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NEW ECONOMIC POLICY IN THE USSR: MAIN RESULTS

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Abstract

The article deals with the main results of the new economic policy in the USSR. It is shown that the tactical goal of the NEPa was to overcome the crisis by strengthening the economic union of workers and peasants, cities and villages. The strategic goal of the NEPa was to build socialism, the leap to which through "war communism" was unsuccessful. The transition from capitalism to socialism required a transitional period. The focus was on the countryside. It became the link by grasping which the Bolsheviks intended to solve the entire chain of historical tasks facing them.

Keywords: NEP, village, peasant, economy, state.

I. INTRODUCTION

After World War I and the Civil War, the Soviet state found itself in a state of economic crisis. During the hostilities, the Donbass, the Baku oil region and the Urals suffered the most.

The crisis covered all aspects of public life, industry, agriculture. Due to the lack of fuel and raw materials, most enterprises stopped. The national income in 1920 was 3 times less than in 1917, industrial production was reduced by 7 times. Stopped traffic on 30 railways. Inflation was rampant. The volume of agricultural production was 60% of pre-war production. The sown areas decreased by 25%. In 1921, a mass famine swept through the city and countryside. There were over 7 million street children in the country. Epidemics of typhus, cholera, and smallpox acquired enormous proportions.

All of these factors testified to the deep economic and social crisis in Russia in the 1920s. Thus, the urgent problem of Russia for this period was the need for a radical change in economic policy in order to improve the state of the country - to prevent economic ruin, hunger, and growing mass strikes by the public. To this end, the Bolsheviks came to the decision to introduce a new course, called the new economic policy.

II. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The transition to a new economic policy immediately became the subject of analysis by many scientists. The historiography of the NEP of the twenties was formed in the conditions of a diversified economy and, therefore, was distinguished by a variety of points of view on the studied social phenomena.

The first direction in the historiography of the NEPa was represented by non-party scientific intelligentsia, who expressed their views on the pages of the journal "Economist". Analyzing the processes taking place in the country, they paid great attention to the possibility of the degeneration of the Bolshevik government. Their point of view was to recognize the evolution of Bolshevism, which began with the introduction of the NEPa and meant the presence of a general democratic trend of development. Analyzing the causes of the NEPa, the researcher V. Kuraev put forward the thesis about the connection between the Kronstadt events and the country's transition to a new policy. S. K Gusev in his article emphasized that the NEP was not a new policy as such, but was a continuation of the policy of "war communism". In his opinion, the NEP was aimed at a radical transformation of the country, overcoming the devastation and raising the country's productive forces. Another researcher of this problem, V. Sarabyanov, took a similar position. He also emphasized that the policy proclaimed by the Bolsheviks at the Tenth Congress was a continuation of the line that had been laid down in 1918. In his opinion, the goal of the NEP was not to restore the former regime, but to achieve complete socialism. V. Sarabyanov pointed to the erroneous steps of the Bolshevik leadership regarding the overestimation of the possibilities of a direct transition to communist construction during the period of "war communism". In his opinion, a transitional period was necessary with the assumption of capitalist relations, which were to disappear in the future. In 1938, the History of the CPSU (b.) was published. A Short Course", which raised issues related to the reasons for the introduction of the NEP. In this work, the policy of "war communism" was understood as forced, dictated by the conditions of the war. However, after this system came into conflict with the interests of the peasantry, the Bolsheviks decided to introduce the NEP. Associating the implementation of this policy with the restoration of the country's economy, this work emphasized that the NEP was the policy that fully corresponded to the principles of socialism and had patterns common to all countries.

During 1921-1922. The NEP was a forced attempt to retain power through economic concessions to the market. However, this market was strongly deformed. Private property was not guaranteed. The state considered it as the worst historical enemy. Therefore, the owner-owners had little incentive to expand the economy in the future, creating capital on speculative transactions. Therefore, first of all, various kinds of adventurers, speculators, who sought to hit the jackpot as quickly as possible, to spend it, to live for their own pleasure, poured into private activity. Naturally, there could be no question of any long-term investments of capital, expansion of the scope of activity and production of goods in such an atmosphere. Therefore, the share of private industry in the total volume of industrial production was low. But industry, restored to 4/5 of its pre-war level, has exhausted its reserves for absorbing the surplus labor force. Private capital was not very significant, semi-legal and did not invest in industry. Private capital rushed primarily into trade. If retail trade was mainly in the hands of a private trader, then wholesale trade was in the hands of the state, which created an explosive situation on the market, constantly fueling both the possibilities of speculation, on the one hand, and the suppression of private initiative, on the other. Significant changes have also taken place in the traditional strata of the population. During the civil war, the already small Russian bourgeoisie was completely destroyed. The intelligentsia suffered a serious blow. At the same time, since the First World War, there has been an active process of marginalization of the population. This fully applied to the working class: out of the civil war and the devastation that accompanied it, "the proletariat emerged, weakened and to a certain extent declassed by the destruction of its lifeblood – large-scale machine industry," stated V.I. Lenin. In 1920, according to official data, there were 1.7 million industrial workers in Russia, and cadre workers accounted for no more than 40%, i.e. about 700 thousand people.

But already by 1928 the total number of the working class had increased 5 times. The pauperized rural youth made up the bulk of the worker replenishment.

Moving to the city, she changed her social status, which gave rise to a complex range of moods. On the one hand, it was the growing expectation of better changes, which, coupled with the peasant psychology, turned it into an obedient and trusting mass of the population in relation to the state. On the other hand, the leveling mood trampled down by the NEP made it fierce opponents of those who were able to adapt to the changed situation and secure high material prosperity. This note was greatly strengthened by that part of the rural migrants who were pushed out of the countryside. But they did not find work in the city, adding to the growing ranks of the unemployed.



Auction house "Apollo" on Nevsky Prospekt, 1920.

Under the conditions of "war communism" and the distributive economy, a new caste of people was born who began to think of themselves as the salt of the earth. NEP for them was only a hindrance. In the resurrection of the free market, they unmistakably saw a mortal threat to their portfolios, their rations, their party privileges. A counterattack was inevitable. But the new class did not dare to openly attack the NEP: the fruits of the free market were too obvious. A certain evolution in the understanding of the NEP could be seen in the views of the Bolshevik leadership. At first, V.I. Lenin and his supporters viewed the NEP as a temporary tactical move, as a forced retreat caused by an unfavorable balance of power, as a forced respite before a forced assault on the shining heights of communism. By the autumn of 1921, V.I. Lenin comes to understand the NEP as one of the possible ways of transition to socialism. The essence of this long transitional period should be a peaceful economic competition between different modes of the economy. As a result of which the socialist way of life will gradually supplant the private capitalist forms of economy. Therefore, the NEP not only included a set of certain economic measures designed to stabilize the internal situation in the country, it also affected the political sphere. And if liberal logic inevitably deduced the formula - economic liberalization is equal to or, in any case, tends to political liberalization, then the logic of radical Bolshevism presented this process somewhat differently - economic pluralism must be compensated by a tightening of the political and economic regime, otherwise the NEP will not lead to socialism, but will turn the country back to the old rails. By the end of 1922, individual links of the NEP began to merge into a certain economic model, which differed significantly from the "military-communist" one. Lenin raises the question of the need to revise "the entire point of view on socialism." By 1925, it became clear that the national economy was at a fork in the road: political and ideological factors hindered further progress towards the market; the return to the military-communist type of economy was hampered by memories of mass famine, fear of anti-Soviet speeches. The new economic policy created the conditions for the development of agriculture, which was absolutely necessary for the restoration and development of industry.

The countryside needed manufactured goods: clothing, footwear, agricultural implements. The young Soviet industry at that time could not yet provide the village with a sufficient amount of goods in exchange for its products. Therefore, the state temporarily allowed the opening of small private enterprises: small factories, shops, etc. Although state industry has made a turn towards the New Economic Policy, the labor collectives of enterprises have not received the economic independence that the food tax gave to the countryside. Cost accounting was used only in associations (trusts), and the enterprises included in them were completely dependent on the old state structures and lacked independence.



Pavilion of the cooperative "Working business" on Lassalya (Mikhailovskaya) streets, 1925.

State enterprises were removed from budget support and transferred to cost accounting, i.e. had to cover their expenses with their income. They received a certain independence and could dispose of part of the products they produced. It also contributed to the revival of trade exchange in the country. All activities of enterprises, as self-supporting units, were aimed at implementing the basic principles of self-supporting self-sufficiency and making a profit.

The costs of each enterprise were to be reimbursed at the expense of the value of the production of this enterprise, and not the total social product. The state was not responsible for the debts of the trusts and did not allocate subsidies to cover the losses. Such a system of relations between the state and enterprises stimulated higher savings by increasing labor productivity, reducing costs and saving raw materials and materials, created objective opportunities for identifying the unprofitability or profitability of self-supporting enterprises.

Thus, the cost accounting of the NEP period was, in fact, a market method of management that contributed to overcoming the costly management of the state economy. Significant rates of economic growth during the NEP period were largely due to the "restorative effect": in industry - the commissioning of existing equipment that was not used, since the population was busy with wars and revolutions, in agriculture - the restoration of abandoned arable land. When in the late 20's. these reserves dried up, the country needed huge investments for the reconstruction of old factories and the creation of new industries. In 1928, the profitability of industrial production was less than before the war. It was impossible to count on agriculture, which was once a supplier of export products. One of the results of the NEP was the fragmentation of peasant farms, the middleization of the countryside, which, in turn, led to a decrease in the production of marketable products, since the middle peasant produced products, primarily for his own consumption and satisfaction of personal needs, and was almost not connected with the market.



Nepman at the tax inspector. 1930.

Before the revolution, the main supplier of marketable grain was the landowners' farms. Now they have been eliminated. In addition, the new government in every possible way hindered the growth of individual large-scale farming in the countryside.

The NEP was never officially abolished. He was crushed, and did not have time to reveal his qualities to the fullest. But the bourgeois relations that existed during the period of the NEP created the material basis for boosting the economic development of industry and agriculture on the basis of sound initiative. The essence of the NEP was economic and political pluralism, the multiformity of economic relations. The NEP showed that pluralism in the economy and politics, even in such a limited form, opens the way to improving the well-being of people, especially in conditions of peaceful coexistence. In political terms, the NEP contributed to the rallying of the two classes - the proletariat and the peasantry, to the reassurance of the people on the basis of civil peace. But for the party, it was just a respite before a new breakthrough towards socialism in the form in which it was understood by the party elite and the administrative-command system it created.

III. CONCLUSION

So, what was the significance of the NEP for Russia? The main success of the NEP, of course, is the restoration of the ruined economy in the country, which, after the revolution, found itself in international isolation, from which a significant number of specialists, the intelligentsia, emigrated, in a word, that part of society that is necessary for the normal development of the state. Under these conditions, the implementation of a fairly successful economic policy is an undoubted success for the new government. However, precisely for the reason that, as a result of the revolution and the subsequent civil war, Russia lost qualified personnel, mistakes and miscalculations in the economy were inevitable.

The main contradictions during the years of the NEP were the obvious divergence in the economic policy and political system of Russia. It was during the years of the NEP, when, on the one hand, changes took place in the economy aimed at the "rehabilitation" of commodity-money relations and the introduction of elements of a free market economy, even if very limited and completely under the control of the state, at the same time, the Bolshevik monopoly was finally established to power.

The state that retained control over the "command heights", i.e. over large industry and banks, constantly sought to dictate its terms in other sectors of the economy. This is one of the important reasons for the NEP crises of 1923, 1925, 1928, which, in the end, led to its curtailment and the establishment of a rigid command and administrative system, "military-communist" in its content. Political instability, the lack of guarantees of private property, too tight control of the state over the economy, and finally, an openly hostile attitude towards the "Nepmen" from both the state and a significant part of the new society led to the fact that the main private capital went into mostly into speculative intermediary operations, but not into the long-term production projects that the economy really needed.

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НОВАЯ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ ПОЛИТИКА В СССР: ОСНОВНЫЕ ИТОГИ

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Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются основные результаты новой экономической политики в СССР. Показано, что тактической целью НЭПа было преодоление кризиса путем укрепления экономического союза рабочих и крестьян, городов и деревень. Стратегической целью НЭПа было построение социализма, скачок к которому через "военный коммунизм" оказался неудачным. Переход от капитализма к социализму требовал переходного периода. Основное внимание было уделено деревне. Она стала тем звеном, ухватившись за которое большевики намеревались решить всю цепь стоящих перед ними исторических задач.

Ключевые слова: НЭП, деревня, крестьянин, экономика, государство.

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