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JPRS L/9683

23 April 1981

USSR Report

HUMAN RESOURCES

(FOUO 2/81)



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LABOR

IMPROVEMENT OF INDICATORS FOR LABOR STATISTICS DISCUSSED

Moscow VOPROSY EKONOMIKI in Russian No 1, Jan 81, pp 8-18

[Article by A. Ul'yanova: "Improved Indicators for Labor Statistics"]

[Text] Stepped-up production based on accelerated progress in science and technology and on labor productivity growth is the basic factor for increasing the effectiveness of social production and the Soviet people's well-being. The problems of work, the problems of improved work organization and the problems of efficient manpower utilization have always been the center of attention for the party and government. While justifying the policy of a sharp increase in the effectiveness of social production in his Keynote Report to the 25th CPSU Congress, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said: "In the 80's, a solution to this problem will be especially urgent. This is primarily due to the acute manpower problem. We will have to simply rely on increased labor productivity and not on recruiting additional manpower. A sharp reduction in the percentage of manual labor and large-scale mechanization and automation of industry are becoming indispensable conditions for economic growth."

The CPSU Central Committee's draft "Basic Directions for USSR Economic and Social Development for 1981-1985 and for 1985-1990" for the 25th party congress points out that "during the 10th Five-Year Plan, the national economy developed according to the course set by the 25th CPSU Congress, a course directed at an additional increase in the Soviet people's well-being based on a dynamic development of social production and improved production efficiency and job performance." Progress in science and technology and improved management have achieved an increase in production efficiency. Labor productivity was responsible for 75 percent of the increased output in industry, the entire increase in agriculture and 90 percent of the increased construction and installation in construction.

The 12 July 1979 CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers decree "On Enhanced Planning and Increasing the Effect of the Economic Mechanism to Improve Production Efficiency and Job Performance" is

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very important for additional improvement in social production efficiency and job performance; this decree outlines steps to improve the level of planning and management in accordance with the requirements of the current stage--the stage of developed socialism. The decree has especially earmarked indicators on labor and social development.

Recently, a great deal of work has been done to improve the indicators for labor and wage statistics. They include indicators which make it possible to do more in-depth analysis of labor productivity growth and to study labor productivity growth by individual factors, indicators which describe industrial sector worker distribution by level of work mechanization, work conditions and industrial engineering and indicators which provide data on more progressive methods of work organization. Also not overlooked were indicators which describe work time utilization in individual sectors of the national economy, indicators which make it possible to obtain more complete data on personnel training and skill enhancement and others.

During the 10th Five-Year Plan, major statistical studies were conducted on personnel and labor. The main studies were: a report on total number of workers by occupation, wage classification, wage payment method and system in industrial sectors of the national economy, data which specifically make it possible to obtain the pattern of variation in workers occupational makeup and the extent to which their work is mechanized by progress in science and technology; a sample survey of industrial worker wages by occupation and of engineers, technicians and white collar workers by positions; a selected report on employee bonuses, incentives and compensation by type of bonus and position; reports on total number of employees by sex, age, length of service, leave time and length of work week; a report on the total number of specialists employed in the national economy with higher and secondary specialized education; and others. Some of the reports were conducted for the first time which required a lot of work on methods development; the routines for other reports were expanded significantly.

With the introduction of electronic data processing, there has been a significant expansion in routines and a reduction of deadlines for developing current and annual reports on employee strength, wages and average wages. Like the data from all the simultaneous reports on labor and personnel, the current and annual report data are developed by ministries, departments and union republic Councils of Ministers as well as on a geographical basis.

Developed for the first time were indicators describing the results of national-level measures to increase employee wages. Statistical agencies automatically gathered and processed data on the results of these measures by individual areas of the country as new payment forms were introduced.

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During the 10th Five-Year Plan, a major social measure--increasing the wage rates and salaries for employees of non-industrial sectors--was completed pursuant to the social development and enhanced living standard program developed by the 25th CPSU Congress.

As a result of this measure, wages were increased for 31 million employees of these sectors. In addition, this period saw an increase in wages for individual categories of employees in a number of other sectors--ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, the coal, shale and textile industries, construction, agriculture and rail transportation. The average wage for employees in the national economy was 168.4 rubles in 1980 and had increased by 22.6 rubles compared to 1975.

The section "Basic Results in Economic Development and Increased Well-Being for the People During 1976-1980" of the CPSU Central Committee draft for the 26th party congress "Basic Directions in USSR Economic and Social Development for 1981-85 and the period to 1990" points out that a new, major step has been taken to accomplish social goals. During that 5 years, 329 billion rubles more from national income were spent on improved living standards for the people than were spent in the 9th Five-Year Plan. The Soviet people's tangible and intangible needs have been satisfied better and their living and working conditions have improved.

Actual income per person increased by 17 percent. Average employee wages increased more than 15 percent and the collective farmer's income from the public farm increased by 26 percent.

The 12 July 1979 CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers decree set major, new goals for statistical agencies, including labor statistics. In accordance with this decree, provisions had been made for a gradual transition in industry to planning total industrial output based on a standard net output indicator. There will be a corresponding change in the methods for calculating the labor productivity index. Plans also call for calculating labor productivity growth based on the standard net output indicator or other indicator which more accurately reflects variations in labor input in individual sectors. At the same time, the decree indicates that the transition to the net output indicator should be made as appropriate industrial sectors prepare for it.

The change in procedures for calculating the plan indicators on labor productivity growth has set new goals for statistical agencies to improve labor productivity statistics and has necessitated the production of appropriate supplements to statistical report forms on production association and industrial enterprise labor plan fulfillment and has necessitated the preparation of guidelines for developing and analyzing the supplements.

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For the first time, the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers decree on streamlining the governmental mechanism for compiling economic and social development plans makes provisions for the development of long-term and annual manpower balance sheets. So, the balance sheets are becoming more effective and efficient. Therefore, it is not only necessary to streamline methods for compiling the annual balance sheets but it is also necessary to adapt them to planning needs.

A scientifically valid compilation of a manpower balance requires the application of a widespread system of economic estimates based on numerous statistical methods and data. In statistical practice, the manpower balance sheets are presently drawn up for 1 January, 1 July and an average for the year. The purpose for developing the balance sheets for the beginning and the middle of the year is to analyze manpower status and utilization during maximum and minimum employment periods. In most of the USSR, the period of most intense work falls on 1 July and the period of least intense work falls on 1 January. A comparison of the manpower balance sheets compiled for these dates reveals the degree of uniformity in employment during the year and, specifically, makes it possible to establish the size of seasonal fluctuations in labor utilization; slack for increasing effective manpower utilization lurks behind the elimination or reduction of these fluctuations.

It should be pointed out that the present practice of compiling manpower balance sheets is, as a rule, completed on a republic, kray and oblast scale. To date, manpower balances for individual administrative rayons and cities have not been worked up. At the same time, it is well known that with the increasing strain of providing the national economy with manpower, statistical information on the size and utilization of manpower in these territorial units is urgently required.

To solve this problem, the program for the January 1979 census made provisions for the development of manpower balance sheets for all administrative rayons and city areas. The material from these balance sheets, which are presently at the disposal of local statistical agencies, makes it possible to obtain valuable information on the availability and utilization of manpower resources and to determine cities and regions where there is excess manpower.

The inclusion of manpower balance sheets in the annual and long-term and social development plans made it necessary to review the deadlines for compiling the manpower balance sheets for the average annual calculation and to reduce them by 40-50 days at all levels; this guarantees submission of the balance sheets to planning agencies and labor agencies by the time that draft economic and social development plans are being drawn up.

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The reduced deadline for compiling and submitting manpower balance sheets made it necessary to review and change the methods for calculating individual sections of it.

The CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers decree made provisions for developing manpower balance sheets not only by republic, kray and oblast but also by city.

To make up the manpower balance sheets by city, it is necessary to do additional labor-intensive and difficult work, specifically: calculate the total number of the able-bodied population by city; develop data on the total number of employees and collective farmers by city; develop data on the total number of students in each type of training (higher educational institutions, technikums, vocational-technical educational institutions and others) by city and others.

In addition, it is periodically necessary to make a special estimate of the total number of employees by place of work and place of residence to determine the size of floating migrations; without information on this, it is essentially impossible to draw up these balance sheets.

This work will begin in 1981. The same year, plans call for making an estimate of the total number of employees by place of work and place of residence and experimental manpower balance sheets by individual cities based on 1980 data. Beginning with the 1981 balance sheet, they will be compiled on an annual basis and primarily for all union and autonomous republic capital cities and kray and oblast centers.

The October 1976 CPSU Central Committee Plenum noted that the primary way to solve manpower problems is to accelerate labor productivity growth rates, primarily by mechanizing manual labor not only for primary but also for ancillary jobs. There is a great deal of slack here since the level of mechanization for ancillary jobs in industry lags significantly behind the level of mechanization for primary industrial processes.

The 12 July 1979 CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers decree made provisions for establishing targets to reduce manual labor in the five-year plans, broken down by year, for industrial ministries, associations and enterprises.

The data on worker distribution by degree of work mechanization has been obtained by statistical agencies up to now from the materials for the report on worker occupational makeup which is made up once every 3 years for industrial sector enterprises. The last report was made in 1979. When these reports are made, individual forms are made up for each industrial sector and each national economic sector (at whose enterprises the report is being made); these forms cover both the universal (common to all sectors) and sector-specific vocations. To obtain data on the

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degree of mechanization, all vocations are distributed (encoded) among 5 groups of workers on the report forms depending upon the method (mechanized or manual) for getting the job done: I-workers who do their job on automatic machinery or automated systems, units or assemblies; II-workers who do their jobs in a mechanized manner, i.e., using electrical, pneumatic, steam or chemically operated machines, machine tools, assemblies, or mechanized tools; III-workers employed on machines or machinery who do their jobs manually; IV-workers not on machines or machinery who do their jobs manually; V-workers who do their jobs manually in equipment maintenance and adjustment.

This grouping of the total number of workers by degree of mechanization makes it possible to obtain data on the total number of workers employed in mechanized and manual labor. Mechanized labor includes workers in groups I and II while manual labor includes workers in groups III, IV and V. When analyzing the data on the total number of workers employed in manual labor and their percentage of the total number of workers, groups III and IV are taken into account since the total number and percentage of workers engaged in manual work to maintain and repair machinery and machines may increase rather than decrease as industrial mechanization and automation increases.

In March 1980, the USSR Gosplan and the USSR Central Statistical Administration approved the Guidelines for Calculating the Indicator on Reduced Utilization of Manual Labor in Industry for developing the draft 1981-85 National Economic and Social Development Plan. The guidelines specifically point out that the establishment of five-year plan targets to reduce the utilization of manual labor will accelerate the mechanization of manual labor and especially of the heavy, labor-intensive and humanly unpleasant jobs as a major area for improving the social work environment, enhancing labor productivity and reducing association and enterprise manpower requirements during the modern stage.

In accordance with the USSR Gosplan and USSR Central Statistical Administration guidelines, targets for reducing manual labor are being developed for the five-year plan and approved by ministries, associations and enterprises in the form of an indicator of the total number of workers employed in manual labor as a percentage of the total number of workers as of the end of each year of the five-year plan.

In developing the economic and social development plan, ministries, associations and enterprises should devote special attention to reducing the number of workers employed in manual labor on the heavy, labor-intensive and humanly unpleasant jobs, guided by the list of top-priority manual-labor occupations to be mechanized. A suggested list of such occupations by industrial sectors was approved by the USSR Central Statistical Administration and GKNT [State Committee for Science and Technology] and sent to ministries in July 1980.

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To monitor fulfillment of the targets for reducing manual labor, the USSR Central Statistical Administration approved a short form for the annual report on the total number of manual workers and guidelines for compiling the report based on this form for production associations (combines) and industrial enterprises. The report form has provisions for distributing primary and ancillary workers (without indicating occupational groups) among the five groups indicated above according to the level of work mechanization (see the form).

Report on Number of Manual Workers
(as of the end of 198-)
I. Number and Percentage of Manual Workers

Line Code		Plan	Actual
A	B	1	2
01	Total number of workers and students doing manual work on machines and machinery and not on machines and machinery as a percentage of the total number of industrial workers and students		
02	Total number of industrial workers and students		
03	Number of workers and students doing manual work on machines and machinery and not on machines and machinery		

The instructions on compiling the report stipulate that the number of workers doing their work in a mechanized manner and manually is determined in accordance with the methods and regulations which provide the foundation for the reports on the simultaneous follow-up on the number of workers by occupation in industry. This will ensure total comparability between the data from the brief annual report and the data which statistical agencies, ministries and departments obtain from the broad program for the simultaneous follow-up on the number of workers by occupation, which is conducted once every three years.

A report on the number of manual workers in industry was compiled for the first time with this form at the end of 1980. A similar reporting form has also been approved for contracting, construction organizations; the data for the form will be gathered and worked up for 1 August 1981.

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II. Worker and Student Distribution by Level
of Mechanization

Sector Code		Total Industrial Workers and Students	Including Those Who Perform Their Jobs			
			Using Machines and Machinery as well as Monit- oring Automatic Equipment	Manually on Machines and Machinery	Manually not on Machines or Machinery	Manually to Maintain and Repair Machines and Machinery
A	B	1	2	3	4	5
04	On Worker and Student rolls at the end of last year. On worker and student rolls at the end of 198-					
05	Total workers and students Including those working in:					
06	Primary shops					
07	Ancillary shops					

Major conditions for increased social production are rational work organization, efficient work time utilization and an additional strengthening of work discipline. There is still a lot of work time lost due to absenteeism, down time and unexcused absences. Especially detrimental to the national economy is the work time lost on the shift. The loss of just one minute of work time on a nation-wide scale, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev noted in his report at the 16th labor union congress, is equivalent to a loss of a day's work for 200,000 workers.

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A lot of lost work time is due to personnel turnover (dismissal for personal reasons, absenteeism and other violations of work discipline). Despite the fact that recent years have seen a certain trend toward lower turnover, it continues to be significant in individual sectors. As shown by studies, approximately two-thirds of the industrial workers discharged from the job for personal reasons are people under the age of 30. Among the significant causes of turnover are: dissatisfaction with occupational, work and living conditions, a lack of opportunity to continue one's education and others.

In recent years, the country has taken steps to reduce personnel turnover and retain them on the job. With this purpose in mind, a number of industrial branches and national economic sectors have instituted meritorious service or longevity step increases for many categories of workers.

In December 1979, the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU adopted a decree "On Increased Work Discipline and Reduced Personnel Turnover in the National Economy." The implementation of the steps in this decree will be an important factor for additional industrial growth and improved labor productivity.

Until recently, national statistical agencies gathered and processed data on work time utilization and personnel turnover for industry, construction, transportation, state farms and certain other sectors. With the 1981 revision of labor reporting forms, the work time utilization and personnel indicators have been included and will be worked up for marketing enterprises, public catering enterprises, public utilities and housing enterprises.

Of major importance for improving the analysis of work time utilization are the studies of the causes of downtime on the shift. Such studies are currently conducted on a periodic basis in machine-building and certain other industrial sectors. These studies show that on-shift downtime continues to be significant at a number of enterprises. As a rule, the majority of the on-shift downtime is caused by organizational and supply problems and also by equipment which is out of commission or needs repairs.

Considering the importance of these studies, the USSR Central Statistical Administration intends to continue them in the future, not only in machine building and other industrial sectors but also in construction and transportation. These studies will be conducted with a periodicity of once every two years. Beginning in 1981, these sectors of the national economy will also conduct sample studies of the causes of worker turnover with the same periodicity (once every two years).

The CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers 12 July 1979 decree made provisions for ministries, departments, enterprises and organizations to implement steps for the widespread development of the team method of work organization and incentives.

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During the 11th Five-Year Plan, this should become the primary method of organization. To obtain the necessary information in this area, the USSR Central Statistical Administration, in conjunction with the USSR National Committee on Labor, approved Form No 2-T (team) "Production Association (Combine) or Industrial Enterprise Report on the Number of Workers Covered by the Team Method of Work Organization" and Form No 5-sf (team) "State Farm (Collective Farm) Report on the Development of Group Methods of Work Organization." This report series will be compiled and worked up on an annual basis. The first of these reports were compiled and worked up for industry on 1 August 1980 and on 1 September 1980 for agriculture. (In construction, the report series on the work of teams which had changed over to the new team method of cost accounting was approved previously; provisions have also been made for indicators on the development of the team method of work organization in the report series on motor vehicle transportation.)

The 12 July 1979 CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers decree made provisions for implementing a number of measures to increase work group incentives to accelerate labor productivity growth and reduce personnel turnover.

Because of this, during the current preparation of the routine for the one-time report on the number of employees by wage size which will be compiled for March 1981, a number of indicators in this area will be included in it, specifically: the number of employees with additional payments for holding two jobs or positions, expanding their service areas or increasing the amount of work accomplished as well as the size of these supplemental payments; the number of employees being paid meritorious service compensation and the size of this compensation; the number of workers with allowances for superior vocational skills and the size of these allowances; the number of workers being paid based on increased piece-work rates for work under progressive, technically valid norms and the size of the increased piece-work rates; and certain other indicators.

The goals of an all-round increase in labor productivity and economical manpower utilization require improved manpower planning. Among the new indicators which have been approved for the five-year and annual economic and social development plans in accordance with the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers 12 July 1979 decree is the indicator for maximum employee strength. Beginning with the 1980 plan, the USSR Council of Ministers has approved a maximum employee strength in the mid-year calculations for ministries and departments while the latter have approved one for associations, enterprises, institutions and organizations.

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Until 1980, there was no plan on employee strength among the indicators provided for by the State Plan. Such a plan was estimated by the USSR Gosplan for the national economy as a whole and set by the enterprises and organizations themselves. This planning procedure resulted in a situation where the plan for employee strength obtained by adding up the enterprise and organization plans exceeded the USSR Gosplan estimates every year; this created an artificial increase in manpower requirements and weakened enterprise and organization management's concern for saving manpower.

In February 1980, due to the establishment of maximum employee strengths in the State Plan for ministries and departments, the USSR Gosplan and USSR Central Statistical Administration sent guidelines to all ministries and departments on the development of maximum employee strength figures and on reflecting them in the reports on labor plan fulfillment.

The guidelines point out that USSR ministries and departments and union republic councils of ministers approve maximum employee strengths for subordinate associations, enterprises, institutions and organizations for the year broken down by quarter and type of activity; when necessary, production associations, enterprises, institutions and organizations may set the maximum employee strength by month provided, however, that the average maximum strength by month does not exceed the established maximum strength for the appropriate quarter.

In connection with the limitations on employee strength, the USSR Gosplan and USSR Central Statistical Administration guidelines also set procedures for counting the number of employees who work on a part-time daily or weekly basis and the number of employees engaged in the manufacture of products at home (cottage craftsmen). These workers are included as a unit in the maximum employee strength and, consequently, in the actual strength for the month, quarter, beginning of the year to date and year. When calculating labor productivity, the number of workers engaged on a part-time daily or weekly basis is determined in proportion to the time actually worked and the number of cottage craftsmen is calculated arbitrarily based on the wages charged to them for their work.

A solution to the problem of an improved analysis of manpower utilization is closely related to various problems concerning the statistical analysis of manpower utilization by education, occupation, position, etc.

With the progress in science and technology, a strained manpower situation increases the requirement for skilled personnel and for an increased level of general education and specialized training for the work force.

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At present, three-fourths of the workers in the the national economy have a secondary (complete or partial) and higher education. Among collective farmers, approximately 60 percent have this level of education. The transition to a universal mandatory secondary education for young people has basically been accomplished.

The leading role in training skilled manpower belongs to vocational-technical educational institutions. During the 10th Five-Year Plan, the vocational-technical educational institutions of the USSR State Committee for Vocational and Technical Education planned to train approximately 11 million skilled workers; during the four-year period, 8.9 million people have been trained. A great deal of personnel training is conducted by enterprises and organizations. Each year, approximately 6 million workers learn new vocations on the job and more than 20 million workers upgrade their skill levels.

There is a continual increase in the percentage of specialists with diplomas in industry, agriculture, construction, transportation and other sectors. At present, the number of specialists with a higher and secondary specialized education employed in the national economy is over 20 percent of the total employed population.

The CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers attach a great deal of significance to expanding and improving the training for highly skilled personnel. In 1978-1979, the following decrees were adopted: "On Improved Planning of Specialist Training and Better Utilization of Graduates from Higher and Secondary Specialized Educational Institutions in the National Economy," "On Steps to Improve On-The-Job Worker Training and Skill Enhancement," "On Additional Development for the Higher Schools and Better Quality Specialists Training"; these decrees are directed at improving the planning of specialist training and improving the utilization of specialists with a higher and secondary specialized education in the national economy as well as at additional improvement to on-the-job worker training and skill enhancement. Recently, statistical agencies have begun to conduct a number of new studies, specifically, a report on intra-republic and intra-departmental fulfillment of the plan on junior specialist distribution, a report on personnel accreditation results and others. At present, the results of a report on the number and composition of specialists with higher and secondary specialized education and a report on the number and composition of employees in supervisory and specialist positions are being worked up according to conditions as of 14 November 1980. When the results of these reports are completely analyzed, there will be detailed data on the number of specialists with diplomas employed in sectors of the national economy, their composition by speciality obtained at higher and secondary specialized educational institutions; the numerical distribution of young workers by educational level; the number of workers employed in supervisory and specialist positions, their distribution by sex, age, length of service, education, nationality, etc., for all sectors of the national economy.

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The problems of employee wage statistics are continually of concern to statistical agencies. In addition to the large one-time statistical studies on wage issues, the USSR Central Statistical Administration and statistical agencies systematically analyze data on wage fund outlays for the national economy as a whole and for ministries, departments and individual sectors.

These issues are especially important now. Pursuant to the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers 12 July 1979 decree, long-term wage standards per ruble of output (broken down by year) are being approved for industrial ministries, associations and enterprises; these standards will make it possible to effect a closer link between an increase in output volume and the amount of money spent on employee wages.

The Guidelines for Calculating the Long-Term Wage Standards per Ruble of Output--which were approved by the USSR Gosplan, the USSR National Committee on Labor, the USSR Ministry of Finance and the USSR Central Statistical Administration in October 1979--specify that the wage standard per ruble of output is determined based on planned outlays for industrial personnel wages (without any payments from the economic incentive fund) for output by ministry or association (enterprise) as related to output volume based on the indicator used to plan labor productivity.

For non-industrial organization personnel, the wage fund is set separately. This fund is not taken into account when the wage standard per ruble of output is calculated.

Because of the changes in industrial wage fund planning procedures, appropriate additions have been made to the primary and consolidated report forms.

Attaching a great deal of importance to the issues of wage statistics, the USSR Central Statistical Administration reviewed the current Instructions on Wage Fund Composition and approved new instructions and payments from the economic incentive fund in June 1980. These instructions take into account all the regulations originating in the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers 12 July 1979 decree as well as all other legislative enactments adopted since the approval of the previous instructions (1972).

At present, the job of reviewing the Standard Instructions on Employee Strength and Wage Fund Statistics for Enterprises, Institutions and Organizations as well as the appropriate sector instructions on labor is being finalized. The new instructions will make it possible to more successfully implement the measures contained in the USSR Central Statistical Administration 24 August 1979 order "On Steps to Carry Out the Instructions of Management Agencies on Stepping Up the Campaign to Decisively Curtail and Eradicate Cases of Over-estimation and Padding"; they will promote the reliability of report data and improve their quality.

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Large-scale missions face national statistical agencies in the near future. As before, the center of concern will be the implementation of all the measures for statistical agencies emanating from the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers 12 July 1979 decree "On Enhanced Planning and Increasing the Effect of the Economic Mechanism to Improve Production Efficiency and Job Performance."

In his October 1980 CPSU Central Committee Plenum speech, L. I. Brezhnev noted that "in the 80's, the economy's transition to intensive development must be completed and there must be a sharp increase in labor productivity and quality. The indispensable conditions for industrial results are increased management standards and the development of efficiency, responsibility and initiative in personnel." Statistical agencies are still far from making complete use of available resources to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the data on these issues. Considering the enormous importance of wage and labor problems at the present time and in the forthcoming five-year period, an increased level of economic activity in this area is one of our major goals.

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LABOR

CREATIVE ACTIVITY OF WORKERS IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Moscow VOPROSY EKONOMIKI in Russian No 1, Jan 81 pp 15-22

[Article by Ye. Kapustin, corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences:
"Role of Creative Activity of the Workers in Socioeconomic Development"]

[Text] The draft of the "Basic Directions of USSR Economic and Social Development in the Period 1981-1985 and up to the Year 1990," which is undergoing nationwide discussion, calls for "using to the fullest the opportunities and advantages of the society of mature socialism." One of the most important advantages and fundamental features of socialism is socialist competition--the leading form for the workers to show their initiative in work and in management of social production. Its economic and educative importance is growing more and more as our society develops. "Having become truly nationwide in its scale and depth," Comrade L. I. Brezhnev has emphasized, "competition is constantly generating examples of creative work and is doing good service for development of the country's economy."*

The draft of the "Basic Directions ..." has stated that the Communist Party sees the basis of the steady rise of the material and cultural standard of living of the people and of creating better conditions for the comprehensive development of the personality not only in a further rise in the efficiency of all social production and of labor productivity on the basis of scientific-technical progress and improvement of the economic mechanism, but also in a growth of the social and work activity of the Soviet people. Without this it is not possible to ensure a further rise in the efficiency of all social production.

The draft of the "Basic Directions ..." sets the complicated tasks over the next 10 years of improving the organization and enhancing the effectiveness of socialist competition and requires that it be aimed at fulfillment and overfulfillment of plans, at ensuring high quality of performance and a rise of labor productivity, and at carrying out an economy regime. Successful fulfillment of the new 5-year plan necessitates "development of competitiveness, creative cooperation and mutual aid in the labor process."

One of the most important problems in the development of socialist competition and in making its results more effective is to ensure organic combination of the initiative of the masses with centralized planning, that is, integration of competition

* KOMMUNIST, No 17, 1978, p 15.

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and the plan. It would be good if this objective requirement of the stage of advanced socialism, which follows from the tasks of further strengthening of the conformity to plan and internal consistency of the entire national economy were stated more straightforwardly in the draft. Sometimes people erroneously set the plan in opposition to socialist competition or centralized planning in opposition to the initiative of the masses or even conformity to plan in opposition to the "spontaneity" which disrupts it. That is why in Section II, in the sentence which speaks about the need "to ensure organic interaction of the plan, economic levers and incentives ...," it would be advisable to add "and socialist competition."

Among the various forms and methods of socialist competition and of developing the creative activity of the workers, the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." attributes particular importance to the movement for drafting and fulfilling counterplans exceeding the assignments of the 5-year plan set for the year in question.

We see the objective necessity, possibility and effectiveness of organic combination of socialist competition with planned management of socialist production above all in the fact that only under that condition can all unused potential which every collective possesses be taken into account in the plan. The "Basic Directions ..." set the task of "reflecting more fully in plans unused production potential and the present-day advances of scientific-technical progress." Attempts to take this unused potential into account in the planned production assignment of the superior entity without socialist competition can result in arbitrary, insufficiently substantiated and objective decisions and in planning "on the basis of past achievements." It is in the counterplans of enterprises that individual and collective socialist obligations and progressive initiatives can be summarized and in which the overall expression of their total benefit can be expressed most fully. By definition the plan must be a counterplan with respect to the plan drafted on the basis of the established standards, which for that reason does not take into account the unused internal potential of the work collective.

In accordance with the decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers entitled "On Improving Planning and Strengthening the Influence of the Economic Mechanism on Increasing Production Efficiency and Work Quality," the period for whose implementation will be precisely the 11th Five-Year Plan, the counterplan is becoming an inseparable part in one of the most important aspects of drafting the plans of associations and enterprises. This decree provides for the need to commence compilation of the annual plan from below--with production associations (enterprises) and organizations. Counterplans adopted on the initiative of production collectives and linked to physical resources are then incorporated into the annual plan.

Strengthening the organic relationship between competition and the entire system of socialist planning on the basis of counterplans will make it possible to improve the balance and proportionality of the national economy and to strengthen still more its planned long-range internal economic relations. On the one hand the additional output which can be attained as the result of competition will be distributed in advance among consumers, and consequently the conditions will be ensured for its effective and immediate use. On the other hand the source of additional raw materials and energy needed to meet the socialist obligations will be determined in advance. If the national economy does not possess them at the given

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moment, competition will in a planned way be aimed at production of the additional products by virtue of economizing on raw materials and energy, at reduction of production costs, at improvement of product quality, and at other objectives.

The growing importance of counterplanning, which is envisaged in the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." requires in our view that production associations (enterprises) and organizations which adopt and fulfill counterplans be given priority in the awarding of banners and qualification for prizes in competition on the basis of annual results, which it would be good for this document to reflect.

Effective use of the results of initiative and of the work of competing collectives which at times is truly heroic and the planned creation of all the necessary conditions for fulfilling the socialist commitments adopted brings about in its turn a further rise of socialist competition. Nothing has such a beneficial effect on enhancing enthusiasm in the work process as when every worker understands the necessity and real possibility of fulfilling the obligations and becomes convinced that the results of this work will be used effectively in the interest of the entire society. That is why it is so important for the draft to point out the necessity of introducing "scientific organization of work and production," which, like planning, are inseparably bound up with the organization of competition.

Competition and planning are also interrelated in the domain of disseminating advanced achievements, methods and procedures, the need for which is mentioned in the draft of the "Basic Directions ...". In this respect it is difficult to overestimate the role of planning. When advanced procedures and advanced methods of work and organization of production become the planned and mandatory standards of good work and are taken into account in planning assignments, then these procedures are disseminated most effectively, and the necessary organizational and technical conditions are created for implementing them.

The draft of the "Basic Directions ..." has reflected the most progressive forms of socialist competition which have shown up in the best light in practice. They include worker competition on the basis of personal (work team) production plans. The drafting of these plans promotes fulfillment of Lenin's requirements that planning assignments be broken down to each operative and each work station. It is ensured that every worker gains a detailed familiarity with the planning assignment issued for the upcoming period not only to the entire enterprise, to the shop, but also to him personally in attending a given work station. This form of competition makes it possible to identify and make maximum use of all potential related to the worker's development, to ensure soundness of the plan for raising production efficiency, and to take into account every worker's individual contribution to its fulfillment. This form of competition is one of the most comprehensible and effective methods of involving the working masses in active management of socialist production. Only through this procedure does every worker get a clear awareness of his place and his role in fulfillment of the plan by the entire production collective.

The further development of socialist competition, improvement of its organization and a rise in its effectiveness depend to a decisive degree on the level of planning. When plans and norms are not stable or sound enough, and when they do not have sufficient internal consistency the economic and moral benefit of competition

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will not be great, and progressive beginnings will soon die out. Here it is easiest to see the inseparability of the bond between competition and planning and the need for simultaneous improvement of the management of these processes. The fact that the decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers on improving the mechanism for management of the national economy will be in the process of implementation in the coming period will therefore have tremendous importance to a further rise of socialist competition.

The typical features of competition under advanced socialism are manifested in the number of new progressive initiatives and in the qualitative improvement of those which are already well known. It is toward them that the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." orients working collectives in that it sets the task of "organizing competition of related collectives of enterprises delivering raw materials, supplies and components with collectives of plants and factories manufacturing the end product."

Staving widespread competition among related entities in the economy, the main direction of which is to ensure planned and synchronized operation of many enterprises in order to attain a single ultimate purpose has tremendous importance at the present time. One of its important concrete aspects is the "worker relay" movement. This movement was born at the construction site of the Nurekskaya GES and has been used extensively in building many of the most important production facilities. For example, 26 production collectives and scientific and project planning organizations in Leningrad have been successfully carrying out contracts concluded concerning creative scientific-technical cooperation in reducing construction time and improving the quality of performance in building the Sayano-Shushenskaya GES.

Competition among related entities as a rule embraces enterprises in a number of industries and subindustries. For instance, competition among enterprises in light industry quickly grew outside the limits of that industry. On the initiative of the Glukhovo Cotton Combine imeni V. I. Lenin the "agreement among thousands" was revived; it originated 50 years ago in Kalinin and other cities. Enterprises in the chemical industry, cotton-ginning mills, machinebuilders, scientific research institutes and garment factories--38 enterprises in all--have entered into the competition. The result is that the entire output of the combine belongs either in the superior- or first-quality categories, and 56 percent of the fabric has been produced in new designs and colors. Agreements on competition have already been concluded by 1,428 enterprises in light industry, and they have been joined by 560 enterprises in other industries.

An important sphere of competition among related entities is the agroindustrial complex, where a movement aimed at a single concrete objective involves workers both of agriculture itself and also of the industries serving it and the production infrastructure, both workers and employees of state enterprises and also kolkhoz members. This form of competition is playing a noticeable role in attainment of high growth rates of agricultural production and in carrying out the food program in the new 5-year period. It also has very great social importance in that it is promoting a strengthening of social homogeneity of our society.

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Competition among related entities developing on the basis of agreements and supplementing the cost-accounting relations of enterprises is helping to unify the efforts of workers in different industries, construction and transportation in achieving uninterrupted smooth operation of enterprises and construction sites. This is a powerful weapon in overcoming interdepartmental barriers and in improving the structure of the economy. It is an important condition for conformity to plan and internal consistency.

A form of competition like competition under the motto "Work Without Stragglers," which originated on the basis of the initiative of the workers of Rostov and was supported by the CPSU Central Committee and became widespread throughout the country, has direct relevance to strengthening conformity to plan. It is extremely necessary to make more effective use of socialist competition under the motto "All Orders Filled on Time," which vigorously promotes strengthening of the very basis of the planned development of our economy--strict observance of contractual obligations by collectives.

The draft of the "Basic Directions ..." emphasizes that in the new 10-year period qualitative changes will be taking place in the means and methods of attaining the goal of socialist production--a more decisive turn toward the predominantly intensive pattern of reproduction. Socialist competition should accordingly be aimed at seeking out and activating unused production potential, and above all the most effective and economical ways of attaining high and final results.

Solving this problem necessitates still more economical use of live labor and consequently enhancement of the importance of the principal objective of competition--the effort to achieve higher labor productivity. Among the various forms of competition aimed at solving this task we should note dissemination of the know-how of the Shchekino Azot Production Association in increasing the volume of production by raising labor productivity and at the same time reducing the size of the work force; the know-how of the Dinamo Plant imeni S. M. Kirov in compiling personal plans, where the size of the work force was reduced while the volume of production was increased, and the know-how of certain other enterprises in fulfilling each worker's 5-day assignment in 4 days.

One of the most important objectives of socialist competition among work collectives should be effective accomplishment of full mechanization and automation of production. This goal of competition needs to be pointed out in the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." as well, since it sets the task of "reducing manual labor requiring little skill and increasing the qualifications of personnel" and the need to create "conditions for highly productive labor and for strengthening the creative character of work." All this in turn is the basis for a further rise in the wages of workers, including those who are paid less. What we need is not a mere rise of money wages, but an increase that is accompanied by a faster growth of labor productivity, that is, by an increase in the physical goods produced and a rise in their quality.

A sizable benefit can come from competition to reduce losses of work time, which, as we know, are very large. This requires introduction of strict reporting on use of work time, an implacable attitude toward violations of work discipline, and systematic time-and-motion studies and spot checks of the workday among all categories

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of workers. We can speak quite realistically about reducing by at least half the whole-day and especially part-day losses of work time at a majority of enterprises, and this moreover would not involve capital outlays of any consequence. This would ensure an additional rise of labor productivity.

Nor should we forget such a form of competition among workers as the attending of more than one machine. We should take into account that so far operators of more than one machine comprise, according to calculated data, about 16 percent of all machine tool operators at machinebuilding plants. Among them there is a shortage of lathe operators, there is a high turnover among them. All of this is one of the obstacles to increasing the shift coefficient of equipment operation. There have been reports in the press about the widespread use in Moskovskaya Oblast of comprehensive plans for engineering support of the effort to increase production efficiency; as a result opportunities have increased for introducing multiple-machine attendance at enterprises of light industry, where at present the size of the work force has decreased from 1975, and output has grown.

Competition to combine occupations, which has especially great importance to personnel in auxiliary shops, which is precisely where potential for the rise of labor productivity is large, is also bound up with solving the problem of a full-fledged saving of labor resources.

But it would be incorrect to suppose that under the conditions of the acute shortage of labor resources the attention of socialist society should be directed solely toward saving on live labor. It is equally important and sometimes still more important to save on labor that has already been embodied--raw materials, supplies, energy, better utilization of fixed productive capital, which is also emphasizes in the draft of the "Basic Directions ..."

Many collectives of industrial enterprises have achieved substantial success in reducing the weight of products and at the same time increasing their quality, their productivity, their durability and their reliability. A new form of competition aimed at producing additional output from materials which have been saved, such a form of competition as competition on the basis of personal economy accounts, etc., have become widespread in a number of industries.

Competition to produce ever larger amounts of products bearing the state Quality Emblem is very important, since production efficiency is determined to a very large degree by the rise of product quality; there is a need for further summarization and dissemination of the know-how acquired by the Leningrad Svetlana Association, which was the initiator of the competition to speed up the development and industrial application of advances of science and technology, the initiative of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute for Materials-Handling Equipment Building in organizing competition among collectives participating in fulfilling each specific scientific research program, etc.

This last form of socialist competition is especially important because of the requirement of "increasing the effectiveness of scientific research and substantially reducing the time required for application of the advances of science and technology," which are set forth in the draft. This is the functional relationship that

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obtains here: comprehensive target programs for scientific-technical development are an effective method of carrying out scientific development projects in industry, and socialist competition to carry them out is an important method of speeding up fulfillment of the program because as this competition is conducted the fullest communication is ensured among workers of all organizations carrying out the program and they have enhanced sense of their responsibility to one another.

The "Basic Directions" are directions for the activity of the country's entire economic mechanism to realize the highest goal of socialist production. That is why the draft states: "It is to be considered a most important task to satisfy more fully the effective demand of the public for various goods and services," which presupposes that the organization of socialist competition be raised to a qualitative new level among workers in the trade sector, the service sector in cities and rural areas, and workers in enterprises in the food and light industry. In this connection satisfaction of consumer demand and the extent to which this task is performed should become the principal indicators in identifying the winner in competition. A tremendous role should obviously be played in organizing this kind of competition by Soviets of People's Deputies and the entire community of the rayon, which is most fully informed about shortcomings in satisfying consumer demand and about all the internal potential which to one degree or another could help in this cause and should be utilized to the maximum.

Another important form of competition is to increase the effective free time of the workers, that is, the time free not only from work in social production, but also free of nonproduction expenditures of time in the household. In setting the task of increasing the free time of the workers, the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." quite rightly emphasizes that this increase should be achieved not by reducing work time, but "on the basis of development of the rendering of services in the public sector and by making work in the household easier," that is, by reducing the losses of free time and by making the work of workers in the service sphere more effective.

An important pattern of mature socialism is the process of the rising social homogeneity of our entire society. An important place in this should be given to competition aimed at reducing manual and unskilled physical labor, especially heavy physical labor, to gradual transformation of farm work into a variety of industrial work, and so on.

Advanced socialism presupposes maximum attention of society to communist indoctrination of all citizens and to improvement of the socialist way of life, which is largely determined by the development of socialist competition and by effective utilization of its educative function. The movement for the communist attitude toward work, in which the requirements of society and of production concerning a man's personality, knowledge and working and moral attributes are concretely expressed, deserves particular attention. Many scientific surveys have shown that participants in this movement have considerably higher production figures, they are better disciplined, they are better organized, and the stability of their production collective is higher. But engineering and technical personnel, workers and employees in agriculture, state enterprises, etc., are still not sufficiently involved in this form of competition. Nor is it uniform from one region of the country to another. Scientific research in this field is inadequate.

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Creating the necessary conditions for still broader development of socialist competition in the next 10-year period requires, as noted in the draft of the "Basic Directions ...," a strengthening of the "bond between material incentives and the results of socialist competition for increasing production efficiency and the quality of performance."

The fact that many problems have not been solved stands in the way of broad dissemination of progressive forms of socialist competition and their greater effectiveness. These problems include not only the incentives of winners, especially when related entities are competing, but also the very identification of winners in competition and determination of the economic and social benefits they have imparted. We lack a sufficiently complete and internally consistent system of success indicators and normative documents regulating relationships among participants in competition. That is why the Scientific Council of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the AUCCTU for Problems of Socialist Competition envisages in the coordinating plan for scientific research in the country in the 11th Five-Year Plan concentration of the forces of scientific institutes and VUZ's on treating precisely these questions of theory and method. There is an extreme need for help in developing scientific research in the field of competition by learned legal experts.

Hundreds of institutes and departments of VUZ's in the humanities are participating in researching the extremely important and complicated problems of making effective use of one of the most important advantages of socialism--socialist competition. But cases are still not uncommon when the importance of working on the problems of socialist competition are underestimated by individual scientists and scientific organizations. All of this obviously is reason for proposing an addition to those tasks as given in the field of the social sciences formulated in the draft of the "Basic Directions ...". These tasks need to be expanded by inclusion of the following proposition: "Expansion of research on the theoretical and methodological problems of socialist competition and on summarizing advanced experience with worker participation in management of social production."

It is stated in the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." that there is a need to "surround competition with more publicity, honor and respect for frontrankers and production innovators." This presupposes that honor and respect should be paid not only to individual frontrankers and innovators, but also to work collectives. For instance, increasing the efficiency of the work-team form of the organization of work necessitates material and moral incentives not only for individual members of the work team and the team leader, but also for the entire team as a group. This is an exceedingly important condition for a wholesome psychological climate in the team and a pledge to mutual aid and mutual replacement in the work process and to the development of collectivism. It is therefore advisable for the draft of the "Basic Directions ..." to emphasize that the reference is not only to individual frontrankers and innovators, but also to entire production collectives, especially mixed work teams.

The new organizational forms of social production, especially at the "enterprise--association" level, necessitate new forms in the field of organizing socialist competition and its management as well. That is why all the advanced know-how already acquired needs to be summarized and scientifically sound proposals and methods

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recommendations drafted to take into account the specific peculiarities and new opportunities for a further upsurge of socialist competition in connection with organization of mixed work teams working against a single standard, the transformation of many enterprises into production units within associations, the drafting and achievement of comprehensive target programs, and so on.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is appealing to all the workers to embody more fully Lenin's ideas of socialist competition in practice, in the life of work collectives, and to become actively involved in the nationwide effort to raise production efficiency and the quality of performance and to achieve the highest results at the lowest cost. This is an exceedingly important way of speeding up communist construction, of satisfying ever more fully the needs of socialist society as a whole and of its individual members and of successfully fulfilling the 11th Five-Year Plan.

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DEMOGRAPHY

BOOK EXCERPTS: OPTIMAL POPULATION: WHAT DOES THIS CONCEPT MEAN

Minsk OPTIMUM NASELENIYA: CHTO ZA ETIM PONYATIYEM? (The Optimum Population: What Is Behind This Concept?) in Russian 1979 pp 2, 6-10, 134

[Annotation, table of contents, and introduction from book by Ya. I. Rubin, Izdatel'stvo Nauka i Tekhnika, 136 pages]

[Text] Is it legitimate to speak of an optimal population? Why is this expression quite often construed as something unscientific and reactionary? Does it have a constructive meaning as well, and if yes, what is that meaning? This work attempts to answer these questions from the standpoint of their close relationship to other topical problems of demographic science. Considerable attention is devoted to criticizing bourgeois concepts of the optimum population and demonstrating the role of such criticism in contemporary class-political struggle.

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Introduction

Soviet literature on the population optimum is more than modest. This subject is touched upon in discrete articles and textbook paragraphs. As for books devoted to this topic, only one exists, and it was published in Moscow 5 years ago. But even the publication of that unique monograph had been intended for a specific purpose. It was based on lectures given at Moscow University by Dr Econ. Sci. A. Ya. Kvasha. While in itself that was an interesting book and written at a high professional level, it was, like any other textbook, chiefly designed to expound what had already "taken place" in science, paying only minor attention to elucidating problems which have yet to pass through the stage of "treatment through discourse." At any rate, a single monograph and a number of scattered minor studies of the population optimum are strikingly little compared with the dozens of works on demographic problems published in this country in recent years.

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The fact that the problem of the demographic optimum (we shall initially consider this concept to be completely identical with the concept of the population optimum) clearly has remained inadequately uninvestigated is generally attributed to the complexity of the problem. And indeed, it is extremely difficult to select a criterion for optimality of demographic growth that would be broadly justified with allowance for long-term prospects. This is because a relatively long interval of time is needed, as a rule, to influence demographic processes. Moreover, such a criterion should be the most expedient from the standpoint of current problems which require solution at a given moment.

Given these constraints, it is not so simple to answer the question of precisely which population growth parameter should be considered optimal (but not "most optimal"), i.e. the best of all possible ones. Here various points of reference, various criteria, may come into play.

Many scientists dealing with the problem of the population optimum focus on the relationship between population and economics. This is justified in the sense that economics is the foundation of all social--including demographic--development. Nearly all the works published in this country that examine the concept of the population optimum constructively deal with the economic aspects of that optimum.

However, it is becoming increasingly necessary to consider the problem of the demographic optimum from the standpoint not only of economics but the whole complex of factors active in the formation of our life. Here the "point of reference" should start with the ultimate goals of our development, which were so explicitly formulated at the 25th CPSU Congress and further reflected in the new Constitution of the USSR and constitutions of the Union republics. The most complete satisfaction of reasonable and sane needs of the individual as well as improvements in the Soviet way of life constitute the principal point of reference of our Leninist party to which all the elements of the concepts of the Soviet population's optimality of development should be tied.

To researchers dealing with this subject the problem is complicated by the fact that the demographic optimum must be isolated from other optimal parameters that may apply to the nation-population as an extremely broad category. After all, how else can an optimum be attained if not by focusing effort on some particular sector whose frontiers are the subject of a given discipline? But when we desire to define more precisely the concepts of the demographic optimum and the population optimum in order to decide which one is more applicable to the solution of practical problems associated with the optimum, we collide with the imprecision of concepts of demography itself as a science.

*We take this opportunity to draw the reader's attention to the fallacy inherent in the phrase "most optimal," which is sometimes used unthinkingly. There can be only one best solution for given conditions. This is the optimal solution, and there cannot be any "other optimal" solutions for given conditions.

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Demographers sometimes joke that, while the broad public so far knows little about demography, the ones who know even less about it are demographers themselves. Although this discipline has been in existence for more than 300 years, its boundaries have not acquired the stability characteristic of many other scientific disciplines. This matter is, of course, not any lack of talent among demographic researchers but the specific nature of the subject of demography itself. Hence, any discussion of the population optimum will be worthwhile only on condition that it is organically related to other topical research problems of present-day demographic science. Such an approach to the topic is in all cases useful because it helps to propagate demographic knowledge. At present demography is part of the curriculum at only a few higher schools. The time will come when this science will possibly be taught to tenth graders. For the present, however, the absence of pertinent courses in school curricula may be offset by disseminating demographic knowledge by means of popular-science publications. Of course, this does not represent dissemination of knowledge in general, even if done within the framework of a particular discipline. The aspects elucidated inevitably focus on some or other particular problem considered by an author as the main problem. In this book, the population optimum is considered as the main problem.

The complexity of the problem of the population optimum is neither the sole nor the main reason for the low interest in it. The main reason is the traditional attitude toward the idea of demographic optimality. This attitude has evolved as an inherently negative one. Most often the population optimum has been and is considered a bourgeois theory and not simply bourgeois but predominantly Malthusian at that. As for the nature of Malthusianism, to many it seems sufficiently explicit and requires no further research and evaluation. Now if the concept of the population optimum is to be regarded as a particular aspect of above-mentioned Malthusianism and nothing more, then it is not worth considering. Why give fresh instances of what is already known? Such hack work hardly inspires anyone.

In reality, however, Soviet literature is far from having said the final word about Malthusianism, and in a number of cases what has been said on the subject conflicts with the picture that emerges from an analysis of sources previously not introduced into scientific circulation. For example, demonstrations of the invalidity of Malthus' theory in many popular science book and textbooks are reduced to a refutation of Malthusian "progressions." It had been asserted that population can never increase in a geometrical progression and therefore this is a "Malthusian fabrication." But now, as can be seen from statistics regularly published by the United Nations, demographic growth in which the population doubles every 25 years or even within shorter periods is observed in dozens of countries. This phenomenon does not, of course, demonstrate that Malthus was "right" (his theory was and remains from beginning to end antiscientific and reactionary); it rather points to an oversimplified interpretation of the nature of Malthusianism. There also exist other inaccuracies in the treatment of that theory. That is why, in the discussion of the population optimum, it was found necessary to include aspects revealing the nature of Malthusianism as a variety of bourgeois ideology. We shall attempt to show which aspects of the "optimum" are linked to a Malthusian approach to this concept, and which aspects require different treatment.

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It is important, both from the ideological and the scientific-practical points of view to critically analyze the manner in which the problem of the population optimum is viewed by those bourgeois scientists who deliberately or unconsciously oppose Malthusianism. Ultimately, it will be possible to perceive more clearly the constructive aspects of the population optimum and to define more precisely the place of that concept in the system of theoretical and methodological concepts substantiating our current long-range goals for economic and cultural development.

The range of problems that will be examined in this work is, as we can see, quite broad. It includes not only aspects directly related to the topic at hand but also aspects that in one way or another bear upon it. In other words, the subject matter analyzed in this book is the historical and contemporary aspects of the problem of the population optimum, as examined both positively and critically.

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DEMOGRAPHY

NEW BOOK ON STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE FAMILY

Moscow SOVETSKAYA ETNOGRAFIYA in Russian No 6, Nov-Dec 80 pp 166-170

[Review by V.Z. Rogovin of book by A.G. Kharchev "Brak i sem'ya v SSSR" [Marriage and Family in the USSR]. Moscow, "Mysl'", 1979.]

[Text] In the foreword to the second edition of the book "Brak i sem'ya v SSSR" [Marriage and Family in the USSR] (Moscow, "Mysl'", 1979), A.G. Kharchev notes that in the fifteen years that have elapsed since the publication of the first edition both the family itself and the science engaged in its study have changed significantly. These changes are clearly felt in comparing the two editions of A.G. Kharchev's monograph: in the later work, the author relies on the conclusions of a significantly broader range of empirical research; the conceptual apparatus and the methodology of research were enriched; new tendencies for the development of family-marital relations developing during these years became the object of analysis. We are dealing essentially with a new work, reflecting comprehensively both the contemporary state of scientific research in the given field and contemporary, quite dynamic processes determining the development of this important sphere of social life.

A noteworthy feature of A.G. Kharchev's book is a consistent use of a complex, systems, interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of the complex and diversified problems of the development of the family in Soviet society. The first two chapters of the book are devoted to a validation of the theoretical and methodological principles of such an approach: "Marriage and Family as the Object of Sociological Research" and "The Social Nature of Marriage and the Family." They carefully trace out the specifics of study of the problems of the family in various social sciences as well as systems, interdisciplinary ties naturally disclosed in an analysis of the many problems of the functioning and development of family-marital relations.

Widely using the materials of ethnographic, demographic, social-psychological, criminological and medical research, the author organically includes them in the general fabric of sociological analysis, making possible the presentation of the studied phenomenon in its dialectical wholeness.

The tendency, which is characteristic of the present stage of development of scientific research, for integration of social-scientific knowledge is responsible for the washing away of clear-cut boundaries between various subject fields of study of the family and leads to the overcoming of historically formed isolation of separate disciplines studying the family. Product is an elaboration of the more complex and socially significant problems of the family, as of other social phenomena,

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is taking place today at the "meeting points" of various social sciences. In this connection, there is a growth in the integrating function of Marxist-Leninist sociology expressed in the inception of new "border" scientific disciplines or fields of sociological knowledge. The process of integration of the social sciences is reflected in particular in the establishment of ethnosociology as a science, organically uniting related fields that are close as to subject and methods of research and that deal with the ethnic aspect of social, including family, relations.

The examination of the laws of development of the family as one of the most important social subsystems of society is done by A.G. Kharchev on the basis of the consistent application of the principle of Marxist historical method. In the light of this principle, the book provides a condensed but rich in content account of the history of study of the family in different sciences as well as a historical account of the development of the institution of marriage and the family from the most ancient epochs to our times. These historical excursions are conducted on the basis of analysis of copious material of social-philosophical and specialized scientific research and the able use of the evidence of belles lettres. Naturally, the author devotes the greatest attention to the processes of establishment and development of the Soviet family, examining them in close connection with the evolution of family law and sexual morality of society.

The diversity of life, characteristic of the first stages of development of Soviet society, was responsible for the significant regional special features of the processes of formation of a new family, particularly among the peoples of Central Asia and the North of the RSFSR. These features, which have determined the unique character of the social policy of the party in the given field as applied to the different national regions, are elucidated in the book on the basis of an analysis of materials of numerous ethnographic researches.

The experience of Soviet ethnographers helped the author in elucidating the social- and national-integrating processes in the sphere of marital-family relations at the stage of developed socialism. Thus, the data of ethnographic expeditions are used in the book; they attest to the dying off or the "cracking up" of many conservative national customs that had been an indispensable attribute of the consummation of a marriage (p 199) and to an expansion of the scope of choice of the future spouse, brought on objectively by increased mobility of the population and intensive urbanization of the country. Mass shifting of rural inhabitants to cities and to newly erected buildings, accompanied by the growing national "displacement" of the population, makes a personal choice in a marriage increasingly free from race, national and religious prejudices. Despite the assertion of bourgeois sociologists to the effect that international [mezhnatsional'nyye] marriages possess considerably fewer possibilities for mutual adaptation of spouses, the experience of our country points to the high level of stability of "mixed" marriages. All these conclusions are made by the author on the basis of broad use of materials of ethnographic research of recent years. At the same time, the book fails to include certain results of the research of Soviet ethnographers on this question; in particular, use is not made of data provided in the content-rich collective monograph "Sovremennyye etnicheskiye protsessy v SSSR" [Contemporary Ethnic Processes in the USSR] (Moscow, 1977).

Carefully tracing the dependence of changes in marital-family relations and in the sexual morality of society on broader shifts in the mode of life, A.G. Kharchev also discloses certain negative sides of these changes. Thus, in particular, he points

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that growth of mobility of the population and its concentration in large cities makes easier sexual practice prior to marriage and adultery because of the weakening of traditional mechanisms of social control and the "anonymity" of the urban way of life (p 230). Substantively interpreting the data of social and demographic statistics and the results of numerous sociological researches, the author analyzes the causes of negative phenomena in sexual behavior and the factors responsible for known instability of present-day marriage. This analysis convinces one of the fact that sociology is more and more actively penetrating this formerly "forbidden" sphere of life and helps to provide a real picture of the state of social mores; it is only on its basis that it becomes possible to develop effective means of social prevention and therapy contributing to the stabilization and bolstering of the family.

The book convincingly shows that sociological research discloses the groundlessness of many ideas current in the everyday consciousness. Thus, for example, despite widespread opinion to the contrary, spiritual closeness of spouses, rather than physical, has a great capacity to "disappear entirely" (p 198). The author also discloses the untenability of another current opinion--the complete dependence of sexual harmony on the natural attributes of the spouses. Sexological research shows the direct influence of psychological relations between spouses on this sphere. The overcoming of what appear to be at first glance unresolvable difficulties and collisions in intimate life turns out to be possible in most cases on the basis of psychotherapeutic assistance to spouses by qualified specialists. The author analyzes the experience of the still few consultation centers in our country on problems of family and marriage and concludes the necessity of making all-out expansion of the network of such centers and of training suitable specialists.

In examining the question of sexual education of the youth, A.G. Kharchev demonstrates the wrongness of neglecting questions of sexual morality, "theoretically" substantiated by the thesis of the unity of communist morality, ostensibly excluding the necessity of singling out such a special sphere of moral education. The norms of morality possess in varying degree universality of character: from the broadest of principles to the most narrow rules of behavior applying only to certain life situations. Sexual life and the interrelations of man and woman belong to such typical life situations. This sphere is in indissoluble contact with the entire moral and emotional life activity of the individual. Therefore, the operation of an effective system of sexual education should comprise a part of the overall system of moral and esthetic education.

It should especially be emphasized that A.G. Kharchev's book is one of the first examples in our social life of an organic union of sociological and ethical analysis, of a strictly scientific analytical examination of the phenomena researched with a value and normative approach to them and one that is free of plain justification and scholastic moralizing. The work contains many profound conclusions on the ethical level, finely drawn observations on really existing moral relations.

An important virtue of the examined work is that it is against a vulgar sociological approach based on the idea of a rigid, straightforward connection between the mode of life of the family and the mode of life of society. The author shows the relative independence of certain changes in the norms of sexual life and marital-family relations and reproductive behavior from the character of the social-economic system. The transition from the traditional type of reproduction of the population,

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connected with an unlimited birthrate, to the contemporary, rational type of its reproduction, resulting from the deliberate limitation of the birthrate, occurs under the direct influence of factors that are common to all industrially developed countries: growth of employment and economic independence of women, widespread use of contraceptives, their improved reliability and accessibility, which logically leads to the separation of sex for reproduction from sex as the expression of love and inclination. These tendencies, which are common for different social-economic systems, cannot, however, be absolutized.

In analyzing social problems of the family as the primary nucleus of society, the author logically resorts to an analysis of related problems of our way of life. Particularly deserving of serious attention are considerations that the experience of separate vacations by spouses due to the lack of desire of enterprises to take into account the interests of the family frequently exerts a destructive influence on marriage.

In directing attention to the need of improving conditions for organized family freetime, A.G. Kharchev emphasizes that poor organization of cultural freetime results in both economic and moral losses for society. Drawing of the population to centers of more developed cultural services, holding of spontaneous informal parties for teenagers, where leaders are rarely from socially healthy elements, drunkenness and other antisocial forms of behavior are severely reflected in family relations and family training.

As the author emphasizes, alcoholism and sexual amorality are practically inseparable fellow travelers. Stupefaction from alcohol frequently evokes heightened sexual "preoccupation" and favors the loss of any restraining principles among seekers of easy sexual "conquests." This group of reasons, which has so far been ignored by investigators of alcoholism, ought to draw the attention of society. An all-out development is necessary of family rest homes, boarding houses, tourist hostels, which are characterized by a more healthy atmosphere than at rest institutions serving individual vacationers.

Referring to the reduced role of the club as a specific factor of leisure, the author explains this by the fact that most clubs and palaces of culture operate attached to enterprises, while the great majority of workers live relatively far from them and have a need for local centers of culture, getting together and diversion. The predominance of departmental principles in the organization of clubs (as, shall we add, in the development of other elements of the urban social infrastructure) significantly reduces the social effectiveness of the use of facilities intended for cultural purposes.

Some of the theses enunciated by the author as though in passing give rise to the thought of the necessity of developing broader sociological research aimed at the optimization of a number of social processes that are at the present time having an unfavorable effect on the mode of life of both the family and society as a whole. This applies in particular to the question of an absence of possibilities of socially profitable expenditure of family funds as the result of a shortage of many vitally important benefits and services. Expansion of existing and opening of new channels for the employment of the monetary funds of the population in the sphere of rest, leisure and the like is bound to contribute to a reduced consumption of alcoholic drinks because, according to the data of a number of studies, drunkenness

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frequently simply fills the "vacuum of higher forms of contacts and more useful amusements for the individual and society" (p 276).

Another important social problem, unfortunately, which is only incidentally touched upon in the book, is connected with the use by a certain portion of Soviet families, as the author delicately puts it, "of funds obtained as additional income, which could not be declared openly." "Of course," A.G. Kharchev writes, "this reasoning is based on an extremely limited empirical base, but it agrees with those conclusions that can be made from materials of courts, militia, readers' correspondence and from surveys of public opinion" (p 276). It would seem that in our days, when the periodical press is increasingly acutely bringing up the question of a spread of the practice of acquisition of unearned income by speculators and bribe takers, the time has come to expand the "limited empirical base" through the collection of reliable sociological information on the scale of this social evil. Such research has a direct bearing on the social problems of the family, as the easy life of any kind of wheeler-dealers and operators and also of their entire families from unearned and "left-hand" income produces an antisocialist way of life for such families and exerts a socially destructive effect on those around them, particularly the youth.

In regard to other topical problems relating to the social development of our society, A.G. Kharchev's position is expressed much more definitely. This applies first of all to problems of effective demographic policy, discussed animatedly in recent years in the Soviet demographic, economic and sociological literature. As we know, certain investigators continue to insist without an adequate basis that the introduction of grants for children would not exert a sufficient influence on changing the reproductive behavior of families and thus raise the level of the birthrate. Without directly polemicizing such views, the author nonetheless clearly states that "the birthrate should be raised through more effective material and moral incentives for giving birth to the first and particularly a second and third child in normal families. Such incentives will undoubtedly provide the necessary corrections in the planning of the time of birth of children in a family" (p 208). Citing numerous data characterizing the closely existing feedback between birthrate level and divorce level, A.G. Kharchev makes another important conclusion--that material and moral incentives for giving birth will serve in the interest not only of growth of population required by the country in its central and western regions but also in that of a certain reduction in the number of divorces (pp 225-227). In examining problems of stabilization of the family and divorce in a broad sociological context of way-of-life problems, A.G. Kharchev emphasizes that "neither state nor society are interested in growth of the number of bachelors and unmarried women because this means at the same time a growth in the number of unstable destinies and children out of wedlock" (p 229). In this connection, he proposes a number of practical recommendations aimed at the strengthening of family relations. Noting that nonsolution of housing problems is today one of the chief reasons both for high cadre turnover and for a high divorce rate, A.G. Kharchev proposes to significantly expand the sphere of cooperative housing constructing and the simultaneous creation of a system of state credit extension to young families. "This measure will help boost not only the stability of these families but also that of new labor collectives, since there is nothing which quite binds a person to an enterprise as a home" (p 229). It is gratifying to note that these proposals have found their reflection in a recent decree of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU "On Further Strengthening Labor Discipline and Reducing Cadre Turnover in the National Economy."¹

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Other scientific recommendations contained in the book are also deserving of attention. In the interest of regulating relations between the sexes, reducing marriage age and an earlier beginning of the fertile period in the conjugal life of a woman, A.G. Kharchev proposes the creation of conditions and incentives for youth in school going to work (under conditions of an incomplete workday), beginning with secondary-school senior classes (p 208). Under conditions of a steady growth of the average duration of schooling by youth, such measures are bound to promote the reduction being formed in connection with acceleration of the gap between physical (including also sexual) maturation of young people and the onset of their social (including also moral) maturity and to put an end to the dependent status of young people, which frequently lasts today to 22-25 years of age. Pointing to actualization of the problem of mediation in the selection of a marriage partner, the author considers it necessary to develop "dating services" ["sluzhba znakomstv"] now being established in a number of cities. As we know, this idea was unconditionally rejected several years ago as being incompatible with the principles of socialist morality. Indirectly arguing against such views, A.G. Kharchev logically notes that "dating services" do not intend to replace personal choice of a spouse or marriage on the basis of love or to reinstate the once existing custom of matchmaking, they only expand the range of choice in marriage and therefore improve its chances" (pp 342, 343).

At the same time, one may encounter in the book "Brak i sem'ya v SSSR" certain debatable or imprecise assertions. Thus, it is hardly fair to connect with the name of A. Kollontay only vulgarized errors in discussing the problem of the family (p 129), since her works contained many valuable ideas on these questions that retain a positive significance for our time. A comparison shown on page 281 on outlays of time for household work in the '20s and the '60s (also cited in many other sociological works) is not quite correct, inasmuch as it does not take into account the significant reduction in the number of children in families in these years. The figures cited on page 283, characterizing aggregate expenditures of time by the population of the USSR on everyday work (180 billion hours per year), disagree with later computations of the data published in the economic literature, according to which these expenditures of time are as high as 275-300 billion hours.

It is hardly possible to agree with the author's assertion that instances where children do not ask permission of their parents to get married but only inform them of it serve as evidence of insufficient respect for parents and should be a cause of concern (pp 184, 185). In our view, such instances reflect the growing autonomy of the individual, his lawful wish to decide such an intimate question as the choice of a marriage partner and to depend on his own rather than someone's else's opinion even when it comes from a person close to him. In addition, the author remarks that a certain proportion of people of the older generation, which is to a large degree afflicted with national prejudices, does not approve for one reason or another mixed marriages and is against the selection of a groom or bride of another nationality (pp 212, 213). It is therefore a natural desire for young people not to follow such preconceptions of their parents and to determine on their own the question of their personal happiness. It is only natural for the differences pointed out by the author to exist between generations in beliefs relating to family life. This is expressed in the fact that only an insignificant portion of newlyweds is inclined to fully follow the example of their parents in their interrelations (p 238).

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Polemizing against the opinion that a family is not needed for the satisfaction of the needs of society in reproduction of the population, A.G. Kharchev singles out such functions of the family which no other social institution in the given concrete conditions is capable of performing. These include upbringing of children, which demands especially during the early age of a child constant care combined with the dedication, deep interest in the fate of the child, found in parents to a much greater degree than in other people. Accordingly, the opinion sounds all the more surprising that "if reproduction of the population is equated solely with giving birth to children, then it would be difficult to quarrel with such an opinion" [about the lack of need of a family for this--V.R.) (p 74). In this connection, the question may be posed: what motives could induce the majority of women to tolerate the burdens of pregnancy, birth and the like except for the thought of subsequent upbringing of a child which can be most advantageously achieved within the framework of the family?

All these comments are of an individual character and do not lower the scientific value, newness and substantive content of the study. One would wish for the book "Brak i sem'ya v SSSR" to be translated into foreign languages and thus be accessible to the foreign reader whose consciousness is burdened with numerous prejudices concerning the fate and tendencies of development of the Soviet family.

A.G. Kharchev's work, generalizing the experience of sociology, ethnography and other scientific disciplines in the investigation of social problems of the family accumulated in recent decades, discloses clearly the creative potential of Soviet social sciences and its effective participation in the solution of current problems of the social development of socialist society.

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DEMOGRAPHY

BOOK EXCERPTS: THEORY, PRACTICE IN POPULATION STUDIES

Moscow TEORIYA I PRAKTIKA ISSLEDOVANIYA NARODONASELENIYA (Theory and Practice in Population Studies) in Russian 1979

[Annotation and table of contents from book edited by V. M. Moiseyenko, Izdatel'stvo "Moskovskogo Universiteta," 185 pages]

[Text] In this collection materials are presented by junior scientists at the Center for Studies on Population Problems in the Economics Faculty of the Moscow State University. In them light is thrown on questions of the theory and methodology in population studies and the relationship between economic and demographic processes in resettlement and migration.

The book is intended for graduate students, students and scientific personnel interested in population problems.

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