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THE EVOLUTION OF THE LABOUR MARKET IN SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE USSR IN THE 1920S

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Abstract:

In article focuses on the main milestones in the development of the Soviet labor market, right up to its official closure at the end of 1930, and the first measures of the Soviet government in the sphere of labor hiring are systematized. In this article, the author considers the main stages of the Soviet labour market's evolution until 1930. The first measures of the Soviet policy on the labour market are systemized.

Keywords: History of Labour Market, Soviet Labour Market, Labour Market's Institutions, Combating Unemployment.

I. INTRODUCTION

The labor market is one of the most important economic institutions that are important for the social and economic life of society. Therefore, the study of its characteristics at various stages of historical development makes it possible to imagine what was happening in the economy in different periods.

For the first time in 1915-1916, an attempt was made to organize the distribution of labor in Russia: a large number of local labor bureaus and the All-Russia Labor Bureau were organized, servicing mainly the needs of refugees. Then, the organization of the labor market began in practice only in August 1917; 6 months after the February Revolution of 1917: a law on labor exchanges was introduced. By the October revolution in the country with hundreds of large cities, there were no more than two dozen labor exchanges.

While Russia was at war, there was no noticeable unemployment. The opposite phenomenon was observed: the defense industry and agriculture experienced a shortage of workers, the economic policy of "industrial mobilization" and "labor mobilization" was carried out. There were no free workers on the labor market, so the work of prisoners of war, soldiers and immigrants ("aliens") was used intensively. The use of labor of prisoners of war occurred throughout the territory of Russia during the period from 1915 (140 thousand) to 1918 inclusive (95 thousand). The maximum number of prisoners of war in Russia was in 1917 and exceeded 1.5 million. This free labor was used at various state-owned enterprises: mining plants, ports, tim-

ber and peat extraction, on the construction and operation of railroads and highways, as well as in front-line operations.

The situation on the labor market in Soviet Russia has changed dramatically in connection with the conclusion of the Brest Peace. By February-early March, the demobilization of the army and industry actually ended, and the country faced a mass unemployment phenomenon. The All-Russian Congress of Labor Commissars held in May 1918 described the general causes of the depression that had developed in the labor market in April-May:

1. The disorganization of the labor market in Russia has reached its extreme limits due to backwardness, the petty-bourgeois way of economy and the resulting economic dispersion of the country. These conditions strongly influenced the labor market after the war.

2. The liquidation of the war, which had drawn into the sphere of production, as applied to military needs. Millions of urban and rural petty bourgeoisie and created countless institutions and enterprises only for servicing military needs-was bound to create an extremely difficult situation in the labor market by throwing overboard hundreds of thousands of people are alien, by their nature, to production.

3. The return from the front of many millions of soldiers, among whom the vast majority was connected to the land before the war, and a large part - with all kinds of casual occupations, gave the ready army of the unemployed and set the state against this whole mass unsolvable tasks.

4. Along with the vast mass of unemployed who were not fit for productive work to recreate the national economy, a considerable number of skilled workers left the production market as a result of the complete liquidation or partial reduction of work in enterprises serving the needs of war appeared on the labor market.

5. These conditions, which together gave rise to mass unemployment, were reinforced by certain circumstances, namely:

a) the isolation of Russia from a number of territories (the Donets Basin, South Russia, the North Caucasus) because of military occupation, as a result of which hundreds of thousands of workers sent to these regions for mining and agricultural work were forced to remain in their provinces (Tula, Kaluga, Tambov, Voronezh, Kursk, and others);

b) a disruption in transport that prevents workers from leaving for agricultural, construction and other work in remote areas; c) the relations created by the land reform have reduced the field of employment in the countryside.

II. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is theoretical analysis and empirical study of the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the labor market in Soviet Russia and the USSR in the 1920s

The subject of the study is the evolution of the soviet labor market.

The theoretical and methodological basis for the study was the statistics and the works of Russian historians and scientists such as I. Khodorovsky, Z.A. Astapovich, O.V. Mramornova, V.S. Rakhmanin and others.

III. RESULTS

Between January 1 and April 1, 1918, prisoners of war (sent home) were removed from work and replaced by unemployed soldiers who returned from the front. Around the same time, the People's Commissariat for Labor passed a resolution on the release of import ("yellow") workers from the operation of contracts, and entrepreneurs were obliged to immediately settle accounts with them and, at the first request of the Chinese workers, take them (at the expense of entrepreneurs) to their homeland, to China. Tens of thousands of Chinese workers left for China. These events have made it possible to ease tensions in the domestic labor market, to free, albeit not better quality, but jobs that generate income.

The general situation in the labor market by April-May 1918 was as follows: within Soviet Russia there were 324,000 (in April), 375,000 (in May) unemployed officially placed on labor exchanges. This number of unemployed was distributed by region as follows:

Table 1.

The Distribution of the Unemployed in Soviet Russia in April-May 1918	
1. The Moscow region	100-120 thousand people.
2. The Petrograd region	50-70 thousand people.
3. The Volga region	50 thousand people.
4. The Don and Caucasus region	50 thousand people.
5. The Ural	18 thousand people.
6. The Black Earth Region	15-20 thousand people.
7. The Transcaucasia	15 thousand people.
8. The Western Siberia	10-20 thousand people.
9. The Turkistan	7 thousand people.
10. The Eastern Siberia	6 thousand people.
11. The Far East	3-4 thousand people.
Total:	324-375 thousand people.

The all-Russian unified network of labor exchanges on June 1, 1918, within the regions controlled by the Soviet government, consisted of 204 labor exchanges, including 73 in the Moscow region, 37 in the Urals, Povolzhskaya - 24, Petrograd - 22, Voronezh - 13 etc.

The economic policy of the Soviet government was from the very beginning directed at liquidating the labor market and creating accounting and planned distribution of all available labor in the country with the help of state bodies for the distribution of labor force-labor exchanges. At first, this was due to military necessity; after the defeat of the white movement - the need for industrialization of the country.

The First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions, held on January 7-14, 1918, adopted a resolution on "Unemployment". It said: "The struggle against unemployment in conditions of re-organization of society on a socialist basis is possible only through the organization of the national economy, the restoration of the productive forces of the country and the proper distribution of labor." It also set the task of organizing "trade unions of labor exchanges for the accurate registration and distribution of workers and their transfer to those branches of the national economy, where they need"; the necessity of carrying out "a working policy (centralized transfer of labor forces from one district to another)" was justified.

Thus, already in 1918, the new leadership of the country relied not on the market mechanism for the supply and demand of labor, but on the planned administrative and command mechanism for its distribution in the country's economy.

Proof of this thesis is a whole series of legislative acts of the Soviet government.

First, on January 31, 1918, a new law on labor exchanges was adopted, which abolished private offices for hire and established the mandatory employment of employees and workers only through state labor exchanges. The categorical prohibition of transactions, in addition to the labor exchanges, created a common for all, compulsory labor queue for sending to work. Labor exchanges acted as the only distributors of labor in their way and regulators of all relations that are formed on the Soviet labor market. The factory committees were obliged to hire only through the labor exchange.

In addition, the new law completely excluded from participation in the management of stock exchanges of entrepreneurs. If previously labor exchanges performed the function of labor intermediation between supply and demand and were built on the principle of parity, with equal participation in their management of entrepreneurs and workers, the new "working" labor exchanges were transferred to the exclusive management of workers' organizations.

Thus, for the first time in Russia, a serious disparity was established between the demand and supply of labor. Before the adoption of the law on January 31, 1918 labor exchanges were authoritative for both sides structures - both for hiring and for supply, was observed the important for the labor market principle of parity of the parties - economic forces of supply-demand; after the entry into force of this law, the credibility of entrepreneurs was diminished, which did not correspond to the norms of a market economy.

Secondly, on September 3, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree on the discipline of the unemployed (on the prohibition of the unemployed from giving up work), which determines (under special instructions) under which conditions an unemployed person can refuse the job offered to him. Unemployed, according to the decree, had no right to refuse work on the specialty, if the conditions of the work provided did not deviate from the norms established by the tariff of the corresponding trade union. With a shortage of laborers, labor exchanges were given the right to send unemployed workers to other jobs. Unemployed people had no right to refuse temporary work and from moving to other cities or localities. It was established that the work on harvesting bread and delivering food was mandatory for all unemployed. Those who violated this provision were deprived for three months of benefits in kind and money, lost their turn at the labor exchange and were registered as newcomers. Unemployed, who violated the law again, were deprived of the right to be re-registered at the labor exchange, and they were reported to local authorities as persons who do not have certain classes.

The reason for the appearance of this decree was that on September 2, 1918, the country was declared a military camp by decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, and all the economy of the country was subordinated to military needs.

Thirdly, on October 5, 1918, the decree of the Council of People's Commissars introduced labor books for the non-working population ("bourgeois elements") living on unearned income, and for persons who do not have certain classes. Only in the presence of a work record book with a note on the performance of public works and duties assigned by local Soviets, the unemployed received food cards.

Fourthly, on November 1, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars issued a Regulation on Labor Force Distribution Divisions, which abolished the Regulations on Labor Exchange. The matter of accurate accounting and planned distribution of labor in the country was finally concentrated in the hands of the state. To this end, departments for the distribution of labor were established, which were the organs of the People's Commissariat for Labor. They were created in settlements with a population of at least 10 thousand. Labor distribution departments were obliged to take into account all employees, as well as all unemployed in the given area.

Fifthly, on November 3, 1918, the decree of the Council of People's Commissars was published on the introduction of labor service to clear snowdrifts. The broad masses of the peasantry were involved in clearing snow from the railway tracks. Gradually, Soviet Russia went to the introduction of universal labor service in the country and the elimination of the labor market. As a result, a totalitarian, strictly centralized and militarized socio-economic system was created and operated in the country for several years, with the goal of suppressing armed resistance ("military communism").

With the market element struggled in all possible ways. Firstly, the Congress of Labor Commissars and representatives of labor exchanges of the Moscow Region decided: "The congress considers harmful the attempts to create special organizations of the unemployed who oppose themselves to workers' organizations." The unemployed, like all workers, had to enter trade unions; "Could form their sections under these unions and carry out measures to combat unemployment in accordance with the interests of the entire labor movement as a whole".

Thus, in Soviet Russia, there could not be independent organizations of the unemployed, who ceased to exist as soon as in May 1918 the period of construction of the Soviet (state) labor exchanges was completed. The accounting of the unemployed carried out by the exchanges provided "an opportunity for Soviet economic bodies to use the free labor force in the interests of socialist construction".

Mass organs of the use of labor of the unemployed by the organs of Soviet power both in the center and in the localities were public works (the institution of public works was used in Russia and before the revolution - during the First World War to help refugees).

Under the Committee of State Structures of the Supreme Council of National Economy on May 9, 1918, a special state body was created—the Provisional Council for Public Works, which planned these works on a nationwide scale. At the beginning of 1918, the local councils of the national economy, the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, the labor commissariats, labor exchanges, and trade unions were engaged in the organization of public works.

For example, in Petrograd, the question of combating unemployment through the organization of public works was associated with the restoration and organization of production on the giants of the metallurgical industry engaged in the production of equipment for transport (Putilovsky, Obukhov, Izhorsk, Aleksandrovsky plants).

Large-scale public works were carried out in the field of peat development in the Petrograd gubernia, in the Volkhov area; In the spring of 1918, 5,500 unemployed were sent there (for these purposes the government allocated 100 million rubles to the Petrograd Soviet). In large cities: Moscow, Petrograd, Smolensk, Omsk, Rostov and other provincial cities - organized seasonal work related to the opening of brick and cement plants, the repair of public buildings. Work was carried out to improve the urban economy, road construction, the procurement of construction materials for the rural population in need, land reclamation in agriculture, etc. Almost all the unemployed in Khabarovsk were covered by work in public workshops, etc.

On March 21, 1921, the Decree of the Central Executive Committee on the replacement of food and raw materials by natural tax was issued. This was a real event in the political course of the Soviet leadership, which was in connection with well-known events, including in Kronstadt. There was a change in the political and economic course caused by the need to solve the task of restoring the country's agriculture and industry, including by "raising the interest of workers to general production issues" (from the circular of the Central Committee of the RCP (B) of Oct. 30, 1922, "On Industrial Propaganda"). .

"The main stratification factor in the middle and second half of the 1920s was the NEP (which took approximately 5-6 years). The prodnologue opened up new paths for the social and economic evolution of the peasantry (and of the whole society - the Auth.), Including through competition. The convolution of NEP reduced the NEP men and the bourgeoisie from 8.5% to 4.6%. The main factor in the revival and reduction of the bourgeoisie was politics, but it did not cause either the growth of the working class or its stratification complexity. Its share by 1928 increased only to 12.4% against 10.4% in 1924 ".

An important feature of the new economic policy was the abolition of universal labor service. Since 1921, a course was taken to voluntarily recruit labor for the national economy. The Decree of the Council of Labor and Defense of August 12, 1921 "Basic provisions on measures for the restoration of large-scale industry and raising and developing production" regulated the main changes in the field of production, as well as hiring workers.

First, the largest enterprises in each branch of industry joined in special associations on the basis of economic calculation. Secondly, the procedure for admission and dismissal, as well as the rate of working out and terms of payment for labor, were worked out by the Board of the association (enterprise) in agreement with the trade union and the labor department of the People's Commissariat of Labor. The remuneration of labor should not be lower than the rates fixed by the production union for the corresponding category of workers. This meant that enterprises acquired a certain amount of independence in the search for and selection of personnel; nevertheless, the need for coordination with the relevant authorities remained.

On December 30, 1924, in the circular of the Supreme Economic Council, the People's Commissariat for Labor and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, it was said to all economic and professional organizations that "raising labor productivity is the main and decisive task for the Soviet power." The results did not take long. Already in December 1926, in the report to the Seventh All-Union Congress of Trade Unions, there was a tendency for the growth of industry and the working class. In two years, the output of industry increased in relation to 1923/24. by 130%. The average number of workers in the operating enterprises of large-scale industry was in 1923-24. - 1263 thousand, in 1925-26. - 1901 thousand, i.e. an increase of 50.5% was obtained.

The state of the labor market was characterized in these years as follows: "The movement of unemployment over the past period (1923-26 - Auth.) Shows the stability and even growth of it according to labor exchanges. Along with the quantitative stabilization of unemployment, there are significant qualitative

changes in the composition of the unemployed. For the period from January to October 1, 1925, there was an increase in the number of unskilled unemployed at the expense of industrial groups. Beginning on October 1, 1925, and up to June 1, 1926, the registration of the unemployed at labor exchanges continues to show that the industrial group of unemployed registered with the labor exchange remains unchanged - about 19% of all unemployed, the group of intellectual labor ranged from 20-17%, and the group unemployed who do not have a certain profession and qualifications, from 42-43%".

There was excessive labor, the Soviet labor market was formed; By the summer of 1930, more than 1 million people were registered with labor exchanges. The dynamics of the number of unemployed who were registered with the Soviet labor exchanges is shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

Elimination of Unemployment in the USSR	
1928, April 1	1576 thousand people.
1928, October 1	1365 thousand people.
1929, April 1	1741 thousand people.
1929, October 1	1242 thousand people.
1930, April 1	1081 thousand people.
1930, October 1	240 thousand people.

As can be seen from the table, during each year, from April to October, the number of Soviet unemployed decreased (in 1928 the number of unemployed decreased by 211 thousand people, in 1929 - by 499 thousand people, in 1930 - by 841 thousand. people). This seasonal decline in the number of unemployed is due to their involvement in agricultural work. In April, preparations began for the sowing of cereals, then the sowing, and as the ear spilled and ripened, harvesting took place in the late 1920s manually, without the use of harvesters (they simply did not exist). But by April of the following year the number of unemployed grew again - to a figure exceeding 1 million people. Thus, seasonal agricultural work, which required the attraction of mass manual labor, annually diverted part of the unemployed from April to October, but did not solve the problem of unemployment.

The problem of unemployment in the USSR was resolved by the government's policy of carrying out industrialization of the country, the need to build large power plants, metallurgical plants and industrial facilities that required hundreds of thousands of workers to conduct preparatory, auxiliary and basic works to develop and operate the production. The average number of workers and employees in the national economy of the country in 1913 was 11.4 million. (including workers - 9.8 million people), in 1928 - 11.4 million people. (including workers - 8.7 million people), in 1932 - 24.2 million people. (including 17.8 million workers). Thus, we see an increase in the number of workers and employees more than twofold. Where did this increase come from, quite understandably, from the former unemployed, for whom the Soviet state acted as an employer.

Primary development was given to heavy industry, primarily machine building, which made it possible to bring the country into the category of industrially developed and defensible countries. The needs of the village were pushed into the background. Industrialization required increased grain exports for the purchase of machinery and equipment.

The problem of technical personnel was being solved: the country was experiencing an acute shortage of engineering and technical personnel in industry. In 1928, 13.7 thousand engineers worked in it - 0.5% of the total number of workers. The USSR used foreign technical assistance: representatives of Soviet business executives traveled to Western Europe and the United States, which concluded contracts with large foreign firms. By the end of 1928, 49 contracts had been concluded. Among them was a contract with Henry Ford, who for nine years pledged to provide free technical assistance, transfer his experience and inventions, and the USSR undertook to purchase cars for 300 million rubles from him within four years. Attraction of foreign technical assistance has fully justified itself.

In the implementation of the tasks of industrialization, an important direction was the improvement of technology and production technology. In the oil industry, instead of the obsolete method of oil production,

compressors and pumps were introduced, a rotational method of drilling wells was used, and oil refining was electrified. In the coal industry, instead of manually cutting coal, a pneumatic pick hammer was used; In the peat industry, a wide application was made of the hydraulic method of peat extraction. Metallurgy began to master the production of high-quality steel and rolled metal.

In total in 1926-27 years. 528 new enterprises were built. In the first years of industrialization the construction of the Kerch and Krivoy Rog metallurgical plants in the south of Ukraine, Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk factories in the Urals and Siberia began. In 1927, according to the plan of the GOELRO, construction of 10 new large power stations began, thermal power stations were built in Donbass, Chelyabinsk and Kizelovsk. In March 1927 was laid Dnieproges, which was one of the main buildings of the GOELRO plan. In the years 1926-28. began to build refineries in Baku, Grozny, Batumi, Tuapse; Between Grozny and Tuapse, Baku and Batumi, oil pipelines were laid. Large reconstruction and construction of new mines were carried out in the Donetsk and Kuznetsk coal basins; New wood processing plants, paper mills were being built. Cotton factories were built in Central Asia and Transcaucasia. An important role was played by the construction in 1927-30. Turkestan-Siberian Railway (Turksib), a length of 1500 km., Which connected the rich with bread, forest and coal Siberia with the cotton-growing areas of Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

January 31, 1932 in Magnitogorsk was blown the first blast furnace, six months later the workers put into operation the second blast furnace. This industrial giant was built within two years. The construction of such a giant as the Kuznetsk Metallurgical Combine with a production capacity of 3 million tons of metal per year was also going on at a fast pace. The project for the construction of this plant was developed at the request of the Soviet government by the American firm Freyn. About 1000 days it took the builders to build this first-class giant of metallurgy in the difficult conditions of the severe Siberian climate with insufficient mechanization.

Soviet machine building was developing: in 1933, the first tractors came out of the buildings of the Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant, the Urals and Novo-Kramatorsk Machine-Building Plants (1934) became operational enterprises. The iron and steel industry has mastered the capacity of the factories of the Ural-Kuznetsk Combine and has received new giant plants: Krivoy Rog, Novo-Lipetsk, Novo-Tula. Over the years of the First Five-Year Plan (1928-32), 1,500 new enterprises were put into operation, the second - 4,500 more, and before 1941 - 9,000 enterprises, for the most part heavy industry and power engineering. Absolutely new industries were created for Russia - aviation, automotive, petrochemical. During the industrialization period, coal production increased 5 times, oil - 3 times, electricity - 10 times. The growth rate of heavy industry was 3 times higher than in pre-revolutionary Russia. The number of workers in the pre-war decade increased from 4 to 12 million people. Such an unprecedented pace of industrial development, called the "big leap policy", required huge material and human resources. These resources were received, including through the collectivization of the peasantry and the mobilization of labor of the unemployed.

"Stratification factors after the NEP were industrialization and collectivization, as well as the policy of the final elimination of the" exploiting classes "and unemployment. The factor of industrialization in the 1930s. and acted in Western countries. In the USSR it was industrialization based on state property. The share of the industrial working class in Soviet Russia increased more than 2.5 times (at the expense of the unemployed - Auth.). But its educational and cultural-technical level did not meet the technical and technological needs of industry. The training of engineering and technical intelligentsia was accelerated. The proportion of intellectuals and employees from the late 20's to the late 30's has more than tripled. A new class arose-the collective farm peasantry, as well as agricultural workers ".

In September 1930, labor authorities were given the right to recruit unemployed people for compulsory work. In October 1930, it was decided to distribute all unemployed people to work and to stop the payment of unemployment benefits. On November 7, 1930, the Pravda newspaper wrote: "The proletariat of the USSR, in alliance with the working peasantry under the leadership of the CPSU (B.) ... achieved the complete elimination of unemployment in the USSR" and ensuring full employment of the able-bodied population.

However, in reality, the system of social guarantees for workers in the labor market was eliminated. The Soviet labor market in the 1930s. was officially closed. Mass repression, especially after 1934, affected all sectors of society; unprecedented scale took the forced labor of prisoners in the system specially created

in 1930 by the General Directorate of Camps (GULAG). Public (paid) work, previously organized for the unemployed, was replaced by state (in fact, unpaid) work in the structure of the GULAG.

In April 1932, the materials of the VCSPS report to the 9th All-Union Congress of Trade Unions "On the Composition of Workers and Employees" stated: "The tremendous growth of the national economy of the USSR is accompanied by the growing involvement of new workers in industry and the socialist sector of agriculture from year to year. Over the entire period since the Eighth Congress (December 1928), the number of workers and employees employed in the national economy increased from 11,552,000 in 1928 to 18,590,500 people by the end of 1931. The absolute growth is 7 million. 038 thousand 500 people or 60.9% "(Table 3).

Table 3.

The Growth in the Number of Workers and Employees in the USSR	
1928	11 млн. 552 тыс. чел.
1929	12 млн. 394 тыс. чел.
1930	14 млн. 360 тыс. чел.
1931	18 млн. 590 тыс. чел.

IV. CONCLUSION

The labor market was a foreign element for the "country of the dictatorship of the proletariat," it could not be fully controlled, since the army of the unemployed represented ballast at the same time and a threat to the newly emerging ("socialist") economic system. Therefore, an economic institution such as the labor market inherent in a market economy and carrying with it certain economic freedoms and problems associated primarily with unemployment of the able-bodied population was unacceptable in the administrative-command economic system.

In this regard, it was adopted a completely logical economic solution for "socialist construction" with a political implication: to eliminate the labor market and turn all former unemployed people into state employees-workers or employees. As a result, the state assumed the function of demand for labor and began to create jobs, that is, it acted as a monopolist-employer for the entire economically active population of the country. The price of labor (the level of wages by industry) was determined from above in accordance with the sectoral wage norms of the State Planning Committee. As for the supply of labor and competition for jobs between job seekers, these classic elements of the market mechanism also lost market power, due to a change in the economic system.

Thus, the basic elements of the mechanism of the Soviet labor market: demand-supply, price and competition-seemingly persisted, but became non-market in nature and economic content, acquired the features of planning and regulation due to total state interference in the sphere of hiring labor. It can be concluded that the Soviet labor market from the very beginning was a quasi-market, which functioned on state orders and served exclusively the sphere of state interests.

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