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Raising good Soviets: Media depictions of Soviet life and upbringing under Khrushchev

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RAISING GOOD SOVIETS: MEDIA DEPICTIONS OF SOVIET LIFE AND
UPBRINGING UNDER KHRUSHCHEV

A Thesis

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

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INTRODUCTION

Policies on education and upbringing affected almost every individual in the Soviet Union, from the youngest child to the oldest pensioner. These policies reflected the current ideological path of the party and the need to train the children to accomplish the country's goals. On a more personal level, these policies helped the children evolve into successful adults able to easily enter the workforce. When the public saw that these policies were not being enforced or implemented, they expressed their dissatisfaction. These individuals were able to safely voice their criticisms by pointing out the educational system's failures within the ideological framework of the party.

Following the Russian Revolution and the founding of the Soviet Union in 1917, educational reforms were implemented. All schools were brought under the control of the new government and made free to both men and women. The leaders stressed that these schools would promote useful work and the collective. They wanted to erase the old bourgeois remnants from the educational system. Children would learn through actions and experiences instead of simply memorizing information. They were given a large voice in the operations of their school and shared equal authority with the teachers. Due to the turmoil of the Civil War, the reforms were difficult to implement in some areas. After Lenin's death in 1924, these progressive and sometimes radical ideas would fall out of favor.

In accordance with Stalin's rule, educational policies under the new leader focused on standardization and rigidity. Instead of Lenin's general and free education, Stalin divided the educational system into industrial schools to train future workers and

advanced schools to prepare student for universities. He ended the overly progressive experimentation and reasserted teacher authority in the schools. Curriculums were also standardized across the Soviet Union. All of these changes worked to fulfill the need for rapid industrialization and a consolidation of power within the country.

The period between Stalin's death in 1953 and Khrushchev's display of supremacy as the new leader of the Soviet Union in 1956 involved the evolution of new ideological goals for the party. In addition to denouncing Stalin's leadership, Khrushchev also believed that reconnecting students with the workers would result in greater gains for the country. He worked to erase the divisions between the working and educated classes through general, unified mass education. Socially useful work was also reintroduced into the curriculum. These reforms closely reflected the educational goals of Lenin. The collective and the workers' traditions would be reincorporated into the schools. All of this served to distance himself from Stalin's policies while also working towards the achievement of communism.

Within this ideology, people were able to express their opinions on the educational system. They commented on the teaching of the workers' traditions, industrial training, ideological lessons, and moral teachings. Both praises and criticisms were printed openly in newspapers and magazines and, instead of being censored or reprimanded, were applauded for their concern for the country and the new generation. By expressing their criticisms from an ideological perspective, these individuals safely voiced their opinions and ensured that they were heard.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

A study of this nature combines and expands upon research already completed in three different fields of Soviet history: Khrushchev and the Thaw, Soviet Mass Media, and the Soviet education system. Each subfield figures critically in understanding the interactions between society and the media. Khrushchev's Thaw, including both his de-Stalinization policy and his attempts at reform, whether through the agricultural reforms of the Virgin Lands or the increased production of apartments, greatly influenced Soviet society at this time. The public's reactions to these significant changes indicate its views towards the party and to the quality of life at that time.

Historians of Khrushchev primarily concern themselves with his life and the political history of the time. William Taubman, in his comprehensive work on the leader, praises Khrushchev for attempting to update the old system of government. At the same time, he admits that the First Secretary often instituted reforms rapidly and sporadically, which prevented a thorough consideration of all related aspects. As a result, a high number of these reform measures ended in failure. Carl Linden concurs with Taubman in the praise of Khrushchev's attempts at reforms. However, instead of blaming the leader's impulsivity, he places the blame on the inherent instabilities and inefficiencies in the Soviet political structure, which plagued the leadership. David Nordlander writes that in recent decades Khrushchev's political reforms have been viewed in a more positive light as a result of the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. Needing justifications for his own

reforms, Gorbachev aimed to interpret Khrushchev's reformist policies as progressive instead of erratic.¹

Other historians focused more closely on Khrushchev's Thaw policies.

Alexsander Nekrich sees Khrushchev's repeated tightening and easing of restrictions as evidence for the leader's lack of control over society. He attributes Khrushchev's need to establish dominance over Soviet society domestically as a response to the government's failures with policies abroad. Erik Kulavig focuses on the legacy of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization. While Khrushchev disavowed some of Stalin's practices and his cult of personality, many of the old party members, including Khrushchev himself, had worked alongside Stalin. This monumental leader had shaped their ideas on the governmental apparatus. A generational gap was forming between the two generations. The older generation, which had come of age during World War II, was more hesitant to chastise Stalin. The younger generation had come of age during the Thaw and embraced criticism. Kulavig compares this generational gap to that expressed by Turgenev in *Fathers and Sons*. The two generations were raised in such different times that they were unable to understand each other.²

¹Biographies and monographs detailing Nikita Khrushchev are abundant, but they vary in their explanations of the leader's sometimes-sporadic nature. Most of these works focus on the international policies during the later years of his rule. For information on Khrushchev's policy changes see: William Taubman. *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2003); Carl A. Linden. *Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership, 1957-1964*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966); David Nordlander. "Khrushchev's Image in the Light of Glasnost and Perestroika." *Russian Review*. 52. (1993): 248.

² Khrushchev's Thaw policies operated in a similar nature to his other, more erratic decisions. For more information see: Alexsander M. Nekrich. "The Socio-Political Aspect of Khrushchev: His Impact on Soviet Intellectual Life." *Khrushchev and the Communist World*. Ed. R.F. Miller and F. Feher. (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1984); Erik Kulavig. *Dissident in the Years of Khrushchev: Nine Stories about Disobedient Russians*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2002)

Fathers and Sons is a novel by Russian author, Ivan Turgenev, and published in 1862. Throughout the course of the novel, the reader is presented with the ideas of two liberals of the older generation and two

The Thaw, while part of Khrushchev's incumbency, has evolved into a subfield of its own. Research in this realm traditionally centered on Russia's intelligentsia and the dissenters but has recently expanded to encompass other areas. Vladislav Zubok emphasizes that people were more confused after the secret speech than they were after Stalin's death. In the course of his speech, Khrushchev began to denounce Stalin's purges, the violation of collective leadership, Stalin's cult of personality, the doctor's plot, and his deportation of entire nationalities. These people had lived under Stalin for over twenty years and saw him as the man who had defeated the Nazis and the man responsible for their country's remarkable industrial modernization. Suddenly, this idol had been dethroned. Iurii Aksiutin believes that despite all of the commotion created, most people did not fully understand or believe Khrushchev when he denounced Stalin or when he promised the approaching achievement of communism. Such conversations provided people with more questions than answers, and often left the common citizen more confused and uneasy than before. The youth were particularly shocked by the speech, and Aleksander Pyzhikov points to this as producing a new sense of inquisitiveness and doubt in the populace in regards to official policies. While young people may not have engaged in dissident activities, their new inquisitive and freethinking attitude would continue into later decades.

While the previous scholars apply their theories to a broader sense of society, Stephen Bittner looks to the change in one community. He traces the sense of rapid change in the Arbat region of Moscow. Here, both modernists and conservationists

nihilists of the younger generation. While both groups hope for a Western-based form of social change in Russia, their differences in age and philosophy make it impossible for them to agree with each other. For a complete depiction of this issue: Ivan Turgenev. *Fathers and Sons*. Trans. Barbara Makanowitzky. (New York: Bantam Books, 1981)

claimed to work for the spirit of reform with their opinions on the region's development. One group wanted to restore the historic buildings while the other worked for the construction of a large highway through the neighborhood and for new modern buildings. Despite their differences, both groups believed themselves to be working in accordance with Khrushchev's reforms.³

A newer scholarly field of this era is that of private life among Soviet citizens. Lidiia Brusilovskaia proposes that citizens realized that outside influences, most often from the West, were beginning to be tolerated. People saw new liberties being tolerated in the film and music industries and furthered that not all aspects of personal life should be controlled by the state. Deborah Field applies this new Soviet phenomenon of questioning to the realm of marriage. While Khrushchev wanted more harmonious families, in order to increase productivity and efficiency, more divorces were applied for and granted during this period than had previously been allowed. Christine Varga-Harris furthers this by investigating Khrushchev's new one-family apartments. Again, in an aim to create more harmonious and efficient family-units, Khrushchev worked to remedy the drastic housing shortage that had plagued the Soviet Union since the days of World War II. Having their own apartment allowed people to take a larger role in the home's appearance. When Khrushchev allowed people to furnish these apartments, a new

³ Recent study of popular responses to the Thaw has displayed repeatedly that a large section of society was uneasy or confused as to what Khrushchev's reforms truly meant. For more information see: Vladislav Zubok. *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 2009); Iurii Aksiutin. "Popular Responses to Khrushchev." *Nikita Khrushchev*. Ed. William Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason. Trans. David Gehrenbeck, Eileen Kane, and Alla Bashenka. (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000); Aleksander Pyzhikov. "Source of Dissidence: Soviet Youth After the Twentieth Party Congress." *Russian Social Science Review*. 45 (2004): 65-79; Stephen V. Bittner. *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw: Experience and Memory in Moscow's Arbat*. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008)

consumerism emerged. Society had to balance materialism with the traditional Soviet ideals.⁴

While scholars have begun to concern themselves more with society's reactions to Khrushchev's reforms and efforts at de-Stalinization, more remains to be studied. There must have been more than divorces and apartment decorations occupying the minds of the public. If the public did in fact express other concerns, one possibility is that these concerns may be seen in the print media of the time. Newspapers received many letters every week from their readers and printed some of these comments in the pages. These papers may have been one method for the public to express non-dissident or covertly dissident concerns.

Journalism in the late 1950s and early 1960s was forced to balance Khrushchev's policies following de-Stalinization with their traditional methods and structure. Angus Roxburgh follows the newspaper *Pravda*'s history and concludes that during the 1950s and 1960s the newspaper continued in much the same way that it had before the secret speech. It allowed some criticism of Stalin's actions, but it prohibited any outright condemnation of the leader. Thomas Wolfe comments that journalists of this time had already adapted and learned to govern society and shape their depictions of it to what they assumed would be the new, post-de-Stalinization wishes of the party. They did this only to discover that the party had no use for such inquisitive journalists. Michael Milinkovitch looks specifically at the political cartoons featured in two newspapers,

⁴ Private life is a newer field of Soviet history, beginning less than twenty years ago. For more information see: Lidiia Brusilovskaia. "Culture of Everyday Life During the Thaw." *Russian Studies in History*. 48 (Summer 2009): 10-21; Christine Varga-Harris. "Homemaking and the Aesthetic and Moral Perimeters of the Soviet Home During the Khrushchev Era." *Journal of Social History*. 41 (2008): 561-589; Deborah A. Field. "Irreconcilable Differences: Divorce and Conceptions of Private Life in the Khrushchev Era." *Russian Review*. 57 (October 1998): 599-613

Pravda and *Izvestia*, from the end of Stalin's rule through Khrushchev's rule. The cartoons were used as propaganda to control the portrayal of international events.

Milinkovitch furthers that the cartoons were used specifically to convey the objectives of the leadership through the choice of which stories to portray. Instances include the failure of the newspapers to depict the Cuban Missile Crisis and the only partial coverage of the Korean War.⁵

This study of criticisms expressed in the media is primarily concerned with commentary on the educational system. The subfield of Soviet education is not a recent discovery and has already produced different criticisms of the system. Dora Shturman examines pedagogical articles in *Novy Mir* and *Literaturnaia Gazeta* and concludes that, like his other reforms, Khrushchev's educational reforms were quickly and hastily put into effect. The reforms failed because the boarding schools cost an exorbitant amount of money to both the state and the families, little concrete money was appropriated for the new policies, and teachers were given little time to cover the newly revised and expanded curriculum. Friedrich Kuebart examines assessment methods of these schools and finds

⁵ The fate of the Soviet Union's newspapers during the Thaw and Khrushchev periods was greatly dependent on the editor and the affiliation of the paper. Some papers saw great changes and liberalization during this period while other remained virtually untouched. For more information on newspapers during this period see: Angus Roxburgh. *Pravda: Inside the Soviet News Machine*. (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1987); Thomas C. Wolfe. *Governing Soviet Journalism: The Press and the Socialist Person After Stalin*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Michael Milinkovitch. *The View from Red Square: A Critique of Cartoons from Pravda and Izvestia, 1947-1964*. (New York: Hobbs, Dorman & Company, Inc., 1987); Dina R. Spechler. *Permitted Dissent in the USSR: Novy Mir and the Soviet Regime*. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982)

The development of the newspaper in Russia is crucial to understanding its role under Khrushchev. Never having been given government subsidies, the newspapers were typically shorter in length and without the numerous pictures commonly seen in Western newspapers. For more information on the development of literacy and the press in Russia see: Jeffery Brooks. *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature: 1866-1917*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1985); Louis McReynolds. *The News Under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991). For more information on Stalin's shaping of the official press see: Jeffery Brooks. *Thank You Comrade Stalin!: Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000)

that teachers were pressured to pass all students, even if they felt that students had not fully understood the year's material, because student advancement was the only assessment of their job performance. Like many of Khrushchev's other reforms, such policies were poorly thought out and short-lived.

Also present in the study of the Soviet educational system is the ruin of the family. Lisa Kirschenbaum chronicles the changes in family structure in early Soviet history. At first the party had wanted to remove the children from their families to educate them while allowing the mothers to remain at work. They retracted from such an idealistic policy and instead allowed the kids to remain with their families. At age three, the children would be brought to kindergartens and reeducated. Catriona Kelly focuses on the importance of heroes and enthusiasm in the educational system under Khrushchev. Children saw such heroes as the cosmonauts Gagarin and Titov and were encouraged to participate in the different party organizations to foster a communist spirit. It was important for them to not only be educated academically, but also ideologically.⁶

⁶ For more information on both the academic and ideological education that took place in the Soviet educational system see: Dora Shturman. Trans. Philippa Shimart. *The Soviet Secondary System*. (New York: Routledge, 1988); Friedrich Kuebart. "7. Aspects of Soviet Secondary Education: Soviet Performance and Teacher Accountability." *Quality of Life in the Soviet Union*. Ed. Horst Herlemann. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1987); Lisa A. Kirschenbaum. *Small Comrades: Revolutionizing Childhood in Soviet Russia, 1917-1932*. (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001); Catriona Kelly. *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890-1991*. (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2007)

For a comprehensive understanding of the history of educational reforms in the Soviet Union, see: Sheila Fitzpatrick. *The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts Under Lunacharsky, October 1917-1921*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Sheila Fitzpatrick. *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1921-1934*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Jeanne Sutherland. *Schooling in the New Russia: Innovation and Change, 1984-1995*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999)

METHODOLOGY

In order to discover more about the dynamics present between the mass media and the public during this period, I collected a wide sample of periodicals and surveyed issues from 1956 through 1964. In an effort to narrow the large number of periodicals to a manageable number, I first conducted a survey of the newspaper, *Pravda*. This publication was the main organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and one of the most subscribed newspapers in the Soviet Union. Through these readings, I discerned that the most prevalent concern expressed and criticized was that of education. This was not just the curriculum implemented in the schools, but the complete upbringing of society.

Focusing primarily on the area of upbringing and education, I examined *Pravda* more closely. The newspaper included a variety of sources and viewpoints. It contained party speeches, ideological commentary, and articles submitted by Komsomol members. It also covered events such as the Day of Soviet Youth, heroes' speeches to the young children, and congresses of the party and youth organizations. Finally, the newspaper published letters of its readers. It included letters of praise extolling the quick construction of a school, the achievements of the local Komsomol organization, or the great academic and moral lessons of one of the teachers. In addition, they also printed criticisms. These included cries for clothes for their children, questions as to why no progress had been made on the school building in five years, and why students were graduating from schools poorly trained to enter the workforce.

I expanded my research to include other relevant, but varied, periodicals. Known for its importance during the Thaw period, I searched for relevant articles and stories

within the periodical, *Novy Mir*. Being literature oriented, the publication was filled mostly with serial novels, short stories, and poems. However, in an editorial section, some writers did voice their concern in regards to the image of the hero in children's and young adult literature.

Party speeches illustrate the ideological framework, within which society functioned. I read the speeches given at the party congresses during this period. These also served to describe the reforms Khrushchev initiated during his time as general secretary. I also surveyed *Kommunist*, a periodical that published commentary on Soviet ideology and the opinions of the party. The survey provided useful insight into the official ideological beliefs propagated by the party. It would be within the framework of these beliefs that people would voice their criticisms of the apparatus.

Krokodil' was a satire magazine, which circulated throughout much of the Soviet period. It proved to be a wealth of information dealing with this type of commentary. The writers filled the pages of the journal with stories, sketches, and cartoons ridiculing aspects of society. Satirists openly mocked Western society but never criticized official actions of the party or government. Their domestic critiques, however, illustrate frustrations that were echoed throughout other publications. While the events depicted in the satire stories and cartoons were at times ridiculous and far from likely, the thoughts behind them were sincere.⁷

In order to look more specifically at education and upbringing, I also investigated the periodicals *Soviet Education* and *Iunost'*. *Soviet Education* is a translated compilation of Soviet education periodicals. Its articles were aimed at educators and discussed classes, moral education, and advice for teachers. All of these articles were written by

⁷ For more information on *Krokodil'* see the appendix on Soviet satire

fellow Soviet educators of all levels in order to improve upon the weaknesses of the system and new teachers to help the students. *Iunost'* was aimed at the younger generations. It included stories, drawings, and poetry, all of which aimed to instill desirable traits in children, illustrating the values of society.

By combining views from a variety of sources, this research demonstrates a representative study of depictions of life in Soviet mass media sources. Criticism of education and upbringing speaks through the commentary on ideology and literature, as well as articles written by all ages from children to pensioners. Analyzing the complaints and comparing them to the educational work being prescribed by the party at the time allows a fuller understanding of the concerns of the common people during the Thaw era.

FINDINGS

The criticisms expressed followed a common formula – they praised the goals of the party in working towards an ideological goal and then cited specific instances of individuals or places that were not implementing the reforms or indoctrinating the youth with communist values. These individuals criticized a lack of progress in a variety of areas: upbringing outside of the institutions, construction of kindergartens and schools buildings, the quality of schools and teachers, industrial training, higher education, boarding schools, and youth organizations. Parents, workers, party members, and journalists openly expressed their opinions, both suggestions and criticisms.

Ideological Work

Lenin and the other early leaders of the Soviet Union built the country upon an ideology – Marxist-Leninism. This was the unique combination of Lenin’s interpretations of Marxist teachings, the laws and decrees issued by Lenin during his years as leader of the Communist Party, and various quotes of Lenin, which would be referenced by future party leaders. The ideology was continuously reinterpreted to suit the direction taken by the current party leaders.

The ideological direction of the party leaders during this period is seen in the directives they expressed at the party congresses.

The Part considers that the paramount task in ideological work at the present stage is to rear all working people in a spirit of ideological integrity and devotion to communions and a communist attitude to labor and the public economy; to eliminate completely the survivals of bourgeois views and morals, to ensure the all-round, harmonious development of the individual, to create a truly rich-

spirited culture. The Party attaches special importance to the rearing of the rising generation.⁸

Ideological upbringing was important. To ensure the future success of the Soviet Union, the party needed to raise all of its citizens in the spirit of communism and encourage enthusiasm among the future workers.

Furthermore, Khrushchev declared that these children would be the future builders of communism. It was vitally important that all children be ideologically prepared for this achievement. He compared them to fruit trees. In his opinion, the amount of work and time that it takes to repair a damaged tree and nurse it back to health is much more intensive than if the tree had simply grown strong in the first place, if the tree can be repaired at all. These young citizens would adopt a deep communist belief and devotion to society, a communist love of labor, communist morality, and a complete education.⁹ By increasing the amount of ideological training in schools, these goals could be achieved.

The party did describe specific methods as to how it would accomplish such ideological goals. Khrushchev wanted the schools to include more practical subjects in their curriculum, in order to assist students entering the workforce at either the kolkhoz or the factories.¹⁰ The communist morality and values Khrushchev wanted instilled in the next generation revolved around the work culture and the traditions of the workers. Students could not enter the workforce, or even society, if they did not grasp these

⁸ "The Party Program." *Current Soviet Policies IV: The Documentary Record of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. Ed. Charlotte Saidkoswki and Leo Gruliow. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962) p 27

⁹ N.S. Khrushchev. "Report on the Party Program." *Current Soviet Policies IV* p 104

¹⁰ N.S. Khrushchev. "The Central Committee Report." *Current Soviet Policies II: The Documentary Record of the 20th Communist Party Congress and Its Aftermath*. Ed. Leo Gruliow. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1957) p 50

common values. Without this foundation, there was no possibility of these students succeeding in the accomplishment of communism.

Khrushchev had his concerns about the new generation's ideological capabilities. He acknowledged that they did not know the hardships of prerevolutionary times, nor had they experienced the sufferings during World War II. The country needed to educate them in both their own history and the traditions of the workers, so that the students would understand the importance of the building of communism.¹¹ The need for such education during this period was high. It was noted in 1957 that of the 953 students who graduated from Tbilisi State University in 1955, only 260 reported to their appointed jobs. The others simply refused to be stationed in those districts.¹² Students graduating not only from schools, but also from the universities, still did not possess the most important of communist ideals: a love of work. The lack of communist values was unacceptable to the party members. Another member noted:

Hitherto the higher schools have suffered major shortcomings in this respect. Certain among the students have given evidence of boastfulness and conceit and of an improper attitude toward rugged work. The higher education institutions have paid too little attention to such important elements in the formation of youthful specialists as the development of will power, persistence, and an insistence on mastering difficulties.¹³

Something needed to be done to remedy the situation and instill these necessary values in the next generation if the Soviet Union was to progress in any way towards communism.

¹¹ N.S. Khrushchev. "Report to the Congress." *Current Soviet Policies III: The Documentary Record of the Extraordinary 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. Ed. Leo Gruliow. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960) p 54

¹² "Criticism of Students' Behavior." *Current Soviet Policies II: The Documentary Record of the 20th Communist Party Congress and Its Aftermath*. Ed. Leo Gruliow. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1957) p 206-208

¹³ V.P. Yelyutin. "Speech." *Current Soviet Policies III: The Documentary Record of the Extraordinary 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. p 158

One solution to the problem was the establishment of boarding schools. Khrushchev thought one cause of the ideological deficit was parenting. If the child was raised by a single parent or both parents worked, then there was little time after work that could be devoted to the upbringing of the child. He proposed a network of boarding schools to lift the ideological yoke from the shoulders of the parents. The boarding school staff would concern itself with the upbringing of the children and the parents could visit their children during the weekends.¹⁴ With such a system in place, the children would be raised by specialists trained in child rearing and in ideological instruction, while also allowing the mothers to free themselves and take an active role in the construction of communism.

Despite Khrushchev's ardent suggestions that such networks of boarding schools be established, and despite his thoughts that these schools would eventually be responsible for the upbringing of all future Soviets, criticism of these schools still existed. S.P. Pavlov, the First Secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee at the time, did not agree with the ideological work being carried out in the boarding schools. He believed the practices to be too rigid and that they allowed the children little free time to play games with their classmates or read a book of their own choosing.¹⁵ His criticism does not imply a lack of approval for the boarding schools or the renewed attention to upbringing, but instead an equal concern for these goals and a hope that all children may have an enjoyable childhood while also being instilled with good communist values.

¹⁴ N.S. Khrushchev. "The Central Committee Report." *Current Soviet Policies II: The Documentary Record of the 20th Communist Party Congress and Its Aftermath*. Ed. Leo Gruliow. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1957) p 51

¹⁵ S.P. Pavlov. "Speech" *Current Soviet Policies IV: The Documentary Record of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. p 159

These concerns were not only expressed during sessions of the party congresses but also in various popular publications of the time. It is clear that children were valued in the Soviet Union. Lenin is quoted as far back as 1919 stating that it would be the responsibility of the children to fulfill the construction of their socialist society.¹⁶ The founders understood that in order for this experiment of socialism to succeed, they would need more generations of communists who understood the traditions, upon which the country had been built, and enthusiastically wished to work toward the construction of communism. This new generation was different than the previous generations in the fact that they had been spared the major struggles. For example, one individual commented that the hero of the new generation, Iurii Gagarin, was only eleven yearsold when World War II was occurring. New attempts at upbringing needed to be found to shape this generation into dedicated Soviet citizens.

The new emphasis on education and upbringing was a direct result of educational failings throughout the republics. In order to achieve communism, the standards of education in all republics needed to be raised. “One brigade, one factory, kolkhoz, sovkhoz, or one region can’t work towards the achievement of communism by itself. Only together, as a united front, will we all win the national struggle for communism”¹⁷ Failing schools were openly criticized in the papers. The secretary of the central committee in Tajikistan expressed his concern with schools in his republic and hoped that they would do more to educate the children according to Soviet values.¹⁸ Another article criticized the Novogorodskii Soviet, because in three years its members had not once

¹⁶ “Zashchita detej – delo vsekh narodov.” *Pravda*. 1 June 1961. No. 152 p 1

¹⁷ N. Kuznetsov. “Shkola vospitaniya cheloveka budushchego.” *Pravda*. 8 April 1963. No 98 p 2

¹⁸ N. Zaripova. “Deti – Budushchee strany.” *Pravda*. 26 August 1961. No 239 p 3

addressed the questions regarding the proper upbringing of children and students.¹⁹ These critics agreed with the new emphasis on education and upbringing and wanted it properly addressed throughout the republics.

People also agreed with the need to train the new generation in the traditions of the workers. Articles appeared every year renewing their concerns. These morals included an active role in the building of communism, knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory, the history of the revolution and party, and a love of work. This task was not taken lightly, and one individual even suggested that those who had not yet adopted this set of morals should be corrected.²⁰ While people agreed on the need to train these individuals, the methods for how this training would be administered varied.

While a common solution was cooperation between the schools and nearby industries to increase students' enthusiasm at joining the workforce, another was introducing students to veterans in the community. These veterans of the war and work could talk to the schoolchildren and help them appreciate the traditions of work and the revolution as well as understand the large gains that had been made in the Soviet Union due to the hard work of the previous generations.²¹ Yet another idea involved placing more emphasis on the Komsomol organization. Following the twenty-second party congress, the Komsomol was given a wide range of responsibilities, including educating the young men and women with the heroic traditions of the revolution as well as

¹⁹ "Shkola vospitaniya, shkola kommunisma." *Pravda*. 28 July 1963. No 179 p 2

²⁰ V. Kolbanovskii. "Moral'nyj kodeks stroitelya kommunisma." *Kommunist*. October 1961. No 15 p 36-46; see also: "Molodye stroiteli kommunisma." *Pravda*. 6 January 1963. No 6 p 1; "Vooruzhat' studentov Marksistsko-leninskoj nauki." *Pravda*. 7 February 1962. No 38 p 1; N. I. Boldurev. "The Moral Code of the Builder of Communism – The Basis for Moral Upbringing of the Rising Education." *Soviet Education*. January 1963. Volume V No. 3

²¹ "Shkola, sem'ya, obshchestvennost'." *Pravda*. 10 January 1964. No 10 p 1

ideological and industrial work.²² With these ideas, everyone sought to reform the system and better the education of their children.

Education did not only apply to children. Some individuals criticized the new school reforms because they wanted the reforms to also extend to adult vocational training and educational work.²³ These people encouraged people to make use of the new people's universities, which hosted seminars, lectures, and discussions on the interests of the masses and the moral values. In the same thought, their criticisms encouraged regions to organize more seminars to increase party spirit and initiative amongst workers, which would then also encourage productivity.²⁴ All of these programs were aimed to reeducate those whom the Soviet educational system had missed as children. The united front of educated citizens would be assembled and together they all hoped to march towards the accomplishment of communism.

Upbringing Outside of the Government Apparatus

People expressed criticisms on areas of upbringing outside of the educational system as well. Upbringing did not only occur in schools. Children were also influenced by their parents, activities available to them outside of class, and by their quality of life. Such areas had the possibility to build a solid foundation of communist values within each child but were failing to accomplish this task. People saw these failures happening around them and expressed their criticisms, which in the end chastised the parents for

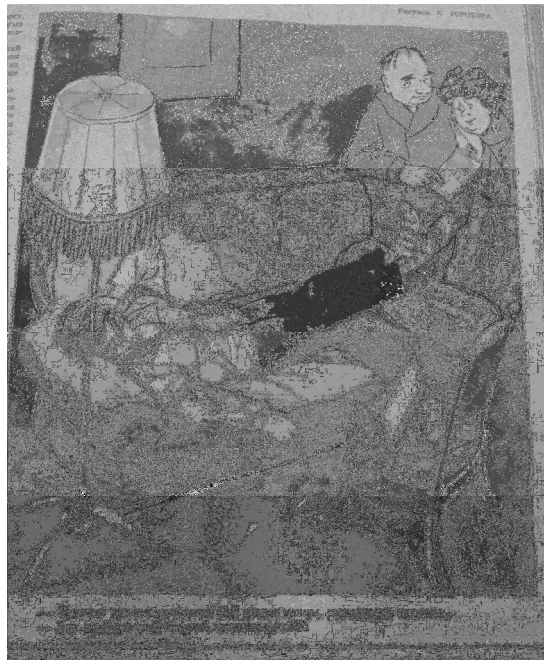
²² "Moral'nye stroileni kommunisma." *Pravda*. 23 November 1961. No 328 p 1

²³ I.A. Kairov. "The New CPSU Program and the Tasks of Pedagogical Science." *Soviet Education*. January 1963. Volume V No. 3

²⁴ "Leninskii Universitet Millionov." *Pravda*. 29 August 1963. No 241 p 2; E. Kolushinskii. "Vospityvat' Kadry v duxe tvorcheskoj initsiativy." *Pravda*. 1 August 1956. No 214 p 3; B. Markov. "Universitet Kul'tury." *Pravda*. 28 June 1961. No 179 p 3

paying so little attention to their children and the government for not taking the necessary steps to remedy the situation.

Idleness was a major criticism directed at the new generation. One critic placed the blame for this on the fact that these individuals had grown up during the successful period of socialism. They had not received the proper training as a child, so reeducation was needed to ensure that they were able to use all of their talents to work towards the common good.²⁵ People were appalled at how late young adults were staying out at night. This was not consistent with the traditional workers' values. One cartoon illustrates the despair of parents, upon seeing that their son is always exhausted.



“Все время танцы, рестораны, пикники... / Вот путевка в санаторий, пусть отдохнет. Always the dances, restaurants, picnics... Here’s a travel ticket, let him go rest. /²⁶

²⁵ V.A. Sikhomlinski. “Labor and Morality.” *Soviet Education*. December 1961 Vol IV No 2

²⁶ E Gorkhova. “Uzhasno ustal nash synok! Vsie Vremya tantsy, restorany, pikniki... Vot putievka v sanatorii, pust’ otdoxniet.” *Krokodil’*. 20 June 1956. No 17 p 5; for more cartoons on the idleness of the youth see: G. Val’ka. “Sdelana vse, shto mogla.” *Krokodil’*. 30 September 1956. No 27 p 1; V.

Parents grew tired of seeing their children occupying their time with clubs and restaurants, instead of work or school. If these children were going to embrace the proper set of morals, then their lives would need to be radically altered.

These individuals were not just parents, but anyone in the country. One woman expressed her frustration with the young workers in her factory. A young person had been let go from the factory as a result of his drunkenness. She and the other workers formed an organization to help such workers, but after six months these individuals still could not grasp the larger goals of communism. Despite her failure, she urged others to continue working to help the youth. In her opinion, the young workers simply needed good role models to follow, because they did not respond to the tales of past heroes.²⁷ People wanted the new generation to be taught how to become good citizens and workers, they just did not know the best way to correct the system of upbringing that was already in place.

Parenting appears to have been a common criticism in the realm of non-governmental upbringing. Outside of the official school system, parents held the most power to educate their children and raise them according to communist values and traditions. Parents were supposed to be seen as the child's role model. Instead, parenting methods were criticized, at times for being contradictory. One individual portrayed the father as rearing the child through punishment while the mother did the same through bribery.²⁸ Parents needed to pay attention to their children. One young child is depicted as trying to ask for help from both his father and his mother, but both turn him away. In the

Konovalova. "Galochkumozhno videt'?' / Ona posle shkoly otyxaet. / Davno? / Vtoroj god." *Krokodil'*. 30 November 1956. No 33 p 8

²⁷ V. Agonin. "Vospitanie primerom." *Pravda*. 18 October 1964. No 292 p 4

²⁸ A. Kanivskogo. "Protivorechiya vospitaniya." *Krokodil'*. 20 June 1961. No 17 p 8

end, it is revealed that he had just wanted to know why he had failed his homework assignment. Without any answers, the boy would only continue to fail.²⁹ The writers wanted parents to know that if they did not pay attention to their children, than the new generation would never succeed. Individuals also criticized fathers for presenting the role model of a drunkard to their children. Drunken citizens would not help the Soviet Union progress forward toward the achievement of communism. One cartoon depicted a family taking a walk through the park. Instead of the happy mother and father pushing the child in a stroller, it was the mother and child pushing the inebriated father in the stroller with his half-liter of vodka.³⁰ Such were the happy times the child would spend with his family and the examples upon which the child would reflect later in life.

Such columns in the papers were not only criticisms of parenting styles, but also recommendations. One commentator wrote simply on the important characteristics of a father. He should provide a good example for the child, while also acting strong and teaching them good morals.³¹ People also cited examples of neighbors who had become role models in the lives of the neighboring children, helping them with homework and taking the time to answer any question the child may have.³² They hoped to illustrate that it was not only the parent's responsibility to raise the children. By presenting as many good role models as possible, the children would be encouraged to follow these examples and grow into good, productive Soviet citizens.

In addition to suggestions for how to raise children, people also wrote to discuss suggestions for how to keep children occupied. Children and young adults needed

²⁹ E. Shchegova. "Papa, pochemu? ...otstan'! Mama, pochemi? ...otstan'! ...I otstal." *Krokodil'*. 20 June 1961. No 17 p 9

³⁰ A. Bazhenova. "Papa, mama, pol-litra i ya." *Krokodil'*. 30 September 1956. No 12 p 14

³¹ V. Sanin. "Kakim dolzhen byt' papa." *Krokodil'*. 20 February 1964. No 5 p 13

³² Anatolij Amksin. "Valerik zadaet voprosy." *Krokodil'*. 20 June 1961. No 17 p 3

beneficial activities to prevent them from frequenting clubs and restaurants late at night. One individual chastised youth clubs for not staying open later into the evening. If they would stay open longer, children would spend their leisure time in these places instead of on the streets.³³ Critics returned to school and party youth organizations as a way for children to occupy their time. It was especially difficult for young children who became easily bored waiting at home while their parents were away at work. At school, the children study, play, are given hot meals, and travel to the park – all to keep them occupied while the parents are busy. One girl commented, “I really like being in the after-school group. Here it is never boring. My dad is a packer and mom works in the hospital. They get home from work late. Without them I would have been really bored staying at home.”³⁴ While such students were not making use of the boarding schools prescribed by Khrushchev, they were still able to gain upbringing from the school system, supplementing the time parents were unable to devote to their children.

Concerns about upbringing extended to more basic areas, such as consumer goods. Parents wanted simple things for their children, such as toys and having a bed to sleep in at night. A childhood without such things would have had a negative effect on the children later in life. People especially criticized the poor quality of children’s clothing and shoes. In 1958, the central committee ordered an increase in the quality of children’s clothing and shoes and in the variety of sizes.³⁵ By issuing such a decree, the party believed that the factories would follow the decree and the issues discussed would be shortly alleviated.

³³ I. Narusova. “Kafe Zazhigaet Ogni.” *Iunost’*. April 1961. No 4 p 106-107.

³⁴ I. Rejdi. “Poka roditeli na rabote.” *Pravda*. 28 January 1962. No 28 p 6

³⁵ “Bol’she dobrotnoj odezhdy I obuvi dlya detej.” *Pravda*. 21 April 1958. No 111 p 4

Despite this decree, the criticisms continued. Parents from the south of the Soviet Union were concerned that summer uniforms were not available for their children. Regardless of the weather, students were required to attend classes in the prescribed uniforms. Parents were angry that neither the town nor the teachers had helped. They reached out to the central government to correct this oversight.³⁶ Parents did not just want functional clothes, but also wanted nice clothes for their children to wear. They wanted clothes that their children would be proud to wear. Still, in 1963, no resolution had been reached. One critic wrote that the production of clothes had grown some, but the variety of colors was limited and it was also difficult to find comfortable shoes. They wanted a growth in quality to be encouraged in addition to a growth in production. These items would assist in the raising of the children, by instilling pride, beauty, and respect.³⁷ Clothing and shoes were not simply frivolous consumer goods or a bygone remnant of a bourgeois economy, but instead vital tools in the process of upbringing.

Literature was also seen as an educational tool. With the building of the new man, Writers believed good literature was more important than ever because it depicted heroes, which showed readers how they should live. One person described this hero as one who is serious, independent, and looks at the world with open eyes while doing everything for the betterment of the world.³⁸ Readers would look at these heroes and aspire to become them. The morals described are the same as the communist morals and values listed by Khrushchev.

People wanted the new generation to learn these values and were concerned that there were few good examples. Komsomol delegates were concerned that neither

³⁶ K. Ivanova. "Shkol'nikam nuzhna letnaya forma." *Pravda*. 7 April 1961. No 97 p 3.

³⁷ E. Marchenko. "Nashi deti dolzhni byt' krasivo odety." *Pravda*. 2 August 1963. No 214 p 2

³⁸ I. Vinogradov. "O sovremennom geroe." *Novy Mir*. September 1961. No 9 p 232-254

literature nor films were providing young people with suitable models.³⁹ One author was more concerned with the impact bourgeois literature could have on the young generation. Such works do not have suitable heroes. If young people read them, they would only be left thinking that it must be impossible to build a socialist country.⁴⁰ Literature was an important method for teaching the youth about hard work, enthusiasm, and honor. Without suitable literature, the new generation would waste their talents and revert to idleness and hooliganism. People suggested better libraries, more bookstores, or even organizing book clubs to encourage the public to read and become educated on the ideals of communism.⁴¹

These thoughts on literature did not only apply to young adult and adult literature. Criticism also emerged regarding the state of children's literature. One critic expressed the common concern books should address the upbringing of the new man, and book production should increase so the children could be better educated. These books were on subjects such as Lenin or the Soviet heroes, and their illustrations also worked to instill an early appreciation of Soviet Realism.⁴² Another individual pushed for more children's magazines, also seeing the beneficial affect they would have on children.⁴³ Such books had a two-fold approach: first, they would increase children's literacy simply by reading, and second, they would create early exposure to the ideas, which would later be taught to the children in schools. By increasing the number and variety of such books, the ideological upbringing of the new generation would be improved.

³⁹ "Vospityvat' kachestva kommunistov-lenintsev." *Pravda*. 18 April 1962. No 108 p 2

⁴⁰ M. Turovskaya. "Geroj bezgerojnogo vremeni." *Novy Mir*. July 1960. No 7 p 240-249

⁴¹ "Blizhe k chitateliu!" *Pravda*. 6 March 1964. No 66 p 1; Rejdovaya brigade. "Knigu – v kazhduiu sem'iu." *Pravda*. 21 June 1961. No 202 p 6; Iu. Borisova. "Nash molodezhnyj klub." *Pravda*. 11 April 1963. No 101 p 4.

⁴² K. Piskunov. "Pisateli – detyam." *Pravda*. 20 October 1962. No 303 p 4; "Detskim knigam – khoroshie illiustratsii." *Pravda*. 6 February 1964. No 37 p 2

⁴³ V. Zaluzhenyj. "Molodaia Gvardiia Sovetskogo Naroda." *Iunost'*. April 1958. No 4 p 11.

Following such concerns, the government established the week of children's books, in order to encourage the printing of new books and make children excited to read.⁴⁴ Criticisms continued to exist and continued through the end of this period. People recognized the educational power that books had to shape the values of the young children, and when they saw that book supply was not adequate, they voiced their opinions and demanded more books, libraries, and stores, so that all people could freely access these books.

Construction

With the increased emphasis on educating the children, many individuals were displeased with the lack of progress in the construction of children's areas. There was a chronic shortage in kindergartens, playgrounds, and school buildings. Some, who wanted to enroll their children in the kindergartens or schools, were turned away because there were not enough spots to accommodate all of the children. These people were aware of the governmental plans for construction of these places and wanted someone held accountable for the inexcusable lack of progress being made on them.

Kindergartens were in increasingly high demand during this period. The number of children of age for kindergartens in 1963 was 6.3 million, roughly two times more than in 1956.⁴⁵ Plans to meet such an increase in enrollment were likely to have been demanding, and the construction projects were rarely completed on time. Such projects typically took much longer and were of poor quality. The cartoon below humorously illustrates the real frustrations with the slow progress of construction projects.

⁴⁴ "Shkol' nye kanikuly." *Pravda*. 28 March 1962. No 87 p 6; "Millionykh iunykh chitatelej." *Pravda*. 30 March 1963. No 89 p 4

⁴⁵ "Dlya nashikh detej." *Pravda*. 9 January 1963. No 9 p 1



«Если ясли не построишь / Будешь ты в углу стоять / Срок заслуженный - всего лишь / Год, два, три, четыре, пять.» “If the nursery you don’t finish, in the corner you will stand. The time deserved for this will be – a year, two, three, four, five”⁴⁶

Like the children in the cartoon, the public no longer wished to accept that the construction projects must be that slow and of such poor quality.

Criticism of these projects was not implied, but explicitly stated in major papers. A reporter described a preschool in 1961 that was far below quality. He returned two years later and found that it was still not completely renovated and, furthermore, the workers were indifferent to the work and the children.⁴⁷ Two of the most highly valued ideals of the party, as expressed by Khrushchev during the party congresses, were a love of work and a duty to progress towards communism. To find a group of workers who rejected both of these values was simply unacceptable.

The slow construction also included the building of children’s playgrounds. Children needed to be able to run about and play, but without playgrounds there was little space available for them. With the growing number of children, the country also needed

⁴⁶ “Po zaslugam.” *Krokodil*. 20 June 1959. No 20 p 9

⁴⁷ N. Antonov. “Rech idet o detyakh...” *Pravda*. 22 October 1963. No 295 p 4

more playgrounds. As one critic noted, despite the increase in children, the parks have not expanded.⁴⁸ One cartoon shows the children being resourceful and converting the area in front of a building into a soccer field. A worker looks on at all the broken windows and thinks, “One more goal and I will have a full day’s worth of work.”⁴⁹ Yet another wrote about how the neighbors always complained that his children were in the way, but if there was nowhere else for the children to go, what were they to do?⁵⁰ The state had promised their children a good upbringing, but, when there was nowhere to run and play, people began to express their discontent.

Perhaps the worst of all of the construction failures, was that of the schools. It could be claimed that kindergartens and playgrounds were superfluous and only optional in a child’s upbringing, but the shortage of school buildings could not be overlooked. School construction projects consistently failed to fulfill their plans and fell behind quotas. In 1964, the government conceded that overall school construction was only at 88% of its supposed yearly plan.⁵¹ This figure being the average, many individuals encountered much worse experiences with the construction of their children’s schools.

People became frustrated with the slow progress of their schools. One person wrote that, while their school was started five years ago, only two floors had been completed. Furthermore, they had been told that the school would be completed that year, but no workers had arrived to finish the construction.⁵² Another wrote to say that after four months, the school’s progress was at only 55% of what it should have been. Only three months from the beginning of the school year, the school did not even have

⁴⁸ “Detskaya ploshchadka i personal’nyj garazh.” *Pravda*. 7 June 1964. No 189 p 2

⁴⁹ I. Semenova. “Tam, gde net sportplashchadok.” *Krokodil’*. 20 April 1957. No 11 p 15

⁵⁰ A. Karacev and S. Revzin. “Ottsy i deti.” *Krokodil’*. 30 June 1962. No 18 p 10

⁵¹ “Stroitel’stvu shkol – vsenarodnoe vnimanie.” *Pravda*. 26 June 1964. No 178 p 1

⁵² “Stroitel’stvo shkol – delo gosudarstvennoj vazhnosti.” *Pravda*. 5 August 1962. No 217 p 2.

electricity.⁵³ One school had been left with no other option than to have their students study in three shifts, simply because there were not enough spots to accommodate all of the children.⁵⁴ Without new buildings, there was little else the schools could do.

When this slow progress was combined with the poor quality, in which many of the schools were constructed, the criticisms of the public were well justified. In 1962, only one-fourth of all newly constructed schools received a rating of “good” or “great”, regardless of the republic.⁵⁵ Criticism was also laid on the poor quality of the workers. A construction worker in Turkmenistan admitted that the projects were disorganized, workers poorly disciplined, and tools were in short supply.⁵⁶ In the end, people were in no way pleased with the lack of progress. If workers could not build enough schools to educate the children, there was no possible way that teachers could also teach the students the necessary ideological and practical lessons to form these children into successful workers.

Commentary on the subject was not only negative. Some individuals had good experiences with school construction projects. They shared their experiences in the hopes of encouraging others and showing that it was possible to build a high-quality school in the time allotted by Gosplan. One group of workers had built a twelve-story school with enough spots for 900 children in twenty days.⁵⁷ They did not write this to imply that all school projects should be completed in twenty days, but instead as an attempt to increase enthusiasm among workers and encourage them to work hard for the completion of the

⁵³ “Kogda prozvenit zvonok v shkolakh-novostrojках.” *Pravda*. 30 May 1963. No 150 p 2

⁵⁴ S. Mityarov, V. Shlenskaya, T. Baranova. “Stroitel’stbu shkol i bol’nits – povsednevnoe bnimanie!” *Pravda*. 18 August 1957. No 230 p 2

⁵⁵ I. Padezhnov. “Nuzhny shkol’nogo stroitel’stva.” *Pravda*. 6 June 1962. No 157 p 4.

⁵⁶ “Kogda prozvenit zvonok v shkolakh-novostrojках.” *Pravda*. 30 May 1963. No 150 p 2.

⁵⁷ “Zdanie shkoly smontirovano 20 denej.” *Pravda*. 7 September 1957. No 250 p 4

school projects. The public wanted the plans for the construction of the new man and the ideological upbringing of the new generation to succeed, and criticized those who they felt were not doing their share of the work.

Schools

Many of Khrushchev's reforms were directed at the curriculum used in the schools. He wanted teachers to play a larger role in ideological education by instructing students on communist morals, while also instilling in them a sense of pride at the history of their country. Classes should improve in quality and include more ideological references as well as place a higher importance on the instruction of the sciences. Finally, textbooks should be updated to reflect the previous changes and the efficiency of textbook production should be increased. All of these reforms were aimed to better the new generation and speed the arrival of communism.

Teachers

Similar to the large increase in the number of school children during this period, sixteen percent of the two million teachers in 1964 were recent university graduates.⁵⁸ It was quickly evident that not only did the old methods of teaching need revised, but this large influx of new teachers also needed to be quickly trained to lead their classes. Individuals began writing to the newspaper, praising and advocating a collective style of teaching, which had been adopted by some of the schools. A new teacher admitted that when he had taught his first lesson, he had no idea how to command the respect and attention of his students. He thanked the collective of teachers in his school for helping

⁵⁸ "Narodnyj uchitel'." *Pravda*. 19 July 1964. No 201 p 1

him learn how to be an effective teacher.⁵⁹ Another school, using this collective method, also included the parents. The teachers helped educate the parents on upbringing, and the parents helped fix and renovate the school at the end of each year.⁶⁰ A school in Rostov-na-Don wrote to tell others that, since it had established its teachers' cooperative, the school had gone from holding thirty-two students back in 1957, to only two in 1960, as well as having no drop-outs in the past ten years.⁶¹ All of these schools had incorporated teachers' cooperatives into their schools and wanted to encourage others to do the same, so that all schools could better educate their students.

In addition to these reforms, other suggestions were also made to improve teaching methods. One educator laid out a variety of suggestions, including attaining a balance between instruction and upbringing, connecting science and labor, encouraging independent thinking, developing logic, and adapting teaching to suit how students most effectively absorb knowledge.⁶² The teachers were to become the instrument, through which the government raised the new generation. It was the teachers who would be responsible for propagating the new curriculum to the children, but also the teachers who would be responsible for the moral and ideological upbringing.

Teachers were charged with not only teaching their subject area, but also instilling communist morals into their students. For values and ideology to have concrete meaning to the students, they needed to be incorporated into practical lessons, which were most easily done in conjunction with the normal lesson plans. People reminisced about the lessons their teachers had taught them. One student remembered that his teacher had

⁵⁹ T. Panfilova. "Uchitel' – vseгда vospitatel'." *Pravda*. 4 August 1963. No 216 p 4

⁶⁰ V. Zimina. "Zabota o shkole." *Pravda*. 13 July 1964. No 195 p 2

⁶¹ E.G. Takareva. "Three Years Without Repeaters." *Soviet Education*. April 1963. Volume V no 6

⁶² B.P Esipov. "Ways of Improving Teaching Methods." *Soviet Education*. June 1964. Volume VI No 8.

shown him how to live right and love work. Another remarked that twelve years later, he was still writing to his schoolteacher for advice.⁶³ These teachers had surpassed their normal duties. Those who wrote these comments fondly remembered their teachers and looked to them as an example of who to become. Dedicated teachers, such as these, met the need for better role models.

The dedication of these teachers could also assist parents who were unable to devote enough time to their children. Criticism already existed in regards to the amount of attention parents were able to give to their children. When parents worked, often long days, they did not always have time to answer all of their children's questions or help them with difficult assignments. One mother wrote to thank her son's teacher for paying this type of special attention to her son. Both parents worked long hours at the kolkhoz and had little time left over for their son. The teacher saw this and helped the boy to keep him from falling behind in school.⁶⁴ By encouraging these teachers, the upbringing issues criticized both in regards to the quality of teachers and the quality of parenting during this period could be remedied.

Classes

The push for more ideological training of the youth was reflected in the new curriculum. Some people specifically wanted more training on Marxist-Leninist theory so that it would assist students in all of their classes and help them correctly answer questions throughout their lives.⁶⁵ People hoped that, after graduating from school,

⁶³ For testimonials regarding the long lasting positive effects of teachers on their students see: "Narodnyj uchitel'." *Pravda*. 19 June 1964. No 201 p 1; "Dorogoj moj uchitel'." *Pravda*. 11 February 1962. No 42 p 6; M. Illarionov. "Zhibet ryadom uchitel'." *Pravda*. 26 January 1964. No 26 p 2; "Molodoe popolnenie rabocheho klassa." *Pravda*. 30 October 1964. No 304 p 1.

⁶⁴ "Dushevnyaya shchedrost' uchitelya." *Pravda*. 10 June 1964. No 192 p 4.

⁶⁵ I. Anoshkin. "Bospitanie studenchestva." *Pravda*. 10 October 1961. No 284 p 3

students would understand the significance of their work as part of the general progress of the Soviet Union. Perhaps with knowledge of Marxist-Leninism they would become more enthusiastic towards work. Along with theory, general social science courses were also deemed more important. Pride typically was seen to arise from an understanding of the current situation as a result of its past. More pride and enthusiasm at work would result in higher efficiency. Therefore social science courses on the history of the Soviet Union, socialist economics, and ideology were added to the curriculums.⁶⁶

Other suggestions for additions to the curriculum did exist, but all included the ideology of the building of the new man as support for their ideas. One individual advocated for more foreign language teachers so the students could interact better internationally.⁶⁷ Others wanted reforms of the physical education courses, so that schools would place more emphasis on practical exercises instead of sports, encouraging children to participate and grow up as healthy people.⁶⁸ Another school, realizing that so many young children in the area were auditioning for the music school, began teaching children in all of the schools to play classical music.⁶⁹ While none of these additions were directly related to the ideological education of children, the critics used the ideological goals of the party to provide validity to their criticisms and justification for the reforms.

More pressing during this period was the practical education. In order to move forward with communism, a new generation of individuals needed to enter the workforce

⁶⁶ For more commentary regarding the increase of Social Science education in the curriculum see: "Uchashchejsya molodezhi – idejnuiu zakalku." *Pravda*. 11 August 1963. No 223 p 1; V. Grishin. "Obshchestvovedenie v shkole." *Pravda*. 10 January 1964. No 10 p 6; "Uluchshet' prepodovanie obshchestvennykh nauk v vuzakh." *Pravda*. 23 August 1956. No 236 p 2; I. Kairov. "Izuchenie istoriya v shkole." *Pravda*. 15 November 1959. No 319 p 3; S.I. Nikishov. "Marxist-Leninist Theory Must Be Taught In Organic Connection with the Life of the People." *Soviet Education*. November 1960. Volume III No 1

⁶⁷ E. Khokhlachev, N. Shubina, V. Demenko, E. Bakhareva. O. Alster. "Pochemu vupiusniki shkol slabo znaiut inostrannyj iazyk?" *Pravda*. 30 November 1956. No 334 p 3.

⁶⁸ V. Alekseev. "S samogo rannego detstva..." *Pravda*. 21 March 1963. No 86 p 4.

⁶⁹ Tamara Kokhanovskaia and Ira Popkova. "Doroga v Mir Prekrasno." *Iunost'*. May 1960. No 5 p 93-96

prepared to continue the progress of industry. One individual noted that if children learned to master the models of technology today, someday they would be building the machines of tomorrow.⁷⁰ The theory behind this was sound, but many such classes in the schools were outdated. Below, the cartoon illustrates children being instructed on “new” tools, when in fact they have long become outdated.



«А теперь, дети, переходим к изучению новых предметов.» “And now, children, we will switch the to the study of new tools.”⁷¹

With the increased call for practical education also came the rise of science classes.

Chemistry was especially popular during this period. Many critics commented that

⁷⁰ P. Treskunov, I. Strelkova. “Detskoe tekhnicheskoe tvorchestvo – ne zabava.” *Pravda*. 12 September 1963. No 255 p 4.

⁷¹ V. Konovalova. “Nauka iunoshej питаet.” *Krokodil*. 20 December 1958. No 35 p 6.

improving science education in the schools would help to bring thousands of talented people to science, which would strengthen the Soviet sciences and economy.⁷²

The responsibility for such education was again placed on the teachers. All teachers were encouraged to incorporate some science into their lessons. This served as an introduction to different scientific fields, but more emphasis was placed in the industrial areas. One individual encouraged teachers to provide students with a scientific understanding of their specific industry, so that they could better master the field and also understand the social significance of their work.⁷³ Like the other fields, teaching science would further the goal of the building of the new man and the teaching of communist values.

Criticisms of these reforms existed as well. These were not from individuals who disagreed with the new measures, but instead from those who thought the reforms were not properly executed. One congratulated the schools for teaching chemistry, but, since the teachers were not properly trained, students continued to perform poorly on the college entrance exams.⁷⁴ Science education was vital, but if the teachers were not properly trained, than it would be to no one's advantage to teach the students chemistry. In the same line, textbooks were not upgraded. Students were not introduced to higher mathematics and science until the last two years of school, giving them little time to absorb entire fields of science. This individual wished the textbook structure would be revised to introduce these subjects earlier.⁷⁵ All of these criticisms simply aimed to better

⁷² "Nauka i vysshaia shkola." *Pravda*. 4 April 1962. No 94 p 1.

⁷³ A.I. Iantsov. "Linking Education in Evening Schools with Production and the Student's Work." *Soviet Education*. December 1960. Volume III No. 2.

⁷⁴ N.N. Semenov, N.M. Zharonkov, V.A. Kargin. "Shkol'nikam – khoroshie uchebniki!" *Pravda*. 23 August 1964

⁷⁵ D. Shirkov and Iu. Sokolovskii. "Nuzhny i novye programmy." *Pravda*. 4 October 1964. No 278 p 4.

implement the reforms designed by the party for better ideological and practical education.

Other criticisms of the school system focused on a common failure in many schools – a lack of promotion through the grades. One reporter commented on schools in the Pskov region. Some children in the area had never attended school due to religious reasons, but others were prevented from coming due to transportation issues. Parents requested transportation in the winter because it was too cold to walk such a distance to school, but no transportation was provided and the students were forced to stay home.⁷⁶ Other criticisms came in the form of satirical cartoons depicting grown men having difficulties performing simple addition or remaining in the second grade.⁷⁷ All of them called for a more attentive approach to these cases so that all students could progress through the educational system and become beneficial members of society. The party plans called for the new educated generation to usher in the arrival of communism, but if society were forced to also carry the burden of those who did not graduate from school, it would never progress forward.

The failure of some students could be seen as a result of the increasingly large amount of homework assigned to students, according to the newly designed curriculum. The following cartoon illustrates the troubles faced by children with the large amount of work they needed to do daily.

⁷⁶ V. Grishin. "Uchit'sia dolzhny vse deti: pochemu v Pskovskoj oblasti proiskhodit otsev iz shkol." *Pravda*. 30 November 1962. No 334 p 3

⁷⁷ K. Nevlera. "U menia stol'ko trudodnej, shto soschitat' ne mogu." *Krokodil'*. 20 July 1958. No 20 p 6; "Kribaia rosta vtorogodnikov." *Krokodil'*. 20 January 1961. No 3 p 3



«А когда же ты будешь спать, сынок? / Завтра на уроках.» “When are you going to bed, son? / Tomorrow during class.”⁷⁸

Spending all night doing homework and then attempting to concentrate in class would ensure only certain failure. A survey completed in 1963 found that students in grades five through eight spent about five or six hours a day doing their homework, and for students in grades nine through eleven that amount of time increased to seven to eight hours a day.⁷⁹ In addition to leaving children chronically tired, this also did not allow children to spend the recommended amount of time outside. These individuals wanted to point out the obvious: the government had increased the curriculum to better educate its students, but by doing so they had also doomed the students to failure.

Equipment

People knew that in addition to prepared teachers and well-planned classes, students also needed the proper equipment in order to succeed. One aspect was the

⁷⁸ K. Eliseeva. “A kogda zhe ty budesh’ spat’, synok? Zavtra na urokakh.” *Krokodil*. 10 June 1956. No 16 p 7

⁷⁹ M.N. Skatkin. “On Eliminating the Overburdening of Schoolchildren.” *Soviet Education*. December 1963. Volume VI No. 2.

collection of educational films. They were used to assist in the technological training of specialists. Students could remain in the classroom but still gain a practical understanding of the work in their specific industry. One group criticized these films because they were not being updated. Technology in certain industries had advanced to such a degree over the past five years, that, by not also updating the films, they were no longer applicable.⁸⁰ These films were meant to assist the students who were unable to travel to the work sites. With outdated films, the students would then graduate with little to no beneficial training in their specialties.

Other people had more pressing concerns. An individual from Archangelsk wrote that their local school still had no electrical lighting.⁸¹ A director of a furniture factory in the Moscow region pleaded for more money and resources, because his factory had the manpower to build more school furniture and ease the desk shortages in Moscow.⁸² Both individuals saw disparities between what they saw in their local schools and what they had been told regarding the new attention devoted to education. They used their ability to complain in order to bring these issues to others attention, hoping that a resolution would be reached.

Perhaps the largest issue regarding school equipment was that of textbooks. With the changes to the curriculum, which were made to reflect the directives of the party on the building of the new man and the increased importance of science, schools needed new textbooks for many courses. One individual was upset that there was still no good textbook for chemistry. He suggested that scientists be made to write these books in order

⁸⁰ V. Smirnov, L. Kell', V. Nikitin, and B. Toll'. "Vuzam i shkolam – uchebnye fil'my." *Pravda* 5 October 1961. No 279 p 3

⁸¹ V. Aleksandrov. "Svet v okoshke." *Krokodil'*. 30 November 1962. No 33 p 6-7

⁸² M. Lazarev. "Eshche raz o shkol'nom parte." *Pravda*. 5 April 1962 No 65 p 2

to help create future scientists.⁸³ Another noted that participants in a textbook competition had produced high quality economics textbooks in a short period of time. Since this was possible, there was no sufficient explanation for the publishers' chronic textbook shortages.⁸⁴ If specialists were able to write the books, and it had been shown that they could write high quality textbooks in a short period of time, then there seemed to be no reason that schools were starting the new school year without their textbooks.

This thought was common in many criticisms. People simply did not understand how it was possible that children attended the first day of school and were not guaranteed a textbook. One individual, while urging workers to hurry to fulfill the plan, said that in 1961 thousands of children went to their classes and found that they did not all have textbooks. One year later, with only two months until the start of the school year, the plan was only at sixty percent.⁸⁵ The following cartoon depicts the extreme trials and desperation faced by people in order to get the textbooks to the schools.

⁸³ N.N. Semenov, N. M. Zhavoronkov, V.A. Kargin. "Shkol'nikam – khoroshie uchebniki!" *Pravda*. 23 August 1964. No 236 p 3

⁸⁴ "Novye uchebniki." *Pravda*. 29 June 1959. No 210 p 2

⁸⁵ "Poluchaet li shkol'niki v srok vse uchebniki?" *Pravda*. 4 June 1962. No 155 p 2.



«В школах не хватает учебники. / Решение задачи с двумя неизвестными. / Наконец-то я смогу выучить уроки!» There aren't enough textbooks in the schools. / Two anonymous individuals solve the problem / Finally I can learn my lessons!"⁸⁶

In response to this, some people defended the publishers and instead placed the blame on the Ministry of Culture. They claimed that the shortages were a result of the low production of paper and that the Ministry needed to better control the supply of resources.⁸⁷ Whether it was the workers, the directors, or the ministry, people knew that regardless of whatever educational reforms the party decreed, if textbooks could not be delivered to the children in time for the start of the new school year, than the educational goals would never be achieved.

⁸⁶ “V shkolakh ne khvataet uchebnikov.” *Krokodil*. 20 September 1961. No 26 p 3

⁸⁷ “Na temy dnia: shkol'nye uchebniki vypustit' v srok.” *Pravda*. 14 June 1956. No 166 p 2

Industrial Training

The reoccurring theme in all of Khrushchev's educational reforms was the instillation of the workers' values in the new generation. In order to best do this, connections were made between industrial centers and the schools, so that students could not only gain practical experience but also enthusiasm to join the workforce. A common criticism of the old system was that its curriculum revolved around preparing students for the universities and not for practical life. Khrushchev wrote that everyone would benefit from increased industrial education. Students who did not go onto a university would be ready for life, and those who did go on for specialized training would have these practical experiences to aid them. All of them would have developed an increased solidarity with the workers.⁸⁸

Such a reform would propel the economy forward, first by producing better-prepared workers but also by reconnecting all of the youth with the workers' traditions. In addition to the other methods of ideological upbringing, such as the youth organizations and the arts, this program would greatly assist in training the new generation according to the communist ideals. The lessons on values and traditions, which the teachers were encouraged to give, would be strengthened by this practical experience. Demonstrating to students the value of a day's work could lessen the problems of idleness and hooliganism. By implementing these practical experiences into the curriculum, the schools would be working toward all aspects of the educational reforms.

⁸⁸ N.S. Khrushchev. "Regarding the Strengthening of Ties Between School and Life and the Further Development of the Public Education System." *Soviet Education*. December 1958. Volume I No. 2

People agreed with the need for such training and recognized that something desperately needed to be done to remedy the disconnect, which had arisen between the new generation and the love of work. One individual expressed, “How horrible it is for the school, when her graduates, going to the factory, don’t know the most elementary things, and more importantly don’t love or respect work.”⁸⁹ A mother wrote about the need for instilling a love of work into the children. “I have three children. The oldest daughter finished in 1956. She studied weakly and was not accepted to a university, and didn’t want to hear anything about work in a factory. That our schools do not combine the general education of the students with industrial education is a serious deficit in the development of the people’s education.”⁹⁰ These individuals saw the impact the lack of industrial training was having on the lives of those around them and wanted a change. An educational system that left students prepared for nothing was doing a great disservice not only to the students, but also the country as a whole.

As a result of this conviction, people also criticized schools that failed to implement this reform. These students would be worse than before. In the past no graduating students had gained practical work experience, so they were all equally unprepared. Now these students would be competing with other students, who had received some form of industrial training in school. In the Cherkasskaia region, students were unsure if their nine-month practicum had been arranged. If nothing could be found, then they would spend this period in the school and receive no training in handling finances, their area of specialty.⁹¹ They were frustrated as to why, if something had been

⁸⁹ “Trudovoe vospitanie shkol’nikov.” *Pravda*. 2 December 1958. No 336 p 4

⁹⁰ “Trudovoe vospitanie shkol’nikov.”

⁹¹ Piven’, Movchan, Cherneshchenko, and Iarosh. “Uchebnoj programnoj ne predusmotreno.” *Pravda*. 1 April 1963. No 91 p 2

decreed by the central committee and made an official reform, they were still not benefiting from the new instruction.

Other schools successfully instituted the reforms and began enrolling the students in industrial training. Students in one school learned how to build and drive automobiles, while in a second school they were trained to operate the machines in a nearby factory, and students in a third simply commented on how much they enjoyed working alongside the workers.⁹² The reform was accomplishing its purpose. Students were gaining practical experience and learning about communist values. Upon graduation, they would be able to enter the workforce trained and ready to work.

Of course, not all programs operated as well as those referenced by the people above. A few years after the reforms were announced, an article was published stating that industrial training remained unconnected with life. It also listed possible suggestions for how to improve the curriculum. Such training should combine theoretical lessons on the trade, practical lab work in order to learn how to operate the instruments, and finally the practical work experience.⁹³ Omitting theoretical lessons or lab work would leave students ill-prepared to begin their work experience, but failing to provide the work experience would prevent proper training both in their specialty and in the values of the workers.

The problems that arose in the industrial training were typically oversights. In Voronezh every student was trained as a locksmith, allowing the curriculum to be more easily implemented. However, it was then nearly impossible for any of the students to

⁹² "Uchebnyj god nachalsia: u novikh moskvichej." *Pravda*. 2 September 1958. No 245 p 1; Eh. Marchenko. "Posle pervogo zbonka." *Pravda*. 2 September 1962. No 245 p 2; E. Starikova. "V piatnadsat' let." *Novy Mir*. January 1961. No 1 p 250-252

⁹³ P. I. Stavskii. "Combining Productive Work and Schooling." *Soviet Education*. April 1961. Volume III No. 6

find work because of the surplus in locksmiths.⁹⁴ There was also still little updating of the course materials. Similar to the issues that had surrounded educational films, one individual criticized the electro-mechanics manuals, because they had not been updated in eight years. There was no discussion about any of the current farming technology.⁹⁵ Without such knowledge, the graduates would be useless to the kolkhoz.

Criticisms also existed in regards to the agriculture-oriented industrial training. An engineer working in a kolkhoz blamed the schools directors for not pursuing connections between the schools and kolkhoz and also blamed the specialists who are not volunteering to teach these classes in the schools.⁹⁶ One satirist illustrated the general lack of training of some students in the following cartoon.



«Окончив школу...Первое знакомство.»“Having finished school...He makes his first acquaintance.”⁹⁷

Similar to the critics of the industrial training, these individuals wanted students to be well trained when they graduated from school and to easily enter the workforce.

⁹⁴ “Iz shkoly v zhizn’.” *Pravda*. 29 May 1963. No 149 p 1

⁹⁵ Piven’, Movchan, Chernishcheno, and Iarosh. “Uchebniki programnoj ne predusmotreno.” *Pravda*. 1 April 1963. No 91 p 2

⁹⁶ A. Burenko. “Ukrepliat’ svjaz’ shkoly s kolkhozam.” *Pravda*. 25 March 1958. No 84 p 4.

⁹⁷ A. Kanevskogo. “Okochiv shkolu...pervoe znakomstvo.” *Pravda*. 10 November 1958. No 31 p 4.

However, agricultural-based training did have more success, in part thanks to Khrushchev's Virgin Soils campaign.

While some schools did provide agricultural training to students, a much larger percentage of students gained experience through the summer programs. Beginning in 1956, students from different universities began working on construction projects or agricultural projects related to their fields. Khrushchev remarked, upon seeing the students working in a kolkhoz with tractors during the summer, that these were the builders of communism.⁹⁸ Similar to the programs, in which students worked in the factories, these agricultural programs afforded the opportunity to gain real experience on a farm and work alongside other agriculturalists.

People applauded these great opportunities for education and upbringing. One example is the story of Sophia Martiniuk. She was an average student in school, who traveled with her class on a spring trip to the local kolkhoz for practical work experience. Sophia enjoyed the experience so much that she then worked at a tractor brigade and became an active Komsomol member.⁹⁹ While this did not happen to every student who traveled to a kolkhoz, it does show the effect such trips could have on students' attitudes. Instead of simply hearing about such places, students were able to experience them for themselves and understand the importance of work in Soviet society. Through their own experiences, students gained a better understanding of the communist ideals than they could have by remaining in the classroom.

⁹⁸ Irina Zemskaja. "Deti stroitelej kommunisma." *Pravda*. 7 November 1961. No 312 p 6

⁹⁹ K. Borodovskij and V. Grishin. "Iz shkoly – v bol'wuiu zhizn'." *Pravda*. 22 May 1963. No 142 p 4

Higher Education

In addition to the criticism and suggestions voiced about the school reforms, people also expressed their opinions in regards to the university system and its ability to prepare the new specialists. In 1962, Soviet universities produced 300,000 specialists from over seven hundred universities.¹⁰⁰ Of these individuals, like those graduating from the lower schools, many were poorly prepared to enter the workforce. One individual wrote to urge university students to be active in the party organizations and to find work experience. Without these experiences it would be hard for them to find a job and they would be unable to best use their talents and energy.¹⁰¹ Like the criticisms directed against the schools, this individual wanted the students to be successful after graduation and enter the workforce prepared to work.

People also wanted the ideological upbringing aspect of the schools to be applied to the universities. A worker in the Ministry Department on Education pleaded for a reform of the university lecture system. He wanted students to not only attend lectures, but also gain an understanding of practical and moral lessons.¹⁰² Simply memorizing facts and figures would not guarantee success after graduation, but practical experiences and an appreciation of work would greatly assist them. The rector of Moscow University agreed with these sentiments. He wrote that he hoped students would learn to view their university as a collective, where the students and professors all worked together for a common purpose – the quest for knowledge and education of each other.¹⁰³ This communal atmosphere would be the type of environment that the students would need to

¹⁰⁰ V. Eliutin. "K novym uspekhom vysshej shkoly." *Pravda*. 20 June 1962. No 201 p 3.

¹⁰¹ "Molodoj spetsialist prikhodit na proizvodstvo." *Pravda* 11 June 1958. No 162 p 1

¹⁰² A. Orlov. "Tak li my uchim studentov." *Pravda*. 9 June 1961. No 160 p 6

¹⁰³ I. Petrovskoj. "Universitety, nauchnye uchezhdeniia, proizvodstvo." *Pravda*. 20 March 1963. No 79 p 2

operate in after graduation. By exposing them to this ideological framework during college, the rector wished to better prepare students for life.

Better training these students for work also meant improving the connection between the schools and industry. In 1961, it was discovered that in one region less than half of the over one hundred enterprise directors had advanced degrees.¹⁰⁴ People understood that if the economy and country were to progress, then the industrial areas would need more educated individuals. Industrial technology was progressing and required a more advanced knowledge of the sciences to continue. The public continued to urge the universities to work closer with industries in order to prepare their students. Two individuals from the Moscow Energy Institute were dissatisfied with the lack of connection made between math and science courses and the modern technological practices. They hoped that by updating these courses and adding more technology they could decrease mistakes made by students on later exams and better prepare them for their careers.¹⁰⁵ Another individual wrote about his dissatisfaction with the students being sent to the kolkhoz. They received no technological training in the university and were unable to bring any new knowledge to the workers.¹⁰⁶ Both groups felt that the universities were failing in their mission to provide well-trained individuals to the factories and other industrial centers of the country. The purpose of the universities was to educate these individuals, but if they emerged without the ideological or technical knowledge to further the country, then changes needed to be made.

¹⁰⁴ "Podbirat' i vospityvat' kadry v dukhe leninskikh printsipov." *Kommunist*. March 1961. No 5 p 13-23

¹⁰⁵ M. Chelikin. P. Ionkin, A. Sokolov. "Vyshej shkole – nobyie metody obucheniia." *Pravda*. 12 October 1962. No 285 p 4.

¹⁰⁶ P. Bogatenkov. "Studentov uchat travopol'shki." *Pravda*. 29 January 1962. No 29 p 2

Higher education was not only available in the traditional method. In addition to attending lectures during the day, students could also attend night classes or even study through correspondence courses. Night schools served multiple purposes. Students could attend lectures as part of their university program. Others, typically workers, enrolled in night schools to become more qualified or continue their education if it had been interrupted by World War II. More common during this period, however, were the correspondence courses. This allowed students to work during the day and support themselves, but still work towards their college degree.

The number of students taking correspondence courses greatly increased during the 1950s and 1960s. This was in large part a result of the increased emphasis on practical work experience. In 1962, students enrolled in correspondence courses comprised more than 50% of all students in all republics.¹⁰⁷ In Moscow alone, there were 270,000 students enrolled in correspondence courses in 1962, and 338,000 students were enrolled in such courses in 1964.¹⁰⁸ Due to this type of education, individuals were able to gain work experience and technical knowledge at the same time.

While working and studying simultaneously was more difficult for the students, no one could deny the benefits of such a method of study. The rector of a correspondence university outlined the basic premises of such a university. It allowed people the opportunity to receive an education while still working. This provided them more practical experience and often resulted in a better job, because they had a more advanced knowledge of the technology.¹⁰⁹ This followed the basic premises of Khrushchev's

¹⁰⁷ Iu. Dadenkov. "Vyzy rabotaiut po-novomu." *Pravda*. 1 September 1962. No 244 p 2

¹⁰⁸ "Tvortzy prekrasnogo budeshchego." *Pravda*. 18 April 1962. No 108 p 1; "Dlia studentov." *Pravda*. 23 August 1964. No 236 p 3

¹⁰⁹ S. Kantenik. "Uchit'sia zaочно mozhet kazhdyj." *Pravda*. 24 August 1961. No 237 p 3.

educational goals. Students would be able to gain practical experience while studying, and during this time they would also be exposed to the workers. The workers would then help educate the students in the workers' traditions of communal work and the essential communist values.

Criticisms naturally existed, but they were primarily concerned with ensuring that these schools continued to improve and provide students with an education comparable to that received by students in a traditional university. The director of a correspondence school advocated for more scheduled consultation times for students. These would maintain the connection between the student and professor while also working to keep students motivated to study.¹¹⁰ Others were concerned that these students would not have the same access to materials as the traditional students. One individual praised these students for getting their education without taking a break from work, but called on the factories and other places of work to be more helpful in providing resources to these workers.¹¹¹ These individuals saw the benefits of this type of education and supported it. Students would have the opportunity to emerge from the correspondence courses better qualified than their traditional counterparts. When people saw shortcomings in the programs, they criticized them and hoped that this expression would ensure the improvement and progress of both the courses and the students themselves.

Boarding Schools

While Khrushchev's boarding school reform would ultimately fail, the ideological aspects of it were appealing. In 1956, they opened the first 285 boarding schools, with

¹¹⁰ P. Lebedev. "Kakoj dolzhna byt' shkola dlia vsroslykh." *Pravda*. 20 January 1964. No 20 p 3.

¹¹¹ "Dlia tekh, kto rabotaet i uchitsia." *Pravda*. 5 June 1963. No 157 p 1.

70,000 students.¹¹² School construction was encouraged throughout the period through yearly plans and articles in the papers. As a result, in 1962, there were over 100 boarding schools in Moscow alone. This is not to say that they had become the majority of schools, as for the same period there were also over 800 eight or ten-year schools in Moscow¹¹³

The newspapers praised the upbringing opportunities provided by these schools. Children tended to the gardens, cooked, cleaned, learned to sew and mend clothing, built furniture, and fixed shoes.¹¹⁴ Above all, by living in a collective unit, they were living the communist ideals. By raising their own food and preparing meals for the other students, they were seeing the effects of hard work and community first hand. These were the lessons that teachers in the public schools were working to incorporate into their lesson plans, but without the experiences to support the lessons, the children could not understand the ideas as well. In addition to this, these schools incorporated industrial training in the same way that the other schools did. One school described how their students worked with a nearby state grain farm. They trained in the winter and worked at the grain farm in the summer.¹¹⁵ Since summers were spent at the boarding school, students could receive more training during the school year, and then spend the summers gaining real work experiences. They would have actual work skills that would help them after graduation.

¹¹² “Bol’she vnimaniia shkolam-internatom.” *Pravda*. 13 August 1956. No 228 p 3

¹¹³ A. Shustov. “U shkoly mnogo druzej.” *Pravda*. 26 August 1962. No 238 p 2

¹¹⁴ For praises of the boarding school programs, see: Z. Lapenko. “Zavod i deti.” *Pravda*. 16 June 1956. No 162 p 4; K. Borodavzhin, V. Grishin. “Iz shkoly – v vol’shuiu zhizn’.” *Pravda*. 22 May 1963. No 142 p 4; A. Kosarev. “Shkoly-internaty I pedagogicheskaia nauka.” *Pravda*. 28 September 1961. No 272 p 3; “Pered nobym uchebnyim godom.” *Pravda*. 21 August 1956. No 234 p 1

¹¹⁵ M.I. Pogpletnev. “Labor Training Experience in a Boarding School.” *Soviet Education*. June 1959. Volume I. No 8.

There were a variety of reasons people advocated for boarding schools. The first was to provide better education to families living in the villages.¹¹⁶ Due to the size of the villages and the great distances between them, it was difficult to provide high quality education for all of the children. Boarding schools allowed these children to live at the school and be taught by highly trained individuals. The second reason was to ease the lives of the parents.¹¹⁷ Single parents and families where both parents worked had difficulty devoting enough time to their children. The schools did not intend to replace a parent's love, but parents could dedicate their time to work during the week and visit their children on the weekends. These teachers merit the third reason for children to study in boarding schools. By placing teachers specifically trained in raising children, the schools could overcome the issues of having to reeducate the children when they arrived at school.¹¹⁸ The teachers would know how to incorporate communist values into everyday aspects of life. By concentrating the students in the boarding schools instead of spreading the resources throughout multiple village schools, the quality of education for these children would be significantly raised.

Little criticism exists around the boarding schools. Aside from the additional attention to upbringing, these schools operated along similar curriculum to the other schools. Issues that normal schools faced with textbook shortages, lack of science education, or slow renovations, would also be experienced by the boarding schools. Also, these schools were optional. If someone disagreed with the basic principle of boarding school education, they could simply enroll their child in a normal school. When a

¹¹⁶ "Zamota o shkole – delo vsego naroda." *Pravda*. 21 August 1962. No 223 p 1

¹¹⁷ A. Kharechev. "Sem'ia i kommunizm." *Kommunist*. May 1960. No 7 p 53-63; A. Shustoj. "Shkola i proizvodstvo." *Pravda*. 13 September 1961. No 257 p 4; S. Stumilin. "Rabochij byt i kommunizm." *Novy Mir*. July 1960. No 7 p 203-220

¹¹⁸ "Shkoly-internaty" *Pravda*. 28 June 1956. No 180 p 1.

boarding school was mentioned in a newspaper, magazine, or journal, it was only to elaborate upon the ideological benefits or to urge the builders to speed the construction of boarding schools. Parents did not write these articles, instead educators did. From these sources it is difficult to determine public opinion on this topic, but nevertheless, any praise or criticism that was expressed, continued to be depicted through an ideological framework.

Youth Organizations

The Soviet Union provided additional methods of upbringing outside of the educational system and parents. Every holiday, performance, lecture, or festival served as a method of transferring communist values to the youth. The most important, however, were the youth organizations. Young children enrolled in the Pioneers, which organized activities, projects, and summer camps. More prominent, however, was the Komsomol. This organization aimed to involve the young adults in the party and also instill them with proper communist morals and values. The party entrusted the Komsomol with more responsibility, and as such, they were able to pursue more educational opportunities.

The responsibility entrusted to the Komsomol by the party was taken seriously. Khrushchev wrote, “Komsomol has always been and is now a loyal assistant and a powerful tool of our party. Komsomol always warmly responded to all the activities carried out by the party, boldly went to the most trying areas in the fight of communism, and has fulfilled its duty to the Motherland.”¹¹⁹ Komsomol was entrusted to help all young women and men find their proper place and ensure that these individuals were ready to work for the construction of communism.

¹¹⁹ “Molodezh’ na stroikakh semiletki.” *Pravda*. 9 March 1961. No 68 p 1

Personal development was believed to arise from involvement in the organizations. One Komsomol worker wrote, that the organization helped to train well-rounded citizens and increase patriotism, in part because of the importance placed on the community of members.¹²⁰ The party wanted the factories and kolkhoz to operate according to the communal idea – everyone working together for the common good. By encouraging the Komsomol members to work this way at a younger age, they would be more likely to encourage these ideas later in life. With such values and enthusiasm, Komsomol members were able to accomplish great feats. They were repeatedly praised for the accomplishments.¹²¹ By proclaiming the achievements of the organization, these speeches and articles served both to encourage the current members to continue their work and to attract future members to the organization.

Komsomol organized a variety of activities. It hosted a world forum of the youth, a holiday of the working youth, and assisted in the yearly Day of Soviet Youth holiday.¹²² The organization was also active in the schools. In addition to serving as role models for the younger children, the members worked to reform their schools and universities as part of the new educational reforms linking school with life.¹²³ Beyond these activities, the Komsomol organization also served as a leisure activity for the youth. One cartoon showed a ball filled with corrupted youth. The caption read, “When the Komsomol organization is not involved in the leisure of the youth some dance pavilions are

¹²⁰ V.M. Orel. “Every Higher School Graduate Should Learn to Lead a Communist Activity.” *Soviet Education*. June 1962. Volume IV No. 8

¹²¹ “Vospityvat’ molodezh’ na prakticheskikh delakh.” *Pravda*. 11 May 1956. No 132 p 1; “Molodezh’ otvechaet na prizyb partii.” *Pravda*. 15 January 1964. No 15 p 1; A. Vezirov. “Molodezh’ vpolnit zadanie partii!” *Pravda*. 25 January 1964. No 25 p 2.

¹²² “Vsesoiuznyj festival’ sovetsoj molodezhi.” *Pravda*. 2 February 1956. No 33 p 5

¹²³ “Vospityvat’ cheloveka novogo obshchestva.” *Pravda*. 19 April 1962. No 109 p 2; E. Grishchenko. “Komsomol v shkole – bol’shaia sila.” *Pravda*. 24 August 1961. No 237 p 4

transformed into gatherings of drunks and hooligans.”¹²⁴ All of these activities worked towards the organization’s primary goal of assisting in the ideological upbringing of the youth, but it would also have a more important goal.

Khrushchev’s construction projects provided an opportunity for Komsomol members to take an active role in the construction of communism while also learning more about communist values. The members were enthusiastically ready to take on any these challenges. A secretary of the central committee of the Komsomol expressed that she and her fellow Komsomol members were prepared to undertake any task of the party or government. They were ready to work and were excited to be a part of the great events of their country, such as the building of communism.¹²⁵ This was the enthusiasm that the party had hoped to instill in all of the students. Some remarked that Komsomol members returned from their construction projects having grown considerably and having learned the Soviet ideals of honor and a hard work.¹²⁶ Such enthusiasm in the workforce would increase productivity and bring all of the workers closer to the communist ideal.

Throughout articles on the Komsomol organization, people consistently praised the efforts of these youth. Criticism existed not in regards to the members but the bureaucratic structure of the organization. One article called for a reorganization of the group so that it could better use the initiative and enthusiasm of the members.¹²⁷ A group of workers also criticized the poor organization. The Komsomol members had helped to build a building for these workers, but the group had been ordered away when the project was only 61% complete. No indication had been given to the workers as to when the

¹²⁴ I. Dolina. “U nas, v odennadtsilentke.” *Iunost’*. July 1961. No 7 p 93-100

¹²⁵ L. Baliashaia. “Prasdnik iunosti.” *Pravda*. 25 June 1961. No 176 p 5

¹²⁶ S. Il’in, N. Fedorova, and M. Anokhina. “Molodezh’ beret rubezhi semiletki.” *Pravda*. 12 September 1961. No 257 p 3

¹²⁷ “Molodye stroiteli kommunisma.” *Pravda*. 6 January 1963. No 6 p 1

Komsomol members would return. When the members had been on the work site, they lived in one dirty, cold dormitory without any hot water.¹²⁸ The workers wanted the Komsomol members treated properly and for them to be allowed to return and finish the building.

These issues echo those expressed through the other criticisms. Individuals wanted to ensure that the students were receiving the best possible education, including education both in and out of the classroom. The current ideological policy of the party was clearly expressed during the party congress – the construction of the new man had begun and everyone needed to be raised with a firm appreciation of communist values and the connection between school and life. When aspects of the education were not proceeding as someone would have liked, they criticized it in light of the ideological program, such as the Komsomol organization was criticized for not using the initiative and enthusiasm of its members to their fullest. In this way, their opinions were heard.

¹²⁸ T. Paukova, E. Musatov, V. Shulika, and L. Ustiuzhaninov. “Pochemu molodye stroiteli uezhaiut iz pavlodara.” *Pravda*. 12 February 1963. No 43 p 2

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the availability of sources and the amount of time allotted for this study, the research is based on only these five sources. They still provided a varied and representative source of criticisms. However, a more representative source would be achieved by surveying multiple periodicals within each subfield. A provincial newspaper would include a more regional perspective. A women's magazine would include concerns specifically of mothers. A pedagogical journal would include ideas from educators. Such sources were not available nearby, and time prevented multiple out-of-state research trips to other institutions. Each periodical worked to target a specific audience when choosing what material to print. As such, each would also provide a different view on the issues and criticize different aspects of the educational system with different faults and suggestions. An extension of this study would work to include these and other periodicals.

Any wider sample would accomplish this goal, but, more specifically, the newspaper, *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, would assist in better highlighting the concerns regarding the organization of the Komsomol and criticisms expressed by the members. The sources that were used primarily praised of the organization and extolled their accomplishments. People saw what the Komsomol members were able to accomplish and encouraged them to continue the work. A notable exception was the criticisms of the workers. They pointed out the failures of the organization and the poor living conditions of the volunteers. It is unlikely that this was the only occurrence of such disorganization, or that none of the members wanted to express their criticisms to improve the organization. The lack of any criticism by the Komsomol members in *Pravda* leads to the

conclusion that perhaps members instead voiced their criticisms through their own newspaper. Collections of *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* are available at the University of Chicago, Michigan State University, and University of Illinois – Champaign-Urbana among other places.

Perhaps the largest recommendation for future research would be in-country research. With the short amount of time and limited finances, this was simply not feasible for the project. Limiting the research to sources available not only in the United States, but also in the Midwest, excluded many possible sources. One month of research in Moscow or St. Petersburg would provide much more information than could have been gathered with even a year of traveling to other institutions on the weekends. In-country research would also provide the opportunity to look at a much wider variety of sources that would have been read by the public during this period, instead of simply relying on the periodicals that had been collected by the various American universities.

While the study is concerned with media depictions, correspondences and memoirs would also add depth to the research. The current research focuses on only the printed criticism. This does illustrate helpful insights into the public's mentality of the period, but more would be understood if compared with the unprinted criticisms. At the end of this study the question emerges – Were there more criticisms that people did not or could not print? Such a comparison would explore the relationship between the two forms of criticism and help others understand the methods and limits of public opinion available to Soviet citizens. All of these recommendations would explore the questions prompted by this research and increase the depth of the study.

SIGNIFICANCE

This study explores criticisms of Khrushchev's educational policies. As such, it outlines his educational policies in the late 1950s, their implementation, and their reception by the public. The simple explanation of these reforms does not provide new scholarly information to the field, but instead serves as the canvas upon which the more dynamic commentaries can be explored. For those outside of this subfield, this information helps to illustrate the framework upon which society operated and the values it hoped to teach the youth. Without an understanding of this context, a proper interpretation of these opinions cannot be reached.

The significance of this study lays in the criticisms. Previous studies on Soviet criticism revolved primarily around the dissent of the intelligentsia. These were the great thinkers who have dominated the study of Thaw history and whose criticisms were aimed at the government, the party, and the apparatus. Some of these individuals incurred punishment as a result of their opinions, including public rebuking, loss of their position, or, in extreme cases, removal from the country. This study demonstrates that this method was certainly not the norm. Many people expressed their opinions about different aspects of life and were not punished. Furthermore, some of them were even influential members of the party or government.

By first agreeing with the ideological program of the party, individuals were able to criticize their leaders and the bureaucratic apparatus's failure to provide for them. These people did not work for the overthrow of the government but instead for more clothes for the children, for better school buildings, and to best prepare the students for life after school. Individuals learned the proper way to express their opinions. Every

critique was directly connected to the party's policy on education. Availability of shoe sizes was connected with the need to instill pride in their country. The push to prepare students for work after graduation was connected with the accomplishment of communism. Educating children with good morals was connected with the building of the new man. These critics were much more concerned with ensuring that their children had a building to go to school in than what ideological impact that would have on the youth. However, by linking the two thoughts together into one critique, they were able to ensure that their voice was heard.

Understanding the balance in these forms of criticism will illuminate public opinion not only in regards to education, but also in other areas of Soviet life. The criticisms voiced point out major failings in the implementation of reforms. They indicate that during the Khrushchev era an environment of criticism existed beyond the intelligentsia. Common people voiced their opinions when they were dissatisfied with the progress being made in the country. While this study was only concerned with forms of upbringing, it hinted at concerns also existing in regards to film, literature, art, consumer goods, and local government. Following this study, future research can be undertaken in these areas and also other time periods. The examination of popular criticism illuminates the dynamics between the public and the government and assists in understanding the cultural environment present in the Soviet Union.

SUMMARY

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev ruled the Soviet Union from 1956 to 1964. He solidified his control with his condemnation of Stalin in the secret speech, delivered at the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956. His speech continued a trend of increased criticism, known as the Thaw, which had begun in 1954, less than a year after the death of Joseph Stalin. Research on the Khrushchev Thaw typically concerns itself with political events, such as the Berlin airlift or the Cuban missile crisis, or the increasing criticism of the Soviet apparatus by the intellectuals. Such a limited scope leaves the views of a large segment of the Soviet population unstudied.

This study explores criticism and concerns expressed by the common Soviet citizen, particularly in regards to education. People of all ages and levels of society published these criticisms in all types of print media. Sources investigated included *Pravda*, one of the more popular newspapers of the time, as well as various periodicals covering literature, satire, education, and youth. A representative conclusion was reached, in regards to popular forms of criticism, by analyzing the sources and compiling sources created for different audiences.

Individuals commented on boarding schools, the quality of classes and teachers, the construction of new schools, and the increased incorporation of industrial training in schools. Citizens used a variety of Soviet periodicals to criticize the disparities between the ideal educational system, as expressed by the party, and the reality they saw every day. More so, while these individuals were willing to criticize these contradictions, in the end they appear to have remained true subscribers to the principles of the party's policies on raising good Soviet citizens to continue along the path to communism.

The results of this study will serve to expand upon the common understanding of Soviet society during this period. Previous thoughts on Thaw culture have stressed either the deluge of dissident criticism from the intelligentsia or Khrushchev's overactive measures, attempting to regain control of expression and art. This study shows that another alternative exists. The public used the ideological framework of the party to express their criticisms of the governmental apparatus. While they did not disagree with the reforms enacted by the party, their remarks on the poor implementation these reforms inevitably imply a criticism of the highly centralized Soviet bureaucracy.

EPILOGUE

The public concerns presented in this study have shown that Soviet citizens expected a high quality educational system. Their children needed to be shaped into good communists, who would be successful in life and make a beneficial contribution to society. While these individuals anticipated more from their schools, other individuals outside of the Soviet Union wanted to imitate the Soviet system in their own country. Foremost among these envious individuals were the fear-stricken American educators.

Sputnik's impact cannot be overestimated. When the satellite was launched in October of 1957, Americans could no longer perpetuate the naivety about the state of their own educational system. Notions of America's great superiority over other nations were demolished overnight. While Sputnik did not carry weapons or ammunition, the fact still remained that if the Soviet Union was able to launch a satellite into space, then they were also able to launch long-distance nuclear weapons. General fear was struck into the minds of Americans, and they turned to their educational system to question how they had allowed this loss of superiority to occur.

Two books were written during this period attempting to answer these questions. *What Ivan Knows That Johnny Doesn't* stressed that the Soviet advantage was more so characteristic of all European schools. All European students learned a much larger vocabulary and were consistently taught foreign languages, literature, and history from an early age. In Soviet schools, children were ready to take on these advanced courses in the fourth grade, partly due to the fact that their textbooks were written by competent scholars to be challenging to the students. The author proposed that by challenging American students and incorporating these courses regularly from an earlier age, students

would surpass the Soviet children.¹²⁹ Two years later, another work was published on the same issue. *The Big Red Schoolhouse* expressed similar concerns. Americans had allowed their educational system to diminish over time by not properly challenging their students. The issue needed serious consideration, especially to prevent individuals from simply working to catch-up with the Soviet Union. In the author's opinion, American students were superior to the Soviet students. By reinstating a superb educational system, America would regain its advantage over the Soviet Union and the Communists.¹³⁰

Despite the fear plaguing American educators in regards to the supposed vast superiority of the Soviets, this study has shown that the Soviets were still voicing both their praise and criticism of the schools. They expected more from the educational system and wanted the children to be as well prepared as possible. The educational system needed to evolve to meet the current needs of society and produce capable workers.

While the course of this study is concerned primarily with opinions expressed from 1956 through 1964, educational policies and ideological paths naturally continued to evolve. Brezhnev reversed some of Khrushchev's educational reforms, but others remained largely unchanged through the 1970s. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, national schools emerged in each of the former republics. Each republic dealt with the difficulties of accommodating multiple nationalities in one school, while also continuing during an economic crisis. Schools in the republics today are a result of these efforts.

The current educational system in Russia continues many of the same policies that were discussed in this study. Young children continue to be enrolled in nurseries and then

¹²⁹ Arthur S. Trace, Jr. *What Ivan Knows that Johnny Doesn't*. (New York: Random House, 1959)

¹³⁰ Fred M. Hechinger. *The Big Red Schoolhouse*. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959)

kindergartens. At age six or seven, students begin their eleven-year compulsory education. After completion of the ninth grade, students may elect to transfer to a technicum and gain industrial skills. Other students continue in their classes, and upon graduation may take the Unified State Exams and apply to the universities. Those accepted to a university are enrolled in a specific plan of study, designed for their major, in contrast to the American liberal arts approach. Current work is being done to transition the universities from a five-year program, to the more widely used four-year undergraduate degree and a two-year master's degree, which would more easily translate to the educational programs in Europe. The changes reflect the same concern of society – a desire for schools to prepare students to be successful and beneficial members of society after their education is complete.

APPENDIX: COMMON TERMS AND PEOPLE OF THE PERIOD

Brezhnev, Leonid – Following Khrushchev, Brezhnev would lead the Soviet Union from 1964 until his death in 1982. He organized the overthrow of Khrushchev and then reversed many of Khrushchev's liberalization policies and adopted a conservative agenda.

Central Committee – The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the highest body in the Communist Party. It was responsible for all decisions between party congresses and its members were elected. Due to infrequent meetings and large membership, stronger power lay with the Politburo or Presidium.

Dacha – The dacha is a home or cottage located beyond the suburbs. Depending on the home, they can be seasonal or year-round residences. While the typical dacha more so resembled a small summer cottage, some higher party members instead had large permanent homes outside of the cities.

De-Stalinization – This process included the denunciation of Stalin's cult of personality, his political system, and the gulag prison camps. These reforms began shortly after Stalin's death, but were typified in Khrushchev's secret speech in 1956. Khrushchev would continue to distance himself from Stalin through the remainder of his tenure.

Doctor's Plot – In January 1953, nine doctors were arrested on charges of poisoning two high-ranking party members and attempting to murder several army men. Stalin died in March, preventing the trial and subsequent purges. The doctors were

exonerated and Khrushchev further condemned this fabrication during his secret speech.

First Secretary – The position of General Secretary was renamed First Secretary from 1953-1964

Gagarin, Iurii – Gagarin became the first man in space when he orbited Earth in April 1961. He quickly became an international celebrity. The Soviet government awarded him multiple awards and made him a national hero and promoter of the sciences and space flight. He died in 1968 during a training flight.

General Secretary – This was the title given to the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Due to the vast power of the Communist Party, the position of General Secretary was often synonymous with leader of the Soviet Union. The position saw this elevation of power under Stalin.

Gosplan – The state planning committee of the Soviet Union, Gosplan was responsible for economic planning and the creation of the Five-Year Plans. They dictated the new quotas of the factories as well as the resources that would be allocated to each factory.

Intelligentsia – The intelligentsia is a class of people comprised of the intellectuals, artists, and writers. These individuals were well educated. While historically in the Russian Empire their ranks had been filled mostly with dissenters, during the Soviet Era the intelligentsia also included anyone performing scientific or cultural work.

Kindergarten – Compulsory education begins at age six, when children enter primary school. Beginning at age three, children are usually enrolled in a kindergarten,

which aims to educate them in basic skills through social interaction. The aims of this form of education closely mirror that of the American preschool system.

Kolkhoz – “Collective Farm” – these farms were characterized by joint-ownership of non-land assets and profits. Assemblies ran the farms, but the outside political bodies often controlled these groups. As the kolkhoz began to resemble the sovkhoz more and more, most changed their status to sovkhoz.

Komsomol – Abbreviated for the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, the Komsomol served as an organization for individuals in their teens through early twenties. It did not have a large influence over the party, but was used to educate its members in the proper communist values. Also, it provided experience training for its members and was one way of advancement in the party and industry.

Lenin, Vladimir – Lenin was the founder of the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet Union, as well as the leader of the Red Army in the Civil War. He died in 1924 and was succeeded by Stalin as the leader of the Party. His many theoretical writings were combined with Marxism to produce Marxist-Leninism, the theoretical approach quoted by Khrushchev and the Communist Party.

Marxist-Leninism – This was the official ideology of the Communist Party. It is seen as the continuation of Marxism with Lenin’s theoretical works. The ideology was constantly being redefined to suit the political group in power, leading to contradictions over time.

Party Congress – During party congresses, the delegates of the Communist Party gathered to discuss the progress of the Soviet Union. Initially this was to be the

supreme ruling body of the party, but since these meetings were only held every one to five years, the Politburo or Presidium wielded the real power.

Pioneers – The Pioneer Organization of the Soviet Union was organized for children age ten through fifteen. Almost all children joined the organization. Summer camps were organized for the children as well as year-round activities in the Pioneers Palace, such as educational programs and extra-curricular activities.

Politburo – This was the executive body of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

While it was technically responsible to the Central Committee, the de facto power laid with the Politburo in making policy decisions.

Presidium – During the Khrushchev Era, the Politburo was renamed the Presidium, although the basic duties and actions of the group remained unchanged.

Soviet – A soviet was a legislative body in the Soviet Union. These were present at the local levels as well as the national Supreme Soviet.

Soviet Realism, Socialist Realism – Developed in the Soviet Union, this style of art perpetuated communist doctrine. Workers were praised and the state was glorified. Under Stalin, this became the official doctrine. It was present in both art and literature.

Sovkhoz – “Soviet Farm” – these were government-operated farms. Workers on these were paid regular wages and were funded by the state budget. These types of farms were seen as more efficient and received investment from the government. Over time the sovkhoz became more common.

Stalin, Joseph – Stalin became the General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1922 and took over as the country’s leader following Lenin’s death in 1924. His centering

of power led to the collectivization of the countryside, the initiation of the Five-Year Plans, the great purges, and rapid modernization. He died in 1953 from a stroke.

Thaw – This period refers to the era of Soviet history from the early 1950s to the early 1960s. During this time, censorship and repression were partially eased.

Khrushchev began a policy of de-Stalinization and released many prisoners from the Soviet work camps. The government also worked for better international relations.

Titov, Gherman – Titov followed Gagarin as the second man to orbit the Earth in 1961.

Similar to Gagarin, he also became a Soviet hero and method of promotion for science and space exploration.

Virgin Lands, Virgin Soils – The campaign was first launched in 1954 in order to open up large areas of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic for cultivation. Following initial success, poor management and the draining of the soil's nutrients led to subsequent failures. While the venture did not survive after Khrushchev's dismissal, vast numbers of young adults participated in the campaign.

APPENDIX: SOVIET SATIRE

This study relies heavily on the satirical magazine, *Krokodil'*. The periodical included a wide range of cartoons, stories, and poems mocking Soviet society as well as capitalism. Production of the magazine began in 1922, amidst several other satire magazines. By 1930, however, *Krokodil'* was the only remaining satire magazine in the Soviet Union. It would continue to release its issues and was widely available through the end of the century, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Censorship was tightly controlled under the Soviets, but, nevertheless, *Krokodil'* was allowed to continue publication. The magazine maintained a steady stream of criticisms, typically in regards to bureaucrats, drunkenness, stilyagi, and bribery. They did not outright mock the party or the Soviet government and in some instances the magazine accommodated current party trends in their publications, specifically when anti-Semitic cartoons were run at the same time that the Doctor's Plot was uncovered. However, the occasional pro-party cartoon does not detract from the amount of domestic criticism the magazine was able to publish.

Criticizing commonplace topics, such as bureaucrats and drunkenness, may appear mundane, but, in the context of Soviet expression, this was bold. Socialist realism had become the official policy during the 1930s and dictated that all literature and art depicted life as it would be when socialism was achieved, instead of how it currently was. When *Krokodil'* depicted a man drunk instead of working it was in contradiction to Socialist Realism. Bribery should not have existed. Children should have been emulating the heroes of labor instead of Western Jazz artists, as the stilyagi did. Bureaucrats should have worked for the workers, but instead they continued to further entangle the country in

bureaucratic red tape. Looking back at these cartoons, they may seem routine, but the messages they implied about the state of socialism in the Soviet Union were indeed daring.

This is in no means to suggest that Soviet satire was pioneered by *Krokodil'*. In addition to the existence of other satire magazines, the 1920s also includes the great Soviet satirist, Zoshchenko. His plays and short stories mock every aspect of Soviet society, from corruption and the bureaucracy to food and housing shortages. While Zoshchenko and other satirists found publishing during the Stalinist year more difficult, social commentary would return in literature. The 1950s and 1960s would see the appearance of Thaw literature, which critically addressed social issues. Following the retightening of censorship in the Soviet Union after Khrushchev's fall, criticisms were still seen in poetry and in the new genre of science fiction. All of these outlets were in addition to the continuing publication of *Krokodil'*.

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