Dewey, like Marx, believed that the child should master a variety of practical skills. But these practical studies, Dewey wrote,

shall not be mere. . . modes of routine employment, the gaining of better technical skill as cooks, seamstresses, or carpenters, but active centers of scientific insight into natural materials and processes, points of departure whence children shall be led into a realization of the historic development of man. . . [It] is through them that the entire spirit of the school is renewed. It has a chance to affiliate itself with life, to become the child’s habitat, where he learns through directed living, instead of being only a place to learn lessons having an abstract and remote reference to some possible living to be done in the future. It gets a chance to be a miniature community, an embryonic society.⁵

The rather vague notion of bringing the school ‘closer to life’ was central to Soviet progressive educational thought in the 1920s; and it was often combined with an emphasis on the moral and educative value of physical labour which echoed the teaching of Leo Tolstoy. In general, even the most progressively inclined schools had difficulty in finding teachers and equipment to acquaint students with basic industrial trades, as Marx had advocated. But they could certainly teach sewing and woodwork, keep rabbits and plant vegetable

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gardens, and organize class discussions and neighbourhood excursions for the children. These activities, in fact, were the most conspicuous innovation in Soviet school practice in the first decade after the revolution.

However, the great majority of parents failed to appreciate progressive educational methods. Peasant parents thought that their children ought to be taught reading, writing and arithmetic; working-class parents thought that their children ought to learn a trade. Such criticism saddened the Old Bolshevik intellectuals who were prominent in the first phase of Soviet educational policy-making: for them, progressive educational ideals were part of the mental baggage of any civilized and 'progressive' person, Marxist or otherwise. They believed that the controversy over progressive education in the 1920s was a conflict of ignorance and enlightenment. But less cultured Communists described it as a clash of proletarian and bourgeois values; and sometimes the Old Bolshevik intellectuals feared that they were right.

Lenin appears to have shared the progressive educational views of which his wife, Krupskaya, was a strong advocate; but his main interests in the educational field were elsewhere. Before the revolution, he had written on the question of social mobility through education. In the 1890s, the Russian education system combined traditional 'caste' schools (providing training appropriate to the parents', and therefore the child's, station in life) with schools which, in Lenin's analysis, followed the capitalist principle of opening an upward path to talent. Lenin scornfully rejected a populist proposal to create 'rural gymnasia' offering both agricultural and general-educational training to peasant children. It was a pseudo-progressive reversion to the old 'caste' spirit of Russian education, Lenin considered; and the truly progressive development of recent years was the evolution of the normal academic gymnasia into capitalist-type secondary schools accessible to all children whose parents could pay the fees.⁶

As a revolutionary opponent of the Tsarist regime, Lenin invariably chose the course of political activism rather than that of gradual enlightenment of the people. He showed comparatively little interest in the efforts of Social-Democratic intellectuals to educate the workers in the 1890s, and expressed contempt for the liberal enlighteners of the Committee on Illiteracy who were prepared to settle for gradual change within the existing political framework.⁷ He rejected Menshevik arguments that Russia's economic and cultural backwardness stood in the way of a successful proletarian

revolution. In the immediate pre-war years, his party gained support from the younger, more rebellious and less educated workers;⁸ and, despite a much broader base of working-class support for the Bolsheviks by the time of the October Revolution, Lenin could still threaten to 'go to the sailors' to defeat his own Central Committee during the first months in power.

But, as leader of the new Soviet government, Lenin was second to none in his insistence that popular illiteracy and 'Communist conceit' were major obstacles to the achievement of socialism. He believed, as all the Bolsheviks did, that workers and peasants must be drawn into leadership positions; but he also believed that education was a necessary prerequisite for leadership. *Sansculotte* elements were purged from the party at the end of the Civil War; and Lenin firmly opposed increasing lower-class recruitment into the party until the educational and political quality of potential recruits improved.⁹

Many Communists were very hostile to the idea that they had something to learn from the bourgeoisie; and there was considerable support for various types of proletarian isolationism in culture – Proletkult's attempt to develop a specifically proletarian literature and art, for example, and the creation of proletarian 'caste' schools like the *rabfak* which were supposed to exclude students from other social classes.

Lenin had little sympathy with the idea of 'caste' schools, though he tolerated the *rabfak*. But he was really annoyed by the theorists of proletarian culture because – apart from his political objections to Proletkult¹⁰ – he thought they were providing an intellectual justification for ignorance and 'Communist conceit'. Unlike many of his fellow Bolshevik intellectuals, Lenin never felt the need to apologize for his intelligentsia background or subordinate his own judgement to the truer class instincts of the workers. His judgement was that people with education were more cultured than people without it. Workers and Communists who pretended that 'bourgeois' culture was inferior to 'proletarian' were simply confusing the issue: the basic cultural task of the Soviet state was to raise the educational level of the masses, and the basic task for Communists was to raise their own cultural level by learning the skills of the bourgeoisie.¹¹

Lenin's sense of the autonomous value of education and culture meant that, in the short term, he was more interested in preserving the old universities and higher technical schools than in proletarianizing them. In the technical field, he had a high regard for the 'bourgeois specialists' and saw little need to force the pace of training proletarian and Communist replacements.¹² His position on the

social sciences was more complex. In the first place, the old universities needed Marxist (and, if possible, Bolshevik) professors of social science, though they would also have to keep most of the old, non-Marxist professors. In the second place, social science was the basic training which Lenin recommended for the *smena* – the new generation of Communist intellectuals, largely recruited from the working class, which would ultimately replace the Old Bolshevik leadership.

But even in his attitude to the training of the *smena* Lenin was cautious. There was, no doubt, an immediate need to bring working-class and Communist students into the VUZy via the rabfaks; but one should also be mindful of the need to maintain academic standards in higher education. In the future, the *smena* would come to higher education through the secondary schools, which Lenin continued to see as the main educational channel for upward social mobility. Pending the consolidation of the Soviet secondary school, the training of the *smena* would have to be a small-scale undertaking, and social class would only be one of the criteria for recruitment.

The formation of education policy: institutional conflicts

In the first decade of Soviet power, there were many different opinions on education policy, and none of them – not even Lenin's – had absolute priority. A number of different government and party institutions contributed to the formation of policy, and their positions were often directly related to the particular needs and interests of the institutions concerned. The institutional dimension of Soviet politics, which has often been overlooked in Western and Soviet scholarship, is essential to our understanding of the process of educational policy-making: in this sphere, institutions played a far greater role than party factions, and some of the institutional battles assumed almost epic proportions.

The government agency directly responsible for education and culture in the RSFSR was the Commissariat of Enlightenment, known by the acronym Narkompros. From 1918 to 1929, Narkompros was led by a triumvirate of Old Bolshevik intellectuals – Lunacharsky (the Commissar), Pokrovsky and Krupskaya. Both Lunacharsky and Pokrovsky had been estranged from the Bolsheviks between 1909 and the summer of 1917, following a philosophical and political disagreement with Lenin which, like most emigré quarrels, was conducted with great bitterness (especially on Lenin's side) and to no real purpose. Lunacharsky, an erudite, tolerant and kind-hearted man, was widely known for his literary and oratorical skills. Pokrov-

sky, whose temperament was combative and sarcastic, was probably the best Marxist historian of his generation and the Bolsheviks' most visible scholar.

Krupskaya, Lenin's wife, was Narkompros' expert on educational theory, having written a short book on the subject in emigration¹⁸ and earlier contributed to the progressive Tolstoyan educational journal *Svobodnoe vospitanie*. During Lenin's lifetime, her relationship with him was a political asset for the commissariat. Later, as Lenin's widow and the object of Stalin's dislike, she became a political liability.

But, even under Lenin, Narkompros was a political lightweight. Neither Lunacharsky nor Pokrovsky was ever a Central Committee member; and Krupskaya was elected to the Central Committee only in 1927, after her break with the Zinovievite Opposition, when her feud with Stalin was already common knowledge in the party elite. Two criticisms were frequently made of Narkompros. The first, dating back to the Civil War, was that the commissariat was disorganized, impractical and excessively sympathetic with the old intelligentsia. The second, which became common in the latter years of NEP,* charged Lunacharsky and his colleagues with excessive zeal in their defence of Narkompros' *vedomstvennyi* (bureaucratic) interest.

However, Narkompros' behaviour in this respect was certainly not unusual. If it stood out, it was probably because many Communists thought it was defending the wrong kind of interest. In the first place, Narkompros supported the principle of general as against vocational and specialized education. This brought it into conflict with the Supreme Council for the National Economy of the USSR (Vesenkha), as well as with the Ukrainian Narkompros, the trade union leadership and the Komsomol Central Committee. In the second place, it attempted to minimize social discrimination in education, objecting particularly to the social purging of schools. This provoked public attacks by the Komsomol leaders, and was a cause of constant low-level tension between Narkompros and the Central Committee secretariat.

In the 1920s, the Komsomol aspired – on the whole, quite successfully – to play an independent role in national politics as representative of the young workers. Its belligerence was not only directed at Narkompros: in fact, Narkompros was sometimes a Komsomol ally in battles with management (Vesenkha) and

* The New Economic Policy, 1921–27.

organized labour (VTsSPS, the Central Council of Trade Unions) on questions of youth employment and training. But on general educational and cultural questions, the Komsomol persistently labelled Narkompros as a defender of the 'intelligentsia' and 'bourgeois' interest; and by the end of NEP the Komsomol had formulated a comprehensive educational platform, differing from that of Narkompros on virtually every controversial issue, and was energetically lobbying for its acceptance by the party in an organized, nation-wide campaign.

The party leadership did not always take the Komsomol's political activity very seriously. 'The Komsomol should help Narkompros in all aspects of its work', Zinoviev said in 1924, adding unkindly 'it is time to stop this war of mice and frogs which is going on between Narkompros and the Komsomol'.¹⁴ However, Narkompros could not take the Komsomol challenge so lightly. In the first place, the Komsomol Central Committee learned to speak as if it were the party organ responsible for supervising Narkompros' work. This was in fact the responsibility of the agitprop department of the party Central Committee; but since that body took only intermittent interest in education, Narkompros often had difficulty getting authoritative support against the Komsomol even when, on principle, it should have been forthcoming.

In the second place, the Komsomol's constant criticism of Narkompros probably had an impact on party opinion. Many Communists, especially those who joined the party after Lenin's death, would no doubt have been extremely surprised to learn that on basic questions of education policy Narkompros' position was almost identical with the position Lenin had taken in the early 1920s. The conventional wisdom, frequently expressed at party conferences and in the daily press, was that Narkompros was the special protector of bourgeois students and the non-Communist intelligentsia – a 'liberal' commissariat, lacking Bolshevik toughmindedness and drive.

Narkompros recognized that many of its policies were unpopular with the Communist rank-and-file and the working class; and of course it had to find ways of explaining this to its own satisfaction. V. N. Yakovleva, one of Lunacharsky's deputies in the latter years of NEP, sometimes adopted a tone of cultural and even moral superiority which made a very poor impression on Communist listeners. On one occasion, she justified Narkompros' opposition to social purging in the following terms:

If we educational leaders are going to say yes to all the decisions which

the [proletarian and Communist] masses demand, and are not going to stand up for our own point of view energetically, . . . then the masses are never going to learn from their mistakes. . . [Our problem of] leadership is probably more complicated than that of any other Soviet organization. Why? Because it is a question of cultural leadership, and our country is uncultured.¹⁵

Lunacharsky himself was more tactful, but some of his arguments also took him into rather dangerous ground. In 1924 (in the course of the debate on literature) he differentiated between a 'party' interest, which would legitimately press for greater discrimination in favour of working-class and Communist groups, and a 'government' interest, which would with equal legitimacy defend the rights of those who were not proletarian or Communist.¹⁶ This was, in fact, quite an accurate description of one of the processes of educational policy-making during NEP; and it was as good an explanation as any of the observable fact that Narkompros had much better working relations with its government superiors (the Russian and All-Union Sovnarkoms) than with the party Central Committee and its apparatus. But it was presumably not a description of what most members of the leadership thought *ought* to be the interaction of party and government organs.

If it can be said, with many reservations on specific questions, that Russian and to a large extent Soviet education policy followed the educational principles formulated in Narkompros RSFSR until the end of NEP, there was no reason to suppose that this situation would continue indefinitely. In the latter part of the 1920s, the mood of the Narkompros leadership became increasingly pessimistic and beleaguered, and with good cause.

In the first place, Narkompros was unable to resolve its differences with Vesenkha (in effect, the all-Union commissariat of industry). These had begun during Dzerzhinsky's tenure at Vesenkha, but became worse under his successor, Kuibyshev. By 1927, Vesenkha was pressing strongly for a transfer of all technical education (including the VTUZY) out of Narkompros' jurisdiction and into that of Vesenkha. On the eve of the First Five-Year Plan for rapid industrialization, Vesenkha's political weight was increasing, and so was its budget. It was hard to imagine that Narkompros could resist such pressure for long, even though the transfer was seen by Narkompros as an unmitigated disaster, both for the technical schools and Narkompros itself.

In the second place, party opinion was hardening on the question of proletarian discrimination. There was concern in the Central

Committee secretariat at the low educational level of party cadres, many of them former workers, holding responsible administrative and managerial positions. Since 1924, the party had absorbed an enormous influx of workers, and every year more of them moved into full-time work in one of the apparats. As administrators, their instincts were anti-bourgeois and often anti-intellectual, and they tended to support discriminatory policies in education. But above all, from the standpoint of the party leadership, these working-class Communists themselves were in need of some kind of training in order to cope with their administrative responsibilities.

These problems and conflicts were to be resolved in the last years of the 1920s, as Stalin consolidated his power and pushed forward with the policy of rapid industrialization. During the First Five-Year Plan, the party adopted a programme of 'affirmative action' comparable to that undertaken in the United States in the 1960s on behalf of blacks and other minority groups. Like American affirmative action, it was based on the assumption that the position of educationally disadvantaged groups could be radically changed only by changing the basis of recruitment to *higher* education, not by gradually improving and extending the secondary schools. As in the US, it involved a temporary lowering of academic standards; and it was accomplished by a series of government actions which were resisted by the educational institutions involved and resented by middle-class parents.

The Soviet affirmative action, however, was remarkable in that it was undertaken by the 'proletarian dictatorship' on behalf of the proletariat. Workers and working-class Communists were the main beneficiaries of *vydvizhenie* to higher education during the First Five-Year Plan. They were sent, according to official statements, because the regime needed reliable 'proletarian cadres', and these cadres needed technical education. The function of affirmative action, in short, was to use working-class upward mobility to create a loyal elite capable of leading an industrializing state.

The purpose of this book is to explore the decision for affirmative action and its antecedents and consequences within the context of education policy. But the significance of this decision goes far beyond the educational realm. The Soviet mode of economic and political development adopted during the First Five-Year Plan was unique; but its socio-political dimension, in contrast to the economic, has received very little attention from scholars. Yet clearly the decision for affirmative action is of the greatest importance for understanding

the social support of the Soviet regime, both before and after the First Five-Year Plan period.

From the October Revolution of 1917 to the Stalin Constitution of 1936, the regime styled itself a 'dictatorship of the proletariat', implying that the industrial working class constituted its main body of support within the society. But Western scholars have tended to reject any such idea. The Bolsheviks, no doubt, had substantial working-class support at the time of the October Revolution, although most of their leaders came from the intelligentsia. But during the Civil War the working class was dispersed as a result of hunger in the towns and the closing of industrial plants, while many workers who were active Bolshevik supporters volunteered for the Red Army or were promoted into administrative jobs. There were signs of estrangement between the ruling party and the proletariat – among them, the Bolsheviks' repudiation of radical interpretations of 'workers' control' in industry, the subordination of trade unions to the state, the suppression of the Workers' Opposition within the party, and the revolt of the Kronstadt sailors in 1921. By the end of the Civil War, most Western historians agree, the Bolsheviks' 'dictatorship of the proletariat' had become, in effect, a dictatorship of the party; and the party's policies did not necessarily represent the desires and interests of the industrial working class.

Yet the party leaders did not lose their sense of commitment to the working class, as any reader of their debates in the 1920s will be aware. This sense of commitment was surely a factor in the large-scale recruitment of workers into the party after Lenin's death (though Trotsky considered it simply a factional ploy to ensure his defeat,¹⁷ and some historians seem to have overlooked the large element of special pleading in his argument), as it was in the affirmative action programme of 1928–32. The commitment was an emotional one, but it was also a matter of practical politics. The Bolsheviks could not rely on the peasantry for support; and, during NEP, they had doubts of the loyalty of the professionals and salaried employees inherited from the old regime which cannot have been wholly without foundation.

The hypothesis that during the 1920s the Bolsheviks not only looked to the working class for support but did so with some success seems to be confirmed by the statistics of party membership. Even in January 1927, with a large recruitment of workers still to come, 56.1% of Communists had been workers by occupation when they entered the party and 39.4% were currently workers by occupation.¹⁸ At the same time, more than 10% of *all* workers were Communists;¹⁹