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**The Leningrad Party Organisation
during the First Five Year Plan**

Yoonhee Kang

Presented for the Degree of Ph.D.

**University of Glasgow
Institute of Central and East European Studies**

**April 2000
Yoonhee Kang**

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Abstract

This is a study of the Leningrad regional party organisation during the first Five Year Plan period (1928-1932). Its membership, structure, organisation and changing role are examined in the context of economic and social change which took place during the first FYP. The main focus is on party organs below the oblast level, in particular the grass roots level of the party. This study relies heavily on an analysis of the material collected during my stay in Moscow in 1993-4 and 1996, in particular archival material collected from the Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (RTsKhIDNI). Party journals, newspapers, and pamphlets collected from the Lenin Library and the History Library in Moscow were also used.

For Leningrad region, as for the whole of the Soviet Union, the first FYP was a period of rapid transformation. The change of economic policy, that is, the acceleration of the expansion of industry and the forced collectivisation of agriculture, not only had a significant impact on the economic structure of the region, but also set in motion a profound change in social structure. The thesis shows that social and economic change was reflected in party life at lower levels. In particular, factory party cells experienced a considerable transformation: party membership expanded rapidly; party structure became more elaborated; party activists, rather than full-time officials, voluntarily carried out various party work; and party cells became more involved in production matters.

It is argued that the effect of these changes was not always what the party leadership had hoped for. Although a considerable number of workers enrolled in the party, not all of them became politically conscious and active party members. The 'breaking up' of factory party cells, equally, had its negative aspects. Party cells were often created in a formalistic sense and did not operate properly. Moreover, the complicated party structure caused a serious problem in controlling lower party cells. The connection between different levels of party organisation within factories was weak, and factory party committees were often unable to control or monitor activities of party cells below them. The promotion of industrial workers into more responsible jobs within the party and state apparatuses also caused a serious party personnel problem within factories. Facing difficulties to find suitable party personnel for the rapidly expanding party apparatuses within factories, the party mobilised less experienced activists for party work, which often resulted in party work being carried out poorly. More importantly, the party's growing involvement in production matters resulted in the party's losing its 'political' character. While factory party cells were occupied by economic tasks for which they were not well equipped, their real work in the realm of politics and ideology was no longer carried out properly.

Overall, during these years of massive transformation, the centre's grip on affairs at the local level was not as close as often assumed, and central party organs were unable to firmly control the way party policy was implemented at the local level. The relationship between central party bodies and the local level, in turn, has implications for other spheres and for our understanding of 'Stalinism' during the period.

Acknowledgements

This study was made possible by all those who have helped me over the years, and I gratefully acknowledge my debt to them all. My greatest debt is to my supervisor, Professor Stephen White, who gave enormous amounts of his time and energy to advising, criticising, and encouraging me. Without his most generous advice and patience, my completing this thesis would not have been possible. I am also very grateful to Professor John Lowenhardt, director of the Institute of Central and East European Studies, for his advice, support and encouragement. I am fortunate to have been one of the many doctoral students at Glasgow University's Institute of Central and East European Studies.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to all those who have commented on work in progress or helped in other ways at different stages. I owe a special debt to Professor Ha Young Chul at Seoul National University, whose influence on me has been unparalleled. It was he that introduced me to the study of Russia in the 1930s. Other people whose help was crucial during my stay in Moscow in 1993-1994 include Judith Shapiro and Gennadii Bordiugov. I am also grateful to Olga Kryshtanovskaia for her assistance while I was attached to the Institute of Applied Politics in Moscow.

My thanks for financial support are due to the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which awarded me a British Commonwealth Office Scholarship in 1991-1992; the Department of Politics at Glasgow University, which supported my research trip to Moscow in 1993; the Institute of Central and East European Studies, which enabled me to take part in various conferences; and Glasgow University, which allowed me to continue my study during the economic turmoil in Korea in 1998 by granting me a South East Asia Hardship Fund.

The bulk of the research has been done at the Glasgow University Library and the Alexander Baykov Library in the UK, and at the Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History, the Lenin Library, the State History Library and the INION Library in Moscow. I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to these institutions and their staff.

I am gratefully indebted to Tania Frisby, Martin Dewhurst, Marina Zinaida Vasil'evna and Peter Kornakov for helping me to improve my Russian. I would like to thank Graham Burgess and Katherine Killen for reading parts of this thesis and making suggestions as to how to improve my English. Special thanks are due to Åse Berit Grødeland for reading and commenting on parts of this thesis and for being a real good friend throughout my studies in Glasgow and encouraging me through many difficult times. I am also thankful to my friends who provided me with practical help during my stay in Moscow: Jisoo Lee, Ikseong Kyun, Beomsik Shin, Joohyeon Baik, Dukjoo Kim, Haejeong Liu and Youngkju Pak. Thanks are also due to Hyunseok Kim and Shinsung Kim, who helped me to draw better looking maps and a diagram.

My greatest debt of all is to my family in Korea. Their support, both financial and emotional, was essential for me to carry on my study abroad. Without their enormous patience and great belief in me, I would not have been able to complete this thesis. I am also thankful to Sangeun Cha and Haewook Chung for their having been in Glasgow and having supported me. Last but not least, my very special thanks go to Sungwon Lee, whose support and companionship were invaluable in my final two years of study.

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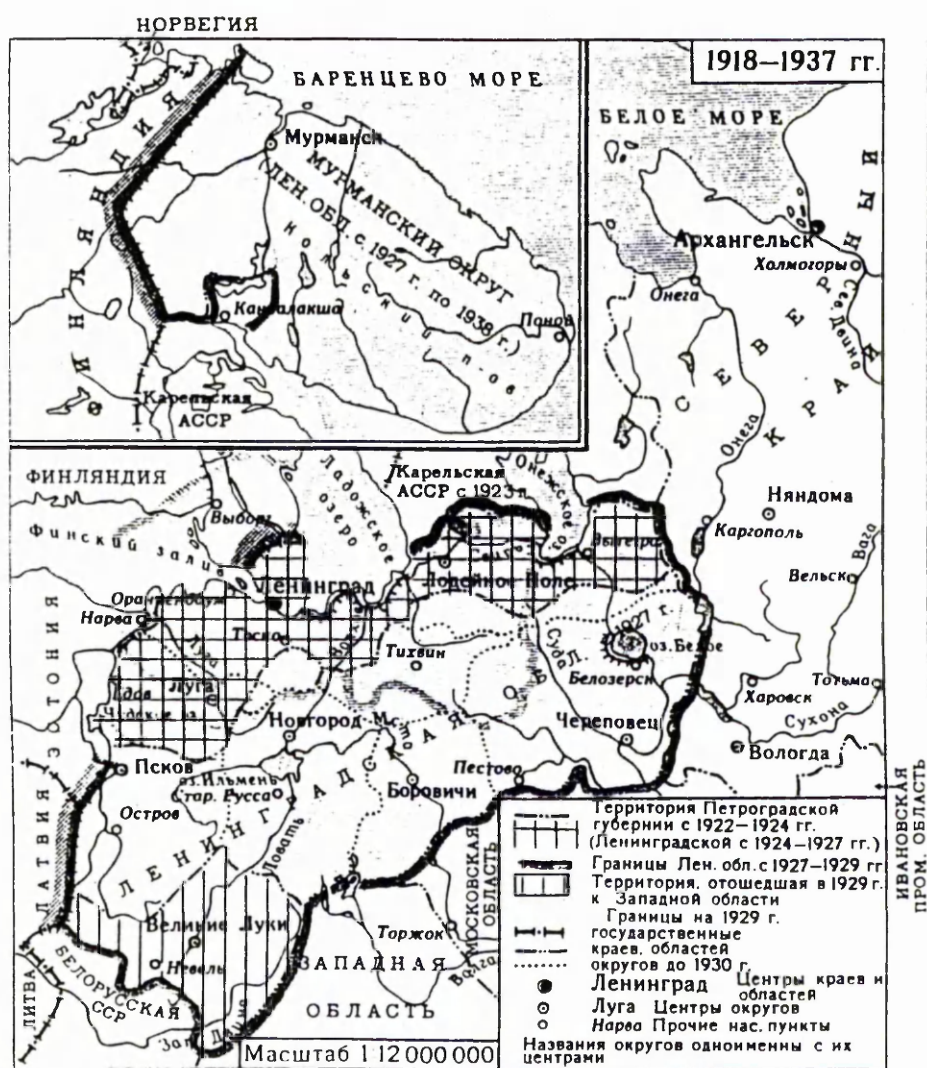
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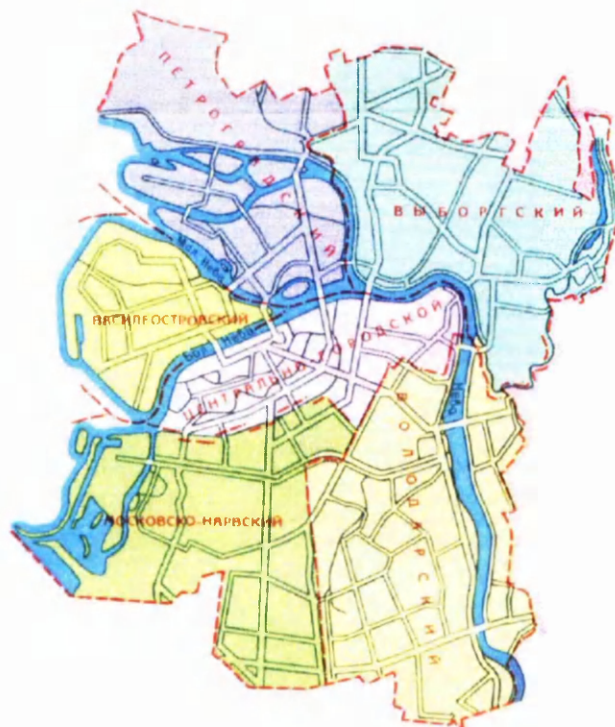
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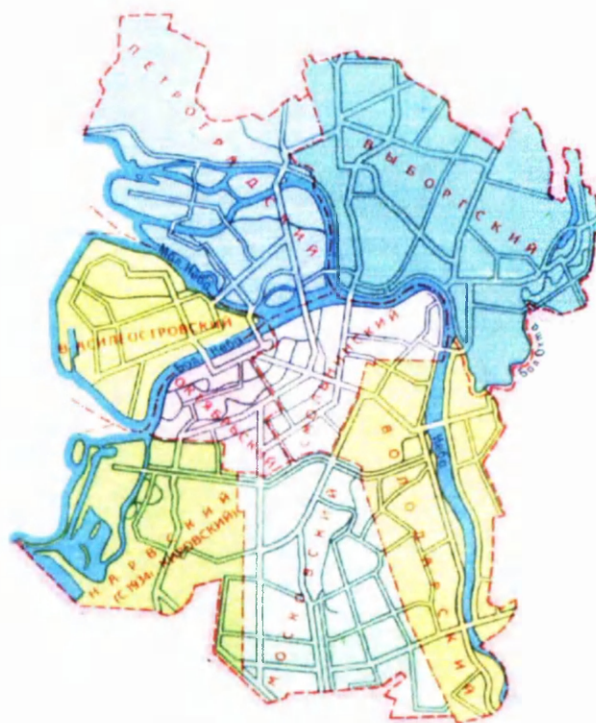


Source: Atlas Leningradskoi oblasti (Moscow, 1967), p. 82.

Map 2 Leningrad's raions, 1922-1936



July 1922 – June 1930



July 1930 – April 1936

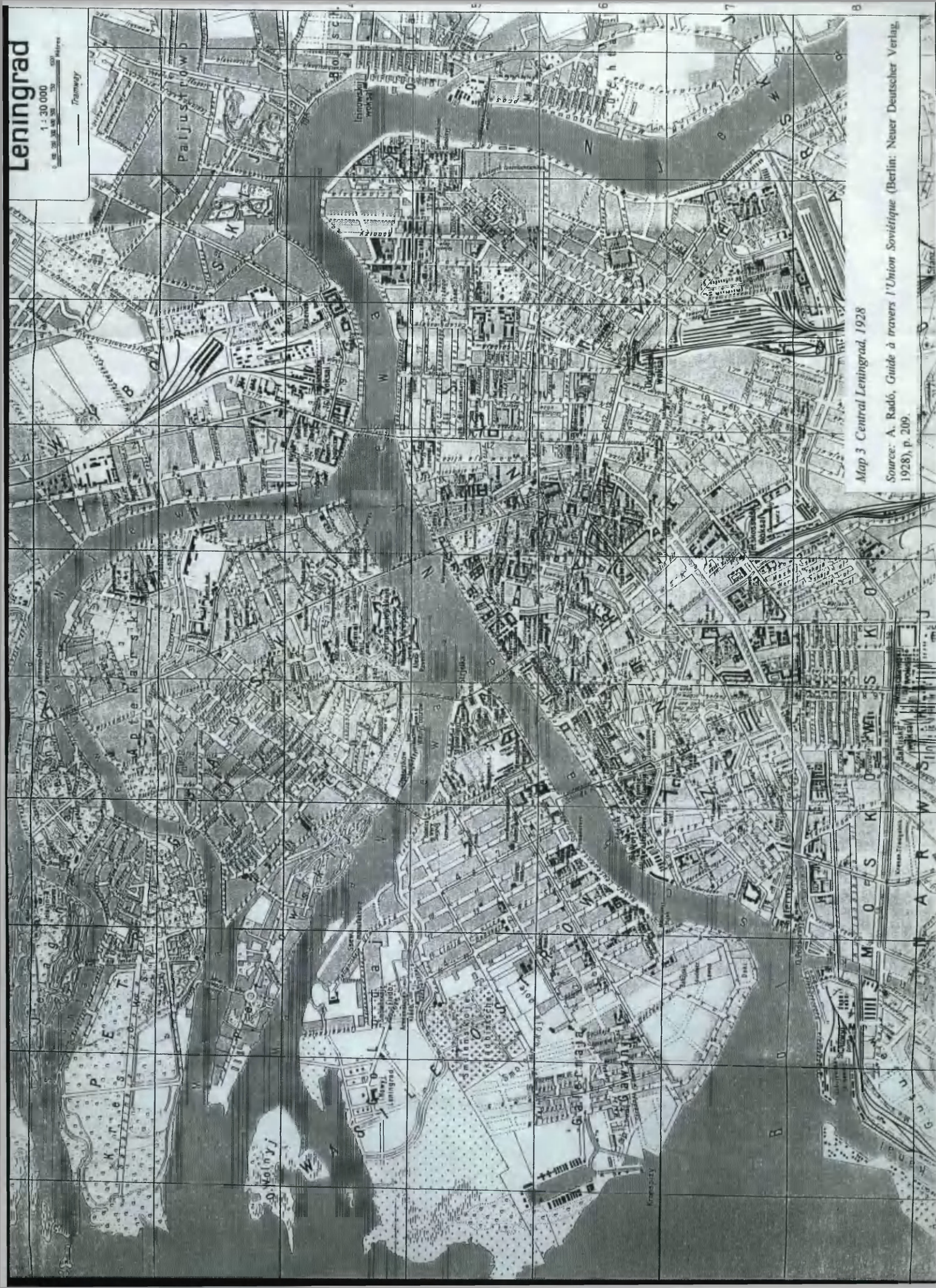
Source: *Sankt-Peterburg, Petrograd, Leningrad: Entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Moscow: Bol'shaia rossiiskaia entsiklopediia, 1992), pp. 536-537.

Leningrad

1 : 30 000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300 1400 1500 1600 1700 1800 1900 2000 2100 2200 2300 2400 2500 2600 2700 2800 2900 3000 3100 3200 3300 3400 3500 3600 3700 3800 3900 4000 4100 4200 4300 4400 4500 4600 4700 4800 4900 5000 5100 5200 5300 5400 5500 5600 5700 5800 5900 6000 6100 6200 6300 6400 6500 6600 6700 6800 6900 7000 7100 7200 7300 7400 7500 7600 7700 7800 7900 8000 8100 8200 8300 8400 8500 8600 8700 8800 8900 9000 9100 9200 9300 9400 9500 9600 9700 9800 9900 10000

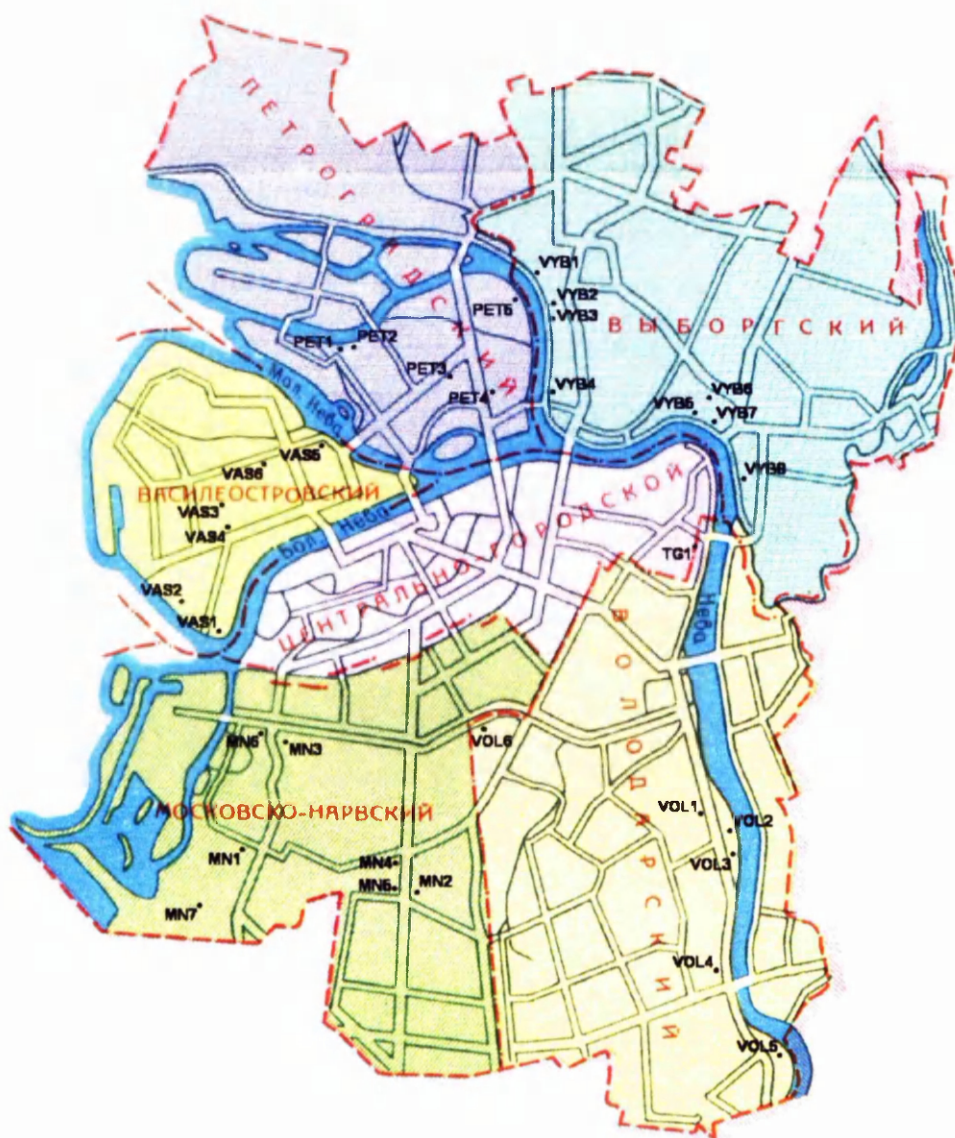
Tramway



Map 3 Central Leningrad, 1928

Source: A. Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1928), p. 209.

Map 4 Leningrad's major factories, 1928



Tsentral'no-gorodskii raion

TG1. Fabrika imeni Khalturina

Vasileostrovskii raion

VAS1. Baltiiskii zavod
VAS2. Sevkabel'
VAS3. Elektroapparat
VAS4. Krasnyi gvozdil'shchik
VAS5. Zavod imeni Kazitskogo
VAS6. Tabachnaia fabrika
imeni Uritskogo

Moskovsko-narvskii raion

MN1. Krasnyi putilovets
MN2. Elektrosila

MN3. Krasnyi treugol'nik
MN4. Skorokhod
MN5. Zavod imeni Egorova
MN6. Vereteno
MN7. Severnaia Verf'

Vyborgskii raion

VYB1. Krasnaia Nit'
VYB2. Zavod imeni Karla
Marksa
VYB3. Krasnaia zaria
VYB4. Russkii dizel'
VYB5. Zavod imeni Sverdlov
VYB6. Krasnyi vyborzhets
VYB7. Zavod imeni Stalina
VYB8. Vozrozhdenie

Volodarskii raion

VOL1. Zavod imeni Lenina
VOL2. Fabrika imeni Nogina
VOL3. Rabochii
VOL4. Zavod imeni Lomonosova
VOL5. Bol'shevik
VOL6. Fabrika imeni Anisimova

Petrogradskii raion

PET1. Vulkan
PET2. Krasnaia Znamia
PET3. Ravenstvo
PET4. Znamia Truda
PET5. Krasnogvardeets

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the study

This is a study of the Leningrad regional party organisation during the first Five Year Plan period (1928-1932). This study aims to facilitate a better understanding of the Soviet communist party by examining the party at the regional level during the crucial period of economic, social and cultural transformation, with special reference to its size, membership, organisation and functional role. This work concentrates on the intermediate level as well as the lower, grass-roots level of the party, in particular on the oblast committee (*obkom*), the district committee (*raikom*), and party cell at the factory level. By focusing on the intermediate and lower levels of the party, one can obtain an insight into the way the communist party actually operated in the Stalin era and the changing relationship between the central party leadership, party branches and the mass membership.

The reason for focusing on regional party organisations is that very little research has been carried out concerning how the party operated at the local level in this period, at least by Western scholars. Although party's central organs during the 1920s and 1930s have already been the subject of numerous studies, party organisations below the central organs have not generally been subject to analysis.¹ Most studies of the communist party were interested primarily in high politics and emphasis was laid on leadership and control. The assumption that the communist party was a monolithic organisation which did not allow any autonomy to lower party organisations discouraged scholars from undertaking a serious analysis of local party organisations. The lack of reliable information on party personnel and operations below the central organs also practically prevented serious research from being

¹ In this respect, Merle Fainsod's work on the Smolensk regional party organisation was exceptional and of particular importance. Using the Smolensk archive as a source, he provided a pioneering study of local party activities in the Western oblast. See Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (London: Macmillan, 1959). Nicolas Werth has provided a comparable view 'from below' using the same source in his book *Être Communiste en U.R.S.S. sous Staline* (Paris: Gallimard/Julliard, 1981). Jerry Hough's most thoroughly researched study of regional party organisations in industrial decision-making is among a few studies about the regional party organisations. However, it dealt with regional party organisations in the 1960s, whose role was significantly different from that in the 1930s. See Jerry Hough, *The Soviet Prefects: The Local Party Organs in Industrial Decision-making* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969).

undertaken.² It was not until relatively recently that some detailed studies of party organisations at the regional or lower levels began to appear.³ This reflected a change in emphasis from the central party organs to the local and grass-roots levels. Challenges to the totalitarian model of Soviet politics have led researchers to adopt an approach 'from below' and accordingly more attention is now being paid to the local and grass-roots levels. Moreover, the opening of Russian archives, to which foreign researchers had generally been denied access by the mid-1980s, facilitated study of the regional party organisations. However, in spite of these opportunities relatively little new work has so far been done on the lower levels of the party. Therefore, this thesis attempts to fill the gap and give a more meaningful picture of party life at the local level.

The study of the regional party organisation is important not simply because relatively little work has so far been done on the lower levels of the party, but also because it helps us understand better the communist party and the way it operated under Stalin. The communist party has been the centre of the scholarly attention not only because it was the only political party in the Soviet Union, but also because its nature and role were vital to an understanding of the Stalinist political system. Many different views have been put forward over the last fifty years. These views were diverse in their approaches, emphasis, and perspectives. Not all of them will be dealt

² Before the opening of Russian archives in 1990, the Smolensk archive was the only available substantial archival source for the study of party history. The Smolensk archive was captured from the Soviets by the German army in 1941, and seized by the U. S. army in 1945. It is now kept in the U.S. It contains the records of the party organisations of the Western region from 1917 to 1939.

³ For recent works on the Moscow party organisation, see Catherine Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin: The Communist Party in the Capital, 1925-32* (London: Macmillan, 1990); and Nobuo Shimotomai, *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule, 1931-34* (London: Macmillan, 1991). Emphasising the importance of questions about society and its relationship with the political structure, Merridale explored the way the ordinary people at the grass roots level related to the party or influenced it from within, and concluded that initiatives were indeed taken at the lowest levels, though seldom on major issues. Shimotomai looked at political and social processes in Moscow, at both regional and city level, in the period 1931-34. His study concentrated mainly on the bureaucratic and political structure of the Moscow region and city as they strove to cope with a rapidly-changing situation. His work focused on the process of creating and implementing policies, interactions between various institutions and elites, and relations between the central power and Moscow. On the other hand, Daniel Thorniley provides an excellent analysis of the rural party organisations in the 1930s in *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party, 1927-39* (London: Macmillan, 1988). His work concentrates on the lower, grass-roots level of the party, in particular on the district committee and cell in the countryside. For party organisations at the factory level, see Antony Sadler, *The Party Organisation in the Soviet Enterprise 1928-34* (unpublished MSocSci dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1979).

with in my thesis, since it is beyond the space that is available. However, two major streams of thought will be looked at in some detail here: the first is the studies of the Soviet communist party that are based on the totalitarian paradigm; the other, a 'revisionist' view, which emphasises the operation of the system 'from below' and rejects the totalitarian paradigm. The examination of the merits and limits of each approach will provide a theoretical foundation for this study.

Several major studies of the Soviet communist party in the 1950s and 1960s were strongly influenced by the totalitarian model.⁴ The classic Western paradigm, which was predominant in Western Sovietology in the decades after the Second World War, described the Stalinist regime as totalitarian.⁵ Definitions of the term varied, but all highlighted aspects - such as a radical official ideology, a single party headed by a dictator, terrorist police control, the party's monopoly of mass communication and weapons, and central control of the economy - which were taken to be characteristic of the Nazi and Stalinist regimes, among others.⁶ The totalitarian paradigm went roughly as follows. The Soviet system under Stalin consisted of a nonpluralist, hierarchical dictatorship in which command authority existed only at the top of the pyramid of political power. Ideology and violence were monopolies of the ruling elite, which passed its orders down a pseudo-military chain of command. At the top of the ruling elite stood an autocratic Stalin whose personal control was virtually unlimited in all areas of life and culture. Major policy articulation and implementation involved the actualisation of Stalin's ideas, whims, and plans, which in turn flowed from his psychological condition. By definition, autonomous spheres of social and

⁴ See, for instance, Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953); Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Permanent Purge: Politics in Soviet Totalitarianism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1956); John A. Armstrong, *The Politics of Totalitarianism: The Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1934 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 1961); Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* (London: Macmillan, 1968); and Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen, 1970).

⁵ Major examples of such works include Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd ed. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1958); Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956); and Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (London: Pall Mall, 1972).

⁶ The totalitarian model was developed on the basis of observed similarities between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, and the essence of this model was a passive society dominated by an elite that was determined to maximise its own power and to transform society on the basis of its own ideological perceptions. For a classic definition, see Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, pp. 9-10.

political activity did not exist at all in Soviet society. The Soviet populace and rank-and-file party members remained outside the political process, objects acted upon or manipulated from above but never historical actors in their own right.

Derived from the interpretation of totalitarianism was the view of the communist party as a monolithic organisation which did not allow any autonomy to the lower party organisations, and an undemocratic organisation which did not allow any opposition to Stalin's power or any serious criticism from below. Totalitarian theorists highlighted the fact that the party was hierarchically organised. Within the party, it was agreed by totalitarian theorists, authority and decision-making was highly centralised.⁷ The analysis of the structure of the communist party was based on the conception of the 'pattern of party controls' in which all authority was imposed from the top down, and more specifically on the principle of 'democratic centralism'.⁸ It was assumed that local party organisations simply implemented the policy decided by the party leadership, and that their performance was closely monitored and controlled by the party leadership. As a result, the party did not decide even if they voted or elected the leadership; it was subject to autocratic direction in matters of policy, and to hierarchical control in matters of leadership.⁹ It was also agreed that there was no longer democracy within the party: Stalin's ruthless 'suppression of disagreement and the crushing of opposition' stifled inner-party democracy.¹⁰ Rank-and-file party members remained outside the political process, and were simply mobilised by the party to achieve the regime's goals. In this condition, the party was merely an instrument of Stalin's power. Merle Fainsod believed that 'the party ceased to be a creative association which shaped policy and was transformed instead into a bureaucratic extension of the personality and dynamism of the dictator.'¹¹ Leonard

⁷ Many totalitarian theorists found the operational principles of a totalitarian party in the Leninist theory of party organisation: democratic centralism. Friedrich and Brzezinski expressed this view: 'in his fanatic insistence on strict party discipline, total obedience to the will of the leadership, and unquestioning acceptance of the ideological programme, Lenin charted the path so successfully later followed by Stalin.' See Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, p. 27. For those who follow this line of argument, Stalinism was a direct outgrowth of Leninism. Leonard Schapiro, however, disagreed with this view. He saw a discontinuity in party history between Lenin and Stalin. For more information, see Schapiro, *The Communist Party*, p. 621.

⁸ Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, chapter, 7.

⁹ Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, p. 27.

¹⁰ Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, p. 150.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

Schapiro also argued that 'Stalin used the years between his first accession to power and the end of the purges to transform the party into something that was much more like a personal corps of adherents than a traditional party.'¹²

This view was supported by Merle Fainsod's study of the Smolensk regional party organisation. He believed that by the 1930s the Soviet Union was a 'full-blown totalitarian regime in which all the lines of control ultimately converged in the hands of the supreme dictator', although he admitted that the totalitarian machine, at least in the Smolensk area, was far from perfect and efficient. The party retained a tyrannical hold on the dominated population through 'force, terror, and organisation', which were the 'instruments of power'. In his view, the party became a creature of Stalin's will and lost such policy-determining functions as it once possessed. Its role was reduced to that of a transmission belt, which Stalin used to communicate his directives, to mobilise support for them by propaganda and agitation, and to check on their execution.¹³

The totalitarian model of Soviet politics always had its critics. In Great Britain at least, a strong empirical tradition persisted in Soviet historical studies. British scholars such as E. H. Carr and R. W. Davies adopted a different approach and regarded the Soviet political system as more multifaceted than depicted in the totalitarian model.¹⁴ The totalitarian paradigm had, in any case, been under attack since the 1950s, partly as a result of political changes within the countries to which it was applied.¹⁵ In particular, the emergence of 'revisionism' in the 1970s made a considerable impact upon the understanding of the Soviet Union. Reflecting a change in political mood, revisionist scholarship rejected the totalitarian model, which was considered to be the product of the Cold War ideology.¹⁶ Some made a serious

¹² Schapiro, *Totalitarianism*, p. 60.

¹³ Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule*, pp. 12, 85, 448-51.

¹⁴ See E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923*, vols. 1 and 2 (London: Macmillan, 1950, 1951); E. H. Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924-1926*, vols. 1 and 2 (London: Macmillan, 1958, 1959); E. H. Carr, *Foundations of a Planned Economy, 1926-1929*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1971); R. W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivisation of Soviet Agriculture, 1929-1930* (London: Macmillan, 1980); and Robert Service, *The Bolshevik Party in Revolution: A Study in Organisational Change, 1917-1923* (London: Macmillan, 1979).

¹⁵ Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, the Soviet Union changed considerably, and the regime seemed to be losing many of its totalitarian characteristics.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the totalitarian model's weakness and its pernicious influence, see Stephen F. Cohen, 'Scholarly Missions: Sovietology as a Vocation', in his *Rethinking the Soviet Experience, Politics and History Since 1917* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

theoretical criticism of the totalitarian model and sought for an alternative paradigm.¹⁷ Others saw a basic discontinuity in Soviet history between Lenin and Stalin, and regarded Stalinism as an aberration and postulated a genuine 'Bukharin alternative' to Stalinism.¹⁸

However, the most serious challenge to the totalitarian model came from social history. Although social history had made earlier incursions into the question of Stalinism and its origins,¹⁹ it did not begin to make a major impact upon the conception of Stalinism until the late 1970s and early 1980s.²⁰ In particular, in the middle of the 1980s, a crop of new, younger historians began to make an impact upon the understanding of the Stalinist period.²¹ This 'new cohort', to use Sheila Fitzpatrick's term,²² has been critical of the effect the totalitarian model has had upon our understanding of the Soviet system in general and Stalinism in particular. In their view, the focus upon the upper levels of the political system and the use of a cold war

¹⁷ See Jerry F. Hough, *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).

¹⁸ This view is associated primarily with Stephen Cohen and Moshe Lewin. See Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888-1938* (London: Wildwood House, 1974) and *Rethinking the Soviet Experience, Politics and History Since 1917*; and Moshe Lewin, *Lenin's Last struggle* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968) and *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Development: Bukharin and the Modern Reformers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

¹⁹ For example, see Moshe Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study of Collectivisation* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968) and Roger Pethybridge, *The Social Prelude to Stalinism* (London: Macmillan, 1974).

²⁰ In particular, see Moshe Lewin, 'The Social Background of Stalinism', in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), pp. 111-136; Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1931* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978).

²¹ Although all social historians wanted to shift the emphasis to social forces and processes, their approaches vary in their emphasis. Some thought it particularly important to study the Soviet working class. See, for example, Lynne Viola, *The Best Sons of the Fatherland: Workers in the Vanguard of Soviet Collectivisation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers, 1928-1932* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Donald A. Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialisation: The Formation of Modern Soviet Production Relations, 1928-1941* (London: Pluto, 1986); and Lewis Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity in the USSR, 1935-41* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Others emphasised the theme of social mobility, suggesting that the opportunity for working-class and peasant upward mobility into the new elite played a role in legitimising the regime in the Soviet period. See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1921-1934* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) and 'Stalin and the Making of a New Elite, 1928-1939', *Slavic Review*, vol. 38, no. 3, September 1979, pp. 377-402. A shared assumption of revisionist historians was that Soviet society was more than a passive object of regime manipulation and that scholars should investigate Stalinism 'from below' as well as 'from above'.

²² Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'New Perspectives on Stalinism', *The Russian Review*, vol. 45, no. 4, October 1986, p. 358.

concept like totalitarianism obscured the reality of the system as it actually operated. It imposed upon that system a rationality and a consistency which did not exist. Moreover, it cast the situation in terms of an active state dominating a passive society. In contrast to this, they argued for the adoption of a 'perspective from below'. Such a perspective highlighted the chaos and irrationalities attendant upon policy implementation, emphasised the limits of central power and portrayed the society as less of a passive subject and more of a partner with the state in the on-going course of Soviet development.²³

The totalitarian view of the communist party has also been challenged by scholars who regard the totalitarian paradigm as inappropriate an understanding of the Soviet Union. Political historians who have adopted the approach 'from below' generally put less emphasis on terror, party-state control and the personal role of Stalin. Instead, they highlighted the chaotic situation within the party and the wider society, the limitations of party-state control, and the existence of popular support from some sections of the society, if not from the whole populace.²⁴ Some have drawn attention to chaos in the Soviet Union's provinces in the 1930s, raising questions about the centre's grip on political affairs at the local level. J. Arch Getty, for instance, in his study of the communist party in the 1930s, draw the conclusion that the party was not the monolithic and homogenous machine that totalitarian theorists had suggested. In his view, administration was so chaotic, irregular, and confused that even Merle Fainsod's characterisation of the system as 'inefficient totalitarianism' overstated the case.²⁵ Daniel Thorniley also suggested that the Soviet rural communist party was not an efficient, monolithic, totalitarian machine capable of manipulating the rural population at will.²⁶

²³ For argument among revisionists on the relationship of state and society in the Stalin period and the question of initiative 'from below', see Sheila Fitzpatrick, et al., 'New Perspectives on Stalinism', *The Russian Review*, vol. 45, no. 4, October 1986, and comments by Stephen Cohen and Geoff Eley in *ibid.*, and J. Arch Getty, Roberta Manning and others in *The Russian Review*, vol. 46, no. 4, October 1987.

²⁴ Among these are J. Arch Getty, Gábor T. Rittersporn, and Roberta T. Manning. See, for example, J. Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and Gábor Rittersporn, *Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications: Social Tensions and Political Conflicts in the USSR, 1933-1953* (Paris: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1991).

²⁵ Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 198.

²⁶ Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party*.

Others argued that there was a relative freedom of initiative at the local level. Catherine Merridale, for instance, indicated that initiatives were indeed taken at the lowest levels, though seldom on major issues. She agrees that major strategic decisions were handed down from the Politburo to local organisations, and that in Moscow's case central intervention was a feature of daily life. Yet, in her view, there were modifications when it came to implementation. Vague official directives were often left for local interpretation. Imprecision arising from the absence of an official policy, or from a lack of practical forethought, led to the local officials' and party activists' relative freedom of initiative during rapid industrialisation.²⁷ She has also argued that there was support for the Stalinist policy within the party, especially at the lowest level. She believed that 'without the more or less committed support of thousands of party activists, the economic achievements and social transformation associated with the first FYP and the consolidation of Stalin's political position would not have been possible'.²⁸

The most important criticism made of the 'revisionist' approach is that it underestimates the importance and power of the central party authorities. By focusing upon the weakness of political controls in the countryside, the limitations of party record-keeping, or the extent of popular initiative in the collectivisation campaign, revisionists tend at best to downplay and at worst to ignore the high degree of centralisation and the significant capacity to exercise power enjoyed by the central political authorities. Reflective of this tendency is the charge that 'the terror is ignored, obscured or minimised' in many of these works and that Stalinism is reduced to 'humdrum politics'.²⁹

Given the shortcomings of both perspectives, from above and below, it soon became obvious to some scholars that both perspectives must be adopted if they were to understand Stalinism. For instance, Graeme Gill, in his analysis of the communist party, attempted to combine both approaches. In his view, the high level of centralisation at elite levels coexisted with significant looseness lower down the

²⁷ Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin*, p. 223.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

²⁹ Respectively, Stephen F. Cohen, 'Stalin's Terror as Social History', *The Russian Review*, vol. 45, no. 4, October 1986, p. 378 and Peter Kenez, 'Stalinism as Humdrum Politics', *ibid.*, p. 395. Also see in the same collection Geoff Eley, 'History with the Politics Left Out - Again?'. The debate was continued in *The Russian Review*, vol. 46, no. 4, October 1987, pp. 375-431.

political structure in the Soviet Union under Stalin. The party machine was insufficiently developed to be able to ensure that the centre could exercise a continuing control over events at lower party levels. While the centre could certainly intervene and remove individual party leaders at subnational levels, it could not exercise a continuous close monitoring of what local leaders were doing. The institutional machinery for exercising close control of this kind was simply lacking. Channels of communication between centre and localities were underdeveloped, while the central party apparatus was not an efficient, smoothly-operating machine. The organisational ties between centre and lower officials were therefore looser than had often been assumed and certainly were not sufficiently strong to enable us to talk of a solid, highly organised and disciplined Stalin machine. Due to the lack of tight and continuing central controls over lower-level figures, regional party leaders retained substantial autonomy in local affairs. Local party leaders were able to follow substantially their own policy lines in local affairs; the levying of their own local taxes on top of central demands is one illustration of the room for manoeuvre they possessed at this time. Furthermore, the degree of control which local party organs themselves were able to exercise over their local regions remained limited by such things as poor transport and communications, despite the effects of the 'revolution from above'.³⁰

The Western debate has been exciting and fruitful. Yet, the debate is still far from being resolved. Many questions concerning the role and function of the communist party have still to be answered. These include whether the communist party was a monolithic organisation or not, to what extent the lower party organisations enjoyed effective autonomy, and to what extent party rank-and-file members were supportive of party policy and played an active role in implementing it. This study attempts to answer these questions by examining the regional party organisation which was the main link between the central party leadership and the masses organised in party branches. By focusing on the regional party organisation, one can obtain at least limited insight into the work of the higher party organs and of

³⁰ Graeme Gill, *Stalinism*, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 10, 34. See also Graeme Gill, *The Origins of the Stalinist Political System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), and 'Stalinism and Institutionalisation: The Nature of Stalin's Regional Support', in John W. Strong, ed., *Essays on Revolutionary Culture and Stalinism* (Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1990).

the primary party organisations as the regional party organisation came into contact with them.

Another concern of this study is related to Stalinism. The nature of Stalinism and the origins of Stalinism have been a central concern of scholarly research both in West and in Russia. These issues have become particularly controversial in the last fifteen years or so. Particularly striking was the scholarly controversy about Stalinism in Russia. Although a critique of Stalinism had appeared in 1956-64 as part of Khrushchev's 'de-Stalinisation' campaign,³¹ serious reexamination of 'the Stalin question' came only under Gorbachev as part of his glasnost policy.³² Unlike the criticism on Stalinism under Khrushchev which was largely limited to specific 'mistakes' and 'excesses' committed by Stalin,³³ a whole range of issues concerning Stalinism had been extensively discussed in an open and forthright manner under Gorbachev.³⁴ Initial discussion was conducted principally by journalists,³⁵ but was

³¹ The 'de-Stalinisation' campaign began in 1956 when Khrushchev delivered his 'secret speech' to a closed session of the twentieth Party Congress. The 'thaw' among historians began almost immediately and lasted for about a decade. A number of historians contributed to the widening debate, including V. V. Adamov, E. Burdzhakov, P. V. Volobuev and V. P. Danilov. For a fuller discussion, see R. W. Davies, *Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 1-2.

³² With Khrushchev's fall from power, official policy moved away from active de-Stalinisation and the public discussion of Stalin was closed down. Under Brezhnev, there was no attempt either to mount a sustained critique of the Stalin period or to investigate the systemic roots of the phenomenon. Publication of a number of major de-Stalinising historical and literary works was blocked, and their authors were obliged to keep them 'in the drawer'. In a number of cases, they circulated them secretly at home or allowed their publication abroad. There was a large volume of *samizdat* publications in the late 1960s and 1970s. For instance, see Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism* (London: Macmillan, 1972); Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation*, vols. 1-3, (London: Collins & Harvill Press, 1974-8); Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope against Hope: A Memoir* (London: Collins & Harvill Press, 1971); Evgeniia Ginzburg, *Into the Whirlwind* (London: Collins & Harvill Press, 1967); and Anton Antonov-Ovseenko, *The Time of Stalin: Portrait of a Tyranny* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981).

³³ By implication, the key to the phenomenon of Stalinism was Stalin himself - a leader whose pathological traits were abetted by an 'unhealthy' situation in the communist party and a security police operating without the necessary restraints. The major thrust of the de-Stalinisation campaign was to demythologise the person of Stalin without demythologising the rule of the communist party. It was Stalin personally who was made responsible for Soviet disasters and failures, just as he had once been held personally responsible for Soviet achievements. This approach was taken by Khrushchev who, in his 'secret speech', denounced Stalin's 'cult of personality' and abuse of power, but did not offer a systemic explanation.

³⁴ Gorbachev called for the elimination of all 'blank spots' from Soviet history, and this constituted official sanction for the wave of historical discussion and revelation which came to characterise the Soviet press and the scholarly community. 'The Stalin question' encapsulated a whole range of issues, including the reasons for Stalin's rise, how the system came to be established, responsibility for the purges and terror, and the costs of the establishment of the system.

soon joined by scholarly historians. This discussion ranged widely across all areas of the Stalinist phenomenon. A variety of views emerged regarding the origins of Stalinism, with a particularly popular line being that which attributed primary importance to the link with Lenin. The costs of the great transformation and possible alternatives (especially that of Bukharin) were canvassed, as were issues of responsibility for and the extent of the famine of 1932-3. The terror, responsibility for it, its extent and whether those involved should be punished, were discussed widely. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and associated charges that the Soviet Union had brought on the Second World War, the early failings of the Soviet military and responsibility for this, the strengths and weaknesses of Stalin as a military leader, and Soviet responsibility for atrocities committed during the war were all debated in a heated fashion. Hardly a single major area of the Stalinist experience remained unexamined, as Soviet writers embarked on this wholesale discussion of the past.³⁶

Inevitably, the extensive discussion of the extraordinary experience under Stalin led to a reappraisal of Stalin and Stalinism. The official account of Stalin and Stalinist regime published before glasnost had described them in a rather positive way.³⁷ However, Russians are now more likely to reject and denunciate Stalin and Stalinism. For many Russian intellectuals, Stalin has become an outright villain rather than just a flawed leader. In the present intellectual climate, a discussion of Stalin that portrayed any of his actions in an unambiguously favourable light - outside a few left-wing sects - would be almost as surprising to the reader as the opposite would have been in the heyday of Stalinism.

Questions concerning the nature of Stalinism and its origins have become a central preoccupation of Russian scholars and intellectuals. Many different answers have been offered. These included the totalitarian model, Trotsky's *Revolution*

³⁵ The most daring and informative re-evaluations of Soviet history in the early years of glasnost appeared in the mass media - *Ogonek*, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, *Moskovskie novosti*, *Kommunist*, and *Druzhba narodov*, to name a few.

³⁶ For discussion of historical revelations under glasnost, see Alec Nove, *Glasnost in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Davies, *Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution*; Walter Laqueur, *Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990); and Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'Constructing Stalinism: Reflections on Changing Western and Soviet Perspectives on the Stalin Era', in Alec Nove, ed., *The Stalin Phenomenon* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993).

³⁷ For instance, see *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1939).

Betrayed hypothesis, the theory of a 'Bukharin alternative' to Stalinism, Slavophile and neo-Populist arguments about the course of Russian history, and the 'barracks socialism' view of Stalinism. Among others, the totalitarian model, often rather crudely borrowed from the West, is favoured by many of the more outspoken Russian historians and political scientists.

Concerning the origins of Stalinism, two types of general explanation emerged as dominant. The first finds the origin of Stalinism in the political system of one-party rule with a ban on internal factions established after the Revolution. This implies that the core characteristic of Stalinism was repressive dictatorship not limited by rule of law, and that Stalinism was essentially an outgrowth of Leninism.³⁸ The other type of explanation focuses on social forces. In the most popular argument of this type, it is bureaucratisation and the emergence of a new bureaucratic ruling class that are the quintessence of Stalinism.³⁹ Both imply that Stalinism had no substantial support outside the new bureaucratic elite. But there is also some cautious discussion of the possibility that Stalinism did in fact have some social support from outside the elite. This includes the theory that Stalin's 'revolution from above' at the beginning of the 1930s had support from urban workers and rank-and-file members of the communist party and Komsomol.⁴⁰

The opening of Russian archives during the late 1980s had a very significant impact on the understanding of the Soviet past under Stalin in both the Western and Russian academic worlds. Improved access to Russian archives has made it possible to ask questions which could not have been answered before. Virtually almost all aspects of Stalinism came under scrutiny based on the newly available material from Russian archives. As Russian archives have become more accessible, a large amount of excellent primary research by both Western and Russian scholars has been published in the past few years.⁴¹ Based on the new material found in the archives,

³⁸ It is similar to one of the standard Western interpretations related to the totalitarian paradigm.

³⁹ This view is similar to that of many European Marxists and some revisionist Western historians such as Moshe Lewin. See G. Popov's review article on the novel *Novoe naznachenie* by Aleksandr Bek, published in *Nauka i zhizn*, no. 4, April 1987, pp. 54-65.

⁴⁰ See, for example, the articles by G. Bordiugov and V. Kozlov in *Pravda*, 3 October 1988, p. 3 and *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 12 October 1988, p. 11; and Iu. A. Poliakov, '20-e gody: Nastroeniia partiinogo avangarda', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 10, 1989, pp. 25-38.

⁴¹ A sample of new research based on the recently released archival material were provided by R. W. Davies. For more details, see chapters 10-17 in R. W. Davies, *Soviet History in the Yeltsin Era* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

various aspects of Stalinism have been reexamined.⁴² By now, much more is known about how high-level politicians including Lenin, Stalin, and other prominent communist leaders acted in their political struggle and in the formation of party policy.⁴³ The terror has attracted much attention, and both Western and Russian historians have tackled the subject from various angles.⁴⁴ Questions related to the scale of mass terror have been answered,⁴⁵ and various regional studies of the Great Purges have showed how the terror was conducted at the local level.⁴⁶ Social

⁴² For instance, see Julian Cooper, Maureen Perrie, and E. A. Rees, eds., *Soviet History, 1917-53: Essays in Honour of R. W. Davies* (London: Macmillan, 1995); and John Channon, ed., *Politics, Society and Stalinism in the USSR* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

⁴³ For interesting documents on this topic, see Lars T. Lih, Oleg V. Naumov and Oleg V. Khlevniuk, eds., *Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Oleg V. Khlevniuk, et al., eds., *Stalinskoe politbiuro v 30-e gody: Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow: AIRO-XX, 1995); Oleg V. Khlevniuk, *Politbiuro: Mekhanizmy politicheskoi vlasti v 1930-e gody* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1996); and Feliks Ivanovich Chuev, *Molotov Remembers: Inside Kremlin Politics: Conversations with Felix Chuev* (Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993). For biographies on Stalin, see Dmitri Volkogonov, *Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy*, trans. by Harold Shukman (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991); Robert Conquest, *Stalin: Breaker of Nations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1993); and Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above, 1928-1941* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990). For work on other politicians, see, for instance, Oleg V. Khlevniuk, *In Stalin's Shadow: The Career of 'Sergo' Ordzhonikidze* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995).

⁴⁴ For instance, see J. Arch Getty and Roberta T. Manning, *Stalinist Terror: New Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Oleg V. Khlevnyuk, 'The Objectives of the Great Terror, 1937-38', in Julian Cooper, Maureen Perrie, and E. A. Rees, eds., *Soviet History, 1917-53*; and Robert W. Thurston, *Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). A comprehensive selection of archive documentation is now available in Getty's new book, but it was not yet available at the time my work was being completed. See J. Arch Getty and Oleg V. Naumov, *The Road to Terror: Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

⁴⁵ The Archives show that the number of convicts in the gulag was lower than Conquest and others suggested in the 1980s, and that the number of persons executed or sent into administrative exile during the Great Purges was higher than the revisionists supposed. See Alec Nove, 'Victims of Stalinism: How Many?' in Getty and Manning, eds., *Stalinist Terror*, and his supplementary article 'Terror Victims - Is the Evidence Complete?', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 46, no. 3, 1994, pp. 535-7; J. Arch Getty, Gábor T. Rittersporn, and V. N. Zemskov, 'Victims of the Soviet Penal System in the Pre-War Years: A First Approach on the Basis of Archival Evidence', *American Historical Review*, vol. 98, no. 4, October 1993, pp. 1017-49; and Edwin Bacon, *The Gulag at War: Stalin's Forced Labour System in the Light of the Archives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994).

⁴⁶ For studies of purge at the local level, see Roberta T. Manning, 'The Great Purges in a Rural District: Belyi Raion Revisited', *The Russian History/Histoire Russe*, vol. 16, nos. 2-4, 1989, pp. 409-433; Francesco Benvenuti, 'Industry and Purge in the Donbass, 1936-1937', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 45, no. 1, 1993, pp. 57-78; Robert Weinberg, 'Purge and Politics in the Periphery: Birobidzhan in 1937', *Slavic Review*, vol. 52, no. 1, Spring 1993, pp. 13-27; Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilisation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), chapter 7; Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Freedom and Terror in the Donbas: A Ukrainian-Russian Borderland, 1870s-1990s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), chapter 6; and James R. Harris, 'The Purging of Local Cliques in the Urals Region, 1936-7' in Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Stalinism: New Directions* (London: Routledge, 1999).

historians also have produced valuable studies of various social aspects of Stalinism.⁴⁷ Some focus on class and social identity,⁴⁸ and others focus on peasant resistance.⁴⁹ Those who have adopted cultural approaches to Stalinism focus on sociocultural issues in the realm of everyday life and the private sphere.⁵⁰ In particular, women and gender questions in the Stalin period have been dealt with by many young scholars.⁵¹

We now know more about Stalinism than ever before. However, the debate on the nature of Stalinism and its origins is not yet resolved, and the task of comprehending the extraordinary phenomenon of the Stalin period is just beginning. As the picture of the 1930s becomes clearer, the question of Stalinism's origins assumes a new intensity. How could such a regime have emerged, and when did it take on its final form? Was it merely imposed from above, or is there any evidence of popular support for the new order? Did the Soviet people contribute to the shaping of this oppressive political system? At present there is no sign of a consensus on these matters among historians in the West or in Russia.⁵²

Given the shortcomings of the totalitarians and the social historians, it is worth attempting a more rounded approach which pays due attention to the interaction of

⁴⁷ For instance, see Nick Lampert and Gábor T. Rittersporn, eds., *Stalinism: Its Nature and Aftermath: Essays in Honor of Moshe Lewin* (London: Macmillan, 1992); and William G. Rosenberg and Lewis H. Siegelbaum, eds., *Social Dimensions of Soviet Industrialisation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993). See also the articles by Chris Ward, John Hatch, Catherine Merridale, John Russell, and Robert W. Thurston in Stephen White, ed., *New Directions in Soviet History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁴⁸ For instance, see Lewis H. Siegelbaum and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds., *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class, and Identity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); and David L. Hoffmann, *Peasant Metropolis: Social Identities in Moscow, 1929-1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

⁴⁹ For instance, see James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Soviet Village after Collectivisation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels under Stalin: Collectivisation and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York, 1996).

⁵⁰ See, for instance, Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*; Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Fitzpatrick, ed., *Stalinism: New Directions*; and Catriona Kelly and David Shepherd, eds., *Constructing Russian Culture in the Age of Revolution, 1881-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) and *Russian Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁵¹ See, for instance, Wendy Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

⁵² Catherine Merridale, 'The Origins of the Stalinist State: Power and Politics in Moscow, 1928-32', in Channon, ed., *Politics, Society and Stalinism in the USSR*, pp. 69-70.

political and social policies.⁵³ In this respect, a study of the party at the intermediate and lower levels is of particular importance as these levels were where the spheres of politics and society overlapped. By examining the role and function of the regional party organisation, the party's relationship with its rank and file, and also the interplay between the party and the masses at a grassroots level, this study will enable us to answer questions concerning the nature of the Stalinist regime. More generally, it is hoped that this study will help to renew the debate on the nature of the Stalinist regime and Soviet society in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

1.2 The scope of the study

This study has a limited objective. Its scope is limited in several aspects. First of all, this study focuses on the period of the first Five Year Plan.⁵⁴ This was a period of great transformation for the whole of the Soviet Union. Often referred to as the 'revolution from above', it was a period of rapid industrialisation and collectivisation, accompanied by massive social changes. In the industrial sector, rapid transformation was evident. Primary emphasis was placed upon the development of heavy industry, with the result that the established industrial centres in the country were refurbished and expanded and completely new industrial centres were created from the ground up. In the countryside, agriculture was rapidly collectivised, and by the end of the first FYP collectivisation encompassed seventy per cent of households. The impact of rapid industrialisation and collectivisation on Soviet society was tremendous. The industrial workforce expanded rapidly and millions of peasants flooded into the towns seeking employment in the rapidly expanding industrial sector. Workers constantly

⁵³ For assessment of both approaches, see Martin McCauley, *Stalin and Stalinism* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 78-85. In this respect, Stephen Kotkin's book, *Magnetic Mountain*, made a groundbreaking contribution to the historiography of Stalinism. It synthesises elements from both interpretations, retaining an active view of the subject but at the same time acknowledging the significance of Bolshevik ideology. Bringing together the disparate strands of intellectual and social history, he compellingly showed how ideology fashioned life in Stalinist Russia. See Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*. For critical review of his book, see Igal Halfin and Jochen Hellbeck, 'Rethinking the Stalinist Subject: Stephen Kotkin's "Magnetic Mountain" and the State of Soviet Historical Studies', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, vol. 44, no. 3, 1996, pp. 456-463.

⁵⁴ Before 1931 the Soviet economic year ran from 1 October to 30 September of the succeeding year. The first FYP was originally projected for the five economic years from October 1928 to September 1933. At the end of 1932, however, the plan was declared to have been fulfilled in four years and three months. This study deals with the period between the beginning of 1928 and the end of 1932, as the beginning of the 'revolution from above' came in January 1928. Events which took place in 1933 will be dealt with, whenever necessary.

moved from one job to another, or one place to another. In the countryside, relatively well-to-do peasants, often labelled 'kulaks', were subject to the policy of dekulakisation, which effectively meant shooting or deportation to northern Russia or Siberia. Millions of peasants died during the course of collectivisation and dekulakisation, particularly during the famine of 1932-3.

The importance of this period in the study of Stalinism is due to the fact that this is when the main characteristics of the Stalinist system, particularly in the economic sphere, became visible. Most importantly, the Stalinist economic system emerged in this period. Both in the agricultural and industrial sectors, market principles were replaced by central direction as the key guiding force of the economy. The policy of five-year-plan industrialisation affirmed highly centralised state planning and state ownership, which in turn became the main features of the Stalinist economic system. In the agricultural sector too, collectivisation had the effect of placing the peasantry under firm state control and thereby guaranteed continuing state access to the grain resources of the country. The first FYP period was also an interesting period in the formation of the Stalinist political system. The Stalinist political system did not emerge abruptly, as did the Stalinist economic system. Although full-blown Stalinism was to come in the mid-1930s, it was in the first FYP period that Stalin began to consolidate his power. In the political sphere, the ideological struggle regarding how to build a socialist country came to an end with Stalin's victory at the beginning of 1928 and the last organised opposition to operate on a national scale was defeated by Stalin's faction in 1929. The consolidation of Stalin's personal authority became the main characteristic of the Soviet political system in the early 1930s, and it paved the way to the full-blown Stalinism of the mid-1930s. By 1932, the main characteristics of the Stalinist economic, social and political order had become clearly visible, though this was more clearly the case in the economic sphere than in the political.

Of greater direct relevance to this study is the fact that the party itself went through considerable changes in terms of its size, organisation, and functional role in this period. By the end of NEP, the idea of the 'mass' party had taken hold, and the party membership expanded rapidly with massive recruitment of workers in the first FYP period. Party organisations were restructured several times, and new and often

experimental party structures in the industrial enterprise proliferated. Party rank and file members were encouraged to display their activism and great emphasis was placed on the role of activists in party work. It was also in this period that the party, especially party cells in factories, began to get involved in the details of economic management. Indeed, the first FYP was a unique period in the development of the party organisations and, therefore, this period deserves special attention.

The Leningrad party organisation has been chosen as a case study of the regional party organisation for a number of reasons. First of all, it was the second largest regional party organisation in the Soviet Union, containing approximately 9 per cent of the whole party membership at the beginning of 1928. Traditionally, the Leningrad party organisation boasted of its large number of members with pre-revolutionary party standing and experience of the 1917 revolution. Many of its party members were veteran Bolsheviks who experienced the hard times of the Revolution and the Civil War. In 1927, about 30 per cent of its membership had joined the party before and during the Russian Revolution and the Civil War. Moreover, it had a strong worker representation throughout the 1920s. At the beginning of the first FYP, 75 per cent of its members were workers by social origin. In the city of Leningrad, the proportion of workers was even higher, reaching 80 per cent. Furthermore, Leningrad city party organisation had an extremely high percentage of 'bench-workers': over 60 per cent.

Of even greater direct relevance to this study is the fact that the Leningrad party organisation was one of the most active regional party organisations. Politically, Leningrad occupied a unique position. Leningrad had been the capital of the Russian empire, the political centre under the old regime and during the Bolshevik Revolution. After losing its status as capital, Leningrad became a political rival of Moscow. The Leningrad party organisation was more 'proletarian' than the Moscow party organisation, and, after October 1917, considered itself the real vanguard party organisation. The result was a vigorous rivalry between activists in the two cities. The Leningrad party organisation had a reputation of generally taking a hard-line approach in debates over policy. It was the headquarters of Zinoviev, in particular, during his

political struggle against Stalin in the mid-1920s,⁵⁵ and although Zinoviev and his supporters had been removed by the beginning of the first FYP, the importance of the Leningrad party organisation could not be ignored in the period we are concerned with. In particular, Kirov, the first secretary of the Leningrad party organisation at this time, was a politician of national prominence who reportedly enjoyed considerable support from the working-class masses. Furthermore, the rank-and-file members of the Leningrad party organisation were often considered to be politically conscious and active in carrying out their party duties.

This study is important in itself as only one study has so far been carried out on the local level of the Leningrad party organisation.⁵⁶ Moreover, given the importance of the Leningrad regional party organisation for the party as a whole, this case study may have wider relevance in identifying political and organisational changes within the party organisations during the first FYP period. Furthermore, this study will enable us to obtain a more comprehensive overview of the communist party under Stalin by highlighting similarities as well as differences between party organisations in different regions. The Leningrad region was different from both the Moscow and Smolensk regions on which some adequate studies already exist. The Smolensk region, which was examined in detail by Fainsod, remained predominantly an agricultural area even during the industrialisation drive of the 1930s. In this sense, Smolensk might not be typical of the party as a whole, although as a rural organisation in a predominantly peasant country, its study was amply justified. By contrast, the Leningrad region was mainly an industrial area even before the industrialisation drive. Leningrad was not only the second largest city, but also the most industrialised city in the country. Having inherited its industrial base from the Tsars, Leningrad was already a well-established industrial city at the beginning of the first FYP. It had a considerable number of factories, some of which were of national

⁵⁵ See D. A. Hughes, *Zinoviev, the Leningrad Party Organisation and the 1925 Opposition* (Unpublished MSocSci dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1977).

⁵⁶ As far as the Leningrad party organisation is concerned, P. O. Gooderham's paper presented to the Centre for Russian and East European Studies (CREES) at University of Birmingham is the only available one. His focus is primarily on the party's own bureaucratic apparatus - that is, the full-time, salaried officials who manned positions of responsibility in Leningrad's party committees and bureaux, although in the course of the discussion he also dealt with the role of the unpaid, volunteer party members who carried out important duties in the organisation, the so-called activists. See P. O. Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan: The Case of Leningrad* (CREES Discussion Papers, SIPS, no. 24, University of Birmingham, 1983).

importance. Moreover, it had skilled workers, with 93 per cent literacy. Having such advantages, Leningrad's industrial sector expanded rapidly during the industrialisation drive. It is obvious that the party organisation in Leningrad played a very different role to an organisation such as Smolensk, based in a largely rural region.

The Moscow region was also peculiar in that Moscow, the capital of the Soviet Union, was the political and administrative centre of the country. It was a region where huge industry, and administrative, commercial and cultural institutions were concentrated. The Moscow party organisation was regarded as one of the most privileged of the local party organisations. Its relationship with the central party organs must have been completely different from that of other regional party organisations as it was located in the very city that housed the central party organs.

Although the Moscow region was a well-developed industrial region, it was different from the Leningrad region in terms of its industrial structure. Whereas the former heavily depended on light industry, the latter was the heavy industrial centre of the country. Accordingly the majority of the workforce in the Moscow region were engaged in light industry, whereas in the Leningrad region they were engaged in heavy industry. Therefore, this case study of the Leningrad regional party organisation will enable us to better identify the similarities and differences between party organisations in different regions and will highlight the impact of the industrialisation drive on the party in general.

1.3 Research framework

1.3.1 Research questions

In this study, three different but related questions will be addressed. The first question is related to the impact of the state-initiated industrialisation drive on the party organisations. Unlike many other European countries, where the role of state in the industrialisation process was limited to a greater or lesser extent, the Soviet state initiated, planned, and controlled the industrialisation process. This state-led industrialisation brought about not only massive social upheavals, but also dramatic changes in the make-up of state institutions. Since the target and speed of Stalinist industrialisation demanded an enormously active role of the state sector, state organs

had to reorientate themselves in order to cope with the tasks imposed upon them. This included both functional and structural changes. The communist party was no exception. The party was the initiator and organiser of these changes, and in doing so, the party itself went through considerable changes in its nature and function. In particular, the lower party organs which were expected to implement party policy, including fulfilment of industrialisation targets by 'mobilising and guiding' the masses, experienced significant developments in term of their size, membership and organisation. More importantly, the lower party organs' function changed considerably by their growing involvement in industry. The particular questions posed in this study are: what was the party's response to ever increasing demands made upon it during the rapid industrialisation drive, and whether the methods the party undertook were effective.

The second question is whether Stalinist state-led industrialisation caused or facilitated bureaucratisation within the party organisations. To put it differently, the question is whether the party had been transformed into an administrative body, or as Trotsky put it, bureaucratised during the first FYP period. In order to answer these questions, it will be necessary to closely analyse how the party organisation was structured and functioned; and how party workers were recruited and how they related to the party, rank-and-file members and the masses.

The final question concerns the emergence of the Stalinist system. The question is whether the structural and functional changes within the party facilitated the emergence of the Stalinist political system. To what extent could the central party leadership control the activities of the lower level party organisations and ensure that the policy formulated above was implemented by the lower level organs? How could Stalin consolidate his power within the party? Is there any evidence of popular support for the Stalinist policy within the party and who were they? These questions will be addressed either directly or indirectly in the main body of the thesis. I will also return to them at some length in the conclusion.

1.3.2 Research sources

This study relies heavily on an analysis of the material collected during my stay in Moscow in 1993-4 and 1996. This included party journals, newspapers, pamphlets

and booklets collected from the Lenin Library and the History Library situated in Moscow. In addition, archival material collected from the Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (RTsKhIDNI), also located in Moscow, is one of the main sources of my research. Unfortunately, I was not able to visit the local libraries and archives in St Petersburg. This was partly due to the limited financial resources and time, but mainly because material on the Leningrad party origination, which was available in Moscow, was sufficient for the purposes of the present study.

The material available on the Leningrad party organisation includes a variety of types of source. The basic sources most frequently used in this study are party journals published both at the national level and at the local level. The party journals published by the Central Committee, such as *Izvestiia TsK* (called *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* after 1929), regularly gave space to the Leningrad party organisation. The Leningrad oblast committee also published specialised journals: *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, a factual publication covering its main resolutions and decisions, and *Partrabotnik*, a party journal containing articles written by party officials and activists on various topics. The latter, which was issued twice a month, embraced major decisions by the local party organisations as well as some of its debates.

The party's newspapers were strictly censored during the period we are concerned with. Nevertheless, the local newspaper, *Leningradskaia pravda*, provides accounts of all the Leningrad party organisation's major meetings, as well as selective information on the work of the district (*raion*) and factory party committees. *Pravda*, the central party's newspaper, also provides useful information covering all the major decisions by the Central Committee, and it often provides accounts of the major events in the Leningrad region.

Published accounts of local party meetings tend to be less heavily censored. Stenographic records of party congresses and conferences are particularly useful. These include the records of the first Leningrad oblast committee conference in November 1927, the second one in March 1929, the third one in June 1930, and the fourth one in January 1932. These are of great value since they normally range over a wide variety of topics, and matters were sometimes discussed relatively openly as

they were intended for party audiences. Other Russian sources include pamphlets, articles, reports by the factory party committee at Krasnyi putilovets, and a number of statistics published by the Leningrad oblast committee.

Archive material from the former central party archive (RTsKhIDNI)⁵⁷ are of crucial importance to my research. This particular archive holds various precious documents related to party activities from central to regional levels.⁵⁸ Documents sent by the Leningrad oblast organisation to the Central Committee can be found under the heading in *fond* 17, *opis'* 21. These cover the protocols of the oblast plenum meetings including one stenographic record of the plenum meeting held on 7 September 1929; the protocols of obkom bureau meetings and of obkom secretariat meetings over the period 1928-1931; and the protocols of joint obkom and gorkom bureau meetings and secretariat meetings in 1932.

For the transliteration of Russian I have based myself upon the scheme used by the Library of Congress, but where other forms are familiar to an English-language reader I have preferred them (thus Bolshevik, rather than *bol'shevik*, and soviet, rather than *sovet*). Citations are given in full when they first occur in each chapter, and thereafter in a shortened form. Place names are particular difficult, given that many of them have changed; but as a general rule I have preferred the name that prevailed at the time to which the discussion refers (thus Leningrad rather than St Petersburg).

1.3.3 The structure of the thesis

This chapter is an introductory chapter which lays out the theoretical and conceptual framework of this research. Chapter 2, another introductory chapter, provides a general background on the characteristics of the Leningrad region, with special reference to geographic, economic, and demographic aspects of the region. This chapter aims to highlight the economic and social changes which occurred during the first FYP period. Given the importance of the city of Leningrad, special

⁵⁷ This archive has been renamed again in 1999 and it is now called RGASPI (*Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii*).

⁵⁸ RTsKhIDNI contains party documents issued during the period up to 1952. The Centre for the Preservation of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), which has now been renamed RGANI, mainly contains post-1952 documents. For more information on these archives, see Davies, *Soviet History in the Yeltsin Era*, p. 95.

attention was paid to the importance of the city in the second part of this chapter. It intends to emphasise the status of Leningrad as a well-established industrial city. Some background information on its major factories was given in this chapter, since these factories will be frequently referred to in later chapters. Following this is an in-depth analysis of Leningrad's population, in particular, of the composition of the working class population. This will clearly reveal the impact of the industrialisation drive on the city's population.

Apart from these introductory chapters, my thesis consists of four parts. The first part concerns the structure and organisation of the regional party organisation. The second part concerns membership changes and the effect of party purges on the membership. The third part deals with party personnel and their recruitment. The fourth part deals with the role and function of factory party cells. Each part approximately corresponds to each chapter, except the second part which is made up of two chapters. All the chapters, except chapter 5 and 7, consists of two sections, the first dealing with party apparatus from the obkom to raikom level, the latter dealing with the party cells at the factory level. Chapter 5 differs from the other chapters in that it did not give a special space to the party cells at factory level. In chapter 7, a whole chapter is devoted to the factory party cells in order to highlight the dynamics of changes within the factory.

Chapter 3 concerns the organisational development of the Leningrad party organisation. The major questions in this chapter are how the formal structure of the party organisation changed as the party assumed a new role as a guiding force in industrialisation, and whether this system operated effectively. In this chapter, the major questions are whether there was a process of bureaucratisation within the party organisation. The following questions will be answered: whether the party organisation had become more hierarchically structured, or whether the party organisation had become more specialised and departmentalised. The first part of this chapter deals with the structure of the party apparatus, from the obkom down to raikoms. Major topics included: the abolition of okruzhkoms in 1930, the establishment of the Leningrad gorkom in 1931, the development of raikoms into the key middle-level party link, and finally the reorganisation of the party apparatus in 1930 and 1931. In particular, the reorganisation of the party apparatus along

functional lines will show how the party apparatus at the regional level developed into a more specialised and departmentalised one during the period of rapid industrialisation. The second issue which will be addressed in this chapter is the development of factory party cells. Even though party cells in other sectors, especially those in agriculture, also experienced a significant organisational development, the main focus will be on party cells in factories. This is not because the former are of less importance, but rather simply because there is no room for a detailed discussion in this thesis. The restructuring of factory party cells, which took place several times during the period which we are concerned with, will clearly show what the party's organisational response to the demand placed upon it during the period of industrialisation was.

Chapter 4 examines in some depth the party membership change within the Leningrad party organisation. Emphasis is placed on the effects of the massive recruitment policy implemented between 1928 and 1932. The first part deals with worker recruitment, the change in the size of the party membership, and the change in its composition in terms of the social origin, occupation, and length of party membership. The consequence of the massive worker recruitment will be also considered. The second part focuses on the party membership within industrial enterprises. At first, the composition of workers recruited between 1928 and 1932 will be examined in terms of the length of industrial work experience, skill level, and participation in shock-worker movement. A major question here is how well the factory party cells were able to recruit workers as instructed from above. Secondly, the impact of worker recruitment on party saturation level within Leningrad's factories will be examined. Finally, the allocation of communists inside factories or workshops will be dealt with. This is to show whether or not the massive worker recruitment brought about the effects which the party leadership hoped for in terms of communists' relationship with other workers.

Chapter 5 deals with the 1929-30 and 1933 party general purges. The major concern of this chapter is the impact of these two party purges on the Leningrad party membership. These two purges were chosen as a case study because they had visible effects on the party membership. This thesis is not really concerned with the year 1933. However, the 1933 purge is chosen as a case study because it had the effect of

reversing the trends towards an ever-increasing party membership in the previous four years. In order to understand the dynamics of the party membership change, it is necessary to deal with the 1933 purge. In addition, the atmosphere and political aims of these two purges were quite different. The comparison of these two purges will show clearly the change in political emphasis within the first FYP period. In each part, the backgrounds and political aspects of the purge will be mentioned briefly. This will be followed by an analysis of the actual conduct of the purges in the Leningrad region. An in-depth analysis of the purge results will be included at this stage. When relevant, the purge figures for the Leningrad region will be compared with national figures as well as the figures available for the other regions.

Chapter 6 examines the composition of party workers with special reference to size, social composition, and mobility. The major questions in this chapter are how the local party organisations recruited their workers and whether there was a substantial change in the composition of party personnel. The first part concerns party officials at the obkom level down to the raikom levels. An in-depth analysis of the composition of party workers will be conducted in relation to party membership length, social origin and occupation. In doing so, the impact of the self-criticism campaign carried out in 1928 and 1929, and of the 1929-30 purges will be considered. The second part is devoted to the party workers at the various levels of party organisations within the factories. At factories, both full-time party officials and non-paid party activists were carrying out party work. Emphasis is placed on the impact of the massive recruitment of party activists for party work, and the dynamics of the relationship between party officials and party activists.

Chapter 7 examines the changing role and function of party cells at the factory level in the process of industrialisation. The main question posed in this chapter is to what extent the local party organisations were able to implement decisions made by the central party leadership, and to what extent the local party organisations could impose the party's decisions on the masses. Unlike other previous chapters, this chapter focuses mainly on the factory party cells. It goes without saying that party organisations at other levels - obkom and raikoms - were also involved in production matters. However, this chapter focuses mainly on the factory party cells in order to highlight the complexity of party work in industry. Major topics included: the turn of

party cells to economic work, the implementation of the principle of *edinonachalie*, the shifting of the focus of party work down to workshop cells and party units, and finally the re-emphasising of political-mass work in 1932. In dealing with these topics, the dynamics and changing relationship between party cells, industrial managers and workers will be discussed. This is followed by an analysis of the level of mass mobilisation. Workers' participation in production meetings and socialist competition movement will be examined. The role of party cells in mobilising the working class masses will also be examined. The major question here is to what extent the party cells could mobilise the workers and whether this had the desired effect. In this particular chapter, frequent references will be made to some of Leningrad's major factories, including the Krasnyi putilovets, the Elektrosila, the Karl Marx factory and others.

Finally in the concluding chapter, I will return to the questions posed in introduction, after briefly summarising the findings of each chapter. These include: to what extent the local party organisation was able to implement decisions made by the central party leadership, and to what extent and how the local party organisations could impose the party's decisions on the masses. Another question to be answered is whether or not party members, if not all ordinary workers, supported Stalinist industrialisation. In other words, the question is who was the main source of the support for the Stalinist regime - party officials, activists, or workers. Finally, it will be necessary to explore more seriously the general question of the political significance of the bureaucratisation of the party organisations.

2. Leningrad Oblast and Leningrad City

The first Five Year Plan was a period of rapid industrialisation and collectivisation. The industrialisation drive of these years and the forced collectivisation of agriculture that accompanied it had a visible effect on the economic structure of the Soviet Union. Industry, in particular heavy industry, rapidly expanded and agriculture underwent fundamental change. The tumult of collectivisation and the voracious demand for labour unleashed by the first FYP had immediate and profound social consequences, resulting in a radical transformation of the society. The Leningrad region also experienced a significant change in its economic structure and population over this period: the rapid expansion of the region's industry, collectivisation of agriculture, the massive increase in its working class population, and a peasant migration into the city of Leningrad.

This chapter provides some background information on the Leningrad region during the first FYP period. Geographic, economic and demographic characteristics of the region are considered in this chapter. Emphasis is placed on the impact of the industrialisation drive on the region's industry and its industrial working class. Given the importance of the city of Leningrad for the region, special attention is paid to Leningrad's industry and population. At first, the structure of the city's industry is addressed in terms of capital investment, number and size of factories and the expansion of industrial output in each industrial sector. We go on to consider the Leningrad population - which consisted mainly of workers. The following characteristics of urban demography are given particular attention: the size and growth of the population in general; the size and distribution of the working class population among various sectors of industry; and the composition of the working class population in terms of social origin, gender, age, and literacy.

2.1 Leningrad oblast

Leningrad oblast was one of the 32 oblasts belonging to the European part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). It was located in the northwest of the RSFSR, sharing its border with the Estonian Soviet Socialist

Republic (SSR) and the Latvian SSR to the west, and with the Severnyi krai to the east. The Baltic Sea and two large inland lakes, Lake Ladoga and Lake Onega, formed the northern border. The Belorussian SSR and the Western and Moscow oblasts were situated to the south, and the Karelian Autonomous SSR to the north (see map 1). The administrative centre of the region was the city of Leningrad, which was founded on the delta of the Neva River flowing into the Bay of Finland. Lake Ladoga was situated about 30 kilometres north-east of Leningrad, and the Finnish border was only a few miles north of Leningrad. As a window to the West, the city had been an important port and naval base even though the bay and the city were icebound during the winter months. Another major city within the boundary of Leningrad oblast was Kronstadt, which was about 40 kilometres away from Leningrad. A naval base was located on this small island.

At the beginning of 1928, Leningrad oblast was composed of nine okrugs: Leningrad, Pskov, Novgorod, Velikie luki, Cherepovets, Borovichi, Luga, Lodeinoe pole and Murmansk.¹ When the Velikie luki okrug was transferred to the Western oblast in 1929, Leningrad oblast had a territory of about 331,500 square kilometres.² After okrugs were eliminated as a unit of administration in 1930, the territory of the oblast was subdivided into more than 100 raions.³ Leningrad and Kronstadt belonged to the oblast until November 1931. Then, the city of Leningrad became an independent administrative-economic unit, separated from the oblast. In addition, the city of Kronstadt and the Prigorodnyi raion⁴ came under the jurisdiction of the city of Leningrad, being subordinated to the *Ispolkom* (executive committee) of the Leningrad Soviet.⁵

¹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 1, January 1928, p. 39.

² *Malaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1930), vol. 4, p. 574.

³ In 1930, a total of 107 rural raions were grouped into three categories: 13 industrial, 13 half-industrial, and 81 simple raions. See RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2754, p. 74. Later in June 1931, rural raions were grouped into four according to their economic characteristics: the flax growing, milk and livestock, timber industry, and cottage industry raions. Each group contained 26, 24, 12 and 27 raions respectively. For more information, see *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti* (Leningrad: Izdanie oblispolkoma i Lensoveta, 1932), pp. 23-31.

⁴ In 1930 the Prigorodnyi raion was created out of five suburban and rural raions surrounding Leningrad. For more information on this raion, see *Partrabotnik*, no. 23, August 1930, pp. 42-44.

⁵ *Sankt-Peterburg, Petrograd, Leningrad: Entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Moscow: Bol'shaia rossiiskaia entsiklopediia, 1992), p. 538.

Leningrad oblast had a population of 5.6 million in 1927/8. As table 2-1 shows, some 30 per cent of the oblast's total population lived in the city of Leningrad, ten per cent lived in other small cities and towns of the oblast, and the rest lived in the countryside. By 1931 the oblast's total population had increased to 6.6 million. Leningrad's population showed rapid growth, and its proportion of the total population had increased to 38 per cent. By contrast, the oblast's rural population declined slightly, and its proportion had fallen to 50 per cent. By occupation, some 45 per cent of Leningrad's population were industrial workers. Of those living in other small cities and towns, 32 per cent were industrial workers, and 4 per cent were either kolkhozniks or individual peasants. Of those living in the countryside, about 44 per cent were peasants, whereas only five per cent were workers.⁶ Taking into consideration that approximately half the population were not involved in economic activities, these figures suggest that the majority of the active workforce in the city of Leningrad were working in factories whereas the majority of the active workforce in the countryside were engaged in agriculture. According to the 1926 census, the majority of the people in the oblast were Russians (91 per cent), and 86 per cent of those aged between ten and 49 were literate,⁷ this percentage being somewhat lower than in Leningrad itself.

Table 2-1. Population of Leningrad oblast by place of residence, 1927/28 and 1931

<i>Place of residence</i>	<i>1927/28</i>		<i>1931</i>	
	N	%	N	%
Leningrad	1,677,000	29.8	2,483,000	37.7
Other cities and towns	582,000	10.3	788,000	11.9
Countryside	3,366,000	59.9	3,316,000	50.4
Total	5,625,000	100.0	6,587,000	100.0

Source: Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti (Leningrad: Izdanie oblispolkoma i Lensoveta, 1932), p. 15.

2.1.1 Agriculture

The economy of Leningrad and that of the surrounding area in the oblast were closely interrelated. Like many other industrial cities, Leningrad depended on the

⁶ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 147.

⁷ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo Leningrada i Leningradskoi oblasti za 60 let: Statisticheskii sbornik* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1977), p. 118

local area for the majority of its food, especially for milk and vegetables. Leningrad oblast, encompassing a large agricultural area, produced most of the agricultural products consumed in Leningrad city. In return, the oblast depended on Leningrad city for industrial products. During the first FYP period, agricultural reconstruction aimed to transform the oblast into the main milk and vegetable reserve in order to meet the demand of workers in Leningrad and other industrial centres within the oblast.⁸

The area to the North-west of Leningrad was traditionally a grain-deficit zone.⁹ Neither the soil nor the climate in the oblast was well suited for agriculture. The growing season was short, and most of the area was covered by forest, lakes, and swamps. Approximately half the land was forest area and only about 25 per cent of the land was suitable for agriculture. Of the latter, half was used for crop cultivation and the other half for pasture.¹⁰ In 1928, a total of 319,500 hectares were used for crop cultivation: 70 per cent was used for grain cultivation, 17 per cent for forage crops, 11 per cent for vegetables and potatoes, and two per cent for industrial crops.¹¹ By 1932, an additional 81,700 hectares had been used for crop cultivation. Between 1928 and 1932, there was a differential increase in the amount of land used for forage crops as opposed to the amount used for grain cultivation: the grain acreage increased by a mere 12 per cent, whereas the forage crops acreage increased by almost 56 per cent. As a result, by 1932, the percentage of the land used for grain cultivation in the total acreage of arable land had been cut to 62 per cent, whereas that for forage crops increased to 22 per cent. Some 14 per cent of the total arable land was used for the cultivation of vegetables and potatoes, and two per cent for industrial crops at this time.¹²

Crop cultivation and livestock farming played an equally important role in the oblast's rural economy. In 1927/28, 44 per cent of the total agricultural output was derived from crop cultivation and the rest from livestock farming. Grain accounted for 24 per cent of the gross agricultural output, potatoes for ten per cent, vegetables for

⁸ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 104.

⁹ R. W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivisation of Soviet Agriculture, 1929-1930* (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 20.

¹⁰ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 105.

¹¹ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo Leningradskoi oblasti: Statisticheskii sbornik* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe statisticheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1957), pp. 32-34.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

six per cent, and flax for four per cent. Milk production accounted for as much as 37 per cent of the gross agricultural output and meat production for 14 per cent. However, the 1930/31 figures show some changes in the relative proportion of each production. The proportion of grain in the gross agricultural output increased to 28 per cent, flax to six per cent, and vegetables to ten per cent. By contrast, that of milk production decreased to 34 per cent and meat production to ten per cent, resulting in the proportion of the agricultural output derived from livestock farming in the total decreased to 49 per cent.¹³

Only a small portion of agricultural products produced in the region was sold at markets: 17 per cent in 1927 and 1930. Grain was the main agricultural product, accounting for almost a quarter of the gross agricultural output, but only a little was sold at markets. Flax was the most important marketable agricultural product: in 1927, 45 per cent of the flax cultivated was sold at markets, and in 1930 this increased to 64 per cent. It is probably due to the fact that the authorities sought to make flax Leningrad's principal agricultural product since flax was exportable. Indeed, much importance was placed on its cultivation during the first FYP. Vegetables were not the main marketable agricultural product in 1927: only five per cent was sold at markets. However, in 1930 the figure increased considerably to 22 per cent. A relatively high percentage of the milk and meat produced in the region was sold at markets in 1927: 31 per cent of the meat produced and 21 per cent of the milk produced. However, their percentages had fallen by almost 30 per cent by 1930. In 1930 only 13 per cent and 18 per cent respectively was sold at markets.¹⁴

In 1928, farming in the Leningrad oblast was largely undertaken by individual peasants: 97 per cent of the land sown was farmed either by individual farmers or workers. Sovkhozy (state farms) and kolkhozy (collective farms) accounted for less than three per cent of the total farming land.¹⁵ Between 1928 and 1930, collectivisation was carried out more slowly in the Leningrad region than in the rest of the country. In October 1930, only six per cent of peasant households were

¹³ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 121.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹⁵ *Narodnoe khoziaistvo Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 37.

collectivised in the region, as compared with 22 per cent in the country as a whole.¹⁶ The rapid advance of collectivisation in the region came only in 1931. The proportion of households collectivised increased dramatically from seven per cent in January 1931 to 44 per cent in October 1931.¹⁷ By October 1931, about 11,400 kolkhozy had been established in the region, and some 285,000 peasant households had been collectivised.¹⁸ In spite of an effort to increase the size of kolkhozy, the average size of the kolkhoz remained relatively small in October 1931, with 25 households, 84 ploughed fields, 18 horses and 14 cows.¹⁹ This led to the average size of a rural settlement (*selenie*) in the region being small, with 20 households, 73 ploughed fields, 14 horses and 25 cows.²⁰ Much livestock was socialised in kolkhozy. Already in spring 1931, as many as 98 per cent of the total number of horses in kolkhozy were socialised. A far smaller percentage of cattle and other livestock was socialised: only 46 per cent of the total number of cattle and 43 per cent of the total number of pigs were socialised in kolkhozy.²¹

Table 2-2. *Peasant households collectivised in the Leningrad region, 1928-1931 (percentages)*

1928	1929	1930	1931	1931	1931	1931	1931
October	October	October	February	April	June	August	October
0.5	1.0	6.1	9.7	23.5	34.2	39.6	43.5

Source: *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 115.

2.1.2 Industrial structure

Leningrad oblast was an industrial centre of national importance, accounting, in 1927/28, for 13 per cent of the country's gross industrial output and for 11 per cent of

¹⁶ The figure for the Leningrad region is from *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 115. The figure for All-Union is from Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, pp. 442-443.

¹⁷ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 115.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 115. Between 1930 and 1931, the number of sovkhhozy established in the region also increased rapidly from 63 to 230. The figure for 1930 is from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo Leningrada i Leningradskoi oblasti za 60 let*, p. 150; the figure for 1931 is from *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 113.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 117. Central Industrial, North-Western and Western Russia and Belorussia tended to have small settlements, with an average of 16-20 households, whereas South-Eastern Russia and the Ukraine had larger settlements, with an average 100-150 households. R. W. Davies, *The Soviet Collective Farm, 1929-1930* (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 34.

²¹ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 117.

its industrial workforce.²² The metalworking and electrical engineering industries of the region were particularly important, producing a considerable proportion of the country's total output. In 1927/28, the region's metalworking industry accounted for 14 per cent of the gross national output in that sector. Moreover, the electrical engineering industry in the region produced almost half of the electrical goods produced in the country as a whole.²³

The industries of the region were heavily concentrated within the city of Leningrad. For instance, in 1930 Leningrad produced almost 82 per cent of the region's gross industrial output. The major industries of the region, such as metalworking, electrical engineering and textile, were heavily concentrated in Leningrad. In 1930, Leningrad produced 84 per cent of the oblast's gross output in the metalworking industry, 100 per cent in the electrical engineering industry, and 92 per cent in the textile industry.²⁴ The chemical, footwear and clothing industries were also heavily concentrated in the city. Some 95 per cent of the region's total chemical output, 100 per cent of its total clothing output, and 99 per cent of its total footwear output was produced in Leningrad.²⁵

By contrast, the mineral mining and processing, fuel, paper, wood and building materials industries were mainly situated in the area surrounding Leningrad. However, these were of lesser importance than those in Leningrad itself, accounting for just under 20 per cent of the region's gross output in 1930.²⁶ The building materials industry was a major industrial sector, with 24 brick factories, more than 20 sawmills and plywood factories and four glass factories.²⁷ There were 21 peat processing plants, and a number of factories producing porcelain, cement, matches and agricultural machinery. In general, these factories situated outside Leningrad were relatively small in terms of the size of their workforce. Only about one quarter of the factories employed more than 1,000 workers.²⁸ The Izhorskii metalworking factory, located in the city of Kolpino, was the largest with more than 5,000 workers.²⁹

²² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, tables, p. 132.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, tables, pp. 106-113.

²⁹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 419.

However, the Izhorskii factory was rather exceptional. Other metalworking factories in the oblast were relatively small scale factories producing rather simple machines compared to those based in Leningrad.

In the early 1920s, the industrial production of the region fell significantly, due to the collapse of industry caused by the Civil War. For instance, industrial output in 1922/23 was only 27 per cent of the 1913 level. However, the industrial output of the region grew steadily from 1923 and it had almost recovered to the prewar level by 1927.³⁰ The electrical engineering, leather, textile and paper industries managed to recover to their prewar industrial levels, whereas the industrial output of the metalworking, chemical, food and printing industries was still below the prewar level.³¹

The oblast's industry, which had just recovered to the prewar industrial level at the beginning of the First FYP period, expanded rapidly in the following four years. Under the first FYP, as much as nine per cent of the total capital available in the country was due to be invested into the Leningrad oblast's industry, and the gross output produced in this region was supposed to reach 13 per cent of the national gross output,³² the equivalent of 3,792 million rubles.³³ The target set for the Leningrad region was 174 per cent growth as compared with the industrial level of 1927/28. Particular importance was given to the development of heavy industry, and its target was much higher than the target for light industry, a 213 per cent growth compared to a 155 per cent growth.³⁴ In order to ensure the rapid development of industries, much emphasis was given to the development and utilisation of regional resources. Therefore, the mineral mining, fuel and building materials industries were to expand rapidly in order to provide necessary resources for factories, especially those in Leningrad.³⁵

In accordance with the plan, a huge amount of capital was invested into the oblast's industry. In the economic year of 1929/30, a total of 290.4 million rubles was

³⁰ *Partrabotnik*, no. 1, January 1928, p. 41.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³² *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona v gody pervoi piatiletki 1929-1932gg.* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 1967), p. 95.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

invested, and by 1932, the figure had increased to 675.4 million rubles. Altogether 1,736.3 million rubles were invested during the first FYP period, and 48 per cent of them went into the reconstruction and expansion of existing factories. In addition, more than 100 new factories were constructed in the region.³⁶

According to official Soviet figures, most industries in the region succeeded in reaching the targets set out in the FYP.³⁷ More than 20 enterprises in the region had fulfilled the targets within two and half years. As a whole, the oblast's industry had met the plan's targets in three years.³⁸ By the end of 1932, the industry of the region as a whole had exceeded the production targets by 16 per cent.³⁹ As a result, the oblast's total industrial output tripled between 1928 and 1932: whereas industrial production in 1928 was worth 1.5 million rubles, the gross output in 1932 was valued at 4.7 million rubles.⁴⁰

As the first FYP envisaged a more rapid growth in heavy industry than light industry, a higher growth rate was set for heavy industry. The rapid growth of heavy industry was only possible at the expense of light industry. As it happened, heavy industry in the Leningrad oblast actually exceeded the specified target by 42 per cent, while the oblast's light industry as a whole reached only 83 per cent of the target.⁴¹ As a result, in 1932, gross output of heavy industry was four times what it had been in 1928, and that of light industry was two times.⁴² In particular, the gross output of the metalworking industry increased fourfold. In the electrical engineering industry, it grew by 350 per cent, and in the chemical industry it doubled.⁴³

³⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, pp. 393-394.

³⁷ Official Soviet estimates have tended to exaggerate the results of the plan. Therefore, the figures given above are somewhat overestimated. For a discussion of the problems of the measurement of plan fulfilment, see, for instance, Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the U.S.S.R.* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 192; Naum Jasny, *Soviet Industrialisation 1928-1952* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); G. Warren Nutter, *The Growth of Industrial Production in the Soviet Union* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), chapter 2; Eugene Zaleski, *Planning for Economic Growth in the Soviet Union 1918-1932* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971); and Roger Munting, *The Economic Development of the USSR* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), pp. 91-92.

³⁸ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 13.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

⁴¹ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 170. For instance, the wood industry fulfilled only 77.7 per cent of the specified target, while the food industry exceeded the target by 29.5 per cent.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁴³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 419.

The rapid expansion of the oblast's industry led to an increase in its proportion of the national industrial output. Although the proportion of capital invested into the industry of the oblast decreased from nine per cent of that of the whole country in 1928/29 to six per cent in 1931, the oblast's proportion of the gross national output increased from 13.5 per cent to 14 per cent over the same period.⁴⁴ This increased further to 15 per cent in 1932.⁴⁵ By 1931, the gross output of the metalworking and chemical industries of the oblast increased to 17 per cent and 12 per cent respectively of these sectors' gross national output. The oblast's electrical engineering industry accounted for 43 per cent of this sector's gross national output, somewhat lower than in 1927/28.⁴⁶

2.1.3 Industrial workforce

In 1929, the Leningrad oblast had 1,018,700 industrial and office workers, representing about eight per cent of the Soviet Union's total of 12.4 million.⁴⁷ Between 1929 and 1931 the number of industrial and office workers in the region increased by 59 per cent, and in 1931, the Leningrad oblast had 1,624,500 industrial and office workers, approximately nine per cent of the Soviet Union's total of 18 million.⁴⁸ If we count only industrial workers, the oblast's proportion of workers increased to 13 per cent of the Soviet total of 5.4 million in 1931.⁴⁹

The dependence of the oblast's industries on the city of Leningrad was quite visible in terms of relative size of workforce. In 1930, Leningrad had 80 per cent of the total industrial workforce in the region. Almost all the workers employed in the electrical engineering industry were working in Leningrad. Likewise, 87 per cent of the workforce in the metalworking industry and 86 per cent in the chemical industry were made up of workers from Leningrad. The proportion of Leningrad workers in the total workforce employed in light industry was even higher than that in heavy industry. Some 91 per cent of the workers in the textile industry, 100 per cent in the

⁴⁴ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 17.

⁴⁵ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 170.

⁴⁶ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 17.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

clothing industry, 96 per cent in the food industry, and 94 per cent in the footwear industry were based in the city.⁵⁰

The size of the regional workforce outside Leningrad was rather small, but in certain industrial sectors the proportion of those workers was relatively high. In 1929 they accounted for 97 per cent of the total workforce in the fuel industry and 85 per cent in the mineral mining and processing industry.⁵¹ In 1930, those workers who were working outside Leningrad comprised 81 per cent of the total workforce in the paper industry and 68 per cent in the building-materials industry. By contrast, only 18 per cent of the total workforce in the leather industry were working outside Leningrad. In the textile industry the figure was only nine per cent, and in the metalworking industry it was 13 per cent.⁵²

Table 2-3. Size of workforce in Leningrad oblast excluding Leningrad city by branch of industry, 1929-1932

<i>Branch of industry</i>	<i>1929</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>1932</i> <i>January</i>	<i>1932</i> <i>July</i>
Mineral mining and processing	18,198	20,915	26,614	30,853	34,821
Fuel	1,693	3,380	5,362	11,188	36,371
Metalworking (machine-building)	10,844	12,815	22,310	30,900	30,634
Chemicals	5,575	6,778	7,074	7,737	7,722
Wood	6,863	10,255	12,340	14,225	15,874
Paper	6,810	7,612	9,159	9,460	8,943
Textiles	5,168	5,000	5,783	5,458	6,057
Food	948	1,286	1,874	3,803	5,789
Total	58,328	71,301	95,393	120,982	153,784

Source: XV let diktatury proletariata: Ekonomiko-statisticheskii sbornik po gorodu Leningradu i Leningradskoi oblasti (Leningrad: Izdanie oblispolkoma i Lensoveta, 1932), tables, pp. 74-75.

Table 2-3 shows the number of industrial workers in the oblast excluding workers in the city of Leningrad. In 1929 a total of 58,328 were working outside Leningrad. Of these, some 31 per cent was engaged in the mineral mining and processing industry, 19 per cent in the metalworking industry, 12 per cent in the wood industry, 12 per cent in the paper industry, and three per cent in the fuel industry. During the first FYP the workforce outside the city expanded rapidly: by July 1932,

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁵¹ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 251.

⁵² *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 70.

the workforce had increased to 153,784, with a growth rate of 263 per cent within three and half years. The workforce in the fuel industry showed the most remarkable growth: 2050 per cent. The workforce in the food industry also increased sixfold, in the metalworking industry it increased threefold, and in the wood industry by 130 per cent. In textiles, the workforce remained relatively stable, showing only a 17 per cent increase. Due to the differential increase in the workforce employed in each industrial sector, the composition of the workforce in relation to industrial sector had changed considerably. By July 1932, the workforce in the fuel industry accounted for as much as 24 per cent of the total workforce. The proportion of workers employed in the mineral-mining and processing industry slightly declined to 23 per cent, while that of metalworkers in the total workforce rose to 20 per cent. In the wood industry the figure fell to ten per cent, in the paper industry it fell to six per cent, and in textiles four per cent.

2.2 Leningrad city

As the administrative centre of the region, Leningrad housed the central offices of the oblast, and exercised control over the surrounding area. The city and oblast governments were closely integrated, and the oblast government was dependent on the city in every respect. However, Leningrad was more than just a regional centre. It was the capital of the old Russian Empire and also the city of the 1917 revolution. Since the foundation of the city by Peter I, St Petersburg, as the capital, had been the political and cultural centre of Russia up to the 1917 Revolutions.⁵³ Administrative and educational institutions had been clustered in the city. It was this city that witnessed historical events such as the revolutions of 1917. Leningrad lost its status as the capital of the Soviet Union in March 1918 when Lenin reinstated Moscow as the capital of the country.⁵⁴ However, the city still remained one of the most important cities in the country.

⁵³ Leningrad was originally called as St Petersburg at the time of its foundation. The city was renamed Petrograd during World War I to eliminate the supposedly German connotation of the original name. Once again it was renamed after Lenin at the time of his death in 1924, when it became Leningrad.

⁵⁴ Lenin moved the capital back to Moscow, fearing that the position of the capital was too exposed to German forces.

Indeed, Leningrad was second only to Moscow in importance. The prestige and authority of Leningrad, as the cradle of the Revolution and the city of the proletariat, had not yet been completely eroded in the 1920s, since Leningrad was still, at a time when other large industrial centres had not yet been developed, the focal point of heavy industry and of the industrial proletariat.⁵⁵ It had never quite lost its status acquired under the Tsars as the original seat of Russian industry and especially of heavy industry. Unlike the Moscow region, where many of the largest factories were situated in the countryside, Leningrad had its major factories within the boundary of the city. It was uniquely accessible to the west and still the centre of industry and world trade. The poverty of the soil, in fact, made it easier here than in Moscow to recruit an industrial proletariat divorced from the land. Leningrad was the stronghold of the class-conscious, organised proletariat: mainly the workers in heavy industry who had provided from the earliest days the hard proletarian core of Bolshevism.⁵⁶ All these factors accounted for Leningrad still being important in this period of the industrialisation drive.

2.2.1 Geographic characteristics

In 1928 Leningrad covered an area of approximately 266 square kilometres,⁵⁷ and was subdivided into six administrative units (*raiony*): Vasileostrovskii, Volodarskii, Vyborgskii, Moskovsko-narvskii, Petrogradskii, and Tsentral'no-gorodskoi. In 1930 some administrative changes took place: the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion was renamed Oktiabr'skii raion; the Smol'ninskii raion was re-established; and the Moskovsko-narvskii raion was divided into two separate raions; Moskovskii and Narvskii.⁵⁸

The Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion, bordered by the Neva River and the Fontanka River, was the central part of the city. It had been the most important part of old St Petersburg, containing the administrative centre of Imperial Russia. Therefore, it was here that many important events in the country's history took place, especially during the last 50 years of Imperial Russia. Under the Soviet regime, the administrative and

⁵⁵ E. H. Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1925-1926* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), vol. 2, p. 67.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁵⁷ *Malaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 4, p. 574.

⁵⁸ *Sankt-Peterburg, Petrograd, Leningrad*, pp. 536-538.

political importance of this raion had been reduced somewhat, since the city was no longer the capital of the country and, furthermore, the centre of political gravity had been transferred to the periphery of the city, the residential areas of workers.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, this district remained the busiest part of the city in the 1920s and 1930s. The administrative institutions of the Northwest region, the governments, the State Trusts, and banks were located here.⁶⁰ The area around Nevskii Prospekt, Leningrad's main thoroughfare, was the main commercial and financial centre of the city, being home to the majority of the city's commercial and financial establishments. Apart from the historical buildings from Imperial Russia such as palaces, churches, and cathedrals, it also had, being a cultural centre, numerous museums and theatres.

The Vasileostrovskii raion, consisting of the two islands of Vasil'evskii and Decembrists, formed the northwestern part of central Leningrad. Vasil'evskii Island, which was one of the first areas of St Petersburg to be built up, had been the cultural centre of the city. On this island, especially in the area around the southeastern end, were situated institutions of higher education such as the Leningrad State University and the Academy of Sciences, and many other institutions, colleges and museums. It was therefore an attractive residential area for academics, scientists, teachers, and students.

However, this raion was not an exclusively white collar area. To the west, not far from the student district, lay numerous industrial enterprises, factories and the workers' housing estate.⁶¹ The Baltic shipbuilding works, which was one of the oldest and largest shipbuilding works in the country, stood on this southwestern part of the island. A string of leather-working factories were located between the Baltic shipyard and the Sevkabel' cable works (formerly the Kabel'nyi factory). Other industrial enterprises on the island included the Elektroapparat (formerly the Siemens & Schukert works), the Krasnyi gvozdil'shchik, and the Uritskii tobacco factory (formerly the Laferme tobacco factory). The Kazitskii radiotelegraph works (formerly

⁵⁹ A. Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1928), p. 206.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁶¹ The proximity of the workers' housing estate and the student district made it easier for workers and students to take the common action in the revolutionary movement. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

the Siemens & Hal'ske works) and the Trubochnyi factory were some of the factories located in the north of the island.⁶²

The Petrogradskii raion, north of the Neva, consisted of seven islands and the northwestern part of the mainland. The Petrograd side of this raion, including the main Petrogradskii Island and three other small islands around it, was the most ancient part of the city. The surroundings of the Peter-Paul fortress were the first residential places of craftsmen, tradesmen and the nobles. Three other islands between the Bol'shaia Nevka River and the Malaia Nevka River were developed mainly as holiday resorts. The mainland area on the northern bank of the Bol'shaia Nevka, known as the Staraia Derevnia and the Novaia Derevnia, was also an area containing country houses.⁶³

Even though the Petrogradskii raion, with its former bourgeois apartments, parks, and gardens, was not the main industrial area of the city, it also had sizeable factories. Not far from the Peter-Paul fortress stood the Znamia truda (formerly Langenzippen engineering works) and the Ravenstvo cotton mill. To the northwest lay the Krasnoe znamia (formerly Kersten knitwear factory) and the Vulkan copper founding and boiler factory, and to the northeast the Krasnogvardeets (formerly Voenno-vrachebnykh zagotovlenii factory).

The Vyborgskii raion, covering the area north of the Neva and east of the Bol'shaia Nevka, was the main industrial district of the city. This raion had been famous for its numerous factories and the density of its working class population.⁶⁴ This raion had developed by the latter part of the 19th century into a squalid industrial suburb and a centre of working class militancy.⁶⁵ As the only solid working-class district of the city, this raion was important in the course of the revolutionary movement. The workers in this raion played an important role in the 1905 revolution, erecting barricades during the great strike of July 1914, and they were among the leaders of the mass movement in February 1917. After the overthrow of the Tsar, this

⁶² The workers of these factories were prominent in the revolutions of 1905 and 1917. See P. P. Pirogov, *Vasil'evskii ostrov* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1966).

⁶³ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 283.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁶⁵ Evan and Margaret Mawdsley, *Moscow and Leningrad* (London: Ernest Benn, 1980), p. 322.

raion became one of the Bolsheviks' main strongholds in the city.⁶⁶ In the Soviet era, this raion was well developed and it was one of the fastest growing parts of the city.⁶⁷

The factories in this raion, predominantly metalworking, were adjacent to one another. Lined up along the bank of the Bol'shaia Nevka were red brick factories and refineries, cotton mills, steel factories, paper works, and weaving factories.⁶⁸ One of the important factories in this area was the Russkii dizel' machine-building factory (formerly the Nobel factory) which overlooked the Naberezhnaia Fokina. Along Karl Marx Avenue, which runs parallel to the Bol'shaia Nevka, stood a considerable number of factories: the Oktiabr' factory, the Krasnaia zaria telephone factory (formerly the Erikson factory) and the Karl Marx machine-building factory (formerly part of the Lessner engineering firm) among others.

The Poliustrovo district in the southeastern part of the Vyborskii raion contained a considerable number of industrial enterprises. Along Poliustrovskaiia Naberezhnaia stood a number of factories, including the Sverdlov lathe combine (formerly the Phoenix factory), the Krasnyi vyborzhets copper manufacturing works (formerly the Rozenkrants factory), and the Stalin machine-building factory. The Kulakov telephone and telegraph factory and the Proletarii porcelain factory were also situated in this district. Malaia Okhta, Udel'naia, and Lesnoi were also industrial districts, containing the Vozrozhdenie spinning mill, the Svetlana electric lamp factory (formerly Aivaz works) and the Engels machine-building factory, to name but a few. The Krasnyi Sudostroitel' shipbuilding yard was located in Matrosskaia Sloboda, another district in this raion.⁶⁹

The Volodarskii raion, in the southeast of the city, was another proletarian area. In the pre-revolutionary period, this area was mainly occupied by factory buildings and badly equipped workers' settlements. Workers, living in poor conditions, had played an active role in the revolutionary movement under the Tsar's regime.⁷⁰ For instance, the violent strike by the workers of the Obukhov steel mill in 1901, known

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

⁶⁷ Between December 1926 and January 1931, the population of this raion grew from 157,300 to 230,500, showing the rapidest growth rate (46.5 per cent) among the raions of Leningrad. See *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, p. 394.

⁶⁸ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 293.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 292-294.

⁷⁰ For more information on the revolutionary activities of the workers in this raion, see V. Lunev and V. Shilov, *Nevskii raion* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1966).

as Obukhovskaia Oborona, was one of the first revolutionary activities undertaken by Leningrad's workers. Under the Soviet regime, this raion had not seen much real development until the mid-1930s. Nevertheless, some construction took place in the 1920s: new buildings and works were constructed on the left bank of the Neva.⁷¹

Workers' districts were situated further along the southward curve of the Neva. Prospekt Sela Volodarskogo, which ran along the left bank of the Neva, went through the suburbs of Stekliannoe and Volodarskoe, where the Krasnaia truba pipe works, the Lenin machine-building factory, the Rabochii spinning mill (formerly Maxwell cotton mill) and the Negin factory stood.⁷² At the end of the avenue stood the Lomonosov porcelain works, which was one of the oldest in Europe.⁷³ Alexandrovskoe suburb began where Prospekt Sela Volodarskogo became the Shlissel'burg Shosse. Amongst the great number of factories standing here, the Bol'shevik metallurgical works (formerly Obukhov works) was the most important, being the first steel mill founded in Russia.⁷⁴ The district of the Malaia Okhta, on the right bank of the Neva, was also a workers' settlement. Here, opposite the Bol'shevik factory, stood electric power station no. 5 called Krasnyi oktiabr'. This power station transmitted 60,000 kw to Leningrad in 1928.⁷⁵

The Moskovsko-narvskii raion, situated southwest of the Fontanka, was one of the most important raions during the industrialisation drive in the first FYP period, with its building sites, factories, the quay which occupied its western part, and the train stations which linked Leningrad to the Baltic countries. From the beginning, this raion had been populated principally by workers, to whom the decisive role had often been delegated during the revolutionary movement.⁷⁶ The workers of this raion played a decisive role in 1917 in opposing the army attacks, and in 1919 combating the White led by General Iudenich.⁷⁷ In particular, the Putilov works, being one of the biggest factories in Imperial Russia, was an important centre of the revolutionary labour

⁷¹ *Sankt-Peterburg, Petrograd, Leningrad*, p. 426; Evan and Margaret Mawdsley, *Moscow and Leningrad*, p. 287.

⁷² Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 268.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 268. This factory was established in 1744 in order to supply necessary equipment for the Imperial Palace.

⁷⁴ Lunev and Shilov, *Nevskii raion*, p. 10. The Bol'shevik factory used to produce guns and cannons in Imperial Russia, but it produced motors and tractors in the 1920s.

⁷⁵ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 269.

⁷⁶ It was this raion that Lenin had began his activity as a propagandist around 1890.

⁷⁷ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 270.

movement. The strike and lock-out at this factory in early 1917 contributed greatly to the mass movement which overthrew the Tsar, and the workers of this factory played an active role during the October Revolution.⁷⁸

The Obvodnyi Canal, which ran horizontally across the northern part of this raion, used to mark the southern limit of St Petersburg, and the area south of the canal was mainly an industrial district. From the top of the Narva Triumphal Arch, standing not far from the canal, one could clearly distinguish the demarcation between the rather salubrious residential area with its tall houses stretching to the north and the worker suburbs with their numerous factories stretching to the south.⁷⁹ Along the canal stood a number of factories, including the Vereteno, the oldest cotton mill in the country. The Krasnyi treugol'nik rubber factory, situated not far from the canal, was one of the largest industrial enterprises in the country.

The western part of the raion, known before the revolution as the Narvskaiia Zastava, used to be a region of aristocratic estates and dachas until the middle of the 19th century, but the Russian industrial revolution led to the creation in this area of some of the largest factories in the country.⁸⁰ Prospekt Stachek, stretching immediately to the south of the Narva Arch, formed the main axis of the southwestern part of the raion. During the 1920s this area was redeveloped in an attempt to redress the imbalance between the formerly wealthy central districts and the squalid industrial suburbs.⁸¹ The Krasnyi putilovets metalworking factory, dominating the southwestern area, was of national importance, being one of the largest industrial enterprises in the country.⁸² This factory housed a number of cultural institutions such as clubs, theatres and cinemas, and it organised training schools and polytechnic courses for adults.⁸³ Not far from this factory stood the Severnaia verf' shipbuilding works.

Mezhdunarodnyi Prospekt, which ran through the eastern part of the raion, was one of the major avenues of southern Leningrad, the northern part of which contained

⁷⁸ See M. Mitel'man, B. Glebov, and A. Ul'ianskii, *Istoriia putilovskogo zavoda* (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1939); *Putilovets na putiakh k oktiabriu: Iz istorii 'Krasnogo putilovtza'* (Leningrad: Partiinoe izdatel'stvo, 1933).

⁷⁹ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 272.

⁸⁰ Evan and Margaret Mawdsley, *Moscow and Leningrad*, p. 331.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 332.

⁸² This factory was established as the St Petersburg State Iron Works in 1801, then renamed the Putilov works in 1868. From 1922 the factory had been named the Krasnyi putilovets. This factory specialised in heavy engineering and it produced the first tractor in the Soviet Union in 1924.

⁸³ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, p. 273.

several important institutions of higher education. The southern part of this avenue, beyond the Obvodnyi Canal, was an industrial district even before 1917, but it was further developed in the Soviet period. Some of Leningrad's most important factories were situated along this part of the avenue: the Skorokhod shoe factory, the Elektrosila electrical engineering factory (formerly the Siemens-Schukert works) and the Egorov factory, which produced railway wagons.⁸⁴

2.2.2 Economic characteristics

Leningrad was already a well established industrial city by the beginning of the first FYP. As the industrial centre of Imperial Russia, Leningrad, unlike the rest of the country, had a strong industrial base with numerous factories and many industrial workers. A great number of factories were scattered throughout the city, in particular, in the Moskovsko-narvskii and Vyborgskii raions. At the beginning of 1928, a total of 365 factories were operating in Leningrad. Metalworking and textile industries were the city's traditional industries: there were 86 metalworking factories including five shipbuilding works and 29 machine-building factories, and 26 textile factories. In addition, Leningrad had 18 electrical engineering factories, 28 chemical factories, and 45 footwear and clothing factories.⁸⁵ Many of Leningrad's factories were of national importance and 35 of them were regarded as the most important enterprises in the country in 1932.⁸⁶

Reflecting the long industrial history of the city, many of its factories predated 1917. The Mart' shipbuilding works, the Lomonosov porcelain works and the Academy of Sciences printing works, established in the 18th century, were some of the oldest factories in Leningrad and indeed among the first factories in Russia. Most of the major factories, however, were founded during the 19th century and in the first two decades of the 20th century, when the Russian industrial revolution turned the city into an industrial centre. According to information on 248 industrial enterprises, which were the most important ones in Leningrad in 1932, approximately 70 per cent

⁸⁴ Evan and Margaret Mawdsley, *Moscow and Leningrad*, pp. 329-330.

⁸⁵ The number of factories in the beginning of 1928 is my recalculation based on the information on Leningrad's factories in 1928-29. See *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravocnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 78-81.

⁸⁶ For more information on those factories selected as the most important enterprises in the country in 1932, see table 2-9.

had been established before the Revolution. Out of 248 factories, about 110 factories had been established in the 19th century, 54 factories were built in the city between 1900 and 1917, and some 38 factories had been constructed in the period 1917-1927 under the Soviet regime.⁸⁷

Traditionally, the metalworking and textile industries had been the most important industries in the city, and this was still the case in 1928. As these branches of industry demanded a high degree of labour concentration within a factory, Leningrad had been renowned for its large factories.⁸⁸ In 1928 the Krasnyi treugol'nik rubber factory, the largest one in the country, employed more than 13,000 workers, and the Krasnyi putilovets metalworking factory, which was also one of the largest in the country, employed as many as 12,000 workers.⁸⁹ Other metalworking factories employed fewer workers than the Krasnyi putilovets, however some employed a considerable number. For instance, the Krasnyi vyborzhets copper manufacturing factory employed 3,900 workers in 1928.⁹⁰ The large concentration of workers within the shipbuilding works was also notable: the Severnaia verf' shipbuilding works employed 2,100 workers⁹¹ and the Lenin naval vessel building works employed 1,800 workers.⁹² The machine-building factories in Leningrad were generally large-scale ones, some of them employing more than 1,000 workers. For instance, in 1928 the Stalin factory employed 3,200 workers, the Karl Marx factory 1,800, the Russkii dizel' 1,500 and the Engels works 800.⁹³ The following electrical engineering factories employed more than 500 workers in 1928: the Svetlana electric lamp factory with a workforce of 1,300 workers; the Krasnaia zaria telephone factory with 900 workers; and the Proletarii porcelain works with 500 workers.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravocchnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 88-105.

⁸⁸ The concentration of the workforce in large scale enterprises was legendary in Imperial Russia. It is said that 77 per cent of the city's 1914 labour force were employed in factories employing over 500 workers, and that nearly half the Petrograd labour force worked in enterprises employing over 1,000 workers. See S. A. Smith, *Red Petrograd: Revolution in the Factories 1917-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 12.

⁸⁹ Radó, *Guide à travers l'Union Soviétique*, pp. 272-273.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 294.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 293-294.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 293-294.

No data have been found on the number of workers employed within each textile factory in 1928. However, taking into consideration the fact that the number of workers employed in the textile industry as a whole showed only a marginal increase during the first FYP period (see table 2-14), one can assume that in 1928 Leningrad's textile factories employed almost as many workers as they did in 1930. Based on this assumption, one can guess that in 1928 the Khalturin spinning mill probably employed about 6,000 workers, and the Krasnaia nit' and Rabochii spinning mill employed over 3,000 workers each (see table 2-9).

The city was the most important industrial centre in late Imperial Russia, and its enterprises accounted for 26 per cent of Russia's total industrial production in 1916.⁹⁵ However, the outbreak of the Civil War and its associated industrial and social dislocation had devastating effects on the city's industry. In the early 1920s, industrial production in Leningrad had fallen significantly due to the collapse of industry. By early 1921 industrial production had fallen to one eighth of the level it had been in 1913.⁹⁶ If we consider the fact that the level of industrial production in 1917 exceeded that of 1913, then the rate of collapse might have been even greater. At the end of January 1921, 186 of the 410 enterprises under the command of the Petrograd Sovnarkhoz were not operating at all.⁹⁷ In 1920 and 1921 the Putilov works (later called Krasnyi putilovets) was operating at only three per cent of its full capacity. In 1921 metalworking and machine-building production stood at seven per cent of the 1913 figure, and the production of the textile industry stood at three per cent.⁹⁸ However, the industrial output of the city grew steadily from 1922. Whereas gross output in 1921 stood at 13 per cent of the 1913 level, the figure reached 18 per cent in 1922, and 25 per cent by 1923.⁹⁹ The gradual recovery continued in the mid-1920s, and by 1928, Leningrad's industrial output recovered to its prewar industrial level.

In 1928, the gross industrial output of Leningrad was 1.4 times what it had been in 1913. The metalworking and machine-building industries managed to reach the

⁹⁵ O. I. Shkaratan, 'Izmeneniia v sotsial'nom sostave fabrichnozavodskikh rabochikh Leningrada 1917-1928,' *Voprosy istorii SSSR*, no. 5, 1959, p. 23.

⁹⁶ N. Mironov and Z. V. Stepanov, 'Stroiteli sotsializma' in *Rabochie Leningrada, 1703-1975: Kratkii istoricheskii ocherk* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1975), p. 184.

⁹⁷ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 147.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁹⁹ Mironov and Stepanov, 'Stroiteli sotsializma', p. 187.

level of output they had attained in 1913, even though the gross output of the metal-cutting lathe industry reached only 71 per cent.¹⁰⁰ The industrial output of building material industry was 1.6 times what it had been in 1913, whereas the output from the wood, paper and woodworking industry had not yet reached its 1913 level. Light industry recovered its prewar level of industrial output more easily than heavy industry. The clothing industry showed the highest rate of growth and its output was eight times what it had been in 1913. The industrial output of the textile industry increased 1.6 times. For instance, 72 million linear metres of cotton fabrics was produced in 1928 whereas 45.1 million linear metres was produced in 1913. However, the production of woollen fabrics did not reach its prewar level: in 1928, only 2.1 million linear metres of woollen fabrics was produced, whereas 2.4 million linear metres was produced in 1913.¹⁰¹ The leather and footwear industry grew rapidly in the mid 1920s and by 1928, its production output was 3.7 times as large as the 1913 level. For instance, 10.2 million pairs of leather shoes were produced in 1928, whereas only 3.8 million pairs had been produced in 1913.¹⁰²

Table 2-4. Gross industrial production and labour productivity in Leningrad, 1928 (as compared with 1913)

<i>Branch of industry</i>	<i>Gross output</i>	<i>Labour productivity</i>
Heavy industry:	n. d.	n. d.
Metalworking and machine-building	1.1	1.2
Wood, paper, and woodworking	1.0	1.2
Construction materials	1.6	2.6
Light industry:	2.1	1.3
Textiles	1.6	1.2
Clothing	8.0	1.5
Leather, footwear, and fur	3.7	1.6
Food	1.2	1.2
Entire industry	1.4	1.2

Source: Leningrad za 50 let: Statisticheskii sbornik (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1967), pp. 24, 35-37.

¹⁰⁰ *Leningrad za 50 let: Statisticheskii sbornik* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1967), p. 39.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

In the first FYP period, not only did the great new industrial centres in the Urals, Kuzbass, and the Volga take shape, but also the traditional areas such as Leningrad, Moscow and the Donbass expanded. The impact of the industrialisation drive on the industry of the city was just as great as in other regions. Leningrad's industrial base expanded considerably as a result of the construction of new factories and the technical reconstruction of industry, which was made possible by a massive capital investment. The total capital invested into Leningrad's industry from October 1928 to December 1932 was valued at 348 million rubles, out of which 294 million rubles were invested for the construction-assembly work.¹⁰³ In this period, more than 140 factories were constructed within the city.¹⁰⁴ In addition, a large amount of capital was invested into existing factories and as a result, a number of new workshops, equipped with modern machinery, were constructed within them.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, due to the technical reconstruction of industry, the equipment within Leningrad's factories was replaced by technologically more advanced machinery. As a result, by 1932, the equipment which had been either established or upgraded during the first FYP period comprised about 40 per cent of the total equipment within Leningrad's factories.¹⁰⁶

Table 2-5. Structure of capital investment into Leningrad's industry in the First FYP (percentages)

<i>Total capital investment</i>	<i>Construction-assembly works</i>	<i>Equipment, instrument, stock</i>	<i>Simple capital works and expenditure</i>
100	84.5	13.0	2.5

Source: Leningrad za 50 let, p. 66.

As the first FYP envisaged more rapid growth in the heavy industrial sector than in the light industrial sector, Leningrad's already well-established heavy industry was to develop further. Moreover, as the industrial centre of the country, Leningrad was to produce the means of production not only for its own industry but also for industries

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁴ Some 14 factories were built in 1928-29 and another 107 factories were built in 1930. In 1931 at least 23 factories were constructed within the city. However, the exact number of new factories built in 1931 and 1932 has not been found. See *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, p. 78.

¹⁰⁵ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 394.

¹⁰⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningrada* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1964), vol. 4, p. 338.

of other regions in the country, which were being developed as new industrial areas.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, the importance of the rapid growth of Leningrad's heavy industry, especially the metalworking (including machine-building) and electrical engineering industries, was ever more emphasised.

The great importance attached to the development of Leningrad's heavy industry was reflected in the fact that a great proportion of available funds was invested into the heavy industry throughout the FYP period. Although data given in the table 2-6 do not cover the entire industrial sector, it clearly shows that priority was given to heavy industry, in particular, the metalworking, electrical engineering, and chemical industries. For instance, in 1928-29 about 76 per cent of total investment funds went into the heavy industrial sector. Moreover, the share of heavy industry in total investment increased further to 86 per cent in 1930 and to 90 per cent in 1931. The metalworking industry, which was planned to show the greatest growth, received more than one third of total investment funds each year. In particular, the machine-building industry received 21 per cent of total investment funds in 1928-29, 17 per cent in 1930 and 33 per cent in 1931. This reveals that great priority was given to the development of the machine-building industry. At the same time, the electrical engineering and chemical industries received increasing amounts of investment funds each year (see table 2-6).

By contrast, the light industrial sector received a far smaller proportion of total investment funds. In 1928-29, only about a quarter of the total investment funds was allocated to the light industrial sector. Since the total volume of investment funds which went into light industry increased only marginally in the following years, the share of light industry in total investment had decreased considerably by 1931, accounting for only ten per cent of total investment. Furthermore, in some branches of light industry, investment decreased not only in its proportion in total investment but also in volume. For instance, the textile industry received 8.8 million rubles in 1928-

¹⁰⁷ Indeed, during the first FYP Leningrad's heavy industrial factories produced a range of equipment for the great new industrial centres within the country, i.e. they produced tractors, other agricultural machinery, blooming mills, turbines, tube generators and many other modern machines. About 69 per cent of the machinery produced in the city was sent to other regions. In particular, 73 per cent of the machinery manufactured at the Krasnyi putilovets, the Lenin factory, the Ekonomaizer and the Metal factory was transferred to regions outwith the Leningrad oblast. See *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 393.

29, but two years later, it received only 5.5 million rubles. Likewise, the volume of investment funds which went into the footwear and clothing industry decreased from 5.9 million rubles in 1928-29 to 3.2 million rubles in 1931 (see table 2-6).

Table 2-6. Capital investment into Leningrad's industry administrated by VSNKh and Narkomsnab, 1928-29, 1930 and 1931 (million rubles)

	1928-29	1930	1931
Entire industry	72.3	164.9	192.2
Group A:	54.6	141.2	172.4
Metalworking	27.2	58.8	96.0
Of which shipbuilding	6.2	11.0	12.1
Of which machine-building	15.1	28.7	62.9
Electrical engineering	5.8	19.0	25.0
Chemicals	9.0	14.1	23.1
Construction materials	2.2	3.1	5.5
Group B:	17.7	23.7	19.8
Textiles	8.8	10.9	5.5
Footwear and clothing	5.9	5.9	3.2

Note: The figures above cover only the industry administrated by VSNKh and Narkomsnab. Therefore, the figures for the entire industry in Leningrad are bigger than the figures above. For instance, the Leningrad industry as a whole received a total of 80.2 million rubles in 1928-29 and a total of 178 million rubles in 1930. For more information on the entire Leningrad's industry, see *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 78-81.

Source: Adapted from *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 38-45.

Consequently, the heavy industry of Leningrad, in particular the metalworking, electrical engineering, and chemical industries, expanded rapidly during the first FYP period. The metalworking industry, which included the shipbuilding and machine-building industries, saw the most rapid expansion. In 1930, a total of 22 metalworking factories, including one new shipbuilding works and three new machine-building factories, were built in the city.¹⁰⁸ In 1931, another seven factories were constructed.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, a large amount of capital was invested into the existing factories to enable their reconstruction. For instance, the Krasnyi putilovets, the largest and most famous metalworking factory in Leningrad, received 10.7 million

¹⁰⁸ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, p. 78.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, tables, p. 39. As this figure covers only the factories controlled by the VSNKh, there might have been a larger number of new factories built in 1931.

rubles, which resulted in doubling the value of its assets over this period.¹¹⁰ Other metalworking factories such as the Krasnyi gvozdil'shchik also received huge investment funds.¹¹¹ In addition, the value of the assets of the Mart' shipbuilding works and the Severnaia verf' shipbuilding works increased significantly due to massive capital investment. For instance, in 1931 the additional capital and other resources allocated to these two factories was the equivalent of 3.6 million rubles and 3.4 million rubles respectively.¹¹²

The electrical engineering industry also saw a great expansion. Instead of constructing new factories, existing factories were expanded and modernised. A huge amount of available funds went into existing factories, and new workshops equipped with modern machinery were built within factories such as the Elektrosila, the Elektroapparat, the Sevkabel', and the Kazitskii factory.¹¹³ This, in turn, resulted in an increase in the value of the assets of each factory. For instance, in 1931 the value of the assets of the Elektrosila and the Elektroapparat increased by seven million rubles and by two million rubles respectively.¹¹⁴

The chemical industry also expanded. Two new chemical factories were built in 1928-29 and another five were constructed in 1930.¹¹⁵ The construction of new chemical complexes such as the Nevkhimkombinat and the Apatitovyi complex considerably expanded the base of the chemical industry not only within the city of Leningrad but also within the Leningrad oblast.¹¹⁶ In addition, the existing chemical factories expanded considerably due to the massive investment. Almost all major chemical factories in Leningrad saw a significant increase in the value of their assets. For instance, in 1931 the total value of the assets of the Krasnyi treugol'nik and the Krasnyi khimik increased by ten million rubles and by 3.4 million rubles respectively.¹¹⁷

At the same time, the labour workforce in Leningrad expanded rapidly during the first FYP period. Between 1929 and July 1932, the number of Leningrad's

¹¹⁰ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 394.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 394.

¹¹² *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 90-91.

¹¹³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 394.

¹¹⁴ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 92-93.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, tables, p. 79.

¹¹⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 394.

¹¹⁷ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 94-95.

industrial workers almost doubled.¹¹⁸ As the table 2-7 shows, the most rapid expansion took place within the heavy industrial sector, in particular within the metalworking, electrical engineering, and chemical industries. Between 1928 and 1931 the number of workers employed in this sector increased from 113,600 to 203,900, whereas the number of workers employed in the light industrial sector grew only marginally, from 98,900 to 120,900 in the same period. The metalworking industry, especially the machine-building industry, saw the greatest increase in their workforce. The number of workers employed in the electrical engineering industry also increased rapidly, doubling between 1928 and 1931. By contrast, the textile industry, which employed as many workers as the metalworking industry in 1928, employed even fewer workers in 1931 than in 1928 (see table 2-7).

Table 2-7. Increase of workforce by branch of industry in Leningrad, 1928-29, 1930 and 1931 (thousands)

	<i>1928-29</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>1931</i>
Entire industry	212.5	285.8	324.8
Group A	113.6	172.5	203.9
Metalworking	58.0	94.9	117.0
<i>Of which</i> shipbuilding	12.1	15.8	22.1
<i>Of which</i> machine-building	31.1	53.1	64.2
Electrical engineering	17.1	29.7	35.9
Chemicals	22.1	27.6	31.5
Group B	98.9	113.3	120.9
Textiles	50.1	48.9	47.1
Footwear and clothing	37.9	51.0	54.2

Note: The figures above cover only the industry administrated by VSNKh and Narkomsnab.
Source: As for table 2-6.

As most of the expanding workforce went into existing factories, the size of the workforce employed in each factory considerably increased. In particular, the labour workforce became highly concentrated within large-scale factories, mostly shipbuilding, machine-building, and electrical engineering factories. As a result, the scale of labour concentration within Leningrad's large enterprises became even

¹¹⁸ *XV let diktatury proletariata: Ekonomiko-statisticheskii sbornik po gorodu Leningradu i Leningradskoi oblasti* (Leningrad: Izdanie oblispolkoma i Lensoveta, 1932), tables, pp. 74-75.

greater. As table 2-8 shows, in 1930 a total of 77 factories employed over a thousand workers and in 1931 the number of factories employing over a thousand increased to 88. In 1930, out of 77 factories, one factory employed over 20,000 workers, one employed between 15,000 and 20,000 workers, one employed between 10,000 and 15,000 workers, and five employed between 5,000 and 10,000 workers.¹¹⁹ A year later, the number of factories with the workforce of more than 20,000 increased to two, the number of factories of 5,000 to 10,000 workers increased to eight, and the number of factories of 1,000 to 5,000 workers increased to 77.

Table 2-8. Number of factories by size of workforce in Leningrad, 1930 and 1931

Year	Total	Number of workers						
		Under 500	500- 1000	1000- 5000	5000- 10,000	10,000- 15,000	15,000- 20,000	Over 20,000
1930	240	121	42	69	5	1	1	1
1931	242	114	40	77	8	1	0	2

Note: The figures above do not cover all the factories in the city, but all the biggest factories are included.

Source: This is my recalculation based on the information given in *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 88-105.

It was the large scale factories within heavy industry that saw the most rapid increase in their workforce (see table 2-9). For instance, the Krasnyi treugol'nik, the largest factory in Leningrad, already employed as many as 20,000 workers in 1930 and a year later the number of its workers had increased to 25,000. The Krasnyi putilovets, another gigantic factory in Leningrad, employed approximately 17,000 workers in 1930 and its workforce increased further to 21,000 by 1931. In addition, all three shipbuilding works experienced a considerable increase in their workforce. For instance, the Baltic shipbuilding works, the city's largest shipbuilding works, employed as many as 6,900 workers in 1930, and its workforce increased to 8,700 workers in 1931. Likewise, the size of the workforce employed in the Mart' and Severnaia verf' shipbuilding works increased significantly: the workforce within the former increased from 4,461 to 5,950 between 1930 and 1931, and within the latter it increased from 3,957 to 7,460 in the same period. At the same time, the workforce

¹¹⁹ For more details, see table 2-9.

within the major machine-building and electrical engineering factories expanded considerably. For instance, the workforce within the Stalin machine-building factory increased by 1,600 workers between 1930 and 1931, resulting in an increase of its total workforce to 5,564 workers in 1931. The Elektrosila electrical engineering factory and the Kazitskii radio factory also experienced a considerable increase in their workforce: between 1930 and 1931 the workforce within the former increased by 1,600 workers and within the latter it increased by 1,400 workers. The workforce within the Krasnaia zaria and Elektropribor telephone factories also increased by 950 and 766 workers respectively in the same period.

On the other hand, factories within light industry did not experience a rapid increase in their workforce due to the fact that light industry was not given a high priority in development. For instance, the Skorokhod shoe factory, which was one of the largest factories in Leningrad, employed approximately 12,000 workers in 1930, however, its workforce remained relatively stable in 1931. This was a big contrast to the rapid increase in the workforce within factories such as the Krasnyi treugol'nik and the Krasnyi putilovets. Likewise, the Khalturin and Krasnoe znamia factories, the largest textile factories employing over 5,000 workers in 1930 did not experience a rapid increase in their workforce: in 1931 the former did not show any increase in its workforce, and the latter showed a marginal increase (see table 2-9).

Taking into the consideration the massive investment and the rapid increase in the workforce which took place within heavy industry, it is no wonder that some factories in Leningrad were very successful in fulfilling their targets for industrial output set out by the first FYP. The specific targets for industrial output which had to be met by each factory were often very ambitious¹²⁰ and it was not always easy to meet them.¹²¹ However, due to the massive capital investment that had been made in

¹²⁰ For instance, the target set for the Krasnyi putilovets was the industrial output equivalent of 102 million rubles, and that for the Stalin factory was the industrial output equivalent of 50 million rubles. See table 2-10.

¹²¹ For instance, at the beginning of 1931, a number of factories including the Elektrosila and Nogina factory failed to meet the specified targets set out for the first quarter of the third economic year of the FYP. As a whole the Leningrad industry was unable to fulfil the requirements of the plan in the first quarter of the third year. See *Partrabotnik*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 1.

Table 2-9. List of the most important enterprises in the Leningrad region, 1932

<i>Names of factories</i>	<i>Branch of industry</i>	<i>Year of establish-ment</i>	<i>Location *</i>	<i>Numbers of workers 1930 and 1931</i>	
Krasnyi putilovets	machine building, metallurgical works	1801	MN	17184	21200
Zavod imeni Stalina	large scale machine building	1857	VYB	3946	5564
Zavod imeni Lenina	machine building	1861	VOL	3595	4700
Elektrosila	electro-machine building	1912	MN	5106	6752
Krasnaia zaria	telephone	1897	VYB	4750	5700
Zavod imeni Kazitskogo	radio set	1867	VAS	2041	3467
Sevkabel'	cable works	1878	VAS	1870	2377
Baltiiskii zavod	shipbuilding works	1856	VAS	6931	8720
Zavod imeni Marti	shipbuilding works	1792	LEN	4461	5950
Severnaia verf'	shipbuilding works	1913	MN	3957	7460
Krasnyi vyborzhets	copper manufacturing works	1866	VYB	3215	3551
Lenenergo	thermal-electric station		LEN	n. d.	n. d.
Krasnyi treugol'nik	rubber works	1860	MN	20807	25194
Bol'shevik	steel mill	1863	VOL	n. d.	n. d.
Izhorskii zavod	metal working	1703	Kolpino	7644	8608
Volkhovskaia stantsiia	hydroelectric power station	1927	LEN	95	93
Rabochii	spinning and weaving mill	1839	VOL	3643	4194
Fabrika imeni Khalturina	spinning mill	1833	TG	6999	6991
Krasnaia nit'	spinning mill	1891	VYB	3473	3766
Krasnyi tkach	wollen cloth	1841	LEN	1957	2529
Krasnoe znamia	hosiery, jersey	1855	PET	5715	6476
Vereteno	textiles, cotton mill	1835	MN	2114	2104
Skorokhod	shoe factory	1882	MN	12030	12337
Proletarskaia pobeda no.1	shoe factory	1910	MN	5249	2338
Proletarskaia pobeda no.2	shoe factory	1929	MN	2721	2960
Zavod imeni Voroshilova	copper manufacturing works	1924	VOL	708	1093
Svetlana	electric lamps	1914	VYB	2950	3050
Elektropribor	telegraph, telephone, radio	1927	LEN	1862	2628
Elektroapparat	electro-machine building	1910	VAS	2708	3350
Russkii dizel'	machine (disel) building	1862	VYB	1743	2250
Zavod imeni Karla Marksa	industrial machine building	1909	VYB	4215	5197

Notes: Enterprises are selected based on the 'list of the first groups of enterprises' published in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 22, November 1932, p. 78. The list contained 262 enterprises in USSR. Some 36 of these were located in Leningrad oblast, thus putting the oblast only second to Moscow oblast, which accounted for 83 of these enterprises. Out of the 36 enterprises, Lenenergo, Zavod no. 7, Khibinskie apatity, Zavod no. 6, Zavod no. 52, Kulotinskaia factory and Il'ichevka factory are omitted in this table, due to lack of data. However, the Karl Marx factory has been added to this table, because frequent references to this particular factory are made in later chapters.

* TG stands for Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion in Leningrad, VAS for Vasileostrovskii, VYB for Vyborgskii, MN for Moskovsko-narvskii, VOL for Volodarskii, PET for Petrogradskii raion. Enterprises whose locations cannot be confirmed are simply given as LEN (Leningrad). Of the enterprises listed above, only the Izhorskii factory was located outside Leningrad city.

Source: Adapted from *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 88-107.

order to allow for technical reconstruction, some metalworking (including shipbuilding and machine-building) and electrical engineering factories even managed to meet their production target earlier than scheduled.¹²² As table 2-10 shows, seven factories in Leningrad had, by 1930, already met the level of industrial output specified in the FYP. In 1931, another ten factories met the targets set by the FYP.¹²³ Subsequently, those factories which fulfilled the plan within two and half years, such as the Krasnaia zaria, the Karl Marx factory, the Russkii dizel', the Svetlana, the Volodarskii factory, were rewarded with the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Banner.¹²⁴

Table 2-10. Industrial enterprises, which had met their target for gross output planned by the first FYP in 1930 and 1931 (thousand rubles at 1926-27 prices)

	Plan		Achieved in 1930		Achieved in 1931	
	N		N	%	N	%
Krasnyi putilovets	101,750		110,448	108.5	161,015	158.2
Russkii dizel'	11,073		9,623	86.9	15,138	136.7
Zavod imeni Egorova	13,524		11,305	83.6	22,731	168.1
Pnevmatika	5,886		6,670	113.3	9,771	166.0
Zavod imeni Voskova	20,000		18,154	90.8	30,399	152.0
Krasnyi oktiabr'	11,000		8,449	66.0	18,611	169.2
Il'ich	14,422		14,592	101.2	17,914	124.2
Elektrosila	46,815		48,697	104.2	66,113	141.2
Elektroapparat	38,291		33,051	76.5	51,545	134.6
Krasnaia zaria	17,800		32,533	182.8	46,434	260.9
Zavod imeni Kazitskogo	19,200		18,725	97.5	23,938	124.7
Svetlana	19,500		39,922	205.1	54,790	281.0
Zavod imeni Stalina	50,177		37,578	74.9	50,672	101.0
Zavod imeni Lenina	24,806		22,008	88.7	29,913	120.6
Baltiiskii zavod	41,200		51,801	125.7	54,464	132.2
Zavod imeni Marti	18,800		17,546	93.3	37,280	198.8
Izhorskii zavod	55,115		51,635	93.7	62,836	114.0
Zavod imeni Karla Marksa	26,086		23,196	88.9	27,963	107.2

Source: Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravocnik Leningradskoi oblasti, p. 71.

As a consequence of the massive investment and the rapid increase of the workforce, the gross output of Leningrad's industry increased rapidly during the first FYP period. Even though table 2-11 does not cover 1932, the final year of the first

¹²² See table 2-10. Out of the 18 factories listed in table 2-10, 12 were metalworking factories and five were electrical engineering factories. The Voskov sawmill was the only exception in this aspect.

¹²³ This does not include the Izhorskii factory, which was located outside Leningrad.

¹²⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 420.

FYP, it clearly shows that more rapid growth in gross output took place in the heavy industrial than in the light industrial sector. Between 1928 and 1931 the gross output of Leningrad's heavy industry showed a 229 per cent growth, whereas that of light industry showed a 153 per cent growth. Within the heavy industrial sector, the greatest growth took place within the metalworking and electrical engineering industries. Gross output within the metalworking industry increased from 403 million rubles to 1,040 million rubles between 1928 and 1931, resulting in a 258 per cent growth within three years. In particular, growth rates within the shipbuilding and machine-building industries were exceptional high, 290 per cent and 270 per cent respectively. The electrical engineering industry also showed a drastic increase in its gross output: the value of the output of the electrical engineering industry rose from 168 million rubles in 1928-29 to 440 million rubles in 1932. On the other hand, the gross output of light industry increased much slowly. For instance, the gross output of the textile industry remained at the same level, and that of the footwear and clothing industry increased only by 68 per cent (see table 2-11).

Table 2-11. Gross industrial production in Leningrad, 1928-29, 1930 and 1931 (million rubles at 1926-27 prices)

	1928-29	1930	1931	Growth rate between 1928 and 1931 (percentages)
Entire industry	1,794	2,522	3,469	193.4
Group A	961	1,485	2,198	228.7
Metalworking	403	633	1,040	258.1
Of which shipbuilding	70	92	203	290.0
Of which machine- building	200	334	539	269.5
Electrical engineering	168	294	440	261.9
Chemicals	227	361	524	230.8
Construction materials	38	48	57	150.0
Group B	832	1,037	1,270	152.6
Textiles	305	317	305	100.0
Footwear and clothing	356	487	600	168.5

Notes: The figures given in this table cover only the industry administrated by VSNKh and Narkomsnab. The figures for the growth rate between 1928 and 1931 are my own recalculation.

Source: As for table 2-6.

By the end of 1932, Leningrad industry as a whole had exceeded the production target set by the FYP by 18 per cent. In particular, the metalworking industry overfulfilled the plan by 55 per cent and the electrical engineering industry by 66 per cent.¹²⁵ As a consequence, total industrial output was three times as large as it had been in 1928. The heavy industrial sector showed a greater increase, that is 440 per cent.¹²⁶ In particular, the gross output of the metalworking and the electrical engineering industries increased five and 23 times respectively when compared to the 1913 industrial level.¹²⁷ The industrial output of each factory grew remarkably: the gross output of the Svetlana factory increased 15.5 times; at Elektrosila it increased four times, and at Krasnyi putilovets it increased 3.5 times.¹²⁸ The labour productivity of Leningrad's industry increased by 58 per cent and prime production costs fell by 17 per cent.¹²⁹ For instance, labour productivity in the Krasnyi putilovets, the Sverdlov factory, and the Baltic shipbuilding works doubled on average.¹³⁰ In particular, due to improvements in labour productivity, the growth rate of gross output in the electrical engineering industry exceeded that of the capital investment put into it. For instance, the gross output from the Elektrosila increased more than three times, while the value of its basic funds only doubled in this period. Likewise, with a 1.5 times increase in the value of its basic funds, the gross output from the Elektropribor increased approximately 35 times, and from the Svetlana factory it increased 20 times.¹³¹

By contrast, light industry did not experience a rapid growth. As a consequence, the importance of the light industry in Leningrad sharply declined. For instance, the textile industry, which was as important as the metalworking industry at the start of the first FYP, did not grow at all in the period of 1928 and 1932 due to the fact that the textile industry was not given a high priority in terms of capital investment. Consequently its importance in Leningrad declined steeply after 1929 relative to the

¹²⁵ *Ocherki istorii Leningrada*, vol. 4, p. 337.

¹²⁶ *Mezhdru dvumia s'ezdami: Leningradskaia partiinaia organizatsiia v resheniiakh konferentsii i plenimov oblastkoma i LK VKP(b) mezhdru XVI i XVII s'ezdami* (Leningrad: Lenpartizdat, 1934), p. 205.

¹²⁷ P. L. Bulat and S. L. Sverdlin, *Bor'ba za tekhniko-ekonomicheskuiu nezavisimost' SSSR* (Leningrad, 1935), p. 45.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹²⁹ *Mezhdru dvumia s'ezdami*, p. 206.

¹³⁰ *Ocherki istorii Leningrada*, vol. 4, p. 339.

¹³¹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 395.

metalworking, electrical engineering and chemical industries.¹³² The clothing, leather and footwear industries showed the same trend. The gross output from these industries increased somewhat during the first FYP period, however, the increase was not significant when compared with the increase which took place within the other branches of heavy industry.

2.2.3 Demographic characteristics

As table 2-12 shows, the 1917 Revolution, the Civil War and the industrialisation drive had a very visible impact on the population of Leningrad. Between 1910 and 1917, the population of the city increased due to the rapid influx of peasants into the city, as the city quickly assimilated these peasants as industrial workers. After 1917, however, the population began to contract, as political and economic crises set in. The growing shortage of food, the rapid decline of industrial production and the loss of its status as capital had left Leningrad's population depleted by the end of the Civil War. The city's population fell from 2,400,000 in 1915 to 1,468,000 in 1918 and to 722,000 by the end of 1920.¹³³ No official figures on the population were kept, but by extrapolating the census figures of 1910 and 1926 it is estimated that by 1920 the number of inhabitants had declined to less than half that of 1910.¹³⁴ However, in the 1920s there was a gradual increase in population, as the city recovered from the devastating effects of the 1917 Revolution and the Civil War. The city's population increased to one million in 1923 and to 1.6 million by 1926, yet it did not regain its 1910 level until the end of the 1920s.

Nevertheless, in 1926, Leningrad, covering the densely populated area at the mouth of the Neva river, was the second largest city in the USSR in terms of population. According to the 1926 census, Leningrad had a population of 1.6 million.¹³⁵ Of Leningrad's working population, some 33 per cent were classified as production workers, while about 28 per cent were classified as employees and professionals. The Leningrad population was predominantly Russian (86 per cent), the

¹³² For instance, the output from the textile industry accounted for only 14.9 per cent of Leningrad's total industrial output in 1930, whereas the output from the metalworking industry accounted for 30.4 per cent. See *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 70.

¹³³ *Leningradskaja pravda*, 12 February 1925.

¹³⁴ *Gorodskoe khoziaistvo* (Leningrad, 1957), p. 9.

¹³⁵ *Leningrad za 50 let: Statisticheskii sbornik* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1967), p. 24.

largest minority being Jews (five per cent). The remaining minorities were Poles, Germans, and Estonians, who individually accounted for no more than one to two per cent of the population.¹³⁶ In 1926, Leningrad had the highest level of literacy in the country: 93 per cent of those aged between 10 and 49 were literate.¹³⁷

Table 2-12. Population of St Petersburg, Petrograd, Leningrad, 1910-1939

<i>Year (date)</i>	<i>Population</i>
1910	1,906,000
1917	2,300,000
1920	720,000
1923	1,071,000
1926 (17 December)	1,614,000*
1929	1,775,000
1931 (1 January)	2,232,600**
1939 (17 January)	3,015,000*

Sources: Malaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1930), vol. 4, p. 572; * *Leningrad i Leningradskaia oblast' v tsifrakh: Statisticheskii sbornik* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1964), p. 13; and ** *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, p. 394.

The industrialisation drive during the first FYP period resulted in a huge increase in Leningrad's population and in its industrial workforce. By 1932, the city's population was estimated at 2.8 million, an increase of 1.2 million in just six years.¹³⁸ In particular, the active workforce increased by one million between 1926 and 1931. The natural increase accounted for only 60,000 and the rest consisted of new arrivals to the city.¹³⁹ Approximately 62 per cent of new arrivals were men since the city's industry attracted more males than females from the rural areas.¹⁴⁰ The overwhelming majority of those entering the city were peasants, either from Leningrad's own region or from the neighbouring Western, Moscow and Ivanovo regions.¹⁴¹ In 1931 industrial workers accounted for 45 per cent of Leningrad's population and artisans for six per cent. Dependants (children, the elderly and the unemployed) comprised 36 per cent, of

¹³⁶ *Malaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 4, p. 570.

¹³⁷ *Leningrad i Leningradskaia oblast' v tsifrakh: Statisticheskii sbornik* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1964), p. 14.

¹³⁸ *XV let diktatury proletariata*, tables, p. 135.

¹³⁹ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 144.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 145. According to the 1926 census, women outnumbered men in Leningrad, accounting for 51.5 per cent of the population.

¹⁴¹ *XV let diktatury proletariata*, p. 150.

which 13 per cent were aged between 16 to 59. This group provided a potential reserve for more workers to be drawn from.¹⁴² The Leningrad population continued to grow in the 1930s and by 1939 it had almost doubled to more than three million.

The size and distribution of industrial workforce.

Leningrad had been renowned for its large working class population, even before the industrialisation drive in 1929-32. Since the city was an important industrial centre under the old regime, it had a considerable number of industrial workers in the pre-revolutionary years. The size of the Petrograd working class had increased dramatically by 1917. The number of workers employed in the enterprises of the city had risen from 234,733 in December 1910 to 242,600 by January 1914.¹⁴³ Between 1914 and 1917, it grew by 150,000 to reach 392,800 - or 417,000, if one includes the factories situated on the outskirts of the city.¹⁴⁴ At the beginning of 1917, the factory workers of Petrograd represented about 12 per cent of Russia's 3.4 million industrial workers.¹⁴⁵ These industrial workers who gradually came to dominate the city were major supporters of the revolts against the Tsars in 1905 and early 1917, and against the Provisional Government in November 1917.

However, it was in 1918 that the industrial working class began its rapid decline. Unemployment and famine forced many workers to leave the city and return to their villages. At the same time, a substantial number of workers left the city either to join the Red Army or to get a new job in the administrative apparatus of the new state. As a result, the size of the industrial population of the city significantly shrank between 1918 and 1921. The active industrial workforce in the city, which numbered 293,000 on 1 January 1918, had shrunk to 79,500 by September 1920.¹⁴⁶ In 1921, the number of workers in the city's enterprises fell further from 91,200 to 69,700.¹⁴⁷ Only 33.2 per cent of the 1913 total of industrial workers were employed in the city's enterprises in January 1921. Material misery caused by unemployment and famine also took its toll on the remaining industrial population of the city. In addition, real

¹⁴² *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 147.

¹⁴³ Shkaratan, 'Izmeneniia v sotsial'nom sostave', p. 22.

¹⁴⁴ Smith, *Red Petrograd*, p. 10.

¹⁴⁵ *Rabochii klass i rabochee dvizhenie v Rossii v 1917 g.* (Moscow, 1964), p. 75.

¹⁴⁶ Shkaratan, 'Izmeneniia v sotsial'nom sostave', pp. 24, 26.

¹⁴⁷ Mironov and Stepanov, 'Stroiteli sotsializma', p. 184.

wages had drastically fallen to one tenth of the 1913 level by 1921,¹⁴⁸ and this led to a catastrophic drop in living standards even for those who maintained their jobs.

From 1922 onwards, however, the size of Leningrad's industrial workforce expanded, as Leningrad gradually regained its pre-revolution industrial strength. More and more enterprises were functioning normally, and workers began returning to work. The number of industrial workers rose from 80,616 in 1921 to 141,739 in 1924/25, reaching 58 per cent of the 1913 level.¹⁴⁹ The working class population in Leningrad did not recover to the 1913 level until 1928, when it totalled 240,104.¹⁵⁰ Although the Leningrad workforce expanded in almost all branches of industry between 1921 and 1928, the number of workers employed in light industry grew faster than in heavy industry. The textile industry showed the most rapid growth in terms of workforce, with a growth of 1465 per cent. By contrast, the workforce in the electrical engineering industry grew by 507 per cent, in the chemical industry it grew by 197 per cent and in the metal industry it grew only by 158 per cent in the same period (see table 2-13).

Table 2-13. Size of workforce in Leningrad by branch of industry, 1921, 1924/25 and 1927/28

<i>Branch of Industry</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>1924/25</i>	<i>1927/28</i>
Metalworking	25156	43961	64937
Electrical engineering	2550	8735	15493
Chemicals	6739	13338	20080
Printing	5650	11240	11010
Textiles	3514	25265	55025
Leather and footwear	5292	6120	16042
Clothing	7771	6267	19009

Source: Istoriia rabochikh Leningrada (Leningrad: Nauka, 1972), vol. 2, p. 147.

The rapid expansion of industry during the first FYP period brought about another massive increase in the size of the Leningrad workforce. In this period, the industrial proletariat was not only the largest section of the population, but also the fastest-growing one. The number of industrial workers rose from 257,464 to 498,092

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

¹⁴⁹ L. I. Derevnina, 'Vosstanovlenie Petrogradskoi promyshlennosti: Izmeneniia v chislennosti i sostave rabochikh,' in *Istoriia rabochikh Leningrada* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1972), vol. 2, p. 146.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

between 1929 and July 1932: a growth rate of 94 per cent. The population classified as production workers increased from 24 per cent of the total Leningrad population of 1.6 million in 1926 to 51 per cent of 2.8 million in 1932.¹⁵¹

The huge expansion of the workforce between 1929 and 1932 occurred in all branches of industry. However, as can be seen in table 2-14, the workforce employed in heavy industry grew faster than in light industry. The electrical engineering and metalworking industries showed the most rapid growth in their workforce: 180 per cent and 170 per cent respectively. By contrast, the workforce in the textile industry remained constant in size, while the workforce in the clothing industry grew by 144 per cent.

As a consequence of these different growth rates, the extraordinary predominance of metalworkers in the Leningrad workforce was even further intensified during this period. The city's metal industry had 59,886 workers in 1929, but the number had increased to 162,002 by July 1932. Whereas metalworkers had comprised 23 per cent of the Leningrad workforce in 1929, three years later they accounted for almost a third. In the same period, textileworkers decreased in number from 56,186 to 52,720, and dwindled as a proportion of the workforce from 22 per cent to ten per cent.

Table 2-14. Size of workforce in Leningrad by branch of industry, 1929-1932

<i>Branch of industry</i>	<i>1929</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>Jan.1932</i>	<i>July 1932</i>
Metalworking	59886	70885	121809	167475	162002
Electrical engineering	16952	20896	39659	51140	47497
Chemicals	24218	26733	34190	53582	40615
Textiles	56186	51096	56131	59168	52720
Food	18741	17809	26825	33274	31392
Clothing	13267	15278	24169	31305	32337
Footwear	12185	16735	18450	23860	22355
Printing	9793	12394	16422	18623	17720
Entire industry	257464	285553	419141	532137	498092

Source: As for table 2-3.

The massive intake of new workers resulted in a change in the composition of the Leningrad workforce in terms of length of service in industry. At the beginning of

¹⁵¹ *XV let diktatury proletariata*, p. 138.

the first FYP, the majority of Leningrad workers were skilled ones who had been working in industry for more than five years. However, by 1931, new arrivals with less than two years' industrial work experience constituted a high percentage of the Leningrad workforce. In 1929 a survey of workers in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries showed that 14 per cent had been working for less than two years; 23 per cent for between two and five years; and 63 per cent for five years or more. In 1931, however, the proportion of workers with less than two years' industrial work experience increased to 40 per cent, whereas the proportion of workers with five or more years' work experience decreased to 41 per cent. In the textile industry, the proportional change in terms of length of service was less sharp than in the metalworking and electrical industries. Between 1929 and 1931 the proportion of workers with less than two years' work experience increased from 12 per cent to 29 per cent, whereas the proportion of workers with five or more years' work experience decreased slightly from 59 per cent to 57 per cent (see table 2-15).

Table 2-15. Length of employment of workers in industry, 1929 and 1931 (percentages)

<i>Industry</i>	<i>less than 2 years</i>	<i>2-5 years</i>	<i>5-10 years</i>	<i>10-15 years</i>	<i>15-25 years</i>	<i>more than 25 years</i>
Metal-working and engineering						
1929	13.5	23.4	23.4		39.7*	
1931	39.9	18.8	18.7	8.6	7.3	6.7
Textiles						
1929	11.7	28.9	18.9		40.5*	
1931	28.5	14.7	19.7	10.5	14.6	12.0

Note: * These percentages are for those who had worked five or more years.

Source: *XV let diktatury proletariata*, tables, p. 90.

The breakdown of workers by year of entry into industry also confirms this trend (see table 2-16). In 1929, workers who had joined the workforce before the 1917 Revolution accounted for 52 per cent of workers in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries and for 51 per cent of textileworkers. In general, these were skilled workers with several years' work experience in industry. They were also considered politically trustful as they had experienced the 1917 revolution. However, as late as 1931, they were no longer the majority of the workforce: their proportion

decreased to 27 per cent in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries and to 39 per cent in the textile industry. By then, the Leningrad workforce was composed largely of newcomers who had joined the workforce since 1926: they accounted for 54 per cent of workers in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries and 42 per cent in the textile industry.

Table 2-16. Composition of workers by year of entry into industry in Leningrad, 1929 and 1931 (percentages)

<i>Industry</i>	<i>before 1905</i>	<i>1906- 1913</i>	<i>1914- 1917</i>	<i>1918- 1921</i>	<i>1922- 1925</i>	<i>1926- 1929</i>	<i>1930 and after</i>
Metal-working and engineering							
1929	22.1	17.9	11.5	8.3	21.3	18.9	-
1931	11.0	9.1	6.7	5.6	13.7	24.3	29.6
Textiles							
1929	22.1	18.4	10.4	5.1	25.9	18.1	-
1931	16.4	14.4	7.9	4.4	15.3	19.4	22.2

Source: XV let diktatury proletariata, tables, pp. 88-89.

More importantly, a significant change took place in the social composition of the Leningrad workforce during this period. As Leningrad's industry rapidly expanded, there was an increasingly urgent need for workers. By 1931, it had become impossible to draw new workers from within the urban population. The inner-city workforce reserves, including women and youth from working-class families, were not sufficiently large to meet the need of rapidly expanding industry. Therefore, from 1931 onwards, most new workers were drawn from the countryside.¹⁵² Since a considerable number of peasants had arrived in the city and had been recruited as factory workers during the first FYP period, it was believed that peasant elements among factory workers had increased over time.

According to a survey of the social origins of the metalworkers and textileworkers in 1929 and 1931, the second-generation workers who had been born into working-class families comprised about half the workforce, whereas the workers who came from peasant families comprised approximately one third (see table 2-17). If we consider the fact that 20 per cent of metalworkers and 25 per cent of

¹⁵² *Leningradskie rabochie v bor'be za soziazizm, 1926-1937* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1965), p. 151.

textileworkers had one or both parents who were workers in 1918,¹⁵³ the figures in 1929 and 1931 reveal that there had been an increase over time in the proportion of second-generation workers in Leningrad. However, as can be seen in table 2-17, the proportion of those classified as children of workers had slightly decreased between 1929 and 1931: it dropped from 52 per cent to 51 per cent in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries and from 58 per cent to 56 per cent in the textile industry.¹⁵⁴

Table 2-17. Social origins of workers in Leningrad, 1929 and 1931 (percentages)

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Born into working class families</i>	<i>Born into employee families</i>	<i>Born into peasant families</i>
Metal-working and engineering			
1929	51.8	7.2	38.6
1931	50.8	8.5	37.1
Textiles			
1929	57.7	4.8	35.5
1931	55.6	4.6	36.5

Source: As for table 2-16.

The drop in the proportion of second-generation workers can be explained by the growing recruitment of workers from peasant families. As can be seen in table 2-18, among new arrivals, the proportion of those who came from peasant families increased considerably in 1931. Almost half the new workers recruited in 1931 were from peasant families. This is a considerable increase from the figure in 1930. As a reflection of this change, the metalworking industry experienced a massive intake of those who were from peasant families. In 1931, 49 per cent of the new intake were peasants by social origin, whereas only 39 per cent were workers. Likewise, in the textile industry, as many as 52 per cent of the new intake were from peasant families, whereas only 40 per cent were from working-class families.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ V. Z. Drobizhev, A. K. Sokolov and V. A. Ustinov, *Rabochii klass Sovetskoi Rossii v pervyi god proletarskoi diktatury* (Moscow, 1975), p. 93.

¹⁵⁴ The Leningrad region economic-statistical handbook gives even lower figures for the percentage of the second-generation workers in 1931. Some 48.7 per cent of metalworkers and 54.5 per cent of textileworkers were classified as of worker background whereas those classified as children of peasants accounted for as much as 40.8 per cent and 38 per cent respectively. *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravocnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p.155.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

Table 2-18. *Social origins of newly recruited workers in Leningrad, 1930 and 1931 (percentages)*

<i>Year of entry into the industry</i>	<i>Born into working class families</i>	<i>Born into peasant families</i>
June-December 1930	44.6	9.8
January-June 1931	40.0	45.2
July-December 1931	36.6	55.1

Source: *Leningradskie rabochie v bor'be za sozializm, 1926-1937* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1965), p. 152.

Table 2-19. *Previous jobs of workers in Leningrad, 1929 and 1931 (percentages)*

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Agri- culture</i>	<i>Institutions and enterprises of non- production type</i>	<i>Army service</i>	<i>Study</i>	<i>Unem- ployed</i>	<i>Others</i>
Metal-working and engineering						
1929	17.9	21.2		60.9 *		
1931	22.7	21.9	6.7	37.5	10.3	0.9
Textiles						
1929	13.7	19.7		66.6 *		
1931	25.0	26.2	1.4	31.7	15.4	0.3

Note: * These figures include artisans, the unemployed and those who were engaged in trade, study and military service.

Source: As for table 2-16.

Table 2-19, in which the workforce is subdivided by previous employment, allows a still closer analysis of the composition of the Leningrad workforce at this time. Although workers were drawn from various sectors, the increasing influence of peasant elements over time is quite evident. In 1929, those who had been engaged in agriculture prior to their entry into industry accounted for only 18 per cent of workers in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries and 14 per cent in the textile industry. However, by 1931, their proportion in the total workforce had increased to 23 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. This suggests that a considerable number of peasants joined the industrial workforce between 1929 and 1931. In actual fact, in 1931 some 26 per cent of the new arrivals in the metalworking industry and 30 per cent in the textile industry had been engaged in agriculture before they began work in factories.¹⁵⁶ Another notable feature of table 2-19 is that the textile industry showed a

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

sharper increase than the metalworking and electrical engineering industries in the proportion of workers who had been engaged in agriculture before they joined the industrial workforce. This implies that the new arrivals in textiles were more likely to have come from the agricultural sector than those in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries.

Another indicator of the extent to which peasant elements were entering the ranks of the working class in the city is the workers' relationship with the agricultural economy. Generally speaking, one can distinguish two groups within the workforce. The first consisted of peasants who worked in industry, but who still retained strong ties with the countryside. They included those who owned or farmed land, those who came to the city with the intention of staying until they had earned enough money to make the family farm a viable undertaking once more, and those who had immediate family dependants in their native village - a wife or child - and supported them by sending money to the countryside.¹⁵⁷ The second consisted of workers who depended exclusively on wages for their income and who were fully committed to factory life. They comprised either peasants who had settled in the towns and severed their ties with the land, or second-generation workers who had been born into working-class families.¹⁵⁸ The relative weight of each of these two groups within the labour force was a matter of concern since only the latter was believed to be truly 'proletarian' in character. In other words, it was believed that the more firmly workers severed their links with agriculture and came to identify with the industrial working class, the more likely they were to become fully fledged proletarians. Soviet historians have often used this as an index to show the extent to which the process of proletarianisation was under way among the workers who came from the countryside.

The ownership and cultivation of land, either directly or indirectly, was what most crucially characterised a 'tie' to the countryside. The censuses of 1926 and 1929 provide some information on land-ownership among Leningrad metalworkers and textileworkers. In 1926 some ten per cent of metalworkers and 12 per cent of textileworkers owned land,¹⁵⁹ while in 1929 the figures changed to 12 per cent and

¹⁵⁷ Smith, *Red Petrograd*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁵⁹ Krasil'nikov, 'Sviaz' Leningradskogo rabocheho s zemlei', *Statisticheskoe obozrenie*, vol. 4, 1929, p. 108.

four per cent respectively.¹⁶⁰ According to a recalculation based on the 1926 census figures, 12 per cent of workers in Leningrad owned land and four per cent of these actually farmed land. By 1929 the proportion of workers who owned land had decreased to ten per cent.¹⁶¹ This reveals that only a small minority of workers in Leningrad owned land, and only a minority of these actually farmed it. In addition, it emerges from these figures that metalworkers were no less attached to the land than textileworkers. The 1929 census also revealed that the proportion of landowners was highest among workers with the longest service in industry. The landowners in the pre-1905 workforce accounted for 18 per cent of metalworkers and eight per cent of textileworkers, while the proportion of landowners among workers who came into industry in the later period was much lower than these figures.¹⁶² It is thus apparent that a long period of work experience in industry did not necessarily erode ties with the countryside.

The 1931 survey, which gives information on ties with the agricultural economy among metalworkers and textileworkers,¹⁶³ does help to establish the extent to which a 'peasant' character had prevailed among Leningrad workers by this time (see table 2-20). According to the survey, 65 per cent of metalworkers and 69 per cent of textileworkers had not had and did not have any links with the agricultural economy. Some 24 per cent of metalworkers and 23 per cent of textileworkers had had ties with agriculture in the past, but had severed their ties by 1931. Only 12 per cent of metalworkers and eight per cent of textileworkers still retained ties with the agricultural economy. This indicates that the majority of workers in Leningrad did not have any links with the agricultural economy in 1931. In addition, these figures provide further evidence that peasant influence among metalworkers was no less strong than among textileworkers, in spite of the fact that metalworkers were normally considered the 'vanguard' of the proletariat.

The survey also revealed that male workers were more likely to retain ties with the countryside. About 13 per cent of male metalworkers and 14 per cent of male

¹⁶⁰ A. G. Rashin, *Sostav fabrichnogo-zavodskogo proletariata SSSR* (Moscow, 1930), p. 30.

¹⁶¹ Smith, *Red Petrograd*, p. 17.

¹⁶² Rashin, *Sostav fabrichnogo-zavodskogo proletariata*, p. 30.

¹⁶³ The 1931 survey results should be interpreted with caution, since the concept of a 'tie' to the countryside is a vague one.

textileworkers still retained ties with agriculture, while only six per cent of women workers retained ties. This is probably due to the fact that more male workers came into the city as a breadwinner while their wife or children were in their native village.

A further breakdown of workers by the year of entry into industry showed that the proportion of those who still retained ties with agriculture was highest among the new intake from 1930 onwards. Amongst the 1926-1929 intake, only ten per cent of metalworkers and seven per cent of textileworkers still maintained a link. However, amongst those who joined the industrial workforce from 1930 onwards, the figure increased to as much as 21 per cent of metalworkers and 22 per cent of textileworkers. This confirms that in the period 1930-1931 new workers were recruited overwhelmingly from the countryside. Another notable aspect is the relatively high percentage of the pre-1917 workforce who retained links with the countryside. Having worked in industry for more than ten years, they must have been more proletarian than peasant in their character, even if they had some kind of ties with the countryside. This suggests that having ties with the countryside does not always mean that a worker is less proletarianised.

Table 2-20. Workers' relationship with the agricultural economy in Leningrad, 1931 (percentages)

	<i>Metalworkers</i>		<i>Textileworkers</i>	
	<i>Those who had had ties with agriculture in the past</i>	<i>Those who still retained ties with agriculture</i>	<i>Those who had had ties with agriculture in the past</i>	<i>Those who still retained ties with agriculture</i>
Among men workers	23.6	12.7	25.3	13.8
Among women workers	23.3	6.4	22.5	6.2
Among those who came into industry:				
before 1917	22.9	10.8	24.5	4.5
1918-1925	22.7	6.6	20.5	3.6
1926-1929	23.8	9.9	19.7	7.0
1930 and after	25.7	21.1	27.1	22.3
Total workforce	23.6	11.8	23.0	7.6

Source: Trud i profdvizhenie v Leningradskoi oblasti 1932 goda: Statisticheskii spravochnik (Leningrad: Izdanie oblistpolkoma i Lensoveta, 1932), p. 36.

Leningrad's industrial workforce also experienced a significant change in relation to gender and age. In urgent need of workers, factories rapidly recruited

women and youths who had previously been unemployed. As a consequence, there was a considerable increase in the number of women employed in Leningrad industry. By January 1930 some 105,527 women were working in the city's factories, and the number of women workers had risen to 188,371 by July 1931.¹⁶⁴ The female workforce increased not only in number but also in its proportion of the total workforce. Their proportion rose from 36 per cent in July 1926, to 37 per cent in January 1930, and to 41 per cent in July 1931.¹⁶⁵ Young people were another source of new workers. As late as 1931, 44,612 of Leningrad's total workforce of 454,832 were youths under 18.¹⁶⁶ Not only did the number of young workers grow, but also their proportion of the total workforce increased notably: by 1931 their proportion had increased to ten per cent.¹⁶⁷ If we consider the fact that the proportion of young workers fell from seven per cent in 1921 to three per cent in 1922,¹⁶⁸ we can see that the growth rate between 1922 and 1931 was extremely high.

The 1931 census provides more detailed information on the distribution of women workers among various industrial sectors. It shows that by this time more women were working in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries than in textiles - 45,434 as against 39,024. Some 41,481 women worked in the clothing industry, and a further 22,762 women were employed in chemicals.¹⁶⁹ However, the proportion of women was higher in the light than in the heavy industrial sector. Traditionally, the textile industry had the highest proportion of women workers and this remained unchanged at this point: about 76 per cent of textileworkers were women. The clothing industry also showed a high percentage of women workers: 75 per cent. The figures for the heavy industrial sector were considerably lower. In the chemical industry, about half the workforce were women. In the metalworking and electrical engineering industries, women workers constituted only 21 per cent.¹⁷⁰ However, it should be recognised that this figure represents a major increase from the

¹⁶⁴ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 153.

¹⁶⁵ For 1926 see Derevnina, 'Vosstanovlenie petrogradskoi promyshlennosti,' p. 151; the figure for 1930 and 1931 is reported in *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, p. 153.

¹⁶⁶ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 422-423.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, tables, pp. 422-423.

¹⁶⁸ Derevnina, 'Vosstanovlenie Petrogradskoi promyshlennosti,' p. 151.

¹⁶⁹ *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravochnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 422-423.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, tables, pp. 422-423.

1930 level of 11 per cent.¹⁷¹ This suggests that a considerable number of women were recruited into the metalworking and electrical industries between 1930 and 1931. Indeed, the female intake into the metalworking and electrical industries from January 1930 to July 1931 numbered 33,383, whereas only 2,836 went into the textile industry in the same period.¹⁷²

Table 2-21. Gender and age breakdown of Leningrad workforce, July 1931

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men workers</i>			<i>Women workers</i>		
		<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18-22</i>	<i>over 23</i>	<i>Under 18</i>	<i>18-22</i>	<i>over 23</i>
	N	%	%	%	%	%	%
Metalworking and engineering	212,633	8.4	17.8	52.4	3.5	6.3	11.6
Chemicals	40,631	4.3	7.0	32.7	6.3	12.4	37.3
Textiles	51,264	0.5	6.2	17.2	6.5	21.7	47.9
Clothing	55,459	0.7	6.5	18.0	5.5	27.4	41.9
All branches	454,832	5.4	13.3	39.9	4.4	12.2	24.8

Note: The proportional figures are my recalculation from the absolute figures.

Source: *Ekonomiko-statisticheskii spravocnik Leningradskoi oblasti*, tables, pp. 422-423.

According to the 1931 census, young workers were most numerous in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries: about 25,313 workers were under 18. A further 4,302 youths were employed in the chemical industry, and in the textile and clothing industries, each had over 3,000 youths working within them.¹⁷³ The heavy industrial sector had not only a larger number of young workers, but also a higher proportion of them than the light industry sector did. Young workers under 18 comprised 12 per cent of the workforce in the metalworking and electrical engineering industries, and 11 per cent in the chemical industry, whereas in the textile and clothing industries, they comprised seven per cent and six per cent respectively of their total workforce.¹⁷⁴ Considering that around 1917 the textile, food and leather industries had a much greater proportion of young workers than the metalworking and chemical industries,¹⁷⁵ these figures suggest that more young workers had been recruited into

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, tables, pp. 422-423.

¹⁷⁴ However, young female workers were still predominant in textiles and clothing industries.

¹⁷⁵ Z. V. Stepanov, *Rabochie Petrograda v period podgotovki i provedeniia oktiabr'skogo vooruzhennogo vosstaniia* (Moscow, 1965), p. 34.

the heavy industrial sector than the light industrial sector by this point in time. This is probably due to the fact that much more emphasis was placed on the expansion of heavy industry during the first FYP period.

Table 2-22. Illiteracy of metalworkers and textileworkers in Leningrad, 1931 (percentages)

	<i>Metalworkers</i>	<i>Textileworkers</i>
Total workforce	2.9	13.9
Among men workers	2.0	5.0
Among women workers	7.8	16.0
Among those who came into industry:		
before 1917	4.5	22.9
1918-1925	2.0	8.5
1926-1929	1.7	4.6
1930 and after	2.8	8.4

Source: Trud i profdvizhenie v Leningradskoi oblasti 1932 goda, p. 42.

Leningrad showed a relatively high level of working class literacy. As late as 1931, 97 per cent of metalworkers and 86 per cent of textileworkers were literate. This was a notable improvement from the literacy rate in 1918, when 88 per cent of metalworkers but only 50 per cent of textileworkers were literate.¹⁷⁶ Working class literacy was closely related to gender, occupation, and length of service in industry. The 1931 survey of metalworkers showed that three per cent were illiterate, but only two per cent of men were illiterate as compared to eight per cent of women. Illiteracy among textileworkers was much higher than among metalworkers. Some 14 per cent of textileworkers were illiterate, and five per cent of men were illiterate as compared to 16 per cent of women. It suggests that women workers, especially in the light industrial sector, were more likely to be illiterate. The survey also revealed that illiteracy was highest among those who joined the industrial workforce before 1917. In addition, the 1931 survey showed that illiteracy was relatively high among those who came into industry from 1930 onwards, especially when compared to the 1926-29 intake (see table 2-22). This suggests that those who came into industry from 1930

¹⁷⁶ Smith, *Red Petrograd*, p. 34.

onwards were drawn from more 'backward' sectors, probably from the countryside, than those who came into industry between 1926 and 1929.

In conclusion, we can say that the impact of the industrialisation drive on the population of the city in general and on the working class population in particular was massive. It brought about a rapid expansion of the population, of the industrial workforce, in particular, and a huge peasant migration into the city. More significantly, it caused the composition of the population and of the workforce to change.

From the data provided above, it can be said that there were discernible social divisions within the industrial workforce, according to degree of proletarianisation, skill, sex and age. Indeed, the workforce in Leningrad in the first FYP period was far from homogeneous. There was a crucial cleavage between the longer established workers and peasant workers. In addition, there were other divisions between skilled and unskilled, male and female, old and young workers. Therefore, one can roughly divide Leningrad's working class into two groups: one consisting of peasant workers, women workers and workers new to industry, and the other consisting of older, proletarianised, skilled, male workers.

One may say that this was not a feature peculiar to this period. However, it appears that in Leningrad these divisions had been regaining importance over the first FYP period. What is more important is the change in the relative weight of these two groups of workers. It is difficult to estimate their exact proportion, yet the data on the composition of the workforce lead us to conclude that by 1932 more peasant workers, new arrivals to industry, women and young workers were employed in Leningrad's industry than before, and that the longer established workforce comprised slightly more than half of the total. We shall see the implication of these changes in the composition of the workforce in the following chapters.

3. Party Structure and Organisation

As seen in the previous chapter, the society and economy underwent fundamental changes during the first FYP. With the launch of the industrialisation drive, the party became more enmeshed in the control and supervision of the rapidly expanding economy; it increased its level of complexity, and introduced organisational changes to meet social, political and economic circumstances. With the party's increasing involvement in the economy, especially after 1929, party organisations evolved into much more elaborate structures in response to the demands placed upon them.

As organisational matters were regarded as one of the keys to overall success, the party apparatus was reorganised several times between 1928 and 1932. Okruzhkoms were abolished, and raikoms emerged as the main link between the primary cells and the regional authority. Yet the most notable development was the introduction of a functional-sectoral system into the party apparatus. The Central Committee secretariat was reorganised, in order to give priority to economic questions, adding 'sectors' responsible for industry and agriculture to the established departments. This reorganisation was reflected in the entire party apparatus at lower levels.

At the same time, with the rapid expansion of party membership and the party's increasing involvement in the economy came the organisational development of primary cells in industrial enterprises. As the party sought to reach every workshop and shift in every factory, the primary cells were broken up into smaller units from 1928 onwards. As a result, the primary cells in the enterprise, which were relatively few in the mid-1920s, proliferated during the first FYP and factory party organisations became far larger and more complex organisations. However, new and often experimental party structures in the industrial enterprise proliferated only until 1932, when there was a major simplification of all aspects of the factory party organisation.

This chapter discusses how the party at the regional level reacted organisationally to the new demands made upon it during the first FYP. It aims to show the organisational changes that were reflected in the Leningrad region,

especially within Leningrad's enterprises. It also offers an explanation of the organisational reversal of 1932-1934.

3.1 Party apparatus at the intermediate level

In the 1920s the party apparatus, as well as the rest of the party's membership, was organised hierarchically on a territorial basis. The territorial pattern of party organisations remained substantially unchanged, despite experiments with 'functional' organisation in the early 1930s. Up to 1927 the party in the Leningrad region was organised at province (*guberniia*), area (*okrug*) and district (*raion*) levels.¹ However, several important changes were made during the first FYP period. This was because the party's administrative units, which corresponded to those of the state, were reorganised whenever state administrative changes took place.

Firstly, the Leningrad provincial organisation was reorganised and renamed the Leningrad oblast organisation in November 1927, following the transformation of Leningrad province into Leningrad oblast in August of that year.² According to the 1925 Party Rules, the provincial level of organisation appears to have been considered more important than the regional one, even though the powers and responsibilities exercised by party organs at both levels were broadly the same.³ However, the provincial level of organisation gradually disappeared in the country⁴ and importance shifted towards regional organisations. By 1934, the oblast level of organisation had established itself as the level immediately below the national one.

Another important change relating to party structure came in 1930, when the *okrug* level of organisation was abolished. *Okrugs*, the level of administration intermediate between the *oblasts* and the *raions*, were abolished in the summer of

¹ Each organisation had its committee, bureau and secretaries. For their responsibilities and rights, see the Party Rules adopted at the fourteenth Party Congress in 1925. *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniakh s'ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1984), vol. 3, pp. 479-483.

² *Sankt-Peterburg, Petrograd, Leningrad: Entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Moscow: Bol'shaia rossiiskaia entsiklopediia, 1992), p. 328.

³ Graeme Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1988), p. 32.

⁴ For example, the Moscow provincial organisation was reorganised as the Moscow oblast organisation in 1929. See Catherine Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin: The Communist Party in the Capital, 1925-32* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 96.

1930. Instead, rural raions emerged as the central link at the middle-lower levels of the administrative hierarchy, acting as an intermediary between the central authorities at oblast level on the one hand and the village and the kolkhoz on the other. Confirmation of the raion's growing importance was given at the sixteenth Party Congress in the summer of 1930. Subsequently eight okrug party organisations and their apparatuses were abolished, and some 111 raikoms were established in the rural area of the Leningrad oblast.⁵ The number of rural raion party organisations increased significantly, as did the total number of staff, with the addition of staff transferred from the former okruzhkoms.⁶ As the principal link between the regional authorities and the rural party cells, the rural raikoms acquired more responsibilities and they were to supervise rural affairs including collectivisation.

The city of Leningrad was the political and administrative centre of the oblast, but it was not until the end of 1931 that a separate Leningrad city party organisation and its apparatus were set up alongside the obkom. On 10 December 1931, a joint plenum of the Leningrad obkom and the Leningrad oblast control commission approved the resolution of the obkom bureau concerning the separation of the city from the oblast as an independent administrative-economic unit.⁷ It seems that the separation of the two was decided upon because of the economic mismatch between the city and its surrounding province (see chapter 2). Two days later, the first Leningrad city party conference took place. The Leningrad gorkom was given responsibility for the administration of party organisations within the city, exercising supervision over a number of urban raions, whereas the obkom, now in charge of supervising the gorkom and raikom of the oblast, was to concentrate more of its attention on agricultural concerns. The Leningrad urban raikoms, which increased from six to eight in number due to the administrative changes in 1930, came under the gorkom's supervision. The gorkom was also entrusted with the guidance of urban raikoms set up in Kronstadt city and the Prigorodnyi raion. By supervising the urban raikoms, the gorkom took responsibility for the guidance of party *kollektivy* of

⁵ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p.123.

⁶ 'Ov itogakh likvidatsii okrugov i ukreplenii raionov', in *Rezoliutsii ob''edinnennogo plenuma Leningradskogo obkoma i oblKK VKP(b) 15-16 fevralia 1931 goda* (Leningrad: Ogiz-Priboi, 1931), p. 3.

⁷ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1980), vol. 2, p. 502.

important industrial enterprises, newly built plants (*novostroiki*) and higher educational establishments within the city.⁸

These changes show that the party structure immediately below the central party leadership was significantly streamlined during the first FYP period. The rather complicated structure stipulated in the 1925 Party Rules had disappeared with the abolition of provincial, area, country and parish levels of organisation. Consequently, there remained only three basic levels between the central organs and the primary organisations, which were the regional, city and district levels. This simplified party structure was formally confirmed at the seventeenth Party Congress in 1934.⁹

Each level of organisation had its own administrative apparatus. In the regional party organisation there were regular conferences and an obkom, which in turn elected an executive body and two to five secretaries. The city and raion party organisations likewise held regular conferences and elected a committee, a bureau and secretaries. In accordance with 'democratic centralism', each organisation was hierarchically subordinate to the one immediately above it - the primary to the raion, the raion or city to the regional organisation, and the latter to the Central Committee and the All-Union organisation.

Table 3-1. Number of leading party organs in Leningrad oblast, 1928, 1930 and 1932 (1 January)

<i>Leading party organs</i>	<i>1928</i> (1)	<i>1930</i> (2)	<i>1932</i> (3)
Obkom	1	1	1
Leningrad gorkom	-	-	1
Urban raikoms in Leningrad	6	6	8
Rural raikoms	n. d.	-	75
Okruzhkoms	9	8	-

Sources: (1) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 3, 1928, p. 30; (2) Adapted from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrah* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1974), p. 137; (3) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 1932, pp. 30-37.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

⁹ See the 1934 Party Rules in *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1985), vol. 6, pp. 137-142.

3.1.1 Leningrad oblast committee (obkom)

In 1928, the Leningrad obkom, the highest party organ in the region, assumed political responsibility for the Leningrad oblast party organisation. In the hierarchy of party organs, it was directly subordinate to the Central Committee and superior to all other party organs in the region including the Leningrad gorkom, which had been established in 1931. The obkom, which was elected at a regional party conference, held plenums to discuss a wide range of party work, and had a bureau and a secretariat to oversee its work.

The obkom was a huge body containing more than a hundred members. For instance, the obkom elected at the first oblast conference in 1927 comprised 155 members and 48 candidates.¹⁰ They included representatives of the Central Committee, the secretaries of the obkom, the heads of its departments, the secretaries of the city's raikoms, and also the secretaries of local organisations in the region. Other members included representatives of the Leningrad Soviet, of the military district, of the local Komsomol, and editors of *Leningradskaia pravda*. The rest were local delegates including the secretaries of local cells, mostly from factories, and also workers 'from the bench'. Most of the largest enterprises in the city such as Krasnyi putilovets, Bol'shevik, Krasnoe znamia and the Baltic shipbuilding works sent their delegates.¹¹

Regional party conferences, the equivalent of the Party Congress at regional level, were held at irregular intervals. The Rules adopted at the thirteenth Party Congress in 1925 stipulated that they should be held once a year, but regional conferences were not held in 1928, 1931, and 1933.¹² Regional conferences appointed a presidium and elected the oblast committee, the oblast control commission and the auditing commission. More importantly, they considered the reports of the Central Committee, the Central Control Commission, the oblast committee, and the oblast control commission, and approved the party policy presented by these party organs. They also discussed and decided the outlines of future policy: the first Five Year Plan

¹⁰ *Stenograficheskii otchet pervoi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b)* (Leningrad: Priboi, 1927), p. 245.

¹¹ *Ibid*, pp. 245-246.

¹² The first oblast party conference was held in November 1927, the second in March 1929, the third in June 1930 and the fourth and fifth, both held jointly with the city organisation, in January 1932 and 1934 respectively.

for the Leningrad oblast was discussed at the second oblast conference in 1929, for instance.¹³

Plenums were the other occasion on which the whole obkom could meet as a body. The 1925 Party Rules stipulated that plenums of the obkom should be convened at least once every two months.¹⁴ However, it was decided at the Leningrad obkom plenum of April 1929 that plenums should be held at least every six weeks.¹⁵ In fact, plenums were held nine times in 1929. However, in the following years, they were held approximately six times a year. The obkom often held plenums jointly with the oblast control commission, or with the Leningrad gorkom, as was the case in 1931 and 1932. Members and candidates of the obkom, members of the oblast control commission and the oblast auditing commission, and some obkom instructors were regular participants. Party workers of the oblast, okrug, city and raion committee, and some economic, trade union, Soviet and press workers were often invited to a plenum depending on the subjects being discussed.¹⁶

It was at these plenums that appointments to the post of secretary and department head, membership of the secretariat and the bureau of both the obkom and of gorkom were formally confirmed.¹⁷ Obkom representatives to the oblast control commission and to the local Komsomol also required approval.¹⁸ In addition, appointments to important posts of government and institutions in the region had to be confirmed at obkom plenums. These posts included the chairman, vice chairman and secretary of the oblast executive committee (*obispolkom*), chairman of the oblast council of trade unions, and editors of the local newspapers such as *Leningradskaia pravda*, *Krasnaia gazeta*, and *Krest'ianskaia pravda*.¹⁹

The obkom work plans, elaborated by the bureau every three to six months, were regularly submitted to the plenum for approval. These plans, which gave guidance as to the work of the plenum, the bureau and the secretariat, show the vast

¹³ *Itogi 2-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi partikonferentsii* (Leningrad: Priboi, 1929).

¹⁴ *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 3, p. 480.

¹⁵ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, p. 12.

¹⁶ See protocols of the plenum meeting in RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2693-2694, 2696-2698.

¹⁷ Yet again, the appointment to these posts needed the approval of the Central Committee.

¹⁸ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, protocol 1.

¹⁹ Among these posts, the chairmanship of the oblast executive committee, of the oblast council of trade unions, and the editorship of *Leningradskaia pravda* needed the approval of the Central Committee.

range of issues the party apparatus had to deal with. The topics for discussion ranged from internal party matters such as regulation and growth of the party membership, purges of the party, cadre problems, organisational work, mass-agitation work and cultural-propaganda work, to planning and economic questions. For instance, the work plan for autumn and winter 1928, adopted at the October plenum, listed eleven separate headings for the party's work: party questions; economic questions; party education and general education; Soviet and mass work; trade union and mass work; Komsomol work; political education and cultural work; work among women; the press; rural work and national minority work.²⁰ The work plan for the period of January to March 1930 provides another example. The party's work was grouped under seven headings: industrial construction; securing realistic wages for workers; questions of agriculture, co-operation, collectivisation and the spring sowing campaign; trade union work and improvement of the work of state apparatus; party construction; cadres; and cultural construction and mass work.²¹ Under each heading, specific areas of work were allotted to the plenum, bureau and secretariat. These plans normally prescribed a month by which the work was to be completed, and also stipulated which non-party experts were to be consulted, including chairmen of the oblast executive committee and of the oblast council for the national economy, heads of trusts, experts in specific areas such as transport or housing, and trade union officials.

In general, regular plenums were convened according to a prescribed plan, and they discussed important questions of the obkom's work as stipulated by the work plan. At the April 1929 plenum, it was recommended that the date and agenda of a plenum should be announced at least a week before a plenum, and that materials concerning the subjects of discussion be sent to the obkom members no later than a week before a plenum, in order for the participants to be ready to participate in the discussion.²² However, it appears that the obkom did not always adhere strictly to these plans. For instance, the work plan for November 1930 to March 1931 stipulated that housing problems should be discussed in December 1930,²³ but a plenum did not

²⁰ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2693, pp. 50-57.

²¹ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2710, pp. 201-203.

²² Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, p. 12.

²³ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 94.

convene in December and it was not until May 1931 that the obkom discussed this problem at a plenum.²⁴ On the other hand, questions outside the provisions of the plan were sometimes discussed if these questions were considered to be important, as was the case at the September plenum in 1929.²⁵

The agenda of a plenum usually included three or four main items. Undoubtedly, internal party matters were the main concern of the obkom. Issues such as the regulation of membership growth, re-election of party organs, and party-mass work were often discussed. At the same time, the obkom became more and more involved in questions of an economic nature, such as planning and industrialisation. The obkom heard reports concerning the preliminary result of the FYP and forecasts for the next year's economic growth, and confirmed control figures for the year to come. It also discussed such detailed economic questions as labour supply, rationalisation of industry, the fulfilment of industrial and financial plans (*promfinplan*), and the introduction of a profit-and-loss accounting system (*khozraschet*). Even though the Leningrad oblast was not a major agricultural region in national terms, questions concerning collectivisation and the agricultural economy were often discussed, as in the case of plenums in December 1929, March 1930, February 1931 and April 1932.²⁶ Other issues discussed at the plenum included questions of food supply, improving trade union work, eliminating illiteracy, housing problems, and the re-election of the Soviet.

Yet oblast party conferences and plenums, while important, were not the place where the real work was done. The real direction of the committee came from its bureau and secretariat, which were the policy-making bodies of the regional party organ. The bureau and secretariat were responsible for the day-to-day administration of the party. Party documents concerning the responsibilities of each organs suggest that there was a clear division of labour between the bureau and the secretariat. According to the instruction given in 1929, the bureau was supposed to deal with questions of planning nature and questions related to the supervision of the work of

²⁴ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2697, protocol 4.

²⁵ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, protocol 6. The oblast committee discussed articles in *Pravda* on 1 September 1929, which criticised the leaders of Leningrad for bureaucratism and suppression of criticism, and revealed shortcomings of some party organisations in Leningrad.

²⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, pp. 497-502.

the economic, soviet, and trade union organs and party work, whereas the secretariat was to deal with questions concerning the work of the obkom apparatus.²⁷ Another instruction issued in December 1931 specified that the bureau should concern itself with collectivisation, industry, transport, newly built plants and the labour supply. On the other hand, it instructed that the secretariat should concern itself with the selection of cadres and the work of the obkom departments. The secretariat also had to check whether the trade union, soviet and economic organs were operating according to party guidelines.²⁸

The obkom bureau, which included the most powerful figures in the region, had 30 members and nine candidates in 1929 and 31 members and six candidates in 1930, but it reduced its membership to 22 while maintaining its nine candidates in 1931 and 1932. The typical composition of the obkom bureau was as follows: the obkom secretaries; the chairman of the oblast executive committee; the chairman and secretary of the oblast council of trade unions; the chairman of the Leningrad Soviet; the head of the security police (OGPU); the editor of *Leningradskaia pravda*; the secretary of the local Komsomol and the local representative of the council for the national economy. In addition, the chairman of the oblast union of mechanical engineering, some raikom secretaries from Leningrad city and other important oblast party and government officials were qualified to be obkom bureau members.²⁹

Bureau meetings took place, on average, once a week during 1928 and 1929. However, the bureau met less frequently from 1930 onwards: it met roughly once every ten days in 1930 and 1931,³⁰ but only 24 times, approximately twice a month, in 1932.³¹ Attendance at bureau meetings varied from about 35 to as many as 216.³² Both full members and candidates of the obkom bureau were entitled to participate in

²⁷ The obkom apparatus was reorganised according to this lines in January 1930. See RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis 21, delo 2711, p. 8.

²⁸ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 1, 1932, p. 11.

²⁹ For instance, in January 1932, secretaries of the three largest raikoms (Narvskii, Vyborgskii and Smol'ninskii raikoms) were included in the obkom bureau. See RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, protocol 1.

³⁰ The work plan for the obkom bureau for the period between April and September 1931 confirms this tendency. According to it, the bureau were supposed to meet every ten days. See *ibid.*, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2713, pp. 61-66.

³¹ On 23 December 1931, the obkom bureau decided to hold its meeting on the 9th and 23rd of each month in 1932. See *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 1, 1932, p. 11.

³² See protocol of bureau meetings in RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707-2716.

the meeting. A number of members and candidates of the obkom and the oblast control commission, some department heads and instructors also took part in bureau meetings. The editors of *Krasnaia gazeta* and of *Leningradskaia pravda* were regularly invited to meetings in 1928 and 1929, but from 1930 this was no longer the case. Representatives of other institutions and organisations, as well as specialists, were invited to report or advise. The obkom bureau resolution in December 1931 suggested that bureau meetings should be attended by the deputy heads of departments, responsible instructors of the obkom, the chairman or deputy chairman of the oblast control commission, heads of sectors, and the editors of *Leningradskaia pravda* and *Krest'ianskaia pravda*.³³

The secretariat was composed of secretaries and two or three others. The size of the secretariat, while relatively small, expanded from two secretaries and three others in 1929, to three secretaries and two others in 1930, and finally five secretaries and three others from December 1931 onwards.³⁴ The obkom secretaries, who held full-time positions, were the real leaders at local level. The first secretary of the obkom, Sergei M. Kirov, was in turn the real party boss in the region, and a key figure in the party administration; the necessity of adapting general directives to fit local conditions inevitably required him to exercise a considerable measure of executive initiative and vested him with important residual powers. Throughout this period he was assisted by a second secretary, M. S. Chudov, except between December 1931 and May 1932. During this period, Chudov was engaged in organising the Leningrad gorkom, and instead of him, P. I. Struppe took the job as second secretary. From April 1930 a third secretary was appointed,³⁵ and from December 1931 two more were appointed to assist the first secretary.³⁶ Apart from obkom secretaries, two or three of the most important figures in the oblast joined the secretariat. In March 1929, for example, the secretariat consisted of two secretaries and three others: the head of the department for agitation, propaganda and press;³⁷ the chairman of the oblast executive committee and

³³ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 1, 1932, p. 11.

³⁴ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698.

³⁵ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2696.

³⁶ One of them was responsible for transport. See *ibid.*, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2697, protocol 7.

³⁷ The heads of this department, A. I. Stetskii and his immediate successor B. P. Pozern were included in the secretariat in 1929.

that of the oblast council of trade unions.³⁸ After that, the secretariat normally included the latter two.³⁹

The secretariat met more often than the bureau, but the frequency of secretariat meetings also declined from about twice a week in 1928 to once a week in 1932.⁴⁰ Secretariat meetings were on a smaller scale than those of the bureau: the number of participants ranged from about 15 to 50.⁴¹ Apart from the five to eight secretariat members, only a few members of the obkom and the oblast control commission were invited to meetings. Some department heads and instructors also participated. Representatives of other institutions and organisations, including the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, were occasionally invited. According to the obkom bureau resolution in 1931, the heads of departments, the chairman or deputy chairman of the oblast control commission, the secretary of the oblast Komsomol, and the editors of *Leningradskaiia pravda* and *Krest'ianskaia pravda* were entitled to participate in the meeting.⁴²

The routine work of the obkom was carried out by a number of departments (*otdely*) responsible to the secretariat. During the period which concerns us, departments were established principally along functional lines.⁴³ In 1929 the obkom

³⁸ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, plenum protocols 1-2.

³⁹ For instance, P. A. Alekseev, who was the chairman of the oblast council of trade unions, was the member of the obkom secretariat from March 1929 onwards. I. F. Kadatskii, the chairman of the oblast executive committee, was the member of the secretariat from March 1930 to December 1931, and his successor, F. F. Tsar'kov accordingly took his place as secretariat member.

⁴⁰ The secretariat met 94, 65, 38, 43, and 50 times from 1928 to 1932 respectively. See protocol of secretariat meetings in RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2737-2764.

⁴¹ See protocol of secretariat meetings in *ibid.*, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2737-2764.

⁴² *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 1, 1932, p. 11.

⁴³ In the period 1925-35 the organisation of departments was a matter of controversy. A most significant debate revolved around the issue of whether to organise departments on the basis of functions such as personnel, propaganda, culture and inner-party work and so forth, or to adopt a system which followed production branch lines. The functional departments supervised their relevant subject in all subordinate party organisations, whereas the party department based on production lines supervised all functions within a particular branch of the economy such as transport, heavy industry or agriculture. For instance, in the former system, the *orgraspredotdel* was responsible for selection and overall control of the distribution of all party members, whereas, in the latter system, each department was responsible for selecting cadres in their own area. The functional system was taken for granted in the 1920s and this remained much in vogue in the early 1930s. However, in 1934, in an attempt to exercise direct control over industry and agriculture from the centre, the functional system was replaced by the system based on production branch lines. For more details, see Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 166-177; Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (London: Methuen, 1970), pp. 451-456; Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party*, p. 46; and Daniel Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party, 1927-39* (London: Macmillan, 1988), p. 52.

secretariat had six departments, which were structured following the Central Committee's model. The key departments of the secretariat were the *orgraspredotdel*, which was responsible for the organisational matter and for the selection and assignment of cadres,⁴⁴ and the *agitpropotdel*, which was responsible for agitation and propaganda and for controlling the press. The importance attached to these two departments was reflected in the fact that the heads of these departments were entitled to be members of the obkom secretariat in 1929. The other departments included those for general work (*obshchii otdel*), for women, for party history and for rural affairs.

However, by 1930 it became obvious that the existing system could not cope with the pressure imposed by the demands of industrialisation, in particular in the sphere of the appointment of cadres. As industry was rapidly expanding and agriculture was undergoing fundamental change, a severe strain was placed on the two largest departments, the *orgraspredotdel* and the *agitpropotdel*, due to a huge increase in workload. In January 1930 the organisation of the Central Committee apparatus was altered in response to the pressures on these two departments.⁴⁵ By introducing a functional-sectoral system, the party apparatus sought to deal effectively with the problems posed by the demands of industrialisation. New functional departments, with their sectoral subdivisions, were set up in order to attain a greater specialisation of duties.

This change was soon mirrored in the local organisations. In the Leningrad region, the obkom departments were reorganised in January 1930. The *orgraspredotdel* was split into two departments: one for organisation and instruction, and the other for assignment. The former had responsibility for organisational work within the party, including party appointments, and for verifying the fulfilment of directives, whereas the latter was made responsible for the selection and appointment of state and economic administrators, trade union leaders and many other non-party nomenklatura posts. The *agitpropotdel* was also split into two: a department for

⁴⁴ In 1929, the work of *orgraspredotdel* was subdivided into three sections: party-professional and cultural-educational work; the work for the economy (industry and transport), professional-technical education and higher technical educational establishments; and the work for the soviet and trade - cooperatives. A deputy head was in charge of each section. A number of instructors and assistant heads were also allocated to each section. In addition, a special assistant head was put in charge of searching for reserves and familiarising himself with cadres in order to select suitable cadres for promotion. See RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2748, p. 202.

⁴⁵ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 2, February 1930, pp. 70-72.

agitation and mass campaigns, responsible for agitational work among the population as a whole, and a department for culture and propaganda, responsible for political education work among party members. The general department and the department for party history remained unchanged while those for women and for rural affairs were abolished.⁴⁶ Instead, a total of 18 sectors were set up alongside the departments, including sectors for women, information-statistics and verification-instruction.

Another change to the structure of the obkom apparatus came in July 1930 when okruzhkoms were abolished and the obkom had to supervise vast rural areas. However, the Leningrad obkom secretariat decided that it was not necessary to set up a department or sector specialising in rural affairs, and that the existing structure with four functional departments and 18 sectors should be preserved. Instead, in each department or corresponding sector, an individual party worker or a group of workers was given responsibility for supervising and monitoring rural raikoms. The instruction department, with the help of information sectors operating in each department, was charged with the task of supervising the work of rural raikoms and giving them instructions. A number of rural raions were grouped together according to their economic or political nature (for instance, industrial, frontier, livestock, and flax growing raions), and an instructor was attached to each group of them. It was expected at this time that the number of staff in the verification and instruction sector would increase in order for an instructor to supervise a maximum of eight rural raions. Obkom instructors were expected to spend most of their time in rural raions. It was the organisation and instruction department's responsibility to provide plans for instructors' visits to rural raions.⁴⁷

In the spring of 1931 the obkom apparatus was reorganised yet again. In accordance with the Central Committee resolution on the reconstruction of the work of party organs, the obkom bureau made a decision to reorganise the obkom apparatus in April 1931. The main change proposed was that the functional sectors introduced the previous year should be supplemented by production-territorial sectors. The principal reason for this change was the need to supervise more efficiently the various sectors of the economy, which was experiencing rapid growth. Another important

⁴⁶ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2711, pp. 8-11.

⁴⁷ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, pp. 127-128.

change made this time was the abolition of the information sector attached to the department for organisation and instruction. With the abolition of the information sector, its work was spread among the remaining sectors: all production-territorial and functional sectors had to inform the obkom apparatus of major economic-political events and inner-party matters occurring within their corresponding areas or within their area of jurisdiction.⁴⁸

The structure of four departments with four to five sectors attached to each department, which was discussed in the obkom bureau resolution of April 1931, was as follows. The department for organisation and instruction had three functional sectors, responsible for party construction, party cadres and transport respectively. Alongside these functional sectors, five production-territorial sectors were set up in this department, each of them responsible for the raions in the following branches of industry: urban industry (Leningrad, Kronstadt and Pskov), flax growing, milk and livestock, timber, and cottage industries. The department for agitation and mass work had four sectors: agricultural campaigning; mass work in Leningrad industries; current campaigns; and mass work among women and peasants. Meanwhile, the structure of the department for culture and propaganda remained unchanged with its four sectors - press, propaganda, cadre and public education. The department for cadres, previously *otdel raspredeleniia*, also remained unchanged with one exception - an additional sector was set up to select cadres for higher educational establishments (*VUZ*), higher technical educational establishments (*VTUZ*), academies, technical secondary schools (*Tekhnikum*), factory-and-workshop schools (*FZY*) and other institutions.⁴⁹

At the January 1932 joint plenum of the Leningrad obkom and gorkom, only five departments - cadres, organisation and instruction, culture and propaganda, mass work and general work - were mentioned,⁵⁰ which suggests that the department for party history had been abolished by this time. Apart from this, the functional-sector

⁴⁸ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2713, pp. 71-72.

⁴⁹ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2713, pp. 71-73.

⁵⁰ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, protocol, 1.

DEPARTMENTS

SECTORS

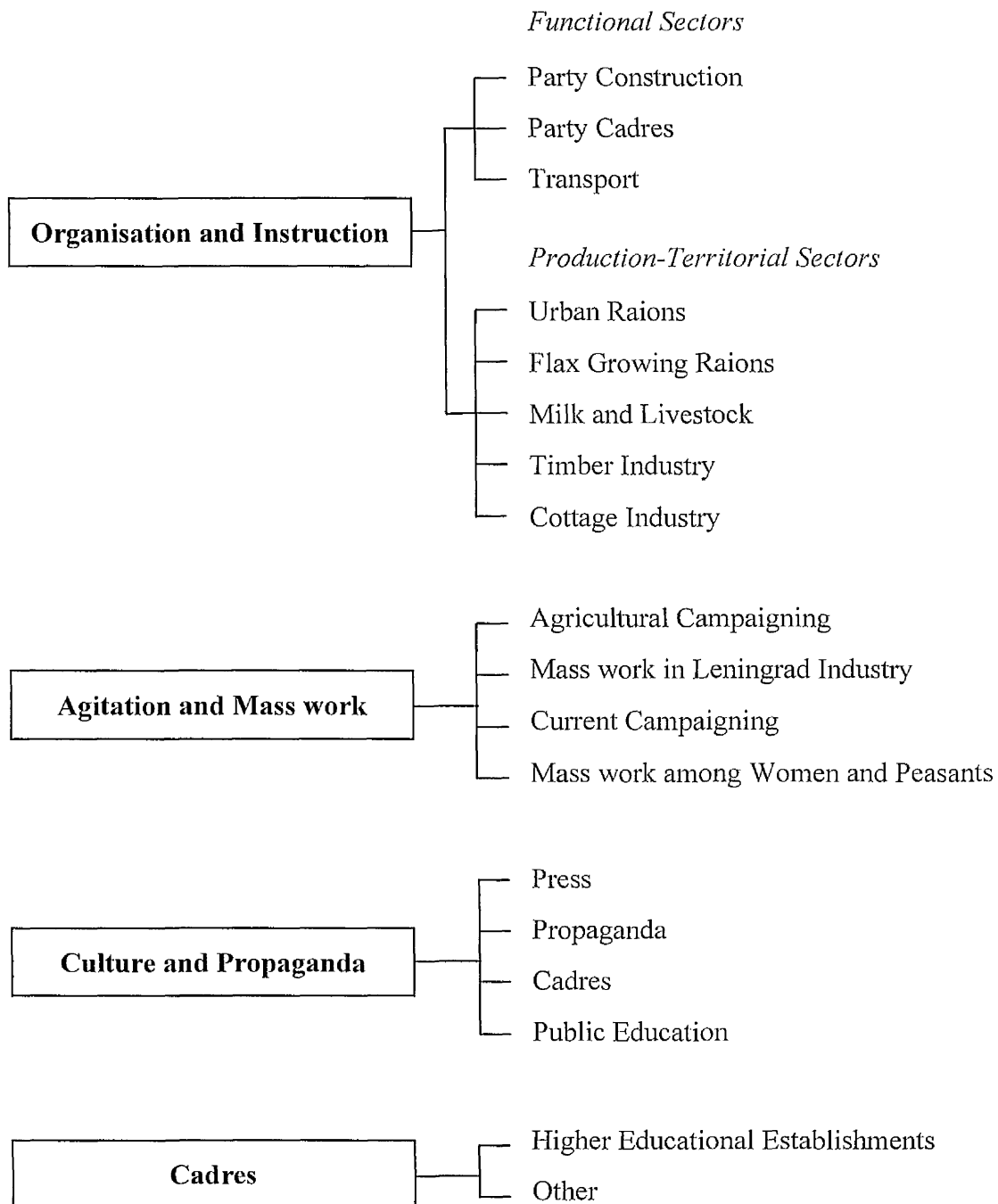


Figure 3-1. Departments and sectors at the obkom level, April 1931
Source: RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2713, pp. 71-73

system remained in effect until 1934 when the departments established on a functional basis were abandoned.⁵¹ One of the reasons for this change in direction was the lack of efficient controls caused by the diffusion of responsibility inherent in a functional-sector system. By 1934 departments were re-established on an integral-production branch basis.⁵²

3.1.2 Leningrad city committee (gorkom)

The Leningrad gorkom took over responsibility for supervising urban raions in the city of Leningrad. A separate gorkom was elected at the first conference of the Leningrad city party organisation, held on 12 December 1931. In January 1932 the gorkom elected a bureau consisting of 27 full members and six candidates, and a secretariat composed of four secretaries and three others.⁵³ Four departments were attached to the gorkom secretariat: organisation and instruction; cadre; culture and propaganda; and mass work.⁵⁴

The city party organisation held its conferences and plenums at irregular intervals. The second city party conference was held in January 1932, and the third one, two years later, in January 1934. The first plenum of the Leningrad gorkom took place on 13 December 1931, and plenums were held six times in 1932.⁵⁵ The obkom and the gorkom worked closely together, often holding joint conferences and plenums.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the bureaux and secretariats of the two organisations held their meetings together from 26 March 1932 and from 3 September 1932 respectively.⁵⁷

As a reflection of the city's importance, the Leningrad gorkom was staffed as fully as the obkom. The composition of the gorkom bureau and secretariat also shows that there was a considerable overlap in personnel between the gorkom and the

⁵¹ Gill, *The Rules of the Communist Party*, p. 46.

⁵² This meant that all aspects of, for example, agriculture were handled in the agriculture department, whether personnel, verification of the implementation of decisions, supervision of lower organs, or agitation and propaganda.

⁵³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698.

⁵⁴ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, protocol 1.

⁵⁵ In 1932 the gorkom held its plenums on the following days: on 29 January, 19-20 April, 29 May, 9-10 July, 15-16 October, and 20 November.

⁵⁶ The second and third city party conferences were held jointly with the obkom. Most gorkom plenums were held jointly with the obkom. The only exception was the plenum of 19-20 April which was held jointly with the Leningrad city control commission.

⁵⁷ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2716 and 2762.

obkom. Kirov, the first secretary of the obkom, also headed the gorkom as first secretary. Chudov, former second secretary of the obkom, became second secretary of the gorkom in January 1932. B. P. Pozern, former obkom secretary, and I. I. Gaza, former secretary of Narvskii raikom, became the third and fourth secretaries. All gorkom secretaries were members of the obkom bureau at the same time. In May 1932, when Chudov was transferred to his previous job in the obkom, he was succeeded by Gaza. At this time, A. I. Ugarov, former head of the department for culture and propaganda, became a gorkom secretary.⁵⁸ The three others who made up the gorkom secretariat were the head of the department for culture and propaganda, the chairman of the oblast executive committee, and the chairman of oblast council of trade unions.⁵⁹ The last two were also members of both the obkom bureau and the secretariat.

In January 1932, the gorkom bureau was composed of gorkom secretaries, all of Leningrad's raikom first secretaries, selected obkom secretaries, the chairman of the oblast executive committee, the chairman of the oblast council of trade unions, the editor of *Leningradskaia pravda*, the local representative of the council for the national economy and other leading party and government officials.⁶⁰ Out of the 33 gorkom bureau members or candidates, 16 were also members or candidates of the obkom bureau.

3.1.3 Urban and rural raion committees (raikoms)

In 1928 the city of Leningrad was divided into six raions, and each raion had its own party organisation and a raikom which was responsible for political life within the raion. Leningrad's six raikoms were Tsentral'no-gorodskoi, Vasileostrovskii, Petrogradskii, Volodarskii, Vyborgskii and Moskovsko-narvskii. Later in 1930, following the administrative changes, the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion party organisation was divided into two separate raion organisations: Oktiabr'skii and Smol'ninskii. The Moskovsko-narvskii raion party organisation was also split into two: Moskovskii and Narvskii.

⁵⁸ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, protocol 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, protocol 1.

⁶⁰ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, pp. 10-11.

Urban raikoms in the city of Leningrad were of considerable importance, due to the large size of party membership they had to supervise. Already in 1928 each raion party organisation had a considerable number of members within them. All raion party organisations, except Petrogradskii, had a party membership of over 10,000. The Moskovsko-narvskii raion organisation was particularly large, with over 20,000 party members.⁶¹ Furthermore, the size of party membership in each organisation increased considerably over the first FYP period. By April 1930, the Moskovsko-narvskii raion organisation contained approximately 38,000 members and the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion organisation, the second largest, contained over 25,000 members. The others had a party membership of between 10,000 and 20,000.⁶² In January 1933, the Smol'ninskii, Narvskii and Vyborgskii raion party organisations had a party membership of over 30,000. All the others, except Moskovskii, had a party membership of between 20,000 and 30,000.⁶³

The number of party *kollektivy* under the raikom's supervision varied in each raion: in January 1928 the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom supervised 229 party *kollektivy*; Moskovsko-narvskii 198; Volodarskii 120; Vyborgskii 84; Petrogradskii 81; and Vasileostrovskii 74.⁶⁴ The number of party *kollektivy* under each raikom's supervision also increased over the first FYP period. For instance, in December 1929 the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom supervised some 280 party *kollektivy* and 700 party fractions (*komfraktsii*) in non-party organisations.⁶⁵ In 1930 the same raikom supervised a total of 198 party *kollektivy* and 282 department cells which were set up in various institutions. In addition, it supervised 37 party *kollektivy* in higher educational establishments (*VUZ*) and 65 faculty cells.⁶⁶ In 1932, the Smol'ninskii raikom monitored more than 500 party *kollektivy* which were diverse in nature.⁶⁷

Secondly, these urban raikoms were considered particularly important in the process of industrialisation since they were responsible for monitoring Leningrad's

⁶¹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 13, 1928, p. 33.

⁶² *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Leningrad, 1930), no. 2, p. 5.

⁶³ *Ibid.* (Leningrad, 1933), no. 4, p. 4.

⁶⁴ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 3, 1928, p. 30.

⁶⁵ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2749, p. 81. The party *kollektivy* of this raion were predominantly those established in the soviet institutions. This was probably because the majority of Leningrad's soviet institutions were situated in this raion.

⁶⁶ *Partrabotnik*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 63.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 15, August 1932, p. 15.

industrial enterprises. In 1928, for instance, the Moskovsko-narvskii raikom was monitoring more than 100 industrial enterprises and 125,000 industrial workers within the raion.⁶⁸ This is probably why the Central Committee paid so much attention to the work of this raion party organisation: in 1928 and again in April 1930 the Central Committee investigated the work of the Moskovsko-narvskii raion organisation, highlighting its achievements and weaknesses, and suggesting improvements.⁶⁹ The Vyborgskii, Volodarskii and Vasileostrovskii raikoms also monitored a considerable number of factories in their raions. The Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom monitored a lesser number of factories: in December 1929 it monitored 51 industrial enterprises, only three of which were large scale ones.⁷⁰

Each raion party organisation held its conference (approximately once a year), where it heard and approved reports of the raikom, raion auditing commission and other raion institutions, and elected the raikom. The raikom was like a scaled-down obkom, in terms of its structure. Each raikom had its secretariat and bureau. The raikom bureau generally comprised the leading party workers of the raion, including raikom secretaries, and a number of important state officials and representatives of the major economic enterprises in the area. The day-to-day work of the raikom was carried out by a number of departments, the structure of which mirrored those of the obkom. The reorganisation of the party apparatus in 1930 also affected the structure of the raikom departments.⁷¹ In January 1930, the obkom bureau recommended that urban raikoms in Leningrad abolish their departments and, instead, organise four sectors. More sectors could be set up if necessary, but no more than six.⁷² However, just three months later in April 1930, departments were restored to the urban raikoms and 14 sectors were attached to departments. This time, it was recommended that the urban raikoms have four functional departments and one general department dealing with the technical operation of the raikom apparatus. The general department did not have its own sectors, but all the other departments had three to four sectors set up

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, nos. 12-13, 1 August 1928, p. 31.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 12-13, 1 August 1928, p. 31; *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, pp. 58-59; *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 501.

⁷⁰ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2749, p. 81.

⁷¹ In 1928, there were *orgraspredotdel*, *agitpropotdel*, department for women and information subdivision.

⁷² RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2711, p. 10.

along functional lines. The department for organisation and instruction was recommended to have three sectors: inner-party construction and cadre selection; verification of party directives and instruction; and information and statistics. Larger raions were allowed to have an additional sector for the regulation and growth of the party. The work of the cadres department was divided into four sectors: selection of economic and industrial cadres; selection of soviet and co-operative cadres; accounting; and promotion and training. The department for culture and propaganda had three sectors subdivided according to its different functions: propaganda of Marxism and Leninism; culture and daily life; and the press. The department for mass work had four sectors: mass campaigning of an industrial-economic nature; current agitation and voluntary societies; work among women workers; and rural work in the countryside and worker *shefstvo*.⁷³

By contrast, rural raikoms in the countryside were on a much smaller scale and of less importance. Since communists were sparsely distributed in the vast area of the countryside, each rural raion party organisation contained a relatively small number of party members. In January 1928, approximately 28,000 party members were living in the countryside in the Leningrad region. The number of communists in each okrug ranged from 1,200 to 7,700, and the number of party cells in each of them ranged from 61 to 262.⁷⁴ This means that okruzhkoms were supervising fewer communists and party cells than Leningrad's urban raikoms. It is obvious that rural raikoms supervised comparably small number of communists and party cells at this time. Indeed, in some rural raions there were only a few communists: about ten to fifteen.⁷⁵

With the abolition of the okruzhkoms in 1930, rural raikoms came directly under the supervision of the obkom. As the rural area in the region was divided into more than 100 raions, a total of 111 rural raikoms had been set up by July 1930.⁷⁶ Each rural raikom supervised approximately 270 communists at this time. By 1932, the size of the rural raion party organisation became larger due to the recruitment of new members in 1930 and 1931. In January 1932, a total of 75 rural raikoms were

⁷³ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2750, pp. 298-299.

⁷⁴ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 3, 1928, p. 30.

⁷⁵ *Partrabotnik*, no. 18, 25 October 1928, p. 44.

⁷⁶ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 123. This number did not include rural raikoms in the Murmansk okrug.

supervising 2,721 rural party cells containing 45,483 communists. On average each rural raikom supervised 36 party cells and 606 party members. The variety in the size of rural raion party organisations was considerable: some large ones contained more than 1,000 communists, while small ones had a party membership of between 100 and 200. The two biggest rural raikoms, Cherepovetskii and Borovicheskii, supervised over 100 party cells, while some eleven rural raikoms supervised between 50 and 100 party cells. The rest supervised less than 50 party cells.⁷⁷

The rural raion party organisation also held party conferences where the raikom were elected. In raions where there were fewer than 30 active party members, raion party conferences were replaced by raion party general meetings.⁷⁸ Each rural raikom had a secretary and a bureau.⁷⁹ In general, staff numbers in rural raikoms were relatively small. In 1930 the average number of party workers in each raikom was only four to five. Each rural raikom had a secretary and two to three instructors, responsible respectively for organisation, agitation and propaganda, and work among women. The rural raikom normally included a person responsible for accounting and information.⁸⁰

3.2 Primary party cells at the lower level

Further down, at the bottom of the party hierarchy, the primary party cells constituted the basic units of the party. Party cells were formed in the workplace, such as in offices, factories and military units, where there were at least three party members. They were normally subordinate to the okruzhkom or raikom, and the formation of cells required the approval of the next higher party organ. Each cell elected a secretary and a bureau that served for six months. Secretaries at this level of the party organisation were expected to have at least one year's party membership. As the party's main link with the mass of the population, cells were to execute party slogans and decisions among the masses, and to take an active part in the economic

⁷⁷ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 1932, pp. 30-37.

⁷⁸ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, p. 276.

⁷⁹ The rural raikom bureau often consisted of raikom secretary, *zavorg*, chairman of the raion executive committee and some of the following: raion komsomol secretary, editor of raion newspaper, chairman of raion trade unions. The average number of bureau members varied between five and seven persons. See Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party*, p. 62.

⁸⁰ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 123.

and political life in the area. In addition, they were responsible for organisational and agitation work among the masses and for the recruitment of new members and their education.⁸¹

As the party stressed the importance of extending its influence down towards the grassroots level, great importance was given to the establishment of the party cells and their role among the masses. This was particularly the case in the first FYP. As the party sought to organise cells in every workplace and in every workshop, the network of party cells expanded rapidly both in the countryside and in the city. In the Leningrad region, the primary cells grew substantially in the first FYP period. As can be seen in table 3-2, the number of party cells in the region increased from 2,265 to 4,549 between 1928 and 1933. In Leningrad city alone, their number increased from 786 to 1,803 in the same period.

Table 3-2. Number of primary party cells in Leningrad oblast, 1928-1933 (1 January)

	1928	1929	1930*	1931*	1932*	1933*
In oblast as a whole	2265	2377	2290	2663	3642	4549
In Leningrad	786	815	885	1045	1459	1803

Note: * Figures for these years did not include candidate groups.

Source: *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1974), p. 127.

3.2.1 Development of the party network in factories 1928-1931

The primary party cells in industrial enterprises, in particular, experienced great organisational development between 1928 and 1931. The change came with the launch of the industrialisation drive. As the industrial sector expanded rapidly, the party had to deal with the rapidly increasing industrial workforce. In this context, organisational matters within factories were regarded as one of keys to the overall success of industrialisation. In order to maximise the party's influence on workers and to effectively mobilise the workforce around slogans calling for greater activism and vigilance, the party sought to reach each shopfloor and shift in every factory by forming cells in smaller production units. The idea of the 'breaking up' (*razukrupnenie*) of the primary cells was strongly advocated from 1928 onwards, and

⁸¹ See the 1925 Party Rules in *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 3, pp. 483-484.

party cells which had previously been set up at either all-factory or workshop levels were broken down into smaller units, which were organised at workshop, brigade or shift levels. It was argued that this would facilitate the recruitment of workers 'from the bench' and that this would serve the party's need to exert the maximum influence on industrial workers and to efficiently guide the industrial effort at all levels within factories, to a greater degree.

On the eve of the first FYP, factory party organisations in Leningrad had a rather simple structure - a one-tier all-factory cell (*obshchezavodskaya yacheika*), or a two-tier party *kollektiv*-workshop cell (*tsekh-yacheika*). All-factory cells were organised in factories where the number of party members was not large enough, and these cells served whole factories. In factories where there were a sufficient number of party members within a workshop, party cells were organised at the workshop level as well as at the all-factory level. All-factory cells and party *kollektivy* were subordinate to the raikoms. The party *kollektiv*, responsible for all party work in the factories, were entitled to guide their workshop cells. At the lowest level of the party organisation, a relatively small number of party members were grouped together as party units (*zveno*). They were normally formed within small production units such as brigades, and they were, in turn, subordinate to the workshop cells.

In Leningrad, the creation of workshop cells dated back to 1924. In the early 1920s, the number of rank and file party members in the enterprises was relatively small, and cells could be organised only if they served whole factories, or even groups of factories. However, the increased enrolment that took place during the 'Lenin levy' of 1924-25 made it possible to create smaller party units in the enterprises, and by the end of 1924, 473 workshop cells had been created in the city.⁸² Following the first official sanction on the creation of workshop cells in 1924, more detailed guidelines were laid down in the Central Committee resolution of 29 June 1925. This resolution specified that workshop cells could be formed within a workshop or within a group of small workshops which were related to each other, and that they could be formed only in the presence of at least 25 full or candidate party members in large scale factories

⁸² G. P. Erkhov, 'Stroitel'stvo i razvitie fabrichno-zavodskikh partiinykh yacheek', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 4, 1974, pp. 77-86.

employing at least 1,000 workers.⁸³ In the years that followed, the number of workshop cells gradually increased in accordance with the general increase in party membership within factories and on the shop-floor. Moreover, the easing of conditions for creating workshop cells greatly facilitated their formation. A further Central Committee resolution adopted in May 1927 allowed the formation of workshop cells in medium sized factories by reducing the number of workers required within a factory from 1,000 to 500.⁸⁴

During the first FYP, the workshop cell, as opposed to the all-factory cell, was being heralded as the vital link in the factory party structure as the party sought to reach every workshop. Accordingly, more workshop cells were created in Leningrad. In May 1928 the Leningrad obkom adopted a resolution on the status of workshop cells, which stipulated that workshop cells should be set up according to the territorial - production division. This resolution also specified that cells could be formed within a workshop containing at least 300 workers and 15 full or candidate party members,⁸⁵ instead of 500 workers and 25 party members, which had been the rule since 1927. This must have made it easier to form workshop cells. Indeed, there was a sharp increase in their number between 1928 and 1932. In March 1928 there were 760 workshop cells containing within them 49,421 of Leningrad's party members in a total of 123 industrial enterprises. Each workshop cell had on average 65 party members. However, there was a huge size differential: the smallest workshop cell contained only six members whereas the biggest one contained as many as 228.⁸⁶ By January 1929 some 1,129 workshop cells had been formed in the city. The trend towards creating more workshop cells continued in 1930 and 1931. The figure had increased to 1,398 by January 1930, to 2,600 by January 1931 and to 3,700 by June 1932 (see table 3-3). This means that, in effect, there was a five-fold increase in the number of workshop cells between March 1928 and June 1932. This was a magnificent increase, bearing in mind that party industrial *kollektiv*y saw less than a

⁸³ *Pervichnaia partiinaia organizatsiia: Dokumenty KPSS* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1970), p. 101.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁸⁵ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, pp. 202-203.

⁸⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 1928, p. 27.

two-fold increase in their number between October 1927 and January 1933 (see table 3-3).

Table 3-3. Number of primary party cells in Leningrad, 1927-1934

	<i>Kollektivy</i>		<i>Of which industrial kollektivy</i>		<i>Workshop cells</i>	
January 1927	746	(1)				
October 1927	782	(2)	439	(3)	712	(4)
January 1928	786	(1)				
March 1928					760	(5)
June 1928	798	(6)	453	(6)	879	(4)
January 1929	815	(1)	437	(7)	1,129	(4)
January 1930*	885	(1)			1,398	(8)
	985	(9)			1,391	(9)
April 1930	946	(10)	552	(10)		
January 1931*	1,045	(1)	617	(11)		
	1,045	(9)			1,917	(9)
	994	(12)			2,600	(12)
January 1932	1,459	(1)	635	(11)		
April 1932					2,838	(8)
June 1932	1,380	(12)			3,700	(12)
January 1933	1,803	(1)	710	(11)	1,823	(13)
January 1934	1,677	(1)				

Note: * Different figures were given for January 1930 and January 1931.

Sources: (1) *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh*, p. 127; (2) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Leningrad, 1929), no. 1, p. 5; (3) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 16 July 1928, p. 37; (4) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh*, no. 1, p. 38; (5) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 1928, p. 27; (6) *Ibid.*, no. 10, August 1928, p. 30; (7) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh*, no. 1, p. 26; (8) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 21; (9) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 66; (10) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1930), no. 2, p. 13; (11) *Ibid.* (1933), no. 4, pp. 4-6; (12) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 11; (13) *Ibid.*, nos. 9-10, May 1933, p. 75.

At the same time, the 'breaking up' of primary cells led to the creation of cells in smaller production units such as shifts and brigades. As early as March 1928, it was claimed that the stage of establishing independent party work in workshops was more

or less completed and that the next step would be the introduction of party groups within subdivisions of workshops and the introduction of shift and workshop unit organisers. While stressing the importance of the transfer of the centre of gravity of party work to the workshop, the further 'breaking up' of workshop cells was called for.⁸⁷ It was argued that party representation in ever lower ranks would strengthen party organisation within the enterprises, because newly created cells within workshops and shifts would inevitably lead to an increase in the participation of workers, especially of political activists.⁸⁸ Later in 1930, the sixteenth Party Congress finally endorsed the idea of the 'breaking up' of the party organisations into even lower ranks and confirmed that the lower levels of party organisation should be organised along production lines.⁸⁹

In Leningrad, the possibility of creating shift cells (*smennye iacheiki*) was already being given serious consideration in 1928.⁹⁰ Although the nation-wide introduction of the uninterrupted working week and the seven hours working day came only at the end of 1929, many factories in the city, in particular the textile factories, ran two to three shifts by this time. This caused a serious problem in carrying out party work. Party members working in the second or third shifts were not able to participate in party meetings since they had to work when meetings were held. Soon it became evident that with the existing workshop cell system, party-mass work could not be carried out effectively in the second or third shifts. Consequently, the issue arose as to how to organise party cells within workshops which were running shifts. For some, organising cells in every shift appeared to be the only solution to the problem. In fact, by February 1928, shift cells had been created in all large-scale textile factories in the Volodarskii and Moskovsko-narvskii raions and some textile factories in the Vyborskii raion.⁹¹

Although the idea of creating party cells within shifts was controversial, it was given official sanction in Leningrad in early 1928. At the March 1928 plenum, the Leningrad obkom approved the formation of shift cells in factories which were

⁸⁷ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, nos. 9-10, 26 March 1928, p. 14.

⁸⁸ *Pravda*, 12 October 1928, p. 5.

⁸⁹ *XVI s'ezd VKP(b): Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1930), p. 65.

⁹⁰ For example, see *Partrabotnik*, no. 3, February 1928, pp. 26-29.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

running shifts, and urged factory party organisations to create cells within shifts.⁹² An obkom bureau resolution, adopted two months later, specified that independent cells could be set up in shifts which contained at least 15 full or candidate party members. This resolution also clarified that shift cells could be formed only within the shifts where the shift personnel was stable. In shifts where the shift personnel was changing, party organisers were to be sent to the shifts instead of cells being created in such shifts.⁹³

Despite the official endorsement, the idea of shift cells did not take hold immediately. Although virtually all factories ran two to three shifts after the introduction of the uninterrupted working week and the seven hours working day at the end of 1929, shift cells were not formed in many of Leningrad's factories. This was more the case in heavy industry factories than in light industry. Obviously some party officials resented the complications it involved. This caused a delay in the formation of shift cells and it was only in the summer of 1931 that more attention was paid to this matter. In the Narvskii raion, for instance, shift cells had not been created in many factories by April 1931. In the rubber factory no. 1 of the Krasnyi treugol'nik, shift cells had been set up only in three workshops by this time. The situations were similar to this in other divisions of the factory. This was a common feature for most factories in this raion.⁹⁴ In August of that year, the review of the party work within this raion's factories revealed that a considerable number of shifts did not have party cells of their own. Only then did the question of organising shift cells come to the fore. Consequently, shift cells were organised in almost all factories of this raion in August. For instance, 16 shift cells were created at the Tyre factory and ten such cells at the Promtekhnik factory. At Krasnyi putilovets, shift cells were being organised in the iron foundry and the tractor-assembly department. One workshop at Krasnyi putilovets even abolished the existing workshop cell and organised four shift cells instead.⁹⁵

However, the situation did not improve greatly. In March 1932 when the party structures of the Leningrad regional organisations were reviewed, it was revealed that

⁹² *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 1928, p. 4.

⁹³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 208.

⁹⁴ *Partrabotnik*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 48.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 15, August 1931, pp. 8-9.

workshop cells were still predominant within heavy industry. Shift cells were rather rare and cells were not organised even when shifts had a stable composition of workers. Reportedly, there was a widespread fear that breaking workshop cells into smaller units would complicate the party committees' leadership over their cells.⁹⁶

At Krasnyi putilovets, for instance, only 22 out of 103 workshops had organised shift cells. At Elektrosila, only 11 out of 66 workshops contained shift cells. No shift cells were organised in the Stalin factory and the Mart' shipbuilding works. In most cases, this was due to the fact that the shifts did not have a stable composition of workers. However, even when they had a stable composition of workers, cells were not always organised within the shifts. Some party officials disliked the idea of creating too many different kinds of party cells within the factory because they feared this would complicate the factory party committees' leadership over their cells. All of these factors contributed to the sustaining of the previously established all-workshop cells. For instance, in the first mechanical workshop at Elektrosila, no shift cells were organised despite the fact that all four shifts had a stable composition and a sufficient number of workers and party members. Instead, one workshop cell was preserved there. This was also the case in the electrical assembly workshop of the same factory. Although this workshop ran two shifts with a stable composition of workers, no shift cells were organised. Instead, there was one workshop cell, which was subdivided into ten shift-party units and one *zveno* cell. At the Stalin factory, the factory party committee's organisation department stuck to the idea of preserving all-workshop cells because it was felt that this would make it possible to deal with questions concerning the whole workshop while shift cells could only deal with questions concerning their own shifts.⁹⁷

Below the workshop cell level were party units (*zveno*) organised in smaller production units such as brigades. It was this level of party organisation that was strongly emphasised from 1930 onwards. At the third Leningrad oblast party conference in June 1930, Kirov emphasised that the 'centre of gravity' of party work should be transferred to even smaller party units, that is *zveno*.⁹⁸ Accordingly, it was

⁹⁶ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 5, March 1932, p. 24.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 26.

⁹⁸ *Stenograficheskii otchet tret'ei Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b): Biulleten'* (Leningrad, 1930), no. 6, p. 35.

recommended that party units should be set up wherever there were primary production units. The regulations adopted by the obkom bureau on 24 July 1930 specified that party units should be set up along production lines in all primary production units such as brigades, mills, and assembly lines, which contained ten to thirty workers, irrespective of the number of party members within the unit. Party units came under the supervision of workshop cells or the party *kollektiv* if there was no workshop cell. Workers were to be distributed by the workshop cell bureaux in agreement with the party *kollektiv* or committee bureau, taking into account local conditions and the particular situation of each workshop.⁹⁹ At the same time, the regulations allowed party units containing no fewer than 15 party members to be converted into *zveno* cells within factories where the party committee existed.¹⁰⁰

The creation of *zveno* cells was deemed necessary because of the ever-increasing size of party units. Indeed, as the party membership in factories sharply increased from 1928 onwards, the number of full and candidate party members contained in one unit increased rapidly. As a result, some party units became too large to be served by just one unit organiser. In May 1930, some party units contained about 80 to 100 workers of whom 20 to 30 were party members.¹⁰¹ In the Volodarskii raion, out of 1,211 party units, 530 contained more than seven party members and 218 contained more than 11.¹⁰²

Despite strong emphasis on the importance of party units, party units were not always strengthened as they should have been. This was the case in the Elektrosila factory. According to a report on this factory's party work in October 1930, party units were not sufficiently strengthened: they were not restructured along production lines in a number of workshop cells; unit organisers were poorly prepared for their work; and workshop cells did not rely upon unit leaders.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, some 371 *zveno* cells and 9230 party units had been created in Leningrad by the end of 1930.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰¹ The diversity in size of party units was huge, however. Some units contained only ten to 13 workers including two to three communists at this time. See *Partrabotnik*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 19.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁰³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 74.

¹⁰⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 66.

The practice of creating *zveno* cells was later on confirmed by the Central Committee. In March 1931, the Central Committee adopted a resolution 'on party and mass work in workshops and brigade', which specified that in large scale enterprises, party units containing no fewer than fifteen party members should be transformed to *zveno* cells.¹⁰⁵ After this official endorsement, the process of converting party units into *zveno* cells was accelerated. As a result, the number of *zveno* cells created in the city had reached 797 by the end of 1931.¹⁰⁶ By this time, the number of party units together with *zveno* cells reached 11,430 in Leningrad's enterprises, which was a considerable increase from the June 1930 figure of 9,304.¹⁰⁷

However, party units were not always created along production lines as had been specified in party resolutions. The case of some factories in the Narvskii raion illustrates this. In August 1931, party units were organised along production lines in most workshops in this raion. In the steam workshop of the Krasnyi putilovets, for instance, all five shifts had on average five to six party units, and all of these units were formed along production lines. By contrast, in the repair-auxiliary workshop, one party unit had been made up of party members working in different shifts until the very recent past. In one evening shift at Krasnyi treugol'nik, there were no party units.¹⁰⁸

Although the practice of forming party units which did not correspond closely with production lines was criticised in 1931, it carried on into 1932. The review on party structures of the Leningrad regional party organisation in March 1932 revealed that some party units were made of party members working in many different brigades or shifts. This practice was deemed inappropriate because of the incorrect way in which party units had been formed. It was emphasised again that party units should be comprised of party members from one brigade working in the same shift.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, many party units in Leningrad were made up of party members from more than one brigades or shifts. At Krasnyi putilovets, for instance, only 12 per cent of party units were formed in the approved manner. Some 65 per cent were made up of party

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁰⁶ *Otchet Leningradskogo oblastnogo i gorodskogo komitetov VKP(b): 4-i oblastnoi i gorodskoi partiinnoi konferentsii* (Leningrad: 1932), p. 87.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁰⁸ *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, August 1931, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁹ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 5, March 1932, p. 24.

members from two to ten brigades, ten per cent from more than ten brigades, and 13 per cent from three different shifts. It was argued that this made it difficult for party-mass work to be carried out effectively in brigades and shifts.¹¹⁰

In April, an article published in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* revealed that there were four different kinds of party units in Leningrad: those containing party members in the same shift and brigade; those containing party members from one shift but many brigades; those containing party members from many shifts but one brigade; and those containing party members from many shifts and brigades. For instance, party units in the iron foundry of the tractor department were made up of party members working in one shift but in three to five different brigades. One *zveno* cell at the Stalin factory contained all 35 party members of the vertical-lathe brigade, even though they were working in four different shifts. Another *zveno* cell of the same factory was made up of all 29 party members of the turners' brigade in spite of their working in four different shifts. *Zveno* cells containing party members from many shifts and brigades were considered the worst of all, since they were, in fact, not *zveno* but all-factory cells. Many *zveno* cells at Krasnyi putilovets had been formed this way. Some 191 workers, including 30 party members, were working in the foundry-instrument department, and one *zveno* cell contained all its party members. Likewise, one *zveno* cell contained all 159 party members of the instruments workshop. This kind of *zveno* cell was common in the instruments, transport and turbine departments of the Krasnyi putilovets.¹¹¹

All in all, the 'breaking up' of party cells resulted in the creation of far more complex factory party organisations during the first FYP period. Factory party organisations were set up in smaller production units, resulting in a sharp increase in the number of primary cells in the enterprises. The rather simple party structure - a one-tier party cell, or a two-tier party committee-workshop cell system - had evolved into a multi-tier structure by 1932. However, the proliferation of experimental party structures in the industrial enterprise continued only until the summer of 1932.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, pp. 27-28.

3.2.2 Evolution of the party apparatus in factories 1928-1931

As with many other aspects of the structure of factory party organisations, 1928-31 was a formative period in the development of an increasingly complex administrative machinery. Due to the 'breaking up' of the party cells and the party's increasing involvement in the economy, the party apparatus in the factories expanded and evolved into a more complex structure. In early 1928, a party apparatus, responsible for the factory's day-to-day party work, was set up at factory-wide or workshop cell levels, but later within smaller party units such as shift and *zveno* cells. The introduction of a functional-sector system in 1930 also affected the structure of the party apparatus. All these factors contributed to the creation of a more complicated party apparatus in the factories.

The party issued detailed guidelines as to how to organise party cells and their apparatus. The resolutions on the status of party *kollektiv* containing workshop cells with them and on the status of workshop cells, adopted by the obkom bureau on 23 May 1928, provide useful information on their respective structures. Party *kollektiv* were the leading party organs at factory level and took responsibility for all party work within the factories. The highest organ of the *kollektiv* was a general assembly of all party members, convened by the *kollektiv* bureau once a month. At the general assembly, delegates to the raion conference were selected, and a bureau and an auditing commission were elected.¹¹² A *kollektiv* bureau that served for six months could have a maximum of 15 full members and five candidates. A *kollektiv* bureau was responsible for preparing work plans for the *kollektiv*, for guiding the activity of the workshop cells, and for recruiting new members. It was to meet three times a month and was obliged to report once every three months to the general assembly. A secretary was chosen from among the bureau members.¹¹³

Workshop cells held general meetings convened by their bureau twice a month.¹¹⁴ Workshop cell plenums were open to everybody, irrespective of party status. At the plenum, workshop cell members confirmed their work plans and discussed production matters concerning their own workshop as well as the whole

¹¹² RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 201.

¹¹³ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 202.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 209.

factory, disciplinary issues and questions concerning agitation work among non-party workers. Moreover, they heard the workshop cell bureau's report on its work at the plenum. They also heard the reports of communist factions, Komsomol cells and individual communists, as well as the reports on work among women and the effective use of wall newspapers. Workshop cells were given the right to decide on questions of recruitment, transfer from candidate to full party membership and the promotion of communists 'from the bench' to more responsible work. A workshop cell bureau was elected every six months, and it was to be made of three to eleven full members and two to three candidates.¹¹⁵ A workshop cell secretary was chosen from among the bureau members.¹¹⁶

One notable feature of these resolutions was that 1928 saw an increase in the number of bureau members both at the *kollektiv* and workshop cell levels. In 1927, the *kollektiv* bureaux could have a maximum of nine full and three candidate members, and the workshop cell bureaux could have a maximum of five full and two candidate members.¹¹⁷ In 1928, both the *kollektiv* and workshop cell bureaux could have almost twice as many members as in 1927. In particular, the increase at the workshop cell level was considerable. This is probably because the workshop cell bureaux, rather than the all-factory cell bureaux responsible for the whole plant, became the focus of party work during the first FYP. Indeed, the importance of party work at workshop cell level was continuously stressed throughout these years. In addition, workshop cells were given full statutory rights (*ustavnye prava*).¹¹⁸ By June 1930 over half of Leningrad's workshop cells had been granted the right to independently recruit new party members.¹¹⁹ In 1931, these rights were extended to all workshop cells.¹²⁰

At the same time, 1928 saw a formation of the factory party committees in Leningrad. In 1928, instead of the ordinary party *kollektiv* bureaux, a number of full-scale party committees were set up in the city's largest enterprises. This move was given official sanction in January 1929, when these newly-formed committees were

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 210.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 209.

¹¹⁷ *Pervichnaia partiinaia organizatsiia*, pp. 135 and 142.

¹¹⁸ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 379.

¹¹⁹ Cited from P. O. Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan: The Case of Leningrad* (CREES Discussion Papers, SIPS, no. 24, University of Birmingham, 1983), part 2, p. 28.

¹²⁰ Cited from Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin*, p. 280.

given a number of wide-ranging rights and responsibilities concerning the acceptance of new party members.¹²¹ Their responsibilities included monitoring the administration, selecting cadres and making practical decisions about important industrial questions.¹²² Moreover, they were responsible for the overall direction of party work in the enterprises by co-ordinating a number of separate cell units within the factory. At the onset of industrialisation, factory party committees were seen as particularly important links in the party's chain of command, and enjoyed a status somewhere between that of a raikom and an ordinary *kollektiv*. In general, they were much bigger in size than the former all-factory cell bureau.

The status of the factory party committee, confirmed by the obkom bureau in June 1929, was as follows. The factory party committee was subordinate to the raikom and assumed responsibility for all party work in the factory. Its highest organ was either a general assembly of all party members or a factory party conference, which convened at least once every two months. The party committees were elected for a period of one year. The size of a party committee was based on the size of the workforce within the factory: it could have a maximum of 25 full and three to five candidate members in factories with fewer than 7,000 workers, and a maximum of 35 members in factories with over 7,000 workers. Plenums of the party committee convened, as a rule, twice a month to discuss and make decisions regarding questions of industrial, mass and party work in the factory, to hear reports from other organisations, to confirm the formation of workshop cells and to discuss questions concerning party recruitment. Factory party committees had to report back to communists at plenums at least once every six months. Plenums elected a bureau composed of seven to nine members, and also a secretary who should have been a party member for at least five years. The bureau, as an executive organ, was to fulfil party directives and resolve practical problems.¹²³

In Leningrad, seven factory party committees had been set up by January 1929.¹²⁴ Officially, factory party committees were to be set up only in large scale

¹²¹ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 4, 15 February 1929, p. 10; *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 8 March 1929, p. 6.

¹²² *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 379.

¹²³ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 6, 1929, pp. 24-25.

¹²⁴ *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrah* (Leningrad, 1929), no. 1, p. 38.

enterprises with more than 5,000 workers and at least 1,000 party members, according to a Central Committee resolution of January 1929.¹²⁵ However, this stipulation was largely ignored in practice. By June 1929, another 17 party committees had been set up in the large-scale factories such as the Proletarskaia pobeda, Severnaia verf', Krasnyi vyborzhets, Krasnaia zaria, Krasnyi gvozdil'shchik, Krasnoe znamia, Rabochii, Metal, Karl Marx, Lenin, and Khalturin factories. The information on these factories showed that, of the 17 enterprises, only two (the Rabochii and Khalturin factories) had more than 5,000 workers, and only two (the Krasnyi vyborzhets and Goszavod no. 4 factories) had a party membership of over 1,000.¹²⁶

In November 1929, the obkom reduced the number of workers and party members required for the formation of the party committee to 3,000 and 500 respectively. In factories that did not meet these requirements, a party committee could be established only with the sanction of the obkom.¹²⁷ Later in March 1931, the Central Committee confirmed the practice of organising party committees in large enterprises, and called for this practice to be extended to all enterprises with no fewer than 500 party members.¹²⁸

The easing of the conditions for setting up a factory party committee, together with the growth in both the workforce and party membership in factories, seems to have facilitated the formation of factory party committees. Indeed, the number of factory party committees increased gradually from 1930 onwards. By January 1930, 40 such committees had been set up in the city, and they contained 47 per cent of all party members in enterprises which between them accounted for 41 per cent of the city's industrial workforce.¹²⁹ By January 1931 another 13 committees had been established in the city. In particular, 1931 saw a sharp increase in their number, mainly due to the Central Committee's endorsement: the figure doubled only within a

¹²⁵ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 1929, p. 6.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 5, 1929, p. 14.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 11, 1929, p. 15. It was also decided that a factory party committee should organise 3 units (*chast'*) - organisation, agitation-propaganda and work among femal workers - and each units should have a board (*kollegiia*), composed of 7-8 persons.

¹²⁸ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 66.

¹²⁹ B. V. Pavlov, *Rost i ukreplenie pervichnykh i nizovykh partiinykh organizatsii v promyshlennosti v pervye gody sotsialisticheskoi industrializatsii, 1926-1932 gg.* (Leningrad, 1972), p. 119.

year (see table 3-4). By January 1933, a total of 115 party committees had been set up in 101 enterprises in Leningrad.¹³⁰

Table 3-4. Number of factory party committees in Leningrad, 1929-1933

<i>1929</i> <i>January</i> (1)	<i>1929</i> <i>June</i> (2)	<i>1930</i> <i>January</i> (3)	<i>1930</i> <i>April</i> (4)	<i>1931</i> <i>January</i> (5)	<i>1931</i> <i>July</i> (6)	<i>1932</i> <i>January</i> (5)	<i>1933</i> <i>January</i> (5)
7	24	40	45	53	85	106	115

Sources: (1) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh*, no. 1, p. 38; (2) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 1929, p. 14; (3) B. V. Pavlov, *Rost i ukreplenie pervichnykh i nizovykh partiinykh organizatsii v promyshlennosti v pervye gody sotsialisticheskoi industrializatsii 1926-1932 gg.* (Leningrad, 1972), p. 119; (4) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1931), no. 3, pp. 6-7; (5) *Ibid.* (1933), no. 4, pp. 4-6; (6) *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Moscow: Partiinoe izdatel'stvo, 1932), no. 11, p. 55.

Lower down, party units did not have their own apparatus. As early as 1927, it was established that there should be a unit organiser (*zvenorg* or *zvenovoi partorganizator*) in each party unit.¹³¹ The obkom bureau resolution of 23 May 1928 gave a clearer definition of the status and role of unit organisers. An organiser was allotted to each unit. They were sent by the workshop cell bureaux and this was to be confirmed at the workshop cell general meeting. If a factory did not contain any workshop cell, party unit organisers were sent directly by the *kollektiv* bureaux, which was to be confirmed at the *kollektiv* general assembly. In principle, unit organisers were allocated according to production-territorial characteristics of each unit - shopfloor, shift and workshop. The maximum number of workers in each party unit was established as 30, irrespective of the number of party members within it. This allowed a unit organiser to deal with fewer than 30 workers.¹³²

Unit organisers' work was supervised by the workshop cell bureaux: the latter were to systematically instruct unit organisers and keep them informed of the party's latest decisions and invite unit organisers to the bureau meetings in order to allow them to discuss important questions concerning the work of unit groups.¹³³ Unit

¹³⁰ For the number of enterprises containing factory party committees, see *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 379.

¹³¹ *Pervichnaia partiinaia organizatsiia*, p. 101.

¹³² RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 217.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

organisers had to report on their work to the workshop cell bureaux as well as to the *kollektiv* bureaux. Unit organisers' meetings were held once a month at the workshop cell level, and once every two months at the *kollektiv* bureau level. In *kollektiv* which did not contain workshop cells, unit organisers' meetings were held at least once a month. At raion level, raikoms were responsible for organising all-raion unit organisers' meetings at least twice a year.¹³⁴

In July 1930, another resolution on the status of unit organisers was adopted by the obkom bureau. Unit organisers, who took responsibility for political leadership and organising party-mass work, were to be elected at party unit meetings, and their election was to be confirmed by either the workshop cell bureau or the *kollektiv* bureau (if there was no workshop cell bureau). In the event of there being fewer than three party members, a unit organiser was to be chosen by the workshop cell bureau. In a unit group with a shift working system and containing at least five party members, a unit organiser could have one or two assistants. Unit organisers were elected every six months and they had to report on their work before a party unit prior to the next election. In addition, they were responsible for organising unit meetings no more than twice a month. At these meetings, unit members were to discuss political, economic, production and party questions as well as questions concerning matters in their own particular factory or brigade.¹³⁵

As had previously been the case, workshop cell bureaux were responsible for guiding unit organisers. This time, it was made explicit that the organisation and instruction sector attached to the workshop cell bureau was responsible for giving systematic instructions to unit organisers. Accordingly, unit organisers were asked to work closely in coordination with the organisation and instruction sector. Workshop cell bureaux were to invite unit organisers and their assistants to bureau meetings, to discuss important questions concerning the work of party units. Workshop cell bureaux were to hear the summary report of unit organisers on their work. Each unit organiser had to report at *zveno* cell meetings as well as at the *kollektiv* (or party committee) bureau meetings. Unit organisers' meetings were to be held once a month at shopfloor level, and once every two months at the *kollektiv* (or partkom) bureau

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 220.

¹³⁵ Ibid., fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 18.

level. All-raion meetings of unit organisers were to be held at least once every six months. If necessary, unit organisers' meetings could be held in a particular industrial sector such as metals, textiles, leather, and the railway.¹³⁶

In later years, as the number of party members within each unit increased, the workload became too heavy for a single individual to handle as a unit organiser. Therefore, there were debates as to whether party units should be allowed to select a deputy unit organiser or to have their own bureaux.¹³⁷ Despite doubts over the benefit of creating their own apparatus in such small units, bureaux were, in fact, created in some large party units in the city even before the official sanction in 1930.¹³⁸ Later that year, when large units were converted into *zveno* cells, they were allowed to have their own bureau and a secretary. According to the obkom bureau resolution of July 1930, *zveno* cells could elect their own three-person bureaux, including a secretary. These elected bureaux and *zveno* cell secretaries were to serve for a period of six months. The highest organ of a *zveno* cell was the general meeting of all its members. *Zveno* cells were under the leadership of workshop cells, and had rights similar to workshop cells.¹³⁹ In *zveno* cells as well as in party units, there was no organisational subdivision.¹⁴⁰ Later in March 1931, the Central Committee confirmed that *zveno* cells could elect their own bureaux.¹⁴¹

One of the most notable developments concerning the party apparatus in the factories was the creation of commissions in 1928-29. Commissions were formed as a part of the administrative organs within the cells, and their formation was considered necessary to take some of the technical work off the shoulders of the cell secretary. Thus, commissions were increasingly seen as important for the implementation of decisions already taken at the bureau level. The party's day-to-day work was distributed between two or three permanent commissions attached to the factory *kollektiv* bureaux. These commissions were responsible for conducting much of the party's routine work: working out work plans for the *kollektiv* and workshop cells;

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

¹³⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 11, May 1930, p.46.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.46.

¹³⁹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 19.

¹⁴⁰ P. Lysakov, *Partrabota v promyshlennom raione: Opyt perestroiki partraboty v narvskoi organizatsii* (Leningrad, 1931), p. 59.

¹⁴¹ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 66.

organising members' party duties; supervising women's organisers; processing applications for party membership; monitoring attendance at party meetings; enforcing party discipline, including the regular payment of party dues; and organising mass agitation campaigns on major holidays.

According to data from the obkom's information-statistics section, published in March 1928, a commission system was spreading rapidly throughout the city. By the end of 1927 almost every large *kollektiv* bureau and workshop cell bureau had three or four permanent commissions, and some larger ones had as many as seven. The most common were organisational, agitation, women's, party history and conflict commissions. In the city as a whole there were over 500 such commissions, over 3,000 party members working within them.¹⁴² In May 1928, the obkom bureau, in its resolution concerning the status of party *kollektiv*y containing workshop cells, confirmed that factory *kollektiv* bureaux could set up three permanent commissions - for organisational work, agitation and propaganda work and work among women - and, if necessary, temporary commissions.¹⁴³

The growing importance of the workshop cell as a level of party organisation and the increase in their number led to much discussion concerning the possibility of setting up commissions attached to the workshop cell bureaux. Despite the criticism that they duplicated the commission system at different levels of the factory party organisations, commissions were set up at workshop cell level as early as 1928. In May, the obkom bureau confirmed that, with the approval of the *kollektiv* bureau, workshop cell bureaux could set up permanent commissions - for instance, those for organisational work and work of agitation and propaganda - and temporary commissions.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, Leningrad was the first place in the country where commissions were formed at the workshop cell bureau level. For instance, in August 1928, the two largest workshops of the Baltic shipbuilding works, containing 800 and 1,500 workers including 120 and 230 party members respectively, had four commissions attached to workshop cell bureaux - three permanent commissions for

¹⁴² *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, March 1928, pp. 14-19.

¹⁴³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 202. Temporary commissions could be set up in order to carry out specific tasks.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 211.

agitation, cultural work and conflict resolution and one temporary commission for production control.¹⁴⁵

The creation of workshop cell commissions was justified by the role they might play in encouraging workshop cell bureaux to concentrate on more important questions without occupying themselves with minor everyday jobs.¹⁴⁶ In an article in *Partrabotnik*, it was suggested that workshop cells with more than 70 party members should create commissions for organisational and agitation-propaganda work in order to make workshop cell bureaux' work easier.¹⁴⁷ There was, however, some confusion about the work of commissions. In the Volodarskii raion, some workshop cell commissions did not have a clear understanding of their own roles and confused their responsibilities with those of other commissions, and not all commissions were able to plan their own work and specify the methods of their work.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, temporary commissions did not always operate as they should have done: some were set up where they were not necessary; the work was distributed unevenly; and there was no clear direction in the work undertaken; and some commissions made preliminary decisions on the matters under discussion.¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, the commission system was adopted at even lower levels such as the shift cells. By mid-1928 the simple commission system was being affected by the development of shift working and an increase in the number of workshop cells. By November 1929, it had become the norm to create commissions in all three shift cell bureaux.¹⁵⁰ However, this commission system was a short-lived experiment, since it was replaced by a sector system in early 1930.

In January 1930 the entire party apparatus was reorganised along functional lines and a sector system was introduced. This feature of the reorganisation was in turn reflected at the factory level, where the party apparatus continued to expand in order to keep pace with the growth in membership. In response to the establishment of sectors within the obkom and raikoms, factory party organisations reorganised their work. In the summer of 1930 a number of Leningrad's biggest industrial enterprises

¹⁴⁵ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 24, 10 August 1928, p. 19.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 25, 22 August 1928, p. 13.

¹⁴⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, 1 September 1928, p. 16.

¹⁴⁸ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 25, 22 August 1928, p. 13.

¹⁴⁹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, 1 September 1928, p. 17.

¹⁵⁰ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 1, November 1929, p. 35.

adopted the functional-sectoral system. The main development involved replacing the existing system of three commissions by a much larger number of sectors. The functions of the previous commissions were more extensively subdivided and separate sectors were created for each division of work.¹⁵¹ The introduction of a sector system was believed to enhance responsibility for party work, improve the quality of work, and draw more activists into party work by giving them concrete party obligations.¹⁵²

There was, however, much confusion about whether sectors should be set up at lower levels of factory party organisations, and how many sectors should be set up at each level. For example, the Elektrozavod's party committee in Moscow, which was held up as a model of a progressive party organisation, set up 18 sectors. It also set up 18 sectors in larger workshop cells and five sectors in smaller ones.¹⁵³ However, the Elektrozavod system with 18 sectors was considered unsuitable, even for the heavily industrialised Moskovskii-narvskii raion of Leningrad. Instead, a maximum of nine sectors was recommended: instruction; information and registration; party growth and recruitment; production tasks and socialist competition; propaganda; mass agitation; *kul'turno-bytovoi* work; cadres; and *shefstvo*, voluntary societies and work with national minorities.¹⁵⁴ At the same time, criticism of the practice of setting up too many sectors at the factory party committee level was voiced in party journals. A multiplicity of sectors, it argued, created parallelism in the party's leadership, and simply led to the formalistic creation of sectors which existed only on paper. It was accordingly suggested that a maximum of four sectors should be set up at this level: organisation and instruction; cadres; propaganda; and mass work. It was also advised that full-time officials should head the sectors created within a large scale party committee.¹⁵⁵

Finally, on 17 June 1930, the obkom secretariat adopted a resolution concerning this matter and recommended that four sectors - organisation and instruction, cadres, propaganda and mass work - be set up within the factory party committees. Workshop cell bureaux were allowed to set up a much larger number of sectors, such as six to

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, no. 9, May 1930, pp. 25-28.

¹⁵² Lyshakov, *Partrabota v promyshlennom raione*, p. 28.

¹⁵³ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1930, p. 63.

¹⁵⁴ A. Gilinski, *Partiacheiki na khoziaistvennom fronte* (Leningrad, 1930), p. 60.

¹⁵⁵ *Partrabotnik*, no. 12, May 1930, p. 25.

eight. On 29 November 1930 the obkom secretariat adopted another resolution, which regulated the number of sectors in medium and small size enterprises. Party *kollektiv*y and workshop cells in such enterprises could have a maximum of four sectors. In the *kollektiv*y and workshop cells containing fewer than twenty party members, sectors should not be set up, or if it was absolutely necessary, only a minimal number of sectors (the suggested number was two) could be set up. Party units were not allowed to set up any sectors, and their various tasks were to be distributed among their members by unit organisers.¹⁵⁶

The obkom secretariat resolution of November 1930 gave detailed guidelines as to how to organise sectors in medium and small size enterprises. Heads of sectors should be appointed by the corresponding bureau, either from among bureau members or among party activists. A number of party members should be involved in the work of each sector and assistant heads could be chosen from among them. It was warned that sectors should not duplicate the work of party organisations at the level immediately below them or the work of other non-party organs. Sectors should carry out their work exclusively through the *kollektiv* (or workshop cell) bureaux. It was recommended that sectors should not simply issue instructions in written documents, but should also, as far as possible, carry out their duties by means of personal contact and instruction.¹⁵⁷

Each sector's responsibilities were defined as follows. The organisation and instruction sector took responsibilities which reflected these objectives: self-criticism and inner-party democracy; checking the fulfilment of party directives such as *promfinplan* and reducing costs; the selection, education and promotion of party cadres; the growth and regulation of party membership; the development of mass social organisations such as trade unions; and monitoring the implementation of party decisions by party factions within non-party organisations and finally, information and statistics. The sector for culture, propaganda and daily life was expected to undertake a range of different but related tasks: organising educational networks within the party; work with party candidates; checking the work of the party factions of trade unions concerning the elimination of illiteracy; supervising the work of

¹⁵⁶ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2754, p. 59.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

factory newspapers; work with worker correspondents; and the selection, assessment and promotion of cultural cadres.¹⁵⁸

The main responsibilities of the mass work sector were as follows: mobilising workers as well as administrative and technical personnel to implement party directives on the *promfinplan*, cutting costs, improving the quality of output, improving labour productivity and discipline; socialist competition and the shock-worker movement; monitoring the work of the production-economic sectors of trade union factory committees; encouraging workers to participate in production meetings; guiding mass workers' control on cooperation; conducting various political campaigns (preparing meetings, leaflets and demonstrations); guiding worker *shefstvo* over the Red Army and the countryside; and guiding mass work among national minorities. The cadres sector was responsible for the following objectives: keeping records on all factory and workshop cell cadres; monitoring the implementation of party directives regarding cadres and promotion (*vydvizhenie*); instructing the corresponding sectors of lower-level party organisations with regard to cadres and promotion; keeping records on administrative and technical cadres as well as those promoted; creating cadre reserves; analysing the work of individual workers and suggesting necessary changes in party personnel.¹⁵⁹

Despite specific guidance given by the obkom, confusion on how to set up sectors still continued in 1931. In March of that year, a Central Committee resolution confirmed that seven or eight sectors could be set up within workshop cells in order to carry out various work of the party. This resolution also made it clear that sectors should not be set up in workshops with fewer than thirty party members, nor in *zveno* cells nor in party units, and that party work should be distributed among all members in such cells or units.¹⁶⁰ Apparently, in Leningrad, there was a great deal of doubt about setting up too many sectors in workshop cells.¹⁶¹ Many were critical of workshop cells' setting up too many sectors. However, there were some who argued

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 60-61.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 61-62.

¹⁶⁰ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 66

¹⁶¹ N. Emel'ianov, *Na khodu perestroiki - iz opyta partiinoi raboty v Leningrade* (Leningrad: Ogiz-priboi, 1931), p. 53.

that more sectors should be set up in factories. For instance, in the Narvskii raion, it was recommended that eight to ten sectors be set up at the workshop level.¹⁶²

As confusion continued in 1931, sectors were formed and structured in a different way in each factory. In the Narvskii raion, for instance, there was a considerable degree of variation across factories, although the four sector system was the most common at the factory party committee level. In some factories such as the Krasnyi khimik, sectors were not created at all. In the Sovetskaia zvezda factory, only one sector - mass work - was created. By contrast, some *kollektivy* created an additional sector which was responsible for party recruitment.¹⁶³ At Krasnyi putilovets, a total of eight sectors were formed at the workshop cell level. These included the sectors for organisation and instruction, party enrolment, cadres, information and registration, agitation, propaganda, *shefstvo* and *kul'turno-bytovoi* work. However, later in 1931, these were reduced to three: organisation and instruction, agitation, and culture and propaganda.¹⁶⁴

On 20 January 1932, the Leningrad gorkom secretariat adopted a resolution which stipulated that eight sectors should be set up in large workshop cells with more than 30 full party members, and that workshop cells with fewer than 30 full members should set up a maximum of five sectors. Party *kollektivy* which did not contain a workshop cell within them were allowed to set up eight sectors. Workshop cells with fewer than 30 full and candidate party members or *zveno* cells were not allowed to set up any sector. Instead, the party's day-to-day work was divided into two categories, each of which was assigned to one of the two cell secretary assistants.¹⁶⁵

As for the sector system, organisational matters were not the only problem. In spite of high expectations about the sector system, it did not always operate effectively, at least at factory level. In many cases, sectors were created only on paper. This had been a problem since the very beginning of the introduction of a sector system. As early as May 1930, it was reported that at Elektrosila, sectors were created only in a formal sense.¹⁶⁶ This was still the case for many sectors created within the

¹⁶² Lyshakov, *Partrabota v promyshlennom raione*, pp. 30-33.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁴ P. Lyshakov, *Partrabota v tsekhu* (Leningrad, 1931), p. 3.

¹⁶⁵ *Polozhenie o rabote sektorov v tsekhovykh partiinykh iacheikakh* (Leningrad: Izdanie orginstruktorskogo otdela LK VKP(b), 1932), pp. 3-4.

¹⁶⁶ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 74.

factories. At the general meeting of the Central Committee organisers on 8 July 1932, the Leningrad gorkom reported that seven to nine sectors were formed at the workshop cell level, but only three to four sectors operated satisfactorily - those for party assignments, work with candidates, training and mass political campaigns. Subsequently, the Leningrad gorkom suggested that only viable sectors should be sustained. In particular, the sector for party recruitment was considered redundant since, in principle, all party organisations should be involved in recruitment.¹⁶⁷

As the negative aspects of the sector system became evident, the over-elaborate sector system, which had been the norm at all levels of the factory party organisation in 1930 and 1931, came to an end in 1932. In the summer of 1932, the sector structure became considerably simplified. Sectors which did not function properly were abolished and only a few sectors were retained.

3.2.3 Reorganisation of the party network in factories in 1932

The organisational changes that took place in the period 1928-31 inevitably resulted in a far larger and more complex party structure within industrial enterprises. Factory party organisations, which had a rather simple structure at the beginning of 1928, had evolved into a multi-tier structure by 1932. This was more the case in Leningrad than in any other region. In particular, the city's large-scale industrial enterprises had created an extremely complicated internal party structure. This was mainly due to the fact that most of its large-scale enterprises were made up of several independent production units and that they had a four-tier production structure. Therefore, unlike Moscow, where most factories had a three-tier party structure (a factory party committee, workshop cells and party units), in Leningrad many factory party organisations had a four-tier structure, with an additional tier for allied workshop cells.¹⁶⁸ Already in 1930 party organisations at Krasnyi putilovets, Krasnyi treugol'nik and Elektrosila had created a four-tier structure with a factory party committee, workshop cells, party *kollektivy* (uniting the workshop cells of one

¹⁶⁷ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 15, August 1932, p. 28.

¹⁶⁸ Cited from Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin*, p. 111. See also Antony Sadler, *The Party Organisation in the Soviet Enterprise* (unpublished MSocSci dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1979), p. 84.

factory) or departmental *kollektiv* (*kollektiv otдела*, uniting the workshop cells of one department), and finally party units.¹⁶⁹

The Leningrad regional party leadership had been concerned about their complex four-tier party structure within factories even before the official approval of a three-tier structure in March 1931. As early as December 1930, the obkom secretariat reprimanded some party organisations within large-scale factories for having created an unnecessary intermediate level, which resulted in a four-tier structure. While conforming the necessity of setting up of a three-tier structure in principle, it allowed party *kollektiv* to be preserved only when they were created according to the production principle, i.e. within departments that operated independently in terms of administration and finance. In addition, the creation of departmental *kollektiv* needed the sanction of the obkom.¹⁷⁰

The proposal for restructuring the party network within the major factories, which was put forward in December 1930, shows how complicated the party structure was within each factory. For instance, at Krasnyi putilovets, party *kollektiv* could be preserved in the following departments which operated independently in terms of finance: tractor, metallurgical, turbine, steel and ferrous construction, instruments, transport, mechanical and construction. These party *kollektiv* were subordinate to the factory party committee, and workshop cells were formed within them. By contrast, in other divisions, workshop cells were directly accountable to the factory party committee. The party structure suggested for the Krasnyi treugol'nik was fundamentally different from that for the Krasnyi putilovets. In the latter, one factory party committee was put in overall charge of all subordinate party cells including both party *kollektiv* and workshop cells. By contrast, it was recommended that the former should have three party committees and three *kollektiv* which were directly accountable to Narvskii raikom. It was argued that this structure would suit most the Krasnyi treugol'nik, which had been formed from a combination of six independent factories. In the case of the Elektrosila, it was proposed that independent party *kollektiv* with full statutory rights remain only in the machine and turbine departments. In other departments, party *kollektiv* were to be dissolved. As for the

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 2, December 1929, p. 49 and no. 9, May 1930, pp. 25-28.

¹⁷⁰ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2754, p. 110.

Skorokhod, it was recommended that party *kollektiv*y should be created in the departments which had an independent accounting system and that these party *kollektiv*y should be subordinate to one factory party committee. All workshop cells in the sewing department were directly subordinate to the factory party committee.¹⁷¹

In 1931 there was a much greater variety of structures of party organisation within the industrial enterprises than had previously been the case. For instance, the Karl Marx factory had a structure of party committee, departmental *kollektiv*y and *zveno* cells, but no workshop cells. It was argued that this structure was more appropriate to the nature of this factory's production.¹⁷²

Then, in March 1931, the Central Committee adopted a resolution 'on party and mass work in workshops and brigade' in which it confirmed that a three-tier party organisation should be established in large enterprises - consisting of a party committee, workshop cell, and *zveno* cell or party group.¹⁷³ After this official approval of a three-tier structure, the need to simplify a clumsy and over-elaborate party structure became acute in Leningrad. However, the directive of March 1931 was not strictly followed in the city, and it was not until 1932 that a significant simplification of the factory party organisation took place.

At the beginning of 1932, many of Leningrad's factories still had a four-tier structure. Moreover, the party network within each factory was organised in a different and rather complicated way. By this time, it was felt that these complex four or five-tier structures in large-scale enterprises did not operate as intended, but actually prevented the party from working efficiently. As the negative consequences of over-elaborate party structure within factories became evident, the party's major concern became how to deal with over-elaborate party structures within factories.

In March 1932, a review of the party structure of the regional organisations was carried out by the organisation and instruction department of the Central Committee. This review revealed that questions concerning the party structure had been neglected in many regions, and that party cells were organised in such an untidy and primitive way that party strength was distributed inappropriately, which led to a weakening of

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁷² *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 25.

¹⁷³ Ibid., no. 7, April 1931, p. 66.

party's guiding role. The practice of creating unnecessary fourth party links in factories was considered one of the shortcomings. Subsequently, it was decided that *kraikoms* and *obkoms* should be involved in question of reorganising their party structure and that organisation departments should examine the party structure.¹⁷⁴

This March 1932 review also showed that the party structure within the Krasnyi putilovets was extremely complicated at all levels. The Krasnyi putilovets, containing 32,000 workers, was made up of a number of independent departments, and the structure of party organisations in each department was variegated. For instance, in the tractor department, a party *kollektiv* had been set up between the factory party committee and workshop cell levels, and in practice, this *kollektiv* assumed the role of the factory party committee. On the other hand, in the turbine and instruments departments, there was no party *kollektiv* and workshop cells were directly accountable to the factory party committee. In the metallurgical department, an instructor was sent from the factory party committee. This meant that the factory party committee had to supervise a number of small party cells that were different in nature. Party cells which were subordinate to it ranged from the party *kollektiv* of the tractor department to the divisional cells of the rolling workshop. This made it difficult for the factory party committee to supervise and give guidance to lower party cells.¹⁷⁵

A further article on the Krasnyi putilovets' party structure, published in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* in May, showed that it still had a wide range of complicated structures within each department. In the tractor and construction departments, party *kollektiv*y had been set up at department level, resulting in a four-tier structure. In all the other departments, no party *kollektiv*y existed and the party network was organised on a three tier basis. However, each department had a different party structure. Only in the metallurgical, steam-engine and mechanical departments were party organisations structured in accordance with the Central Committee resolution. In the instruments, turbine and transport departments, party cells immediately below the factory party committee were created not at workshop level, but at department level. This meant that, despite the name, the workshop cells of these departments were, in fact, department cells. The third level of the party structure, *zveno* cells or party units, were

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 5, March 1932, pp. 27-28.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

created in a correct way only in one department, and in other departments, they were formed at workshop level. For instance, in the turbine department, workshop cells were created at the department level, and *zveno* cells were created at the workshop level. In the instruments department, all party members were put into one department cell, and *zveno* cells were formed not at the brigade level, but at the workshop level. Therefore, the *zveno* cells of this department, unlike those of the turbine department, were large in size, as they were, in fact, all-workshop cells. One *zveno* cell in this department, for instance, contained as many as 159 party members. All these facts showed that the party network was organised as a three-tier structure only in a formal sense. In other words, a real restructuring did not take place. Here came the difficulty the factory party committee had to face: it had to supervise many different kinds of cells. These included party *kollektiv*y, departmental cells, workshop cells, shift-workshop cells, and divisional cells. The biggest one was the tractor department's party *kollektiv*, which contained 1,400 party members, and the smallest was the rolling workshop's divisional cell. Inevitably, this led to difficulties in the work of the factory party committee.¹⁷⁶

After the extensive discussion on the Krasnyi pulilovets' party structure, several proposals for its reform were outlined. Three options as to how to restructure party organisations were considered: at first, legitimating a four-tier structure and creating party *kollektiv*y in all departments; secondly, dissolving the all-factory party committee and creating a number of party committees at department level; and thirdly, creating a number of party committees at department level and, at the same time, transforming the all-factory party committee into a sub-raion or raion committee. The second option was preferred to the others, since the first option violated the principle of a three-tier structure, and the third option turned out to be operating inefficiently in some other places.¹⁷⁷

Despite much emphasis put on the necessity of simplifying the party structure in factories, a reorganisation did not take place immediately. When the report of the representative from Krasnyi putilovets was heard at a general meeting of Central Committee organisers on 8 July, it was admitted that in the two months which had

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 9, May 1932, pp. 41-42.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

passed since Kaganovich called for the restructuring of the party work in factories, they had not yet embarked on the task. The main obstacle in reorganising their party structure was that this particular factory had a four-tier administrative structure. At this time, there still existed two party *kollektiv*y, one in the tractor department and the other in the *Putilstroi*. Altogether there were 103 workshop cells, 72 of which were directly accountable to the factory party committee, while the rest came under the supervision of two party *kollektiv*y. Two options were considered at this time: the preservation of party *kollektiv*y; and the creation of three separate party committees. If a decision had been made to maintain party *kollektiv*y, there would have been, instead of 103 workshop cells, 49 cells which were very large in size. Therefore, the latter option - creating three separate party committees - appeared to be preferable.¹⁷⁸

When reports on the experiment carried out in five of the largest enterprises were heard at the Central Committee Secretariat meeting in the summer of 1932, the Krasnyi putilovets was one of these five enterprises. At Krasnyi putilovets, prior to the restructuring, the factory party committee had been in charge of 103 workshop cells, uniting more than 7,000 party members. Naturally, in these conditions the party committee could not provide adequate leadership in practical matters to subordinate cells. It was reported that there had been 'enormous bureaucratic confusion and excessive documentation'. The party committee workers had wasted a great deal of time in meetings and compiling resolutions, and they had rarely appeared in the workshops. However, due to the reorganisation of party structure, considerable improvements had been made by this time. First of all, three separate party committees had been set up at Krasnyi putilovets: one in the main site, one in the tractor workshop and one in the *Putilstroi*. All three factory party committees came under the supervision of the raikom. The factory party committee set up in the main site was now responsible for 33 instead of 86 workshop cells.¹⁷⁹

Likewise, the party structure in other enterprises was greatly simplified over the summer of 1932. Despite the official approval of a three-tier structure, many factories in Leningrad still had a four-tier party structure before the restructuring. Therefore, at a general meeting of the Central Committee organisers held in July, an instructor from

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 15, August 1932, p. 19.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 17-18, September 1932, p. 49.

the Leningrad gorkom reported that the prime concern of the restructuring was the establishment of a three-tier structure.¹⁸⁰ Over the summer, serious efforts were made to simplify the party structures in factories. As a result, by October 1932, a four-tier party structure had been replaced in most of Leningrad's enterprises.¹⁸¹

At the same time, this year saw a significant simplification of the lower party cell network. Unlike the previous years when the idea of 'breaking up' had been strongly advocated, 1932 saw a sudden change in direction whereby the policy of 'breaking up' was reversed. From the beginning of 1932, official thinking was moving away from it, as its negative aspects became evident. Indeed, articles questioning the advantages of 'breaking up' party cells began to be published in party journals from the end of 1931. The main argument against it was that 'breaking up' of the primary cells, rather than benefiting the organisation, was actually serving to break the party up into excessively small units (*razmel'chenie*). Doubts were voiced as to whether breaking party work down into smaller units was in fact achieving better results. It was claimed that the excessively complex party structure led to the party spreading its membership too widely throughout the various cells, and that, as a result, it caused inefficiency. Moreover, there was a growing feeling that this system was not harnessing the creative power of the masses, as had been intended.

A review of the party structure, carried out by Central Committee instructors in March 1932, revealed that in many regions lower party cells had been created according to professional or territorial characteristics rather than along production lines. A passive attitude towards the creation of shift cells was also reported.¹⁸² In case of Leningrad, some violations were spotted in the way of creating shift cells and party units. In heavy industry, workshop cells were predominant, and shift cells were rare. Often, shift cells were not created even in shifts where the personnel were stable. The idea of creating shift cells was disliked by those who feared that breaking up of workshop cells into a number of shift cells would complicate the leadership of the party committee. In addition, a considerable number of party units had not been created as instructed: some units were made up of party members working in many

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 15, August 1932, p. 27.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, nos. 19-20, October 1932, p. 35.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, no. 5, March 1932, pp. 27-28.

brigades or in many shifts. It was confirmed again that party units should be comprised of party members from one brigade working in the same shift.¹⁸³

In the three months that followed the first general meeting of organisers in March, the restructuring process proceeded rather slowly in Leningrad. When the structure of workshop cells and party units in the city was reviewed in the summer of that year, it was revealed that many cells and units were violating the party directives regarding their structure. For instance, at Krasnyi putilovets, there were 128 workshop cells spread among 60 workshops and at Krasnaia zaria, 37 workshop cells were created despite there being a total of only 30 workshops. Many party units contained only one or two party members, and were therefore not able to operate satisfactorily.¹⁸⁴

It was in the summer of 1932 that serious attempts were made to strengthen the party cells, which had been poorly organised and not able to work properly. At the end of June, Leningrad gorkom resolved to strengthen the workshop level of the party organisation by transferring officials downwards from the factory party committees, and by abolishing those cells and party units which bore no relation to the basic production structure of the enterprise. Also a minimum limit of five to seven party members was set for party units, many of which previously contained only one or two members.¹⁸⁵ Then, at the gorkom plenum on 21 July 1932 it was decided that the existing network of workshop cells and party units should be restructured along production lines. It was also decided that party units with elected unit organisers should be created only where there were five to seven communists, and that party units could be formed in brigades and sites where there were fewer party members. In the latter case, party work was to be carried out by one of unit's members.¹⁸⁶ This decision appears to have been aimed to strengthen workshop cells and party units by reorganising them into bigger cells or units, and by shifting full-time party officials into posts in the workshop cells and cutting down substantially on the number of unit organisers. Later a Central Committee resolution of August 1932 'on the work of

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁸⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 380.

¹⁸⁵ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, pp. 11-12.

¹⁸⁶ *Mezhdru dvumia s'ezdami: Leningradskaia partiinaia organizatsiia v resheniiakh konferentsii i plenumov oblastkoma i LK VKP(b) mezhdru XVI i XVII s'ezdami* (Leningrad: Lenpartizdat, 1934), pp. 152-153.

party cells in enterprises' confirmed this tendency by clarifying that it would be unacceptable that the number of cells in a single enterprise should reach up to 50, 60 or even more.¹⁸⁷

At the time when the general meeting of Central Committee organisers was held in July, the lower party cells within Leningrad's factories were still being reorganised. According to a report of the representative from Krasnyi putilovets, party cells were being strengthened, while maintaining the production principle. A number of small cells were being amalgamated into bigger cells. Larger cells would contain 398, 356, 290 and 200 people, while the smallest would contain 70. At the same time, full-time party officials were being shifted into posts in the workshop cells. Of the 16 responsible party workers of the factory party committee, 12 had been transferred to workshop cells as cell secretaries. In this way 12 workshop cells had been strengthened by the addition of highly qualified party workers with work experience at all-factory level. Only four party officials remained at the factory party committee level.¹⁸⁸

There were, however, some difficulties in reorganising party cells, as was reported by a party official from the Leningrad gorkom at this meeting. In the textile factories, most shifts had a stable workforce, so shift cells were preserved. The problem was that there was not a sufficient number of people in each shift cell: only 25 to 30 workers. Nevertheless, some improvements were already achieved by this time. In the Rubber factory, a total of 64 cells had been reorganised into 30. Earlier there had been on average 45 party members in each cell, but now, there was an average of 98 in each cell. Likewise, at Skorokhod, the average number of party members in each cell increased from 38 to 97. It was expected that, after the reorganisation, the average number of party members in each workshop cell would rise from 50 to between 95 and 100. This size (approximately 100 party members per cell) was considered normal for workshop cells. Here occurred another problem. In some workshops or departments within large-scale enterprises, party cells would be as large as to contain 500 or even 600 members. This would be the case for party cells at

¹⁸⁷ *Partinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 16, August 1932, pp. 1-2. The effect of this resolution was a dramatic reversal of the tendency of the previous four years towards ever larger, more complex structures in the factories.

¹⁸⁸ *Partinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 15, August 1932, p. 19.

the Sudoverf and Baltic shipbuilding works. It was obvious that it would be difficult for one secretary to work for such a big cell. Therefore, it was suggested that three to four people should be allotted for party work, or that big workshop cells should be broken up into smaller ones. Regarding lower party units, it was decided at the Leningrad gorkom plenum that party units should be reorganised so that each unit would have at least five party members. The decision seems to have been made based on the experience that party units which contained only two or three party members were not, in fact, able to work properly.¹⁸⁹

Table 3-5. Number of party cells within factories in the light industrial sector in Leningrad before and after the reconstruction of the party network, 1932

	Number of party members	Before the reconstruction			After the reconstruction			
		Workshop cells	Zveno cells	Party units	Workshop cells	Of which shift cells	Zveno cells	Party units
Krasnoe znamia	1,927	29	-	134	22	16	10	109
Volodarskii factory	1,600	20	96	26	15	15	57	15
Skorokhod	3,002	78	28	235	31	23	31	131
Proletarskaia pobeda no. 1	716	22	12	52	12	11	8	26
Proletarskaia pobeda no. 2	636	18	6	51	12	10	-	41

Source: Adapted from *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 16, August 1932, p. 35.

Based on the decisions made at the gorkom plenum, workshop cells and party units were reorganised in the following months of 1932. By August 1932 a substantial number of factories had already managed to complete the reorganisation of cell network. For instance, in the October textile factory, 11 workshop cells were reduced to eight, and the number of party units fell from 50 to 21.¹⁹⁰ As table 3-5 shows, the number of party cells in the light industry factories had fallen considerably by this time. This, in turn, led to a considerable increase in the average size of cells: most units contained no fewer than five party members. In principle, party units were set up where there were five party members, and *zveno* cells where there were 15 party

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 16, August 1932, p. 32.

members. In the textile factories, shift cells were preserved. Due to the reorganisation, the average size of each cell increased from 50 to 100 or in some cases to 150 party members. At the same time, more party workers at the workshop cell level were qualified ones, often those who had been transferred from the factory party committees.¹⁹¹

Party organisations in the heavy industry factories also carried out similar operations over two and a half months that followed the June obkom plenum. As can be seen in table 3-6, the number of workshop cells in each factory had fallen substantially by September 1932. No exact figures for the number of *zveno* cells and party units in heavy industry were located. However, it would be reasonable to assume that the party network had been greatly simplified by this time. For instance, in the Krasnaia zaria factory, weak *zveno* cells reverted to party units: the number of *zveno* cells fell from 30 to 23, while the number of party units increased from 70 to 112.¹⁹²

Table 3-6. Number of workshop cells within the heavy industry factories in Leningrad before and after the reconstruction of the party network, 1932

	<i>Lenin factory</i>	<i>Krasnyi vyborzhets</i>	<i>Molotov factory</i>	<i>Kirov factory</i>	<i>Kulakov factory</i>	<i>Sevkabel'</i>
Before the reconstruction	25	25	19	27	13	20
After the reconstruction	12	12	13	14	7	7

Source: Partrabotnik, no. 17, September 1932, pp. 3-4.

All in all, the number of primary cells in the city's enterprises had fallen considerably by September. In the city as a whole, the number of workshop cells had been reduced from 1,822 to 1,087. Due to the reorganisation, the average size of workshop cells had risen from 49 to 83 party members. At the same time, the number of party units had fallen from 8,032 to 3,999. Meanwhile, *zveno* cells were strengthened and increased in number from 527 to 953.¹⁹³ The general reduction in size and in the degree of complexity of the factory party organisations continued in the latter half of 1932. By the end of 1932, the number of workshop cells had

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁹² G. Glazkov and E. Ivanov, *V avangarde piatiletki: Rabota zveniacheek na zavode "Krasnaia Zaria"* (Leningrad, 1932), p. 36.

¹⁹³ *Partrabotnik*, no. 17, September 1932, pp. 3-4.

decreased to 1,156 and the average size of workshop cells stabilised at about 80 party members.¹⁹⁴

Table 3-7. Number of factory party cells in Leningrad, 1932, 1933 and 1934

	<i>1 January 1932 (1)</i>	<i>1 April 1932 (2)</i>	<i>21 June 1932 (3)</i>	<i>September 1932 (3)</i>	<i>1 January 1933 (1)</i>	<i>1 January 1934 (1)</i>
Workshop cells	1,536	2,838	1,822	1,087	1,156	n. d.
Zveno cells	797	2,085	527	953	n. d.	1,077
Party units	n. d.	15,359	8,032	3,999	n. d.	5,363

Note: The figure for 1 April 1932 seems to have been inflated when compared to other figures. No reason for that was found.

Sources: (1) *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, pp. 380-381; (2) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 21; (3) *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, pp. 3-4.

Reorganisation in 1932 resulted in a significant simplification of all aspects of the party organisations within Leningrad's factories. The over-elaborate party structure was considerably streamlined, and, as a result, factory party organisations came to have a far simpler structure than they had had in previous years. Moreover, the party committee responsible for the whole plant, rather than the workshop cells, became once again the focus of party work. This trend continued and was once again confirmed at the seventeenth Party Congress in 1934. At this Congress, Kaganovich dealt with the problem of the number of sectors along with that of the *mnogostupenchatost'* of the multi-tier party organisations in larger industrial enterprises.¹⁹⁵ Both *mnogostupenchatost'* and the over-elaborate sector structure were to be remedied by the abolition of workshop cell bureaux and the creation of workshop organisers, in the name of more efficiently involving the party rank and file and activists. A new set of Party Rules, adopted at this congress, confirmed the abolition of a whole tier of party organisation in the factories, the abolition of the workshop cell bureaux which were replaced by organisers and the simplification of other levels of party organisation beneath the workshop level.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 381.

¹⁹⁵ *XVII s'ezd VKP(b)*, 26 ianvaria-10 fevralia 1934 g.: *Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Partizdat, 1934), pp. 556-557.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 672.

4. Party Membership and Recruitment

The first FYP was a period of massive expansion in the party's membership. As the idea of the 'mass' party had taken hold by the end of NEP, the policy of mass proletarian recruitment was carried out throughout the first FYP. The recruitment campaign's priority was the enrolment of workers, especially those engaged in production. As industrialisation gathered pace, the importance of recruiting workers was increasingly stressed. Undoubtedly, this recruitment policy had a visible effect on the size of the party membership and the party's social composition. The Leningrad regional party organisation, which boasted of its high worker representation in the party, experienced a massive expansion of its party membership and a compositional change in terms of social origin, occupation and the length of party membership.

This chapter examines in some depth the party membership changes of the Leningrad regional organisation during the first FYP. The analysis of the party membership will make clear the impact of the massive worker recruitment policy of this period and its consequences on the party. Emphasis is placed on the effects of the recruitment policies implemented, the effects for party membership size and social composition. Following this is an analysis of how the mass recruitment of workers affected the party saturation at factory levels. This analysis shows the dynamic of the increase in both industrial workforce and party membership in factories. Finally, the way party members were distributed within factories is examined in some depth.

4.1 Mass recruitment and party membership change

4.1.1 Mass recruitment policy 1927-1932

The period 1927-1932 was one of rapid expansion for the communist party.¹ During this period, not only did the party rapidly grow, but also it became more proletarian. Unlike the recruitment policy in previous years, for some years after

¹ While the total strength of the party, members and candidates, was over a million and three hundred thousand on 1 January 1928, by 1 January 1933 the total number of membership rose to over three and a half million members and candidates. See T. H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R., 1917-1967* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 52.

launching the first FYP, official policy followed the traditional preference for working-class recruits to the party. As the party put greater emphasis on the improvement of the social composition of the party organisation in favour of workers, production workers in factories were strongly encouraged to enrol in the party over this period.

The background and motivation of this rapid expansion and ‘proletarianisation’ of the party can be explained in several ways. First of all, ideology and politics seem to have played an important role in this turn to the party’s original preference for workers. Even though the communist party had always proclaimed itself to be a party of the working class and set the target of bench-workers’ comprising 50 per cent of the party membership at the thirteenth Party Congress in May 1924, worker representation within the party was far from sufficient throughout the 1920s.² Furthermore, the recruitment policy in previous years, from 1924 to mid-1927, which had not given any preference to industrial workers, inevitably resulted in a drop of worker representation within the party.³ The party leadership must have been uncomfortable with a low level, and even a drop, of worker representation within the party, especially when faced with criticism from the Left opposition. Therefore, high levels of worker recruitment in this period were repeatedly quoted as proof of the correctness of the party’s line, especially in answer to the challenge of the Left.

Besides, the beginning of Stalin’s drive for rapid industrialisation and collectivisation of agriculture in 1928 seems to have necessitated better party representation on the factory floor and in the countryside. To the party leadership, the success of industrialisation and collectivisation seemed to depend on the support from the masses, especially industrial workers, and the enrolment of workers in the party was seen as a way of involving them in its policies. In particular, in the absence of material incentives, it was thought that support for campaigns like industrialisation

² For the percentage of workers in the All-Union party in the 1920s, see *Ibid.*, p. 116.

³ Due to the first and second Lenin enrolment, the proportion of production workers in the total membership increased from 18.8 per cent in the beginning of 1924 to 41.3 per cent in 1925, and to 42 per cent in 1926. However, from 1926 it began to decrease and by the beginning of 1927 only 39.4 per cent were workers. See *Ibid.*, p. 116.

could be gained by involving people in party life.⁴ This was the reason why the importance of worker recruitment was increasingly stressed throughout this period.

The turn in this direction came in 1927 with the so-called October call-up. Early in 1927, the party census had shown that the proportion of bench-workers was far from being 50 per cent of the whole party membership. Furthermore, it had revealed that the growth rate of production workers among party members lagged behind the growth rate of the total number of workers in the whole country, which indicated that there were enormous reserves for an increase of industrial workers in the composition of the party.⁵ On 13 October 1927, in connection with the results of the 1927 party census, the Central Committee adopted a resolution on the regulation of growth of the party, the effect of which was to emphasise the recruitment of workers, especially workers from large enterprises and factories. The drive was to be focused at the workshop level in large plants, and the komsomol and women's organisers were to be more energetic in preparing suitable candidates for admission to the party. At the same time, obstacles to the enrolment of white-collar workers were more stringently enforced.⁶ A month later, coinciding with the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, the party initiated an intensified phase of mass recruitment of workers: the October call-up. The drive was directed first and foremost at worker activists - i.e. those already active in party-directed social, welfare or other programmes in the factories. It was emphasised that this mass recruitment of the workers would bring a closer relationship between the party and the masses, and reinforcement of the leading role of the proletariat in socialist construction.⁷

The attitude of the Leningrad party organisation towards the mass recruitment of workers appears to have been enthusiastic. Given the fact that the Leningrad party organisation led by Zinoviev had strongly advocated the mass recruitment of production workers in the mid-1920s,⁸ it was not surprising that the Leningrad party

⁴ Catherine Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin* (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), p. 117.

⁵ These 1927 party census results were quoted in statistical justification of the proletarianisation of the party. See *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh s'ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1984), vol. 4, pp. 210-211.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 210-213.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

⁸ The Leningraders had strongly opposed to conciliatory recruitment policies towards the peasantry. As a consequence, the part of Northwest Russia controlled by Zinoviev's Leningraders was not touched

organisation welcomed the party's change in recruitment policies in 1927. Indeed, the Leningrad party organisation was one of several organisations which had appealed to the Central Committee with a proposal to step up the mass recruitment of workers, and this led to the October call-up.⁹ During the October call-up, which ran from November 1927 till 1 February 1928, some 14,035 persons applied for party membership in the Leningrad region.¹⁰ In Leningrad city alone, 11,304 persons applied, which was the largest number of applicants in one city in the Soviet Union.¹¹ Out of 11,304, about 10,300 applicants were production workers (91 per cent),¹² and about half of them were metal and textile workers (41 and 15 per cent respectively).¹³ In Leningrad, the October call-up brought in 6,251 new candidate members, of whom 94 per cent were production workers.¹⁴ This was a much higher percentage when compared to those of the all-Union level: nationally, it brought in some 108,000 recruits, of whom 80 per cent were production workers.¹⁵ To break down the 'production stages' of the October call-up recruits, 30 per cent had been involved in production for over ten years, 23 per cent for five to ten years, 24 per cent for three to five years, and 24 per cent for less than three years.¹⁶ This suggests that a large number of the October call-up recruits were less skilled workers: of those workers

by the deproletarianisation process in the mid-1920s. In the Leningrad region, farming peasants contributed under 2 per cent of the 30,000 membership increase between January and September 1925. Meanwhile large-scale recruitment of workers continued in Leningrad, and typical of the measures adopted to this end was a local conference decision to enlist a further 27,000 metal-workers, with the object of making every second metal-worker in the city a party member. See Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, pp. 143-145.

⁹ The Moscow, Bakin, and Rostov party organisations were the others. See *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 4, p. 251.

¹⁰ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 2, 10 February 1928, p. 26. The figure given in *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980) seems to be inflated. It says that 15,010 applications were submitted between October and December 1927, and 93 per cent were from production workers. See *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1980), vol. 2, p. 171.

¹¹ The Leningrad oblast party organisation had the second largest number of applications in the country during the October call-up. It was only second to the Moscow oblast, where a total of 17,500 persons applied for party membership. However, in the city of Moscow, 10,500 persons applied for party membership, fewer than those in Leningrad. See *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 10 February 1928, p. 26.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁵ Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 167.

¹⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 2, 10 February 1928, p. 31.

recruited during the October call-up, over 47 per cent had worked in industry for less than five years.¹⁷

The procedure for workers entering the party was speeded up after 1927, in order to ensure an adequate shop-floor representation of party members to act as the vanguard for the impending industrialisation drive. In August 1928, a further review by Malenkov stated that bench or production workers still made up only 41 per cent of the total membership, and their share of recruitment would have to be raised to 80 per cent and kept there for a significant period if the party's goals - bench-workers should comprise 50 per cent of the party membership - were to be met.¹⁸ Based on this evaluation, the Central Committee adopted a resolution at the November 1928 plenum. In order to achieve the 50 per cent bench-worker objective by the end of 1930, it ordered intensified recruitment of workers for the following two years, specifying that no fewer than 80 per cent of all recruits should be production workers.¹⁹ Two months later, the Central Committee adopted a directive, which laid down that manual workers must constitute 90 per cent of recruits in industrial areas, 70 per cent in agricultural areas and 60 per cent in the non-Russian republics.²⁰ Accordingly, under the slogan 'every second communist a bench-worker!', the party launched campaigns for the mass enrolment of workers into the party.

Interestingly, the Leningrad oblast party organisation set an even higher target at the October 1928 obkom plenum: two-thirds (67 per cent) of the party membership in Leningrad were to be production workers.²¹ In May 1929, the Leningrad obkom secretariat confirmed the target of two-thirds of the party membership in Leningrad and 50 per cent of the whole party membership in the region being production workers by 1 January 1931. It also decided that no fewer than 95 per cent of all recruits in urban raions of Leningrad and Kronstadt and no fewer than 90 per cent in Tsentral'nyi raion should be production workers. For other areas, the minimum percentage of workers was set lower: in half-industrialised okrugs such as Borovich, Novgorod and Leningrad okrugs, workers and farm labourers should constitute no

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁸ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 24, 10 August 1928, pp. 1-6.

¹⁹ *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 4, pp. 387-394.

²⁰ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 2, 8 March 1929, pp. 3-7.

²¹ *Ibid.*, no. 12, 1928, p. 4.

fewer than 80 per cent, and in all the other okrugs, no fewer than 60 per cent. It also decided that workers of no less than three years' industrial work experience should be recruited in order to keep up the quality of party members.²² Judging from the obkom resolutions, the Leningrad party organisation showed great enthusiasm towards the mass recruitment of workers.

Later, in 1930, the party opened the door more widely for the recruitment of non-workers, which was provided by a Central Committee directive issued in February 1930, entitled 'on further work in regulating the growth of the party'. While emphasising the need to recruit more workers, the directive allowed for increased recruitment of peasants and the intelligentsia.²³ The relative easing off of recruitment from social groups other than workers resulted in both the acceleration of the rate of recruitment and a drop in the proportion of workers among the party intake in the period 1930-1932.

Table 4-1. Number of recruits into the All-Union, Leningrad oblast, and Leningrad city party organisations, 1927-1932

	<i>All-Union</i>	<i>Leningrad oblast</i>	<i>Leningrad city</i>
1927	176,180	10,140	7,315
1928	262,031	20,742	14,540
1929	287,630	22,855	16,178
1930	670,529	50,872	37,110
1931	997,398	84,017	63,738
1932	760,367	51,445	38,552

Sources: The figures for the All-Union party organisation are adapted from *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1933), no. 4, p. 14; the figures for the Leningrad oblast and city party organisations are adapted from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1974), pp. 114, 116.

In the Leningrad region, a total of 229,931 joined the party in the period 1928-1932 (see table 4-1). In Leningrad city alone, some 170,118 were recruited, about 74 per cent of all recruits in the region. The breakdown of total recruits by year of entry into the party shows that the rate of recruitment accelerated in 1930 and 1931. In the region as a whole, about 23,000 candidates were accepted in 1929, twice as many in

²² *Ibid.*, no. 4, 1929, p. 5.

²³ *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 5, pp. 87-89.

1930, and almost twice as many again in 1931. In 1931 alone, over 84,000 joined the party, accounting for about 37 per cent of all recruits of this period. The growth rate of recruitment in the Leningrad region conformed to the general recruitment trend of the All-Union party organisation. Nationally, the rate of recruitment had accelerated from 1930: about 300,000 candidates were accepted in 1929, twice as many in 1930, and almost a million in 1931 (see table 4-1).

Table 4-2. Current occupation of party recruits in the Leningrad region, 1927-1932

Year	Total recruits	Of which workers		Of which peasants		Of which employees	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
1927	10,140	8,182	80.7	1,108	10.9	850	8.4
1928	20,742	16,124	77.7	1,180	5.7	1,803	8.7
1929	22,855	19,833	86.8	1,193	5.2	1,829	8.0
1930	50,872	43,972	86.4	3,722	7.3	1,639	3.2
1931	84,017	69,619	82.9	9,580	11.4	2,772	3.3
1932	51,445	43,798	85.1	5,348	10.4	1,685	3.8

Note: The percentages are my own calculations.

Source: Adapted from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, p. 114.

As table 4-2 clearly shows, workers comprised a large proportion of those admitted to the party. In the region, a total of 193,346 workers were recruited in the period 1928-1932, accounting for 84 per cent of all recruits. However, the breakdown of the current occupation of party recruits by year of entry into the party shows that there were some fluctuations in workers' proportion. In 1928, despite a slight decline in the proportion of production workers recruited after the October enrolment, workers accounted for 78 per cent of new members, and in 1929 and 1930 the figure exceeded 85 per cent. This meant that the Leningrad oblast party organisation had overfulfilled the Central Committee's directive of 7 January 1929, and also the obkom secretariat's resolution of May 1929. However, there was a 3.5 per cent drop in the ratio of workers in 1931. This was due to the increasing recruitment of peasants. Indeed, in 1931, some 9,580 peasants joined the party, and their percentage reached 11 per cent. In 1932, the number of total recruits decreased to 51,445 persons, and the ratio of workers increased to 85 per cent whereas that of peasants remained 10 per cent (see table 4-2).

Table 4-3. *Proportion of workers among total recruits in the Leningrad city and All-Union party organisations, 1927-1932*

	<i>Leningrad city party organisation</i>			<i>All-Union party organisation</i>		
	<i>Total recruits</i>	<i>Of which workers</i>		<i>Total recruits</i>	<i>Of which workers</i>	
	N	N	%	N	N	%
1927	7,315	6,378	87.2	176,180	121,229	68.8
1928	14,540	12,485	85.9	262,031	186,089	71.0
1929	16,178	15,250	94.3	287,630	232,167	78.0
1930	37,110	35,665	96.1	670,529	451,836	67.4
1931*	63,738	61,158	96.0	997,398	629,823	63.2
1932*	38,552	37,238	96.6	760,367	491,312	64.7

Note: * *Leningradskaiia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (no. 4) gives different figures for 1931 and 1932. In 1931, a total of 59,916 were recruited into the Leningrad city party organisation, and workers made up 57,853, which was 96.6 per cent of the total recruits. In 1932, the total number of recruits was said to be 35,483, of which workers made up 34,383 (96.6 per cent). See *Leningradskaiia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1933), no. 4, p. 14.

Sources: The figures for the Leningrad city party organisation are adapted from *Leningradskaiia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, p. 116; the figures for the All-Union party organisation are adapted from *Leningradskaiia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1933), no. 4, p. 14; the percentages are my own calculations.

The Leningrad city party organisation showed even higher percentage of workers among new members than the figures for the oblast as a whole. Already in 1927 and 1928, the percentage of workers among recruits in the city exceeded 85 per cent. In 1929 the figure increased further to 94 per cent, and in 1930, 1931 and 1932, it remained at 96 per cent. These figures show that, except in 1929, the Leningrad city party organisation fulfilled the May 1929 obkom secretariat resolution which stipulated that 95 per cent of the recruits should be workers. Even in 1929, the figure was very close to the target of 95 per cent. The percentages of workers among new members in Leningrad city were extremely high when compared with the figures for the All-Union party. They were ten to 15 per cent higher than the national average throughout the period. In the All-Union party, proportion of workers among recruits reached its peak in 1929, recording only 78 per cent. Then, the national average fell to 67 and 63 per cent in 1930 and 1931 respectively and stabilised at 65 per cent in 1932. Therefore, it is no wonder that the Leningrad city party organisation boasted that 97

per cent of its recruits in 1931 were workers from the bench.²⁴ In addition, the high percentage of workers among recruits, which had remained the same in the early 1930s, indicates that the recruitment pattern in Leningrad city was not affected by the relative easing off of nonworker recruitment in the early 1930s.

4.1.2 Party membership growth

Party membership in Leningrad oblast rapidly expanded throughout this period, reaching its peak in 1933. It increased from a total of 119,446 to 278,280 between 1928 and 1933, showing a growth of 230 per cent. In Leningrad city only, party membership increased from 90,277 to 220,991 in the same period. The growth pattern of the Leningrad party organisation conformed to the general trend of massive expansion in the All-Union party organisation. The growth was a continuous one in both party organisations throughout the period, despite the 1929-30 purges. This implies that those newly enrolled into the party outnumbered those expelled from the party in 1929 and 1930. Party membership, however, began to shrink from 1933, both in the All-Union and Leningrad regional party organisations. Two factors contributed to a decrease in party membership: party recruitment was completely banned in 1933; and at the same time, the party conducted a general purge, which resulted in a massive expulsion.²⁵

The growth rate of the All-Union party membership was greater than that of the Leningrad oblast party membership, and as a consequence, the proportion of the Leningrad party membership among the whole party membership slightly decreased over the period. At the beginning of 1928, the Leningrad party organisation contained about nine per cent of the whole party membership, but by the end of the first FYP period, it contained only about eight per cent. At the same time, party membership expanded more rapidly in Leningrad city than in the oblast as a whole between

²⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 374. This figure for the ratio of workers among the total recruits in 1931 seems to have been calculated from the data given in *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1933), no. 4, p. 14. See information given in table 4-3.

²⁵ There was no party recruitment between 1933 and 1935. The Leningrad oblast party organisation did not recover its 1933 membership level until 1957. The Leningrad city party organisation recovered its 1933 membership level sooner than the oblast one: its membership reached 220,729 by the beginning of 1952. See *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1974), pp. 69-71 and 114.

January 1928 and 1933 (see table 4-4).²⁶ As a result, the proportion of the city party membership in the whole party membership of the region increased from 76 per cent to 80 per cent.

Table 4-4. Party membership in Leningrad oblast and Leningrad city, 1928-1934 (1 January)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Leningrad oblast party organisation</i>			<i>Leningrad city party organisation</i>		
	<i>Members</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Total</i>
1928	93,088	26,358	119,446	71,714	18,563	90,277
1929	111,323	28,314	139,637	86,731	19,768	106,499
1930	118,666	32,249	150,915	96,138	23,988	120,126
1931	134,332	55,605	189,937	107,628	40,639	148,267
1932	161,487	91,227	252,714	135,596	67,270	202,866
1933	199,760	78,520	278,280	166,592	54,399	220,991
1934	145,217	48,045	193,262	122,601	34,810	157,411

Source: Adapted from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, p. 69.

A breakdown of party membership by raion reveals that party membership in Leningrad's raions more than doubled in the same period (see table 4-5). In October 1927, the Moskovsko-narvskii raion party organisation was the biggest in Leningrad, containing 22,515 members, and the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi organisation was the second largest, containing 17,597 members. Within five years' time, the party membership in these two raion party organisations increased remarkably - in particular, that of the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi organisation trebled. Later in 1930 these two raion party organisations were divided into two separate organisations each: the Moskovsko-narvskii organisation was divided into the Moskovskii and Narvskii organisations, and the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi organisation was divided into the Oktiabr'skii and the Smol'ninskii. In January 1933, the Smol'ninskii raion party organisation became the biggest with 38,347 members. The Narvskii, Oktiabr'skii, and Moskovskii raion party organisations contained 33,229, 20,818 and 16,530 members respectively. Party membership in the Vyborgskii and Petrogradskii raions also grew rapidly over the same period. In October 1927, the Vyborgskii raion party organisation had only 12,694 members, but by the end of 1932, it contained more than 33,000 members, becoming the second largest organisation in Leningrad. Party

²⁶ In Leningrad city, party membership increased by 145 per cent whereas in the oblast it increased by 133 per cent.

membership in the Petrogradskii raion increased from only about eight thousand to over twenty thousand in the same period.

Table 4-5. Party membership in Leningrad's raions, 1927-1933

<i>Raion party organisations</i>	<i>1 October 1927 (1)</i>	<i>1 October 1928 (1)</i>	<i>1 April 1930 (2)</i>	<i>1 January 1933 (3)</i>
Moskovsko-narvskii	22,515	28,035	38,637	-
Moskovskii	-	-	-	16,530
Narvskii	-	-	-	33,229
Tsentral'no-gorodskoi	17,597	20,293	25,345	-
Oktiabr'skii	-	-	-	20,818
Smol'ninskii	-	-	-	38,347
Vyborgskii	12,603	15,236	19,546	33,611
Volodarskii	12,694	14,651	18,250	24,199
Vasileostrovskii	10,779	12,922	15,014	21,096
Petrogradskii	8,096	9,388	10,859	20,132

Sources: (1) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 13, 1928, p. 33; (2) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1930), no. 2, p. 5; (3) *Ibid.* (1933), no. 4, p. 4.

The size of the party membership outside Leningrad was relatively small, despite a rapid increase in membership. In the beginning of 1928, there were only 29,169 communists in the rural area of the Leningrad oblast, about 24 per cent of the total party membership in the oblast. However, by the end of 1932, the number of rural communists reached 57,289, which meant an increase by almost 96 per cent when compared to that of January 1928. The growth rate of party membership in rural areas lagged behind the growth rate in the city of Leningrad, and as a result, the ratio of rural communists in the whole oblast party membership had decreased to 19 per cent by the end of 1932. This is probably why party membership growth in rural areas was considered insufficient.²⁷

Table 4-6. Party membership in the rural area of Leningrad oblast, 1928-1933

<i>Year</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>1929</i>	<i>1930</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>1932</i>	<i>1933</i>
Party membership	29,169	33,138	30,789	41,670	49,848	57,289

Source: Calculated from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, p. 69.

²⁷ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 375.

4.1.3 Composition of party membership

The Leningrad party organisation had been one of the party organisations with a strong worker representation even before the proletarianisation drive.²⁸ In both the Leningrad oblast and city party organisations, the percentage of workers by social origin continuously grew from 1922 onwards, and reached its peak by the beginning of 1926. In the Leningrad oblast party organisation, those from working-class backgrounds accounted for only 43 per cent in January 1922, but their percentage increased to 58 per cent in 1923, 61 per cent in 1924, 73 per cent in 1925, finally reaching 79 per cent in January 1926. In the Leningrad city party organisation, the percentage of workers was slightly higher than in the oblast party organisation, and it also increased from 48 to 82 per cent between January 1922 and 1926.²⁹ The massive increase of the ratio of workers among party membership took place particularly in 1924 and 1925, when large numbers of workers were recruited into the party during the first and second Lenin levy.³⁰

However, between January 1926 and January 1928 worker composition decreased from 79 to 70 per cent in the oblast party organisation and from 82 to 76 per cent in the city party organisation.³¹ The official explanation was put down to the former gubernii party organisations (Pskov, Novgorod, Cherepovets and others) not having a strong worker representation.³² Nevertheless, the fall of worker representation seems to have been caused by the increasing recruitment of those from white-collar and peasant backgrounds in 1926 and 1927.³³

²⁸ When interpreting Soviet data on the social composition, one should keep in mind what the social categories of party members precisely refer to, since it can be either social origin, or current employment. 'Worker' relates to social background, parentage and previous occupation rather than actual occupation at the time of membership.

²⁹ The percentages of workers by social origin are calculated from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, pp. 72-73.

³⁰ The first Lenin levy took place immediately after Lenin's death in 1924. As a result, in 1924 the Leningrad party doubled in size, and the number of registered workers rose from 61.2 to 72.7 per cent of the party membership in the oblast party organisation and from 62.9 to 74.7 per cent in the city party organisation. The second one took place in the first two months of 1925, when a massive influx of worker members into the party transformed the composition of the party organisations. As a result, worker composition reached 79.2 and 81.5 per cent in the oblast and city party organisation respectively in January 1926.

³¹ These figures are calculated from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, pp. 72-73.

³² *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1980), vol. 2, pp. 169-170.

³³ In the Leningrad oblast party organisation, the number of party members and candidates, who were from peasant backgrounds, increased from 4,211 to 10,541 between January 1926 and January

Yet, at the beginning of the first FYP period, the Leningrad party organisation was still one of the best party organisations in the country in terms of worker representation.³⁴ Moreover, the ratio of those from working-class backgrounds increased in the first three years of this period. In the Leningrad oblast party organisation, the percentage of workers grew continuously from 70 per cent to 78 per cent between January 1928 and January 1931. Then in January 1932 and 1933, it stabilised at around 77 per cent (see table 4-7). On the other hand, in Leningrad, the increase in the ratio of workers by social origin continued until the beginning of 1932, when the worker composition reached 84 per cent. From then on, the worker composition began to decrease, and by January 1933, among the 220,990 party members and candidates in the city, those from the working class comprised 84 per cent.³⁵ Taking into consideration the fact that the average percentage of workers by social origin did not exceed 64 per cent in the whole country in January 1933,³⁶ one can say that, by the end of the first FYP period, both the Leningrad oblast and city party organisations still had a relatively high proportion of workers by social origin.

Table 4-7. Social composition of party membership in the Leningrad region, 1928-1934 (1 January)

Year	Leningrad oblast party organisation				Leningrad city party organisation			
	Workers		Peasants		Workers		Peasants	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1928	83,903	70.2	10,541	8.8	68,191	75.5	3,512	3.9
1929	103,819	74.3	12,423	8.9	84,801	79.6	4,681	4.4
1930	115,897	76.8	12,588	8.3	96,903	80.7	5,873	4.9
1931	149,004	78.4	17,817	9.4	122,771	82.8	7,401	5.0
1932	196,785	77.9	29,305	11.6	169,990	83.8	10,531	5.2
1933	214,824	77.2	35,099	12.6	184,665	83.6	12,798	5.8
1934	145,289	75.2	24,031	12.4	126,570	80.4	10,799	6.9

Note: The percentages are my own calculations.

Source: Adapted from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, pp. 72-73.

1928. As a result, their proportion in the total membership almost doubled (from 4.8 per cent to 8.8 per cent). On the other hand, the number of those from white-collar and other backgrounds increased from 14,118 to 25,002 over the same period. Their proportion also increased from 16 per cent to 21 per cent. See *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, pp. 72-73.

³⁴ According to data given in *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)* on 20 June 1928, the Leningrad party organisation had a relatively high percentage (75.3 per cent) of workers by social origin, compared to 66.7 per cent of the Moscow party organisation and to 80.3 per cent of the Baku party organisation.

³⁵ In January 1934, the proportion of workers by social origin decreased further to 80.4 per cent.

³⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 447.

However, during the first FYP period, what mattered more was the proportion of workers by actual occupation. Under the slogan 'every second communist a bench-worker!', the party had intensively recruited bench-workers, and this recruitment policy had a visible effect on the party's social composition in terms of occupation. Nationally, the 50 per cent bench-worker target was to be met by the end of 1930. It was claimed that the quotas of recruits by current occupation set out by the January 1929 Central Committee directive were actually met in 1929. As a consequence, the proportion of communists who were bench-workers was rising rapidly, from 41 per cent in January 1928 to 44 per cent in January 1929 and to 46 per cent in January 1930. In April 1930, eighteen months after the two-year drive was launched, the ratio of production workers had reached 49 per cent, and achievement of the target then seemed certain.³⁷ However, the All-Union party never achieved the target, and the ratio of production workers began to decrease from April 1930. By January 1931, bench-workers comprised only 44 per cent and their proportion decreased further to 41 per cent in January 1933 (see table 4-8).³⁸

In Leningrad, the situation was slightly different. The Leningrad city party organisation had already over 50 per cent of bench-worker membership at the beginning of 1928. Therefore, it set the target higher than the national one: 67 per cent of party membership in Leningrad should be workers by occupation.³⁹ As production workers were massively recruited in the city, the proportion of bench-workers gradually increased up to April 1930, when it reached its peak of 64 per cent.⁴⁰ However, from April 1930 onwards, the proportion of workers from the benches began to decrease, and by the end of 1932, bench-workers comprised only about half (49 per cent) of party membership in the city (see table 4-8).

Even though the Leningrad city party organisation never achieved its target of 67 per cent of bench-worker membership, the position of the city party as a highly proletarianised organisation was very clear. The proportion of workers among its

³⁷ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 11-12, June 1930, pp. 14-19.

³⁸ The proportion of workers from the bench had decreased partly due to the continued transfer of worker communists to nonmanual occupations, but mainly due to the increased recruitment from other groups of occupation. See Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 184.

³⁹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 12, 1928, p. 4.

⁴⁰ *K XVI s'ezdu VKP(b): Materialy k organizatsionnomu otchetu TsK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1930), no. 1, p. 159. This figure meant an increase from 59.2 per cent in January 1928.

membership remained over 50 per cent throughout this period, far above the national average of about 40 to 48 per cent (see table 4-8). For instance, in April 1930 workers engaged in actual production accounted for 64 per cent of party membership in the city whereas only 49 per cent of the whole party membership in the country were workers engaged in production.⁴¹ Moreover, party organisations in some of its more heavily industrialised raions were the most proletarian in the country. In 1929, for instance, the Moskovsko-narvskii and Volodarskii raions boasted bench-worker party memberships of over 70 per cent.⁴²

In the oblast as a whole, the percentages of workers by occupation among its party membership was slightly lower than the figures for the city. In January 1931, bench-workers comprised about 54 per cent of the whole party membership in the oblast, and two years later, the proportion decreased to 45 per cent. Nevertheless, the ratio of bench-workers among the oblast party membership was still higher than the figures for the whole party (see table 4-8).

Table 4-8. Proportion of workers by occupation in the All-Union, Leningrad oblast and Leningrad city party organisations, 1927-1933 (percentages)

1 January	<i>Leningrad city party organisation (1)</i>	<i>Leningrad oblast party organisation</i>	<i>All-Union party organisation (1)</i>
1927	61.4	n. d.	39.7
1928	59.2	n. d.	40.8
1929	59.9	n. d.	44.0
1930	61.6	n. d.	46.3
1931	57.6	53.9 (2)	44.2
1932	57.3	53.6 (2)	43.8
1933	49.2	45.4 (3)	40.9

Sources: (1) The figures for the All-Union and Leningrad city party organisations are from *Partrabotnik*, nos. 9-10, May 1933, p. 74; (2) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 5, 1932, pp. 2-3; (3) *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 375.

The massive recruitment which took place in the first FYP inevitably resulted in a change to the make up of Leningrad's party membership, as expressed in terms of year of entry into the party. A breakdown of Leningrad's party membership by year of entry into the party in 1927 and 1933 clearly reveals that both the Leningrad oblast

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, no. 1, pp. 17, 159.

⁴² *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP (b) v tsifrah* (1929), no. 1, p. 16.

and city party organisation had gone through significant changes in their generational composition (see table 4-9). Traditionally, the Leningrad party organisation boasted of party members with pre-Revolutionary party standing and experience of the 1917 revolution. In 1927, there were 3,786 such members, including 3,417 in the city of Leningrad.⁴³ However, their proportions in the total membership of the Leningrad oblast and city party organisations were not significant: they accounted for only six per cent. Instead, those who had joined the party during the Civil War comprised about 24 per cent of party membership in the oblast as a whole, and 23 per cent in the city of Leningrad only. This meant that about 30 per cent of the total membership had joined the party before and during the Russian Revolution and the Civil War. On the other hand, those who had joined the party in the period 1924-1927 comprised the largest part (over 65 per cent) of the party membership both in the oblast and city party organisations.

However, incomplete figures suggest that by the end of 1932 the proportion of each group had significantly changed in both the oblast and city party organisations. First of all, the absolute number and ratio of the party members of pre-Revolutionary party standing and of those who joined the party in the 1917-1920 period had considerably decreased by this time. For instance, in the oblast party organisation, their percentage had dropped from 30 per cent in 1927 to 11 per cent in January 1933.⁴⁴ The decrease in their proportion was partly caused by the decrease in their absolute number,⁴⁵ but mainly by the massive recruitment, which had drawn a large number of new members in the period 1928-1932.

Secondly, the proportion of those who had joined the party in the period 1924-1927 markedly decreased: their share had dropped from 66 to 26 per cent in the oblast organisation and from 68 to 27 per cent in the city organisation between 1927 and

⁴³ Since the figures in table 4-9 does not cover the whole party membership, these numbers seem to be imprecise.

⁴⁴ In Leningrad, their percentage had dropped from 28.3 per cent in 1927 to 10.4 per cent in January 1933.

⁴⁵ In the 1927-1932 period Leningrad probably lost in absolute terms around 4,600 party members of pre-1924 date of entry, around 23 per cent of the total number of pre-1924 party members in 1927. The biggest losses came from the so-called 'civil war generation' who joined the party in the 1918-1920 period. Clearly, the process of supplying experienced cadres to other regional party organisations was partially offset by the arrival each year of substantial numbers of party members of long-standing membership to take up study and subsequently to find employment. However, the losses of more experienced party members seems to have been inevitable in the first FYP period.

January 1933. Therefore those who had enrolled in the party in the first and second Lenin call-ups (1924 and 1925) and in the 1927 October call-up were no longer the majority of the party membership by the end of 1932.

Thirdly, those who had joined the party in the first FYP period became the largest part of the Leningrad party membership by the end of 1932, making up more than 61 per cent of the overall number of party members and candidates in both the oblast and city party organisations. In particular, those who joined the party in the 1931-1932 period accounted for more than one third (35 and 34 per cent in the oblast and city party membership respectively). These figures suggest that the mass enrolment of this period had resulted in a somewhat younger and less experienced party membership.

In conclusion, one can say that between 1927 and 1933 there was an extensive change in the make up of Leningrad's party membership in relation to year of entry into the party, even though there seems to have been little change as expressed in terms of the varying lengths of time spent as a member. As a result, by the beginning of 1933, the Leningrad party organisation became a mass organisation with its majority having joined the party during the first FYP period.

Table 4-9. Composition of Leningrad party membership by year of entry into the party, 1927 and 1933

<i>Year of entry</i>	<i>Leningrad oblast party organisation</i>				<i>Leningrad city party organisation</i>			
	<i>1927*</i>		<i>Jan. 1933**</i>		<i>1927*</i>		<i>Jan. 1933**</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Before 1917	977	1.4	870	0.6	917	1.5	759	0.6
1917	2,809	4.1	2,479	1.6	2,500	4.0	2,150	1.7
1918-1920	16,789	24.1	12,791	8.4	14,364	22.8	10,542	8.1
1921-1923	2,931	4.2	2,594	1.7	2,559	4.1	2,229	1.7
1924-1927	46,116	66.2	39,685	26.0	42,502	67.6	34,701	26.6
1928-1930	-		41,484	27.2			35,724	27.4
1930-1932	-		52,691	34.5			44,210	33.9
Not indicated	33	0.0	-		30	0.0		
Total	69,655	100.0	152,594	100.0	62,872	100.0	130,315	100.0

Notes: * The figures for 1927 are based on the data of the 1927 party census; ** The figures for 1933 do not cover all party members; The percentages are my own calculations.

Source: Adapted from *Leningradskaia organizatsiia KPSS v tsifrakh 1917-1973*, pp. 87-88.

4.1.4 End of mass recruitment in 1933

The massive recruitment of industrial workers brought about an unexpected negative result: a poor quality of party members. Although the party sought to recruit the leading workers, with long years of industrial experience and an enthusiasm for party and social work, workers of poor quality joining the party could not be avoided in this massive recruitment period. As the proletarianisation drive of 1927-1930 opened the way for workers to enrol into the party without much difficulty, apparently inappropriate persons were also allowed to enter the party, and as a consequence, the quality of party members deteriorated over the period.

Indeed, workers could relatively easily join the party in these years, as party cells were keen to accept as many workers as possible in order to fulfil recruitment targets.⁴⁶ For instance, at the Elektrosila factory, workers were encouraged to join the party by filling out questionnaires, which simply asked why they did not want to join.⁴⁷ Another recruitment case illustrates how easily workers could join the party at this time. At the Krasnyi treugol'nik factory, 60-70 activists attended at an activists' meeting where a *zavkom* representative spoke for collective entry into the party. When he asked who wanted to join, some ten persons raised their hands, and in doing so, they were admitted into the party.⁴⁸

The negative side of the mass recruitment was soon felt and criticised. In 1930, it was claimed that sizeable quantities of those who had joined had become 'ballast' - that is, they failed to play any active part in the organisation, or else simply dropped out altogether. In the Petrogradskii raion, for instance, 17 per cent of its membership were classified as either 'passive' or 'ballast' in 1930.⁴⁹ It was also admitted that many workers in 73 'communist workshops', which had been formed in the city by

⁴⁶ The relative ease with which workers could join the party in these years is shown by the fact that while in 1927 in the Soviet Union as a whole, only 44 per cent of those applying to join were accepted, by 1929 the figure was 84 per cent. See P. O. Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan: The Case of Leningrad* (CREES Discussion Papers, SIPS, no. 24, University of Birmingham, 1983), part 1, p. 2. In the period from July 1930 to December 1932, almost 90 per cent of those production workers who applied to join the party were accepted in the country, and in Leningrad the percentage was ever higher. See *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Moscow: Partiinoe izdatel'stvo, 1932), vol. 11, p. 30.

⁴⁷ V. Beliakov and N. Zolotarev, *Partiia ukrepliaet svoi riady* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1970), p. 87.

⁴⁸ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 11-12, June 1930, p. 12.

June 1930, were party members only in the most formal sense of the word, undertaking none of the duties expected of them.⁵⁰

The growing concern over the 'quality' of more recent recruits was expressed in party journals from 1930 onwards. Following a period of mass recruitment in January 1930, coinciding with the anniversary of Lenin's death, Stalin emphasised the need to keep up the quality as well as quantity of party members.⁵¹ In Leningrad, more attention was given to the quality of party members in and after 1931. In 1931 articles in the Leningrad party press began to stress the need for a better quality of membership, if necessary at the expense of quantity. However, despite warnings about the poor quality of party membership, no immediate action was taken and the situation worsen further in 1931 and 1932. When the factory party cells had to recruit certain number of workers in order to fulfil recruitment targets, they could not avoid recruiting workers who did not meet the qualification for party membership. Indeed, it remained easy for workers with little experience in industry to join the ranks of the party. At the beginning of 1932, the Leningrad party leadership again expressed open disquiet at local organisations' apparent preference for 'quantity, without taking into account the quality of those accepted'.⁵²

It was only in the summer of 1932, however, that the party seriously reviewed the work of factory party cells in this respect. The review showed that the work with candidate members was poorly carried out. It was complained that factory party cells were keen to recruit workers to the party, but that they did not do enough work to educate them. Many candidate members failed to show enough enthusiasm for party work. Some even did not pay party dues, and did not attend party meetings for months on end. There were cases in which party unit organisers did not even know who were party members within their brigades.⁵³

⁵⁰ Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 6.

⁵¹ Stalin pointed out that although 'the desire of whole workshops and even factories to join the party is a sign of the very great revolutionary upsurge (*pod''em*) of millions of the working masses - It certainly does not follow from this that we should accept into the party everyone who wants to join. In workshops, in factories, there are all kinds of people - Therefore the party must retain the trusted method of adopting the individual approach to everyone who wishes to join the party - We need not only quantity, but also quality.' See *Pravda*, 10 February 1930, p. 1.

⁵² *K IV-oi oblastnoi i gorodskoi partiinoi konferentsii: Otchet Leningradskogo oblastnogo i gorodskogo komitetov VKP(b)* (Leningrad, 1932), p. 83.

⁵³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 28.

Finally, at the end of 1932 the party announced a complete ban on all recruitment in 1933. This decision was undoubtedly influenced by this concern over the quality of many of the more recent recruits. The poor quality of party members also acted as a powerful rationale behind the decision to purge the party of undisciplined elements who had wangled their way into its ranks during the years of mass recruitment. The party completely banned all recruitment from 1933 to the end of 1936, and the emphasis was put firmly on the notion of quality until 1938. It was only in 1938 that recruitment began to pick up and the party once again took on the task of encouraging workers to join its ranks.

4.2 Party saturation and distribution of communists in factories

4.2.1 Recruitment work of factory party cells

As already seen in chapter 4-1, a great number of workers were recruited to the party during the first FYP. Undoubtedly, the massive worker recruitments were triggered by the desire to improve the social composition of the party. At the same time, it was believed that massive worker recruitments would guarantee support for party policy, especially for the rapid industrialisation drive, from the worker masses. Indeed, without support from the worker masses, it would have been difficult to achieve the extremely high tasks set out for industry. Thus, just as in the mid-1920s economic failure and political corruption could be explained as the results of 'lack of self-criticism', so in the 1929-32 period the characteristic style of Central Committee resolution on the state of mass-party work in an enterprise linked failure in plan fulfilment to inadequate growth in the party 'layer' either in the enterprise as a whole or in specific parts of the enterprise.

As the party sought to recruit as many workers as possible during the first FYP, a great burden was placed on the factory party cells that were responsible for the recruitment of workers and the education of new party members. Quite detailed directives concerning recruitment were handed down to lower party organisations.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ For such instructions concerning recruitment, see *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 3, 1928, pp. 23-29; *Instruktsiia o poriadke priema v kandidaty i perevoda v chleny VKP(b) Leningradskoi oblastnoi organizatsii VKP(b)* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b), 1929); and RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2750, pp. 256-257.

Factory party cells had, above all, to implement the ambitious recruitment targets that were set by higher party organisations. If they failed to fulfil these tasks, they were criticised for their poor work. For instance, when the work of the Moskovsko-narvskii raion party organisation was reviewed in May 1930, the Central Committee responsible instructor criticised this raikom for not being able to achieve sufficient membership growth, and complained that many factories in the raion did not have a sufficiently high level of party saturation.⁵⁵

As factory party cells experienced disaggregation and developed into a multi-tier structure, the main focus of recruitment work shifted to lower party cells. According to the status of party *kollektivy* containing workshop cells, issued by the obkom bureau on 23 May 1928, recruiting new party members was one of the main responsibilities of *kollektiv* bureaux.⁵⁶ However, already at this time, workshop cells were also given the right to decide on questions of enrolment as candidates and transfer to full party membership.⁵⁷ Later, when party committees were created within large-scale factories, they were granted a number of wide-ranging rights and responsibilities concerning the acceptance of new party members. At the same time, workshop cells, which were considered the main focus of party work, were given full '*ustavnye prava*'. By June 1930, all workshop cells had been granted the right independently to recruit new party members.⁵⁸ In Leningrad, this right had been already accorded to over half of its workshop cells by this time. Then, from 1931 onwards, *zveno* cells were expected to carry out the recruitment of new members, as the focus of party work was transferred further lower down to *zveno* cells. It was agreed at that time that this would revitalise the party work at factories and draw more workers into the party since lower party cells knew more about their workers and would be able to find suitable ones. In Leningrad, some *zveno* cells appear to have carried out the work expected of them. For instance, a party worker from the Karl Marx factory declared that the increase in party membership which took place in January 1931 was due to the effective work conducted by *zveno* cells.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52.

⁵⁶ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 202.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁵⁸ *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika* (Moscow), vol. 8, p. 303.

⁵⁹ Some 211 workers joined the party within a month. See *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 25.

To recruit as many workers as possible into the party, factory party cells undertook various methods of recruitment. Raikoms and factory party committees undertook intense mass-political work at workers' conferences, rallies of shock workers, and other meetings. At the same time, workers were individually approached by communists and encouraged to join the party through discussions.⁶⁰ One of the effective ways of recruiting workers was said to be the distribution of questionnaires among non-party workers, mainly activists. Workers were asked to fill out questionnaires, which questioned why they had not joined the party yet and whether this was due to a lack of understanding the tasks of the party or family obligations, and so on. Then, party cells discussed the problem with individual workers based on the questionnaires they answered. In this way, the Elektrosila factory recruited most workers who had answered the questionnaires into the party in January 1929.⁶¹

However, various seasonal campaigns were the most important recruitment method, where workers were accepted en masse with only a few questions asked.⁶² For instance, during the period of mass recruitment in January 1930, coinciding with the anniversary of Lenin's death, whole brigades, workshops and factories handed in collective applications for party membership.⁶³ This kind of collective entry into the party was even acclaimed as evidence of the party's close association with the working class although it was against party regulations, which stipulated that each applicant was to be considered on an individual basis. However, later in 1930, some of the practices employed by party organisations to attract workers into the party, and thus increase the figures, were criticised by the Central Committee. In particular, the method of collective recruitment, where workers were accepted into the party en masse to satisfy some arbitrary target issued by the raikom, was condemned as contrary to the spirit of the party rules. For instance, a Central Committee organisation instructor criticised the way in which workers were recruited en masse at the Krasnyi treugol'nik.⁶⁴ Facing criticism from a Central Committee instructor, a party worker from the Krasnyi treugol'nik admitted that there had been one such case, but he also

⁶⁰ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 373.

⁶¹ Beliakov and Zolotarev, *Partiia ukrepliaet svoi riady*, p. 87.

⁶² *K XVI s'ezdu VKP(b)*, no. 1, p. 9.

⁶³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 374.

⁶⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52.

claimed that collective admission was a rather exceptional way to recruit new members.⁶⁵

4.2.2 Composition of workers recruited to the party

During the first FYP analysts of party recruitment focused upon two variables: a worker's social background; and his production experience and level of skill. As the party aimed to recruit leading workers, the party put great emphasis on drawing skilled workers with long years of industrial experience into its ranks. In the Leningrad region, workers who had worked in industry for at least three years were encouraged to join the party.⁶⁶ However, the figures available show that variations in the composition of the workers admitted to the party in terms of the length of work experience were rather great among different raions at different periods (see table 4-10). For instance, in the Petrogradskii raion, only a few who were admitted into the party in 1929 had less than three years' work experience. Furthermore, the majority of those admitted into the party (79 per cent) between 1 July 1928 and 1 April 1929 were classified as skilled workers with long periods of industrial experience.⁶⁷ However, not every raion managed to achieve the same level of quality among the intake. For instance, in the Volodarskii raion, among those admitted into the party in the fourth quarter of 1929, those who had worked in industry for less than three years accounted for as much as 27 per cent, while those who had worked for more than ten years accounted for only 16 per cent. However, the trend was completely reversed in the following quarter: only 12 per cent had worked in industry for less than three years, while 20 per cent had worked for more than ten years.

As the party sought to recruit workers with a long period of industrial experience, workers who entered industry before the Revolution were considered to be the party's 'foremost reserve' for recruitment. In February 1930 those workers who entered industry before the Revolution accounted for as much as 50 per cent of the industrial working class in the country as a whole. However, too few of these cadre workers, it was claimed, were found in the ranks of the party. Among Leningrad workers, only 29 per cent of those who entered industry before 1913 were party

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁶⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 1929, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 12, June 1929, p. 35.

members, and 37 per cent of those who began work between 1914 and 1917 were party members. Furthermore, four-fifths of Leningrad's pre-1905 metalworkers still remained outside the party.⁶⁸ Therefore, in 1930 much emphasis was placed on recruiting workers who had begun to work before the Revolution. In Leningrad, some 30 per cent of those admitted to the party in the first quarter of 1930 were workers who began to work before the Revolution. In the second quarter, the figure increased to 32 per cent.⁶⁹ All in all, workers who began to work before the Revolution accounted for some 26 per cent of those admitted to the party in 1930.⁷⁰ In the Moskovsko-narvskii raion, workers with over 15 years' work experience accounted for 17 per cent of those admitted to the party in 1930, a big increase from the 1929 figure of five per cent.⁷¹

However, the general picture presented by table 4-10 could not be considered a very positive one from the party's viewpoint. When we consider the proportion of the workers had worked in industry for more than five years, the figures for Leningrad read: 56 per cent in 1930, 58 per cent in 1931, and 58 per cent in the first half of 1932.⁷² These figures were much lower than the national figures, which were put at 68 per cent in 1931 and 62 per cent in the first half of 1932. This suggests that a considerable number of workers who had a relatively short period of work experience in industry were also recruited into the party, and that their percentage among all recruits in Leningrad city was larger than the average percentage for the All-Union party. Indeed, workers who had less than five years' experience in industrial labour accounted for over 40 per cent of those accepted into Leningrad's party organisation in 1930, 1931 and 1932 (see table 4-10).

In particular, workers who had been working in the industrial sector for less than three years accounted for as many as 15 per cent of workers admitted into the party in the first quarter of 1930.⁷³ In 1931 the 'quality' of new recruits worsened appreciably. In the first nine months of 1931, 17 per cent of those workers joining the

⁶⁸ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1930, pp. 35-36.

⁶⁹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 108.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2713, p. 7.

⁷¹ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1932, p. 52.

⁷² *Partrabotnik*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 24.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 27.

party had an industrial work experience of less than three years and almost half of these had not even gone through the Komsomol, a situation considered to be

Table 4-10. Length of industrial work experience of workers admitted to the party, 1928-1932 (percentages)

		Less than 3 years	Between 3 and 5 years	Between 6 and 10 years	Between 11 and 15 years	More than 15 years
Petrogradskii raion						
July 1928-March 1929	(1)	5.5	46.5	28.0	20.0	
January-March 1929	(2)	2.6	45.1	26.4	11.5	14.4
July-September 1929	(2)	6.0	48.0	30.0	8.7	7.2
Volodarskii raion						
October-December 1929	(3)	26.9	36.2	26.8	8.0	7.9
January-March 1930	(3)	12.3	18.3	31.5	17.4	20.3
Moskovsko-narvskii raion						
1929	(4)	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	5.0
1930	(4)	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	17.0
Narvskii raion						
January-March 1931	(5)	22.8	22.3	31.6	13.1	10.2
April 1931	(5)	20.0	24.5	32.2	12.8	10.5
May 1931	(5)	16.4	30.5	30.7	11.5	10.9
Vyborgskii raion						
1931	(6)	18.1	23.1	27.6	17.2	13.9
Leningrad as a whole						
January-March 1930	(7)	15.4	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
January-September 1931	(8)	17.0	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
July-September 1931	(9)	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	58.0	
1930	(10)	n. d.	n. d.		56.0	
1931	(10)	n. d.	n. d.		58.0	
January-June 1932	(10)	n. d.	n. d.		57.6	
All-Union						
1930	(11)	15.4	20.1	29.6	18.4	19.5
January-June 1931	(11)	16.5	21.8	27.6	17.3	16.8

Sources : (1) *Partrabotnik*, no. 12, June 1929, p. 35; (2) *Ibid.*, no. 1, January 1930, p. 23; (3) *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 31; (4) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52; (5) P. Lysakov, *Partrabota v promyshlennom raione: Opyt perestroiki partraboty v narvskoi organizatsii* (Leningrad, 1931), p. 75; (6) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 62; (7) *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 27; (8) *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 44; (9) *Ibid.*, nos. 21-22, November 1931, p. 133; (10) *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 24; (11) *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Moscow: Partiinoe izdatel'stvo, 1932), vol. 11, p. 16.

intolerable.⁷⁴ Although the figure decreased slightly to 14 per cent at the beginning of 1932,⁷⁵ it is evident that the quality of new recruits did not improve considerably in 1932. Taking into consideration that a considerable number of peasants arrived in Leningrad and found jobs in a rapidly expanding industrial sector from 1930 onwards, some of the party recruits between 1930 and 1932 might have been linked, directly or indirectly, to the countryside.⁷⁶ It was believed at that time that peasant elements among industrial workers in general and party membership in particular, had increased over the first FYP period.

The party sought to recruit as many skilled workers as possible during the massive worker recruitment campaigns. No comprehensive data exist, but those that are available suggest that in the early period of the massive worker recruitment the majority of those admitted to the party were skilled workers. For instance, some 79 per cent of those admitted to the Petrogradskii raion party organisation between 1 July 1928 and 1 April 1929 were classified as skilled workers.⁷⁷ Likewise, skilled workers accounted for 92 per cent of the workers who were admitted to the party at Krasnyi putilovets between 1 October 1929 and 15 April 1930.⁷⁸ As a result, by October 1931, the Leningrad party organisation achieved a higher party saturation level among skilled workers than the average party saturation level in its total workforce: 26 per cent as against 18 per cent.⁷⁹

However, the 'quality' of the new recruits deteriorated considerably in 1932. A national survey of 551 enterprises employing 1,313 workers showed that unskilled workers comprised about one third of workers admitted to the party in the second quarter of 1932: only 16 per cent were skilled, while 30 per cent were unskilled.⁸⁰ Likewise, in Leningrad a considerable number of unskilled workers were admitted

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 44.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, nos. 3-4, February 1932, p. 36.

⁷⁶ In particular, in 1931 and 1932, most new workers were drawn from the countryside. See chapter 2 of this thesis.

⁷⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 12, June 1929, p. 35.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 51.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 21-22, November 1931, p. 133. In February 1930 one third of the working class in the country was formally classified as skilled workers, the party saturation among these workers varied from 15 per cent to 25 per cent. Among the semi-skilled workers it varied from 7.6 per cent to 26.2 per cent (among Leningrad metalworkers). See *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1930, p. 35.

⁸⁰ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 21, November 1932, p. 47.

into the party in 1932. During the first half of 1932, for instance, unskilled workers accounted for as many as 74 per cent of workers admitted to the party at the Krasnyi vyborzhets factory and for 60 per cent at Goszavod no. 4.⁸¹ Not surprisingly, there were complaints about the poor quality of new recruits in the city.

Table 4-11. Proportion of shockworkers among total workers admitted into the party (percentages)

		<i>Proportion of shockworkers</i>	
Narvskii raion	July-September 1930	81.2	(1)
	October-December 1930	79.8	(1)
	January-March 1931	84.7	(1)
	April 1931	38.1	(1)
	May 1931	95.5	(1)
Vyborgskii raion	1931	95.0	(2)
Leningrad	July-September 1931	84.4	(3)
	January-June 1932	89.5	(4)
All-Union	October-December 1930	56.2	(5)
	January-March 1931	70.6	(5)
	April-June 1931	73.0	(5)
	1931	76.0	(6)
	January-June 1932	82.4	(6)

Sources: (1) Lysakov, *Partrabota v promyshlennom raione*, p. 75; (2) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 62; (3) *Ibid.*, nos. 21-22, November 1931, p. 133; (4) *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 24; (5) *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1932), vol. 11, p. 16; (6) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 21, November 1932, p. 46.

From 1930 onwards, shock work was widely used as a means of identifying potential party recruits. In recruiting workers into the party, the party laid special emphasis on shock workers. In its February 1930 resolution concerning recruitment, the Central Committee declared that 'the active participation of workers in shock brigades and socialist competition and their genuinely progressive role in production are to be considered a major criterion of admission into the party'.⁸² Following the sixteenth Party Congress in 1930, the main criterion for applicants became that of shock-work, and factory party organisations attempted to attract the maximum

⁸¹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, August 1932, p. 76.

⁸² *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 5, p. 88.

number of shock workers into the party.⁸³ The extent to which a worker participated in shock work was regarded as sufficient evidence of a worker's suitability for party membership. Therefore, the meaning of party membership came to be bound up with shock work, and shock work became not merely a factor in labour productivity but also a system of political values.

In the country as a whole, 56 per cent of workers who joined the party in the fourth quarter of 1930 were classified as shock workers. This figure had increased to 72 per cent by July 1931 and it further increased to 82 per cent by July 1932.⁸⁴ In Leningrad, the proportion of shockworkers among those admitted into the party was higher than the national figure. Some 84 per cent of those admitted into the party between July and September 1931 were shock workers,⁸⁵ and in the first half of 1932, 90 per cent.⁸⁶ In particular, the Vyborgskii raion showed an exceptionally high percentage of shockworker recruitment: 95 per cent of workers who joined the party in 1931 (a total of 13,131 workers) fell into this category (see table 4-11).⁸⁷

All in all, the available material we have of the composition of the newly admitted suggests that from 1930 onwards the quality of party recruits deteriorated in terms of length of industrial experience and skill level. As workers could enrol in the party without much difficulty during the massive worker recruitment period, workers of poor quality joining the party could not be avoided. Moreover, the party's emphasis on the participation of workers in shock movement and socialist competition as a criterion of admission into the party did not guarantee that the best workers would join the party, since almost 70 per cent of all workers in Leningrad claimed to be engaged in shock movement and socialist competition by 1931.⁸⁸

4.2.3 Party saturation in factories

At the beginning of the first FYP, Leningrad had a considerable party saturation level within its factories. In July 1928, as many as 18 per cent of Leningrad's industrial workers were communists and the figure increased to 20 per cent by January

⁸³ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 21, November 1932, p. 46.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46; and Beliakov and Zolotarev, *Partiia ukrepliaet svoi riady*, p. 118.

⁸⁵ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 21-22, November 1931, p. 133.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 24.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 62.

⁸⁸ See chapter 7 of this thesis.

1929 (see table 4-12). In the following years, Leningrad was expected to increase further or at least to maintain its high party saturation level. However, despite the sharp increase in party membership within factories, it was not always easy to keep this level. Leningrad's workforce expanded extremely fast during the first FYP (see chapter 2-3), and its growth rate often exceeded the growth rate of party membership within factories, which led to a fall in the party saturation level. As both the workforce and party membership expanded rapidly, the party saturation level fluctuated every quarter, though the fluctuation was not very great. Nevertheless, Leningrad maintained its 20 per cent party saturation level in January 1930, which means that approximately one in every five industrial workers were party members at this time. When we consider the fact that the national figure for party saturation level was only 12 per cent in July 1928 and 14 per cent in January 1930,⁸⁹ one can say Leningrad had a considerable party saturation level within its factories.

However, the party saturation level in Leningrad's factories began to fall from January 1930 and it had fallen considerably to 15 per cent by July 1931. In the latter half of 1931 the party saturation level gradually increased again, but it reached only 17 per cent by January 1932. The main cause of such a fall was the massive and rapid expansion of Leningrad's workforce which took place between January 1930 and January 1932: the workforce almost doubled, from 285,553 to 532,137. The party membership did not increase as fast as the workforce did: it increased from 120,126 to 202,866, an increase of almost 69 per cent. Furthermore, the proportion of industrial workers among party membership decreased slightly from 62 per cent to 57 per cent over the same period. All these factors contributed to lowering the party saturation level within factories. However, the gradual increase took place in 1932, and by January 1933 it had reached 18 per cent (see table 4-12).

The party saturation level varied among Leningrad's urban raions, as can be seen in table 4-12. For instance, in October 1928 the Vasileostrovskii raion showed a 24 per cent party saturation, the highest figure in Leningrad at this time.⁹⁰ In April 1930 party saturation among the Volodarskii raion's industrial workers reached 24 per cent, which was much higher than Leningrad's average party saturation level.

⁸⁹ *XVI s'ezd VKP(b): Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1930), p. 84.

⁹⁰ *Partrabotnik*, no. 2, January 1929, p. 50.

Table 4-12. Party saturation in industrial workforce in Leningrad and the All-Union (percentages)

	Leningrad	All-Union	Volodarskii raion	Petrogradskii raion	Moskovsko-narvskii raion
October 1927			19.0 (9)		16.0 (13)
January 1928	18.8 (1)				
July 1928	18.0 (2)	11.9 (7)			
October 1928			20.0 (9)		
January 1929	20.1 (1)		19.8 (10)	19.3 (11)	18.7 (13)
July 1929	19.8 (3)			20.6 (12)	
October 1929	19.2 (3)			19.6 (12)	
1929					18.6 (14)
January 1930	20.1 (1)	14.3 (7)			
April 1930	16.0 (4)		23.5 (10)		18.3 (14)
July 1930	15.2 (4)				
January 1931	16.5 (1)	12.8 (8)			
July 1931		13.9 (8)			
October 1931	17.6 (5)				
January 1932	17.1 (1)				
July 1932	18.0 (6)				
January 1933	18.1 (1)				

Sources: (1) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1933), no. 4, p. 33; (2) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 10, 1928, p. 33; (3) *Partrabotnik*, no. 22, December 1929, p. 58; (4) RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2754, p. 71; (5) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 21-22, November 1931 p. 133; (6) *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1931 p. 23; (7) *XVI s'ezd VKP(b): Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1930), p. 84; (8) *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1932), vol. 11, p. 60; (9) *Partrabotnik*, no. 2, January 1929, p. 28; (10) *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 29 (11) *Ibid.*, no. 2, January 1929, p. 14; (12) *Ibid.*, no. 1, January 1930, p. 23; (13) *Ibid.*, no. 2, January 1929, p. 37; (14) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 55.

Meanwhile the Moskovsko-narvskii raion did not show a sufficiently high level of party saturation within its factories. For instance, the party saturation level of this raion was recorded as 19 per cent in 1929. Given the large size of industrial workforce within this raion and the importance of its factories for Leningrad's industry, this party saturation level was not considered to be sufficient. Furthermore, despite the massive enrolment of workers into the party, especially during the 'Lenin levy' in

1930, the party saturation level of this raion fell to 18 per cent by April 1930.⁹¹ The insufficient level of party saturation of this raion was explicitly criticised by Central Committee instructors in May 1930.⁹²

Table 4-13. Party saturation in Leningrad's industrial unions, 1 July 1928

Union	Total workforce	Among whom party members	Total number of men workers	Among whom party members	Total number of women workers	Among whom party members
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Metalworkers	93,724	22.7	84,537	22.8	9,187	21.4
Chemicalworkers	26,169	16.1	13,384	21.0	12,785	10.9
Printers	12,351	21.5	7,313	24.2	5,038	17.6
Woodworkers	8,682	15.4	7,284	15.0	1,398	17.5
Leatherworkers	14,663	17.5	8,605	21.4	6,058	12.0
Paperworkers	2,935	22.5	2,242	24.0	693	17.6
Textileworkers	60,297	11.4	18,241	17.9	42,056	8.6
Sewingworkers	13,198	10.9	3,679	15.4	9,519	9.2
Foodworkers	18,662	21.9	10,691	23.2	7,971	20.2
Total	250,681	18.0	155,976	21.6	94,705	12.1

Source: Adapted from *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 10, 1928, p. 33.

The variation in party saturation level across different branches of industry was rather great. As can be seen in table 4-13, in July 1928 party saturation levels within Leningrad's industrial unions ranged from 11 to 23 per cent. The metalworking industry, which was normally hailed as the leading branch of industry, showed the highest level of party saturation. Party saturation levels among printers, paperworkers and foodworkers were also considerable. By contrast, textile workers and sewing workers showed low party saturation levels: only 11 per cent of them were party members. Such low party saturation levels seem to have caused by the fact that women workers, who showed an extremely low level of party saturation, comprised the majority of the workforce in those industrial branches. Indeed, women workers showed a lower level of party membership more generally than those male counterparts. In July 1928 the party saturation level among women workers was lower

⁹¹ The party saturation level decreased mainly because the workforce of this raion expanded faster than the party membership within its factories did. See *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 55.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 52 and 55.

than among men workers in all branches of industry, except in woodworking. In particular, those working in the textile and sewing industries showed extremely low party saturation levels: about nine per cent.

A further breakdown of these figures by Leningrad's raions shows that there was also a great variation across the districts. For instance, as many as 26 per cent of metalworkers of Petrogradskii raion were communists, while in the Moskovskonarvskii raion the figure was only 20 per cent. Among textile workers, the Vasileostrovskii raion showed the highest party saturation (19 per cent), while the party saturation level in the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion was as low as 11 per cent.⁹³

Table 4-14. Party saturation in Leningrad by branch of industry (percentages)

<i>Branch of industry</i>	<i>1929</i> (1)	<i>Feb.</i> <i>1929</i> (2)	<i>Jan.</i> <i>1930</i> (3)	<i>April</i> <i>1930</i> (4)	<i>July</i> <i>1930</i> (4)	<i>Oct.</i> <i>1930</i> (3)	<i>1931</i> (1)	<i>Oct.</i> <i>1931</i> (5)	<i>July</i> <i>1932</i> (6)
Metalworking	24.6*	23.6	23.1	20.3	17.9	17.1	21.4*	22.1	21.0
Textiles	11.7	n. d.	15.4	n. d.	n. d.	15.2	12.6	17.4	n. d.
Leather	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	17.7	n. d.
Chemicals	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	13.8	n. d.

Note: The figures marked with an * include those working in the electrical engineering industry.

Sources: (1) *XV let diktatury proletariata: Ekonomiko-statisticheskii sbornik po gorodu Leningradu i Leningradskoi oblasti* (Leningrad: Izdanie oblispolkoma i Lensoveta, 1932), tables, p. 90; (2) *Ko 2 Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b): Otchet oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b), noiabr' 1927 g.-fevral' 1929 g.* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1929), p. 132; (3) *Partrabotnik*, no. 26, October 1930, p. 39; (4) RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2754, p. 71; (5) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 21-22, November 1931, p. 133; (6) *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 23.

In Leningrad, the largest party membership continued to be found in the metalworking industry in the following years.⁹⁴ As can be seen in table 4-14, the metalworking industry maintained a considerable party saturation level throughout the first FYP. Its party saturation level remained over 20 per cent except the latter half of 1930, when its saturation level was recorded as 18 per cent in July and 17 per cent in

⁹³ *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, 1 September 1928, p. 6.

⁹⁴ It is not clear whether this means that the metalworkers were politically more activated than any other groups of workers, or whether it is because more priority was given to the metalworkers.

October.⁹⁵ The textile industry still had a much lower party saturation level than the metalworking industry, even though its party saturation level had increased considerably between 1929 and 1931. For instance, in October 1931 as many as 17 per cent of textile workers were party members, which was a significant increase from the 1929 figure of 12 per cent. In the Moskovsko-narvskii raion, party saturation among its textile workers was recorded as 15 per cent in July 1928,⁹⁶ and it had increased to 17 per cent by April 1930.⁹⁷ This was positively evaluated by the Central Committee instructor in May 1930, when the party work of the Moskovsko-narvskii raikom was reviewed.⁹⁸

In 1929, party saturation within the large-scale industrial enterprises was generally lower than in medium or small sized enterprises. At the giant metalworking factories employing over 6,500 workers, party saturation stood at 19 per cent in February 1929, while medium sized ones employing a workforce of between 1,000 and 2,000 workers, it was as large as 26 per cent. At the largest textile factories employing over 6,000 workers, party saturation was ten per cent, while at medium sized ones employing a workforce of between 1,000 and 3,000 workers it was 13 per cent. Likewise, within the factories, the larger the workshop was, the smaller the party saturation. For instance, in metalworking factories where on average 24 per cent of the workers were communists, workshops containing over 600 workers had a 18 per cent party saturation, while smaller ones containing a workforce of between 100 and 200 workers had a 28 per cent party saturation. In the textile factories, workshops containing over 600 workers had an 11 per cent party saturation, while medium sized ones containing workforce of between 300 and 600 workers had a 15 per cent party saturation, and smaller ones containing a workforce of below 300 workers had a 25 per cent party saturation. At Krasnyi putilovets, workshops with a stable workforce had a 22 per cent party saturation, while workshops running shifts had a 19 per cent party saturation. At the Baltic shipbuilding works, workshops with a stable workforce

⁹⁵ Even in the metalworking industry there was great regional variation; in the Moscow and Leningrad oblasts the party saturation in 1931 was 20.5 per cent and 21.8 per cent respectively, while in the Ural it was only 12.6 per cent. *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 9-10, May 1931, p. 19.

⁹⁶ *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, 1 September 1928, p. 6.

⁹⁷ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

had a 27 per cent party saturation, while workshops running shifts had a 16 per cent saturation.⁹⁹

As the party aimed to develop party work at large-scale enterprises which were considered the basic proletarian centre, the possibility of party membership growth at Leningrad's gigantic enterprises was assessed to be considerable in 1929.¹⁰⁰ Later in February 1930 the Central Committee also specified, in its resolution concerning recruitment, that 'in any recruiting effort large enterprises must be the object of special attention'.¹⁰¹ Afterwards, much emphasis was placed on party membership growth at large-scale enterprises, and during 1930-31 it became a general rule that the larger the enterprise the larger the party saturation.¹⁰² As can be seen in table 4-15, party saturation at large-scale enterprises grew rapidly between 1930 and 1931, and by January 1931 the saturation level achieved at the major large-scale enterprises in the country had become higher than the average party saturation among all factories: 14 per cent as against 13 per cent. Both metalworking and textile industries showed an increase in their party saturation levels; in particular the latter showed a considerable increase from ten per cent to 12 per cent. However, in the Leningrad region, many large-scale enterprises failed to raise the party saturation level in 1930. Indeed both large metalworking and textile factories showed a decrease in their party saturation levels, in particular the former showed a significant decrease from 24 to 20 per cent between January 1930 and 1931. It is true that at the beginning of 1930 the large-scale enterprises of the Leningrad region already had a considerable party saturation level, far higher than the national average. Therefore, one can assume that it might have been very difficult to raise or even to maintain the relatively high party saturation levels within Leningrad's large scale factories.

However, it appears that the decrease in the party saturation level was caused by the massive expansion of the workforce within large-scale enterprises. For instance, the industrial workforce at Krasnyi putilovets increased by 128 per cent between June 1928 and April 1930, while its party membership grew only by 43 per cent. This led

⁹⁹ *Ko 2-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b): Otchet oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b), noiabr' 1927 g.-fevral' 1929 g.* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1929), pp. 131-132.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

¹⁰¹ *KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 5, p. 88.

¹⁰² *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 13, July 1931, p. 5.

to the party saturation level at Krasnyi putilovets being reduced to 24 per cent. Likewise, many factories in the Moskovsko-narvskii raion failed to raise their party saturation level, and only a few factories had managed to increase it by April 1930.¹⁰³ However, Leningrad's large-scale factories managed to raise their party saturation levels from January 1931, even though the growth rate was not as impressive as in the country as a whole (see table 4-15).

Table 4-15. Party saturation at large-scale enterprises in the Leningrad region and the All-Union (percentages)

	Number of enterprises	January 1930 %	January 1931 %	April 1931 %
Entire industry				
All-Union	355	12.9	14.0	14.8
Metalworking				
All-Union	100	15.9	16.2	17.3
Leningrad oblast	13	24.2	20.0	21.8
Chemicals				
All-Union	14	14.9	13.6	16.3
Leningrad oblast	1	18.7	18.6	19.2
Textiles				
All-Union	88	9.8	12.2	14.2
Leningrad oblast	10	13.5	12.6	14.6
Clothing				
All-Union	18	15.6	14.3	16.2
Leningrad oblast	5	16.8	15.5	17.7

Source: Adapted from *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1932), vol. 11, pp. 60-64.

By October 1931 some large-scale factories, especially metal-working factories, had considerably raised their party saturation level (see table 4-16). For instance, between October 1927 and April 1930, the party saturation level at Krasnyi putilovets increased from 18 per cent to 29 per cent, and at the Lenin factory the figure jumped from 20 per cent to 30 per cent.¹⁰⁴ Later, at the sixteenth Party Congress held in June 1930, the Krasnyi putilovets was singled out for its high party saturation rate: 27 per

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52.

¹⁰⁴ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 29.

Table 4-16. Party saturation in Leningrad's major factories, 1927-1932 (percentages)

	Krasnyi putilovets	The Lenin factory	The Baltic shipbuilding works	The Stalin factory	Krasnyi vyborzhets	The Karl Marx factory	Krasnaia zaria	Svetlana	Russkii dizel'	Skorokhod
October 1927	18.2 (1)	20.0 (1)								
October 1928		19.9 (2)								
January 1929		21.0 (2)				27.0 (3)	29.2 (3)	33.3 (3)		
April 1929		21.9 (2)								
June 1929			27.7 (4)							
July 1929										19.4 (5)
October 1929										18.0 (5)
January 1930										16.9 (5)
April 1930	29.0 (1) 24.0 (6)	30.0 (1)		39.3 (3)	41.8 (3)	24.1 (3)	27.1 (3)	19.3 (3)		
January 1931				41.0 (7)						
May 1931				42.0 (8)						
October 1931			26.1 (9)	38.8 (9)	29.9 (9)	25.9 (9)				
March 1932	17.0 (10)				28.1 (11)	32.9 (11)			29.3 (11)	

Sources: (1) RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 21; (2) *Partrabotnik*, no. 13, July 1929, p. 20; (3) *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, pp. 24-25; (4) *Ibid.*, no. 16, August 1929, p. 46; (5) *Ibid.*, no. 1, January 1930, p. 18; (6) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 52; (7) *Ibid.*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 29; (8) *Ibid.*, nos. 9-10, May 1931, p. 31; (9) *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1932), no. 11, pp. 66-67; (10) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, p. 47; (11) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 6, March 1932, p. 31.

cent as on 1 April 1930.¹⁰⁵ In 1931 exceptionally high levels of party saturation were reached in some of the city's giant metalworking factories, where entry into the party was particularly easy. At the Stalin factory, as many as 41 per cent of its workers were communists in January 1931,¹⁰⁶ and the figure had increased to 42 per cent by May of that year.¹⁰⁷ In October 1931, as many as 39 per cent of workers at the Stalin factory and 30 per cent at Krasnyi vyborzhets were party members. Approximately one in every four workers at the Baltic shipbuilding works and the Karl Marx factory were either party members or candidates.¹⁰⁸

4.2.4 Distribution of communists inside factories

To maximise the party's influence on the mass of workers, the distribution (*raspredelenie* or *rasstanovka*) of the party membership throughout the appropriate sections of the work of the enterprises became the major concerns of the factory party cells in the first FYP period. With the substantial growth of party membership in factories, emphasis was given to the appropriate distribution of communists inside the factory and workshop. Indeed, Kaganovich emphasised the importance of distributing communists within each enterprise in his speech at the sixteenth Party Congress in 1930. He stated that 'the distribution of communists in production has an importance in the party cell's turning its face to production. Already the ninth Party Congress pointed out that it was necessary to organise party work in such a way that every enterprise would be provided with a minimum number of communists. However, by now, comrades, it is not a question of each enterprise. It is a question of each workshop, each corner, each unit, and each brigade, so that there should be the appropriate number of party members'.¹⁰⁹

However, it was not until 1931 that serious attention was paid to this issue. In May 1930 when the work of the Moskovsko-narvskii raion party organisation was reviewed, Pastukhov, the Central Committee organisational instructor, spotted that the

¹⁰⁵ Other factories which were singled out for the high party saturation included the Kolomensk factory (48 per cent of its workers were communists), the Kramatorsk factory (21.2 per cent), and the Lys'vensk factory (20.1 per cent). These factories also had notably high proportions of workers from the bench. See *XVI s''ezd VKP(b)*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁶ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 29.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, nos. 9-10, May 1931, p. 31.

¹⁰⁸ *Sostav VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1932), vol. 11, pp. 66-67.

¹⁰⁹ *XVI s''ezd VKP(b)*, p. 65.

Moskovsko-narvskii raikom did not provide factory party organisations with specific instructions regarding such questions as how to distribute party members.¹¹⁰ As a result, party members were frequently distributed without prior planning, and some party cells had either too many or too few communists within them. Furthermore, there were often too few communists in the most important and decisive sector of production and too many were involved in administrative work and the like.¹¹¹

From the beginning of 1931, great emphasis was placed on the 'correct' distribution of party membership within the factory. The growing influence of communists on the rest of the workers, it was suggested, would lead to better economic results. In January 1931, while calling for the factory party organisations' more effective leadership in production matters, the party explained that effective party leadership entailed the distribution of the party membership in the most important sections of the enterprise and the mobilisation of non-party activists and the entire mass of workers, so that each section of the enterprise could meet production targets within a set period of time.¹¹²

It should be noted that by 1931 the meaning of 'correct' distribution had changed. Earlier, there was supposed to be a roughly equal number of party members in each workshop that formed part of the enterprise. However, by 1931, more communist-workers were supposed to work in the 'decisive' sectors of the factory than in less important sectors. This was clearly stated in the Central Committee resolution of March 1931: the party strongly recommended that the party stratum in the priority workshops and major production sectors be strengthened.¹¹³

Accordingly, the factory party organisations, from party committee down to *zveno* cells, carried out the work of distributing or re-distributing of their communists inside the factory and workshop. According to an article on the work of the Narvskii raion party organisation published in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* in September 1931, in many factories communists were being distributed among workshops and brigades in order to ensure the fulfilment of the plan in the 'decisive' sectors of the factory. Factory party organisations were placing leading worker-communists in the most

¹¹⁰ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 53.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, no. 1, January 1931, p. 53.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, no. 2, January 1931, p. 43.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, no. 7, March 1931, p. 65.

important units of production, in order to raise the quality of work and to mobilise the masses into the fight for a 'militant tempo'.¹¹⁴

According to the examples given in this article, some factory party organisations had distributed party members as instructed by this time. For instance, in the third mechanical workshop of the Krasnyi putilovets, its communists had been distributed so that more communists worked in the decisive production sectors. In this workshop, which produced important machinery, communists accounted for 38 per cent of workers. Among the brigades which made up of this workshop, only two had a party saturation of between seven and 17 per cent. In all the other brigades, communists accounted for between 30 and 40 per cent of their workers, and in the metalworkers' and fitters' brigades, on which the tempo and quality of assemblage depended, as much as 43 per cent of workers were communists. The case of the turbine department at the same factory provides another example. On average, 29 per cent of workers in this particular department were party members. The assembly and mechanical workshops, which were considered to be more important than others, had a higher percentage of communists among their workers: 43 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. Other workshops had a lower percentage. Communists were distributed in a similar way among brigades. In brigades such as metalworker-motor carters, paper-hangers, and turbine workers, almost half of the workers were communists. In other less important brigades, there were fewer. In this way, the majority of communists were concentrated in the most decisive sectors of production. There were many other such examples, and this was interpreted that factory party organisations understood the important role that correctly distributing communists played in the process of implementing the plan in workshops and factories.¹¹⁵

Furthermore, some factories in the Narvskii raion already distributed party members appropriately in each shift. At this time, most workshops were running two to three shifts, sometimes four shifts. To influence all of the workers, it was necessary to distribute party members in each shift. For instance, at the Regenerator factory, which ran three shifts, each shift had a substantial number of party members: in the first shift containing 84 workers, 28 were party members; in the second shift

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1931, p. 11.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

containing 57 workers, 24 were party members; and in the third shift containing 49 workers, 14 were party members. However, in many other factories, not enough attention was paid to the proper distribution of party members in each shift. For instance, at the Severnyi verf' shipbuilding works, the first shift, which contained 5,420 workers, had 1,107 party members, while in the second shift, which contained 620 workers, only 163 were party members and in the third shift, which contained 230 workers, only 54 were party members.¹¹⁶

Towards the end of 1931, further work was done in this sphere. By November 1931, more factories in the Narvskii raion had distributed their party members as instructed. For instance, at Krasnyi putilovets 19 per cent of its workers were party members. However, the most important and vital sectors of factory had a much higher level of party saturation: party members accounted for 38 per cent of workers in the third mechanical workshop and 60 per cent of workers in the tractor-assembling workshop. At the Kirov factory, 34 per cent of its total workforce were party members, but the percentage was much higher in a leading mechanical workshop within the factory: 61 per cent.¹¹⁷

At the same time, the party made every effort to maximise its influence on the workers of leading professions. The party recruited as many of them as possible, and simultaneously, it allocated party members to the most important positions within the factory. The article on the work of Narvskii raion party organisation showed that by September 1931 important posts of economic management had been occupied by party members. At Krasnyi treugol'nik, all factory managers and many workshop managers were party members. At Krasnyi putilovets, almost all departments were headed by communists who were also experienced economic managers. In workshops such as car-manufacturing, mechanical-assembly, and repairs, highly qualified workers with a long period of work experience became the workshop managers. In many workshops 50-60 per cent of junior managers were party members.¹¹⁸

The case of the Stalin factory illustrates how the factory party organisation increased its influence by redistributing party members into the leading sectors. In

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 22, November 1931, p. 43.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1931, p. 11.

October 1931, the turner machines were one of the causes of a 'bottle-neck' in production in the turbine workshop. Therefore, the workshop cell paid special attention to this sector's work. The workshop cell launched a recruitment campaign and as a result, the number of party members working in this sector increased to 30, a big increase from two to three party members at the beginning of 1931. Among those admitted to the party, many were classified as leading shockworkers. In this way, the workshop cell increased 'party influence over every machine'. Moreover, in this factory, party members had already been put to work in the most decisive sectors, where the work was most highly skilled. For instance, in the turbine workshop, a higher percentage of party members worked with the most important machines than with other machines, 62 per cent as against 15 per cent.¹¹⁹

However, not all factories managed to distribute party members as instructed. In a number of factories, party organisations did not have much influence on distributing party members and did not recruit enough workers into the party. As a result, they failed to strengthen the party core in the leading sectors and also among the leading groups of highly qualified workers. In November 1931, at the Sovetskaia zvezda factory, the party membership was not appropriately distributed. Even though the fulfilment of the industrial-production plan of the whole factory depended on the work of the spinning workshop, only six per cent of workers in this workshop were party members. This figure was actually lower than the figures for other workshops, where party members accounted for between eight per cent and 13 per cent of the workers. Likewise, at Krasnyi khimik, the proportion of party members reached 67 per cent among diggers, 31 per cent among carpenters, and 34 per cent among stove-makers. However, there was not a single party members among workers in the most important professions such as boiler-makers.¹²⁰

One of the problems factory party organisations faced while redistributing party members inside a factory was that foremen and brigade leaders sometimes refused to reallocate their workers. The case of the model workshop in the Stalin factory clearly illustrates this issue. When this workshop failed to meet the economic target and showed no increase in party membership, factory party organisations attempted to

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 19-20, October 1931, pp. 25-26.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 22, November 1931, p. 43.

redistribute party members within it. The uneven and incorrect distribution of party members within this workshop was, it was said, the main cause of such problems. A substantial number of party members - almost all party activists - were working in the upper part of the workshop, while only two of them were working in the lower part. The latter could not exert any influence on the workers, especially when some workers showed a reluctance to fulfil the party directives set for this workshop. The two members suffered from the hostile attitude of some workers towards them, and anyone who wanted to join the party faced maltreatment from other workers. Therefore, it was felt absolutely necessary to redistribute party members within the workshop in order to increase party influence on workers. However, in doing so, the party cells faced serious opposition from economic managers. Foremen and brigade-leaders refused to redistribute their workers on the grounds that the transfer of workers would cause disruption to production. Party members could be redistributed only after the party cells overcame the strong opposition of managers. Later on, it was claimed that communists who had been transferred to the lower part of the workshop formed a strong party core in every sector of production, and that, due to the 'correct' redistributing of communist-workers, the industrial-financial plan was fulfilled and more workers, especially shockworkers, were recruited to the party.¹²¹

This was just one of many cases where the party organisations faced opposition from industrial managers while redistributing communist-workers. In the turbine workshop of the same factory, foremen strongly opposed the redistribution of workers. Therefore, the *zveno* cell had to call a general meeting, where the foreman's report on the distribution of workers was heard. At this meeting, the foreman was severely criticised by communists. After this event, it was claimed, party influence reached all shifts and the factory obtained many successes in all aspects of production.¹²²

Nevertheless, by 1932, many factory party organisations in Leningrad had allocated their members as instructed. For instance, in March 1932 it was agreed that in most factories of the Narvskii raion, party members were distributed appropriately within the factory. At the Krasnyi putilovets, whose party saturation was put at 17 per

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, nos. 19-20, October 1931, p. 25.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

cent by this time, the leading sectors had more than 20 per cent party saturation. Party members accounted for 20 per cent of the workers in the tractor department, 38 per cent in the third mechanical workshop, and 24 per cent in the rolling-mill workshop. At the Molotov factory, as many as 48 per cent of the workers in the no. 2 iron foundry were party members while the average party saturation was only 30 per cent. At Promtekhnik and Krasnyi treugol'nik, 25 per cent of the workers in the rolling-mill were party members while the average party saturation in the factory was only 16 per cent. There were many other such examples. In addition, most factory party organisations managed to distribute comparatively evenly the party strength at each shifts. For instance, in the tyre factory of the Krasnyi treugol'nik, each shift had a roughly even proportion of party members. The figure for the first shift were 15 per cent, and for the second and third shifts it was 16 per cent. Likewise, in many other factories of this raion including the Severnyi verf' shipbuilding works and the Regenerator factory, party members were distributed so that each shift had an equal proportion.¹²³

Table 4-17. Party saturation within each shift at the Sevkabel' factory, March 1932

	<i>First shift</i>			<i>Second shift</i>			<i>Third shift</i>		
	<1> N	<2> N	<3> %	<1> N	<2> N	<3> %	<1> N	<2> N	<3> %
Workshop no. 1	180	152	84.4	54	8	14.8	78	14	17.9
Workshop no. 2	127	51	40.2	84	22	26.2	50	12	24.0
Workshop no. 3	150	31	20.7	125	18	14.4	110	15	13.6
Workshop no. 4	130	23	17.7	114	17	14.9	42	8	19.0
Workshop no. 5	151	31	20.5	48	11	22.9	32	6	18.8

Notes: Column <1> is for the total number of workers; column <2> is for the total number of party members; column <3> is for the proportion of communists in the total workforce; the percentages are my own calculations.

Source: *Partrabotnik*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, p. 68.

In the factories of other raions, the situation was more or less similar to the examples given above. For instance, at the Svetlana factory of the Vyborgskii raion, party saturation in the brigades of decisive production sectors reached up to 70 per cent, while in the remaining brigades it fluctuated at about 35 per cent.¹²⁴ At the

¹²³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, pp. 47-48.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

Sevkabel' factory of the Vasileostrovskii raion, the more important the workshop was, the higher the party saturation. As can be seen in table 4-17, workshop no. 1 and no. 2, which were the most important production sectors, had a higher party saturation than other workshops. In particular, in the first shift of workshop no. 1, party saturation reached 84 per cent. By concentrating communist-workers in the most decisive production sector, it was claimed, this factory could achieve the fulfilment of the production tasks.¹²⁵

However, the 'correct' distribution of party members did not always guarantee the degree of influence that the party had hoped for. For instance, in the building-construction workshop of the Mart' shipbuilding works, party members were distributed appropriately. In this workshop, the average party saturation was 22 per cent. The party saturation among workers of leading professions was higher than in the other groups of workers: it was 48 per cent among sorters, 25 per cent among crane-operators and among planers, 22 per cent among inspectors, and 16 per cent among ship-assemblers. However, party influence on non-party workers was completely unsatisfactory, due to the fact that the party cell of this workshop did not undertake mass-agitation and explanatory work seriously enough.¹²⁶

Therefore, by the time that party work was being restructured and the emphasis was shifting from economic to mass-political work, it was commonly accepted that the 'mechanical' distribution of party members would not always lead to an improvement in party work or increased party influence. As Ugarov, the Leningrad gorkom secretary, pointed out, in his speech to the all-city meeting of workshop cell secretaries on 16 September 1932, 'allocating communists was not the end of the task, but the first stage of party work'. As he emphasised, the question was not that an appropriate number of party members should be distributed among workshops, but that party members should be distributed so that they would exercise party influence on major sections and so that this influence would actually reach workers.¹²⁷ Henceforth, less attention was paid to the issue of the distribution of party members than in previous years.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 27.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 8.

5. Party Purges in 1929-30 and 1933

This chapter concerns two party purges: one carried out during the first FYP and the other launched immediately after the end of the first FYP. Although a purge became a regular feature of party life and standard practice in the 1920s, no full-scale campaign had been held since 1921. It was only in 1929 and 1930 that the general party purge was conducted in a national scale for the first time since 1921. The 1929-30 party purge, the first as such under Stalin, was carried out in conjunction with an enthusiastic recruitment campaign. The second purge under Stalin came two and a half years after the completion of the first purge, and this time the purge was carried out in a completely different atmosphere: with the imposition of a ban on further recruitment. Nevertheless, both party purges had a discernible effect on the size and composition of party membership.¹

This chapter examines the conduct of the 1929-30 and 1933 party purges in the Leningrad region and their impact on the Leningrad party membership. After the general background of each purge is briefly looked at, the conduct of purges at the local level is considered. This is followed by an in-depth analysis of the effects of the

¹ The party purges have been an interesting subject for researchers, and a considerable amount of work has been done on this subject. However, main focus of research has been normally placed on the purges in the mid-1930s, and the 1929-30 and 1933 purges have drawn relatively little attention. Rigby's work on the communist party membership in the period 1917-1967 provides a general background information on party membership change at the national level, including some information on the 1929 and 1933 party purges. J. A. Getty's book on the party purges in the 1930s provides useful information on the 1929 and 1933 purges at the All-Union level. He focused more on the organisational aspects, and argued that the organisational confusion was the main cause of the conducting of party purges in the 1930s. See T. H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R., 1917-1967* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); and J. Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). Party purges conducted at the local level were relatively untouched. Fainsod's work on the Smolensk region is of special interest since it contains a detailed information on the 1929-30 party purge. However, it provides less information on the 1933 purge. P. O. Gooderham's discussion paper illustrates the impact of the 1933 purge on the Leningrad party organisation. Both Catherine Merridale and Nobuo Shimotomai dealt with the party purges in the Moscow region. The former considered mainly the 1929 purge and the latter the 1933 purge. See Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (London: Macmillan, 1959), pp. 210-222; P. O. Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan: The Case of Leningrad* (CREES Discussion Papers, SIPS, no. 24, University of Birmingham, 1983), part 2, pp. 13-23; Catherine Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin: The Communist Party in the Capital, 1925-32* (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 174, 180, 211, 213-216; and Nobuo Shimotomai, *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule, 1931-34* (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 16-21. For the effects of the 1929-30 and 1933 purges on the rural communists, see Daniel Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party, 1927-39* (London: Macmillan, 1988), chapters 3 and 9.

party purges for party membership size and social composition. The political aspects of two purges are not dealt with extensively in this chapter since the focus of the analysis is limited to the effect of the purges on party membership.

5.1 The 1929-30 party purge

5.1.1 The general background of the 1929-30 party purge

In 1929 and 1930, the mass recruitment of workers into the party was accompanied by a general purge of the party. The 1929 general purge of rank-and-file party membership, referred to as both *chistka* (sweeping, cleaning) and *proverka* (verification), was initiated at the sixteenth Party Conference of April 1929 and lasted till May 1930. In accordance with the resolution 'On the Purging and Verification of Members and Candidates of the CPSU,'² that was adopted at the sixteenth Party Conference, ordinary rank and file party members were subjected to review and allegedly unfit members were expelled from the party.

In general, a membership purge was initiated in response to a specific situation, and the 1929-30 purge was no exception. As widely known, socio-political upheavals caused by grain procurement difficulties at the beginning of 1928 brought about the abandonment of NEP policies and led to a change in the general line of the party, from NEP to rapid industrialisation and collectivisation. Although the party leadership tried to hide the division between the Stalinists and the Bukharinist 'Right' over the pace and methods of collectivisation and industrialisation, an intense power struggle between the Stalin group and the Right opposition had been developing since April 1928. In connection with the struggle against the Right opposition, the purge of the Moscow party organisation ran from October to December 1928. Party leaders who had the right-wing view were dismissed from the Moscow organisation: Uglanov, secretary of the Moscow organisation, and his subordinates were removed from their posts.³

² *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh s''ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1984), vol. 4, pp. 484-493.

³ The Right oppositionists had a strong hold in the Moscow oblast party organisation. For more information on the 1928 party purge in the Moscow region, see Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (London: Methuen, 1970), pp. 368-371; Merridale, *Moscow Politics and*

Meanwhile, piecemeal purges of some regional party organisations and the purges of state and economic institutions took place in 1928. The grain crisis led to the screenings of seven oblast and guberniia party organisations and alleged 'bureaucrats' and 'corrupt elements' were expelled from the party in those regions.⁴ On the other hand, the Shakhty affair was followed by a purge of the administrative and managerial personnel within the government and industrial institutions. No overall data on the results of this purge are available, but according to the data given at the sixteenth Party Conference, approximately 20,000 officials had been removed from their posts by the beginning of 1929.⁵

It was against this political background that the desire to launch a general purge was first expressed at the November 1928 Central Committee plenum.⁶ While calling for an extensive recruitment of workers into the party, the Central Committee declared that 'the broad recruitment of workers must be combined with strict verification of the current party compositions and with the most resolute purge of socially alien, bureaucratised, degenerate elements, and other hangers-on.' In the same resolution, it was also declared that 'intensified measures, considerably stronger than those of recent years, must be applied to purge the party organisations of elements who exploit their membership in the ruling party for their own selfish and careerist goals, degenerate bourgeois narrow-minded elements, which have fused with the kulaks.'⁷ It appears that the party leadership intended to proletarianise the party membership by means of extensive working-class recruitment as well as purging at the same time.

Soon after the decision on the general party purge was taken at the November 1928 plenum of the Central Committee, preparations for a general purge of the party were under way under the direction of E. M. Iaroslavskii, Secretary of the Party Collegium of the Central Control Commission. In a statement published in March 1929, Iaroslavskii called for a careful re-examination of the party's ranks in order to

the Rise of Stalin, pp. 57-59; and Nobuo Shimotomai, 'Defeat of the Right Opposition in Moscow Party Organization: 1928', *Japanese Slavic and East European Studies*, vol. 4, 1983, pp. 15-34.

⁴ During these screenings an average of 12-13 per cent of their party members were expelled. *XVI konferentsiia VKP(b), aprel' 1929 goda: Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1962), p. 592.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 461.

⁶ For the background leading up to the decision to launch the purge, see E. H. Carr, *Foundations of a Planned Economy* (London: Macmillan, 1971), vol. 2, pp. 142-147.

⁷ *KPSS v resoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 4, pp. 392-393.

counter petty bourgeois influences hampering the advance to socialism.⁸ Iaroslavskii's 'thesis' was endorsed by a joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission held on the eve of the sixteenth Party Conference,⁹ and formed the basis of the conference resolution that had already been mentioned.

At the sixteenth Party Conference, the party approved a general party purge by adopting the resolution formulated by Iaroslavskii. In the resolution, the official reasons for the launching of the party purge were stated as follows: 'in the period of the reconstruction of the socialist economy of the country, which is bound up with a socialist attack on capitalist elements in both city and country and with a sharpening of the class struggle, the party must re-examine its ranks with special care in order to strengthening resistance to the influence of petty-bourgeois moods, to make the party more homogeneous, and better able to fight in overcoming the difficulties of the socialist reconstruction of the national economy.'¹⁰ It is quite clear from the passage above that its main purpose was to cleanse party ranks of elements who were opposed to the programme of collectivisation and industrialisation to which the party was now committed. Anyone who had doubts about the new direction of party policy could be subject to expulsion from the party. In other words, the 1929-1930 purge was necessitated in order to compel party members to adjust to the new task of the rapid industrialisation and collectivisation drive.

According to the same conference resolution, the party needed a general purge because 'there had been a penetration of party ranks by petty bourgeois elements, by carriers of rot in everyday life, people who were bringing corruption to the party ranks by the example of their personal and public life, people who held the public opinion of the workers and toiling peasants in contempt, self-seeking and careerist elements of which the party was not sufficiently ridding itself through regular, day-to-day work by the control commissions.'¹¹ Therefore, the party declared that 'the purge must pitilessly eject from party ranks all elements that are alien to the party, that constitute a danger to its successes and that are indifferent to its struggle; it must eject incurable bureaucrats and hangers-on, those who are in league with the class enemy and are

⁸ *Pravda*, 31 March 1929.

⁹ *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 4, p. 429.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 485.

¹¹ *XVI konferentsiia VKP(b)*, p. 659.

helping him, those who are cut off from the party by virtue of economic and personal aggrandisement, anti-Semites, and covert adherents of religious cults; it must expose covert Trotskyites, adherents of Miasnikov, and Democratic Centralists, and adherents of other anti-party groups and cleanse the party of them.’¹²

Although the resolution was worded so as not to mention the Right opposition directly, it appears that the purge was primarily directed against the right-wing followers of Bukharin, Tomsy and Rykov.¹³ Indeed, the connection between the purge and the campaign against the Right was clearly indicated in the resolution ‘On Intra-Party Affairs,’ adopted at the April 1929 plenum of the Central Committee just before the sixteenth Party Conference. While analysing the alleged right-opportunist fractional activity of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy, the resolution suggested the need for a general purge of the party in order to remove such opposition.¹⁴ Taking into consideration the fact that it was not until the sixteenth Party Conference that the defeat of the Right opposition became apparent, it must not have been a coincidence that the main attack on the Right opposition was launched openly at this Conference, where the launch of the general party purge was announced. Even though the resolution authorising the party general purge did not cite ‘rightists’ among the elements to be eliminated, passages like ‘concealed Trotskyites, Miasnikovites, Democratic Centralists and protagonists of other anti-party groups’ who were to be ‘mercilessly ejected from the party’ indicated that the removal of the political opposition was one of the main purposes of the purge. Taking into consideration the fact that the power struggle between the Stalin group and the Right opposition was not yet being openly conducted, it is not surprising that the resolution avoided mentioning ‘Right opposition’ implicitly.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 662.

¹³ The 1929 purge was often understood as an attempt to remove the Right Opposition from the party. Rigby, for instance, regards the 1929-30 purge as an elimination of the Right Opposition, emphasising the political aspect of the 1929 purge. In his view, the Stalin group, being challenged by the Right opposition, needed reliable supporters in state and economic institutions as well as in party organisations to successfully carry out the industrialisation drive. By conducting purges of those sections of the party and the bureaucracy where the opposition was strongest, and at the same time by carrying out mass recruitment, the Stalin group was able to secure a majority of votes for the party’s nominees and resolutions, and was able to ensure that cadres who accepted their orders would replace those purged. See Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 176.

¹⁴ *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 4, pp. 429-436.

Despite the fact that there were obvious political motives behind this purge (in particular, the wholesale removal of the Right opposition, and bureaucrats and kulak elements in the countryside who stood in the way of the general line), however, it should be stressed that it also aimed to rid the party of corrupt, inactive, undisciplined, class-alien, or criminal persons.¹⁵ The purge was also to kick out the 'rubbish'; those guilty of drunkenness and debauchery, religious practices, squabbling, and self-interest; and those who had links with alien elements, speculators, and forgers.¹⁶

Moreover, the purge categories indicated that any party members who did not show sufficient enthusiasm for the implementation of the party policy, either industrialisation or collectivisation, could fall a victim of the purge. For instance, anyone who did not take an active part in increasing labour discipline in a factory ran the risk of being condemned as a self-seeking element. Likewise, those who were not enthusiastic in implementing measures for collectivisation or who were not able to carry out the party's directives in the countryside could be expelled from the party.¹⁷

5.1.2 The conduct of the party purge in the Leningrad region

In the Leningrad region, careful preparations for a general purge began already in February 1929, even before the approval of a party purge at the sixteenth Party

¹⁵ In general, revisionists agreed that despite the obvious political motives behind the decision to launch a general purge, the aim of the 1929 purge was larger than just getting rid of the Right opposition. Hiroaki Kuromiya, for instance, regarded the 1929 purge mainly as a method to strengthen the party's 'mobilisation readiness for the socialist offensive,' and argued that 'with or without the Bukharin faction, the Stalinist leadership would have resorted to a general purge of the party to strengthen "mobilisation readiness for the socialist offensive".' Although he agreed that 'the Stalin group directed the general purge against the Bukharin sympathisers within the party,' he argued that the purge affected far wider circles than those deemed 'Rightists.' Likewise, Catherine Merridale claimed that 'the threat of being expelled from the party for having a passive attitude towards the new policies of socialist offensive was expected to raise the consciousness and vigilance of party members. It was hoped that the purge would raise the profile of the party by showing that the party took personal and public discipline seriously.' However, the most serious challenge to the totalitarianist view has been put forward by J. A. Getty. While analysing the purges of the 1920s and 1930s, he argued that the 1929-30 general purge was typical of a 1920s-era purge in its causes and criteria for expulsion. In his view, examination of the membership, as an ordinary cleansing, had been implemented so as to rid the party of corrupt, inactive, undisciplined, class-alien, or criminal persons. In other words, it was not intended, at least explicitly, to rid the party of all ideological dissenters or suspected oppositionists, although such persons might have seemed to a purge commission to be outside the aforementioned personal code. See Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers, 1928-1932* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 38; Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin*, p. 213; and Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 47.

¹⁶ *Stenograficheskii biulleten' II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii* (Leningrad, 1929), p. 30.

¹⁷ *XVI konferentsiia VKP(b)*, p. 660.

Conference. In February, a circular was sent out from the Central Control Commission to local commissions informing them that the question of a purge would be considered by the forthcoming sixteenth Party Conference, and instructing them to prepare for it, and to pay special attention to the selection of the local commissions which would be set up to conduct it.¹⁸ Accordingly on 6 February 1929 the Leningrad obkom bureau adopted a resolution, which called for the party to make preparations for the checking and purging of its members.¹⁹ While setting the start of the purge operation at the beginning of April 1929, the resolution called for maximum mobilisation of the masses into this purge operation. It encouraged to discuss information about the purge, its political significance and aims, and the decision of the Central Committee plenum in November 1928. At the same time, it asked local verification commissions (*proverkomissii*) to be set up at each level of the party, under the leadership of the Control Commission, together with the party committee.²⁰ A few months later, in June 1929, the joint plenum of the obkom and oblast control commission declared that, in general, the organisational and political preparation for the checking up of the party had been conducted satisfactorily.²¹ It was also claimed that questions on the purge had been widely discussed and about 2,200 members of local verification commissions had been selected for this operation.²²

It appears that special attention was paid to the selection of the local verification commissions, which would conduct the verification and purge operation. The oblast control commission, together with the oblast committee, was to select members of the verification commissions. Leningrad obkom bureau also ordered a preliminary verification of those communists selected as members of the local verification commissions in order to ensure that their suitability could be guaranteed. In particular, it was urged that *podpol'shchiki* should be drawn to this important position. The lists of members of local verification commissions were to be confirmed by the oblast control commission and also co-ordinated by the obkom.²³ An article in *Partrabotnik* demanded that members of local verification commission should be staunch

¹⁸ *Pravda*, 6 February 1929.

¹⁹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 1929, pp. 6-8.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

²¹ *Ibid.*, no. 5, 1929, pp. 3-6.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²³ *Ibid.*, no. 2, 1929, pp. 7-8.

communists who had been in the party at least ten years, although it said that in some exceptional cases, those of eight years' party membership should be allowed to be selected as members.²⁴

In accordance with the obkom bureau resolution, local verification commissions were set up at all levels of the party organisation. Each verification commission was composed of three members and it had to verify about 200 communists. In order to verify 140,000 party members and candidates in the Leningrad region, about 2,500 communists needed to be selected.²⁵ By June 1929 about 2,200 members had been selected and it was said that their names had been published in newspapers and wall newspapers and their suitability had been widely discussed at party meetings.²⁶ Most of those selected as members of the local verification commission in the region were workers with a long period of party membership. According to the results of the verification of the 2,200 members selected as members of the verification commissions, 22 per cent were *podpol'shchiki*, and 72 per cent were party members from 1917-1919. Those who were of worker background comprised 87 per cent, and bench-workers comprised as much as 50 per cent.²⁷

Not much detailed information is available regarding the composition of the verification commissions apart from a list of the 30 members who were to verify the leading party officials at the okrug and raion levels. They were selected from among members of the oblast control commission and the obkom. Most of them had a party membership of more than ten years: 11 were *podpol'shchiki*; 18 had joined the party in the period 1917-1920; and only one had joined the party in 1923. The majority of them were workers by social origin: 27 were of worker background. They included party secretaries, either at the partkom or party *kollektiv* level, from one of Leningrad's biggest factories such as Krasnyi putilovets, Krasnyi treugol'nik, Elektrosila, Bol'shevik, Krasnaia zaria, and the Metal, Baltic, and Karl Marx factories. A number of bench-workers were also included: workers, either fitters or foremen, from Krasnyi treugol'nik, Elektrosila, Krasnyi putilovets, and the Baltic factory. Two factory directors (one from the Krasnyi putilovets and the other from the Proletarskii

²⁴ *Partrabotnik*, no. 7, 10 April 1929, p. 9.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 1929, p. 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 7, 1929, p. 8.

factory), a chairman of the Krasnyi putilovets, and a manager of the Bol'shevik were also included.²⁸

The 1929-30 purge differed from that of 1921 in that the verification commissions first examined the party organisation, and then its individual members. At first, leading party officials of party committees, control commissions, and auditing commissions at the oblast, okrug, and raion levels were checked. This operation started from 29 May and about 336 leading party officials at the oblast level, 700 party workers at the raion and okrug level, and 2,200 members of the verification commissions were subject to this operation.²⁹ By 27 July, almost 90 per cent of them had gone through the purge process.³⁰

The verification of the rural, soviet, and VUZ cells was to start from the beginning of April 1929. By 1 November 1929, a total of 86,692 party members and candidates (53 per cent of the whole party membership in the region) had gone through the verification process. Some 93 per cent of party cells within army units, 88 per cent of the rural cells, 87 per cent of the soviet cells, 38 per cent of the production cells, and 27 per cent of the VUZ cells had been checked up by this time.³¹ Different deadlines were set up for the verification of particular types of party cells. The verification of rural cells was to be completed by 15 November and that of the soviet cells by 5 December, that of the VUZ cells by 1 December, and that of the production cells by 15 December.³² However, it took a longer time to complete the verification of the various cells in the region. According to the preliminary results published on 22 December 1929, the verification of the cells had not yet finished, although the purge operation within the soviet cells as well as the medium and small production cells had already finished. The purge and verification of cells within okrugs were also about to finish and almost all the major production cells in Leningrad had been checked up by this time.³³

Mass participation in the purge process was emphasised throughout the purge process. The November 1928 and April 1929 joint meetings of the Central Committee

²⁸ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2747, p. 149.

²⁹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 7, 1929, pp. 7-8.

³⁰ *Partrabotnik*, no. 7, 10 April 1929, pp. 10-11.

³¹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 11, 1929, p. 20.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

³³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 23-24, 22 December 1929, p. 118.

and the Central Control Commission called for participation by non-party workers and peasants and encouraged party organisations to attract them to this work. However, the directives from the centre regarding the level of popular participation and the intensity of the 1929 purge were ambiguous. On the one hand, the Central Committee had called for a purge 'irrespective of person' and with maximum rank-and-file criticism of bureaucratism and corruption. On the other hand, most subsequent clarifications by the Central Control Commission had sought to limit the possibility of popular participation in the purge. These contradictions might be explained simply as the result of a high level of confusion and indecision regarding the purge.³⁴

Nevertheless, the 1929-30 purge had a strong anti-bureaucratic emphasis. The purge was merged with the self-criticism campaign which was already well underway at the party meetings. During the self-criticism campaign, lower level rank-and-file members were allowed to reveal and criticise the work by leading party officials. It appears that the party leadership sought to use the self-criticism campaign together with the purge to uncover local corruption, bureaucratism, and malfeasance. It encouraged lower-level mass input as a check against entrenched local party machines.³⁵

In the Leningrad region, the importance of mass participation was emphasised in the Leningrad obkom resolutions, which repeated same calls. Much ostensible encouragement to talk freely and to criticise the shortcomings of the party work was given to non-party workers and peasants as well as party members. For instance, in order to ensure maximum mobilisation of the masses into this purge operation, the Leningrad obkom bureau ordered on 6 February 1929 that informations about the purge, its political significance and aims, the decision of the Central Committee plenum in November 1928, should be discussed prior to the actual purge process. A few months later, it was reported that questions concerning the purge had been discussed at open plenums of the *kollektivny*, workshop cells and rural cells as well as at the non-party conferences of workers, farm labourers, and poor peasants.³⁶ In addition, any one who doubted the suitability of those selected as a member of the

³⁴ Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p.45.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.43.

³⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 1929, pp. 3-6.

verification commission was given a chance to raise the issue of suitability and to challenge the decision. Indeed, the names of members were published in newspapers and wall newspapers and their suitability was widely discussed at the party meetings.³⁷

It was reported that the purge were carried out with the active participation of non-party members in the Leningrad region. The purge was said to have been conducted in conditions of sharp criticism and of unreconcilable struggle against all manifestations of anti-party deviation in the region.³⁸ According to the official estimate, the level of mass participation in the purge process in the Leningrad region appears to have been high. For instance, during the checking up of the work of the city's leading party officials at the oblast level, some 214 open party meetings were held and a considerable number of people took part in it. It was estimated that a total of 102,100 people participated in the meetings, including 65,100 Komsomol members and candidates, and 37,000 non-party people. During the purge process, altogether about 6,000 party meetings were held in Leningrad, and some 135,000 non-party members attended the meetings. Some 65,000 of them were said to have advanced various criticisms and proposals.³⁹

Despite the declaration that the purging process was proceeded with a high level of mass participation, it appears that the masses were not as enthusiastic as they were supposed to be, in particular at the initial stage. According to the Central Control Commission report, the purge process took place in some places without sufficient attention from party members and also without appropriate attention and guidance from party committees. Especially, at the beginning of the purge process, the mass participation was reported to be weak. In particular, the soviet cells were singled out as having a weak mass participation in the purge process. This, in turn, resulted in the expulsion rate from the soviet cells being lower than that within the production cells. In addition, some party committees approached the purge rather formally, entrusting all the work to the control commissions: they did not sufficiently mobilise and guide the masses during the purge process.⁴⁰ This was also the case for the Leningrad

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁸ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 373.

³⁹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1980), vol. 2, p. 172.

⁴⁰ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 10, 1929, pp. 24-25.

region. Despite the declaration that the purge was carried out successfully as a political campaign in the region, the masses were not enthusiastic about taking part in the purge process, in particular at the initial stage. According to the report of the Leningrad oblast control commission, for instance, passivity and fear of criticising the shortcomings of party work were reported in a number of party *kollektivy*.⁴¹

Another problem which hindered the successful implementation of the purge was that local party officials were protecting each other against self-criticism. Nepotism (*semeistvennost'*) and mutual protecting (*krugovaia poruka*) were often reported.⁴² As a result, the purge process could not reveal the cases in which the party line was not properly followed. Shortcomings of party work either in the party *kollektivy* or on the part of certain party members were not fully disclosed.⁴³ In particular, this was the case in some soviet institutions such as *Sevzaptorg* (the north-west trade), *Pishchetrest* (the food trust), and *Otkomkhoz* (the oblast department of the communal farm economy). This led to a sharp criticism from *Pravda*. On 1 September 1929, *Pravda* published a number of articles which criticised shortcomings in the work of *Sevzaptorg*, *Pishchetrest*, and *Otkomkhoz*.⁴⁴ It published the results of an investigation which revealed the aforementioned abuses along with evidence of right opportunist attitudes in a number of state institutions in Leningrad's Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion. It advanced criticisms against certain institutions within Leningrad such as *Otkomkhoz* and *Sevzaptorg* for the suppression of self-criticism, for bureaucratism, and for the distortion of the class line regarding the selection of cadres.⁴⁵ It also criticised shortcomings in the work of the Leningrad oblast control commission and the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom. These two organs were criticised for their mistakes in carrying out the purges. In particular, the former was heavily criticised for failing to uncover those who had sought to stifle self-criticism, had created family circles, and had indulged in favouritism.⁴⁶

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, no. 11, 1929, p. 20.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴³ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 11, 1929, p. 20.

⁴⁴ *Pravda*, 1 September 1929. *Pravda* continued to publish articles on this event in the following week. See *Pravda*, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11 September 1929.

⁴⁵ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 330.

⁴⁶ Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 1, p. 17.

This led to the repeating of the purge process in a number of the soviet party cells, in particular in *Sevzaptorg*, *Pishchetrest*, and *Otkomkhoz*.⁴⁷ Furthermore, entire members of the Leningrad oblast control commission were replaced on 8 September. G. A. Desov, the chairman of the oblast control commission, was removed,⁴⁸ and replaced by P. B. Bordanov, a worker from the Baltic shipbuilding works. Both the members of the presidium and the party board (*kollegiia*) of the Leningrad oblast control commission were replaced.⁴⁹ It was reported that the Leningrad oblast control commission admitted that they had approached too softly bureaucracy and the suppression of criticism, and they began to reconsider the decisions they made previously.⁵⁰

5.1.3 The result of the 1929-30 purge

From May 1929 to May 1930, a total of 1,530,000 members across the entire country were subjected to review and some 170,000 (or approximately 11 per cent of the current membership) were expelled from the party.⁵¹ Subsequently, however, 36,600 of those purged (about 22 per cent) were reinstated on appeal, reducing the rate to 8 per cent.⁵² In the Leningrad region alone, 7444 persons were expelled from the party during the 1929-30 party purge, resulting in an expulsion rate of 5.1 per cent.⁵³ The expulsion rate within the Leningrad oblast party organisation, which was much lower than the national average, shows that the Leningrad party organisation was not severely affected by the 1929-30 purge. This is probably because, in general, the purge fell more heavily on party organisations where rural cells were predominant than on party organisations where production cells were predominant.⁵⁴ Yet the

⁴⁷ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 11, 1929, p. 20.

⁴⁸ He had already come in for criticism at the second oblast party conference in March 1929 for declaring himself satisfied with the progress of the self-criticism in 1928 and for failing to combat bureaucracy in the state apparatus. See *Stenograficheskii builleten' II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii*, no. 4, pp. 33, 40-44.

⁴⁹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 8, 1929, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁰ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 331.

⁵¹ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 11-12, June 1930, p. 26.

⁵² Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, pp. 178-179. Subsequent clarifications show that the vast majority of those reinstated to membership had been expelled for 'passivity' and that most of these were rank-and-file members of working-class origin. See Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, pp.47-48.

⁵³ *Otchet o rabote Leningradskoi oblastnoi kontrol'noi komissii VKP(b) i raboche-krest'ianskoi inspektсии III Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii* (Leningrad, 1930), p. 9.

⁵⁴ According to the data given in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* in May 1930, the expulsion rates within the regions where production cells were predominant were lower than those within the predominantly

expulsion rate of the Leningrad party organisation was the lowest in the country, even when compared with other regional party organisations where production cells were predominant.⁵⁵ For instance, about 14,000 party members and candidates were expelled in the Moscow region, the expulsion rate being about 6.9 per cent.⁵⁶ This shows that the impact of the 1929-30 purge on the Leningrad oblast party organisation was far less severe than any other party organisation, including the Moscow one. It is no wonder that this fact led Leningraders to the conclusion that 'the Leningrad party organisation was healthy and followed in Lenin's footsteps, enjoying the trust of the workers and the poor and middle peasants (*bedniaki* and *seredniaki*).'⁵⁷

Table 5-1. Expulsion rates in the All-Union, Leningrad, and Moscow party organisations, 1929-1930

	<i>Leningrad oblast</i>	<i>Moscow oblast</i>	<i>All-Union</i>
Number of those expelled	7,444	13,953	170,000
Expulsion rate	5.1%	6.9%	11%

Note: Different figures were given in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* in May 1930. The figures were somehow lower than the figures given in table 5-1, the national average expulsion rate being 10.4 per cent, the expulsion rate for the Leningrad party organisation being 4.8 per cent and that for the Moscow party organisation being 6.6 per cent.

Sources: Figures for the Leningrad oblast party organisation are from *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 373; figures for the Moscow oblast party organisation are from *Ocherki istorii Moskovskoi organizatsii KPSS 1883-1965* (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1966), p. 454; and figures for the All-Union party organisation are from *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 11-12, June 1930, p. 26.

Table 5-2 provides a breakdown of the expulsion rate by type of party cells. It clearly shows that the rural cells were the hardest hit. Both in the All-Union and Leningrad party organisations, the highest rate of expulsion occurred within the rural cells. In the Leningrad region, 13 per cent of rural party members were removed, while only six per cent of party members within the industrial plants were expelled.

agricultural regions: the former ranged from 4.8 per cent to 10.1 per cent, whereas the latter ranged from 11.3 per cent to 12.7 per cent. This led the party leadership to the conclusion that production cells within large industrial centres turned out to be the strongest and most effective. See *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 10, May 1930, p. 16.

⁵⁵ For instance, the expulsion rate was 8.2 per cent in the Nizhegorod party organisation, 8.9 per cent in the Ural organisation, and 10.1 per cent in the Ukraine organisation. See *ibid.*, no. 10, May 1930, p. 16.

⁵⁶ *Ocherki istorii Moskovskoi organizatsii KPSS 1883-1965* (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1966), p. 454.

⁵⁷ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 8, 1930, p. 5.

This shows that the majority of those expelled came from the rural cells,⁵⁸ while only a small proportion of party members and candidates from the factory party cells were expelled.

Table 5-2. Expulsion rates by type of party cells in Leningrad, Moscow and Western oblasts in comparison with All-Union figures, 1929-30 (percentages)

	<i>Leningrad oblast</i>	<i>Moscow oblast</i>	<i>Western oblast</i>	<i>All-Union</i>
Production cells	6.0	6.7	12.2	8.0
Rural cells	13.0	12.2	16.9	15.7
Administrative cells	5.8	7.2	11.9	n. d.
Educational cells	4.4	4.6	6.7	n. d.
Non-production cells*	-	-	-	9.5

Note: * Non-production cells included cells in administrative bodies and educational establishments.

Sources: Figures for the Leningrad oblast party organisation are from RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2711, p. 62; figures for the Western oblast party organisation are from Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule* (London: Macmillan, 1959), p. 217; and figures for the Moscow oblast and All-Union party organisations are from F. M. Vaganov, 'O regulirovanii sostava partii v 1928-29 gg.', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 6, 1964, pp. 69-70.

One notable feature of table 5-2 is that the party cells within the administrative bodies and the educational establishments in the Leningrad region showed extremely low expulsion rates. In the country as a whole, non-production cells showed a 9.5 per cent expulsion rate, having a higher expulsion rate than production cells. However, in the Leningrad region the expulsion rates within the administrative bodies and the educational establishments were as low as 5.8 per cent and 4.4 per cent respectively. These figures were significantly lower than the national average expulsion rate for non-production cells, which suggests that the non-production cells in the Leningrad region were much less severely affected by the purge than those in other regions. Moreover, the expulsion rates for the administrative and educational cells were lower than the expulsion rate for production cells of the Leningrad region. This is why the

⁵⁸ It was evident from the very beginning of the purge that rural cells were the main target. According to the resolution of the Leningrad obkom bureau of 6 February 1929, the social situation of the peasant-communists in the rural cells was to be examined. In addition, the political activity of rural cells was to be checked by the okrug committees and control commissions. The resolution adopted at the joint plenum of the obkom and oblast control commission of June 1929 also emphasised that particular attention should be given to the checking of rural cells. See *ibid.*, no. 2, 1929, p. 7; no. 5, 1929, pp. 3-6; and no. 8, 1930, p. 5.

verification commissions within these institutions were criticised for not being able to fully disclose ‘symptoms of decay’ and develop self-criticism on all shortcomings in party work.⁵⁹ This might suggest that the purge was not as thorough as it was intended to be within the non-production cells in the Leningrad region. It appears that some party members managed to avoid expulsions during the 1929-30 purge.

No comprehensive data were found regarding the occupational composition of those purged during the 1929-30 purge. However, table 5-3 provides some information on those purged in 1929 in the Leningrad region. Although more workers were purged than peasants by this time, the expulsion rates broken down by occupation shows that peasants were affected most severely than any other occupational groups. About 10 per cent of the peasant communists were purged, while only 4.9 per cent of the worker communists and 4.4 per cent of the white collar worker communists were purged.

Table 5-3. Party purge in the Leningrad region, broken down by occupation, 1929

	<i>Those who had gone through purge</i>	<i>Those expelled</i>	<i>Expulsion rate in the Leningrad region as a whole</i>	<i>Expulsion rate in Leningrad city</i>	<i>Expulsion rate in the rural area</i>
	N	N	%	%	%
Workers	62,569	1,296	4.9	3.8	8.5
White collar workers	24,239	1,081	4.4	3.7	6.2
Peasants	3,274	333	10.2	-	10.2
Others	4,864	167	3.4	3.3	3.8

Note: Figures above covered only those purged in 1929.

Source: *Parabotnik*, nos. 23-24, December 1929, p. 119.

In the Leningrad region the leading party officials at the oblast, okrug, and raion levels were barely touched by the purge operation. According to the preliminary purge results published in August 1929, out of the 336 leading party officials at the oblast level, only 12 received party censures, and none were purged.⁶⁰ In the country as a whole, among leading party officials who were members of the party committees at the oblast, krai, and republic levels, 0.9 per cent were purged and 6.6 per cent were

⁵⁹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2711, p. 63.

⁶⁰ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 7, 25 August 1929, p. 7. This implies that only 3.2 per cent of those checked up were subject to party reprimand.

reprimanded; and among party officials at the okrug level, 1 per cent were purged and 8.8 per cent received a reprimand.⁶¹ This shows that leading party officials in the Leningrad region fared better than those in other regions.

However, the party officials in the countryside were much more severely dealt with. At the initial stage of the 1929 purge, 15.4 per cent of all rural party workers in the Soviet Union were removed, and a fifth of them were described as 'class-hostile elements'.⁶² In the Leningrad region, party officials in the countryside fared no better. In 1930, party officials in the rural areas, especially rural raikom secretaries, were criticised for their poor work in connection with the collectivisation drive. Subsequently many of them were replaced. For instance, in May 1930, about 21 per cent of the rural raikom secretaries under review were replaced. Some 9.4 per cent were replaced because of their poor work and not fully carrying out the party's policy in class lines.⁶³ It appears that, during the 1929-1930 purge, it was the party officials in the countryside who were dealt with more severely.

In Leningrad region as well as in the whole country, the reasons for expulsion ranged from political passivity, being or being related to an alien element, defects in personal life and conduct (drunkenness, anti-Semitism, participation in religious rites), or involvement in criminal activity, to fractional activity and other violations of party discipline. In December 1929, when the preliminary results of the purge were published in the Leningrad party journal, the following information regarding the reasons for expulsion was given: almost 40 per cent of those expelled from the Leningrad party organisation were purged for political passivity, 33 per cent for drunkenness, 25 per cent for being or having connections with an alien element, and 20 per cent for violations of party discipline (see column 2 of table 5-4).⁶⁴ Although these figures did not cover those purged in 1930, they clearly show that the 1929 purge affected far wider circles than those deemed Rightists. The majority of those

⁶¹ F. M. Vaganov, 'O regulirovanii sostava partii v 1928-29 gg.', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 6, 1964, p. 68.

⁶² Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 1, p. 19.

⁶³ *Partrabotnik*, no. 12, May 1930, p. 42.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, nos. 23-24, December 1929, p. 119. Since many were expelled from the party on the basis of multiple reasons, the total number of reasons was almost double the number of those purged. By December 1929, 2,876 had been purged in the Leningrad region for 4,815 reasons. That is why the figures given in column 2 of table 5-4 exceed 100 per cent.

purged were expelled from the party not for their political convictions, but for not having shown enough enthusiasm for party work or having been drunk.

Table 5-4. Reasons for expulsion in the Leningrad region in comparison with the Western region, 1929-30

<i>Reasons for expulsion</i>	<i>Leningrad oblast (1)</i>	<i>Leningrad oblast (1)</i>	<i>Western oblast (2)</i>
	% of total number of reasons for expulsion	% of total number of those expelled	% of total number of those expelled
Alien elements or connection with alien elements	15.5	25.1	25.0
Official crimes	9.6	16.5	19.3
Drunkenness	19.9	33.3	36.8
Passivity	23.8	39.8	40.4
Violations of party discipline	12.3	20.6	7.0
Distortions of the party line	n. d.	n. d.	4.7
Carrying out religious rites	3.2	5.4	10.9
Violations of labour discipline	4.4	7.4	6.5
Bureaucratism	0.8	1.4	n. d.
Refusal to enter kolkhoz	n. d.	n. d.	9.8

Note: Figures for the Leningrad region covered only those purged in 1929.

Sources: (1) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 23-24, December 1929, p. 120; (2) Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*, p. 218.

One notable feature of table 5-4 is that there was a surprisingly remarkable resemblance in the composition of those purged in relation with the reasons for expulsion between the Leningrad and Western oblasts. It is true that there were some differences in the pattern of the purge in these two regions. For instance, the Leningrad oblast showed a much higher percentage of expulsions on the ground of violations of party discipline than the Western oblast. On the other hand, in the Western oblast the percentage of those expelled for conducting religious rites was almost double that of the Leningrad oblast. However, apart from these, both regions showed a similar pattern of the purge. In both regions, those who were expelled for political passivity comprised the biggest group, accounting for about 40 per cent. Those expelled for drunkenness comprised the second largest group, accounting for about 35 per cent. Then, those expelled for being or having connections with an alien element accounted for 25 per cent in both regions. Given the difference in the

economic and social characteristics of these two regions,⁶⁵ it is rather surprising that these two regions showed a similar pattern of the purge. It is not quite clear whether this implies the existence of orders from above indicating the proportions of those to be purged, or whether this was a simple coincidence.

Table 5-5 shows figures for the All-Union party, given at the sixteenth Party Congress in July 1930. Although figures for the Leningrad region and those for the All-Union party are not directly comparable,⁶⁶ a comparison suggests that in the Leningrad region 'passivity' and 'violations of party discipline' claimed far larger proportions of those purged than at the all-Union level (see tables 5-4 and 5-5). However, it is not clear whether this is due to the peculiarity of the purge conducted in the Leningrad region, or due to the different methods of calculation.

Table 5-5. Reasons for expulsion in the All-Union party organisation, 1929-30

<i>Reasons for expulsion</i>	<i>% of total number of those expelled</i>
Alien elements or connection with alien elements	16.9
Passivity	17.0
Violations of party discipline	10.0
Defects in personal life and conduct	21.9
Criminal offences	12.3

Source: XVI s'ezd VKP(b): Stenograficheskii otchet (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1930), p. 340.

No comprehensive data were found regarding the reasons for expulsion among the different types of party cells. However, material available shows that there were some interesting variations in the grounds for expulsion from the party among the different types of party cells. In the production cells, political passivity and drunkenness were the most important factors in contributing to the purge, accounting for 44 per cent of those expelled. Some party members were expelled for having been influenced by 'unhealthy petit bourgeois and kulak attitudes' and for showing a conciliatory attitude towards them. Self-seeking attitudes, lack of enthusiasm for the

⁶⁵ The Western oblast was mainly an agricultural region, while the Leningrad oblast was an industrialised region. For more information on the Western oblast, see Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*, chapter 1.

⁶⁶ First of all, both figures did not cover all those purged. Figures for the Leningrad region did not cover those purged in 1930, while the figures given at the sixteenth Party Congress covered only 130,000 out of the total 170,000 members and candidates expelled during the 1929-1930 purge.

shock-brigade movement, and also violations of party and state discipline accounted for numerous expulsions in factories.

In the soviet cells, the main reasons for expulsion were reported to be right opportunist attitudes, nepotism (*semeistvennost'*), mutual guarantee (*krugovaia poruka*), and not fully understanding the main tasks of the party in the reconstruction of the soviet apparatus. The soviet cells were criticised for failing to guide strongly the soviet apparatus, and also for limiting themselves narrowly to educational work. Reticence and poor development of self-criticism were said to be the main reasons for that a number of sick phenomena remained un-revealed. In a number of places, this led to the repetition of the purge process.

Rural cells showed different patterns: not fully implementing the party's class line, the 'right opportunistic' practice, and poor work with poor peasants and farm labourers were listed as the main shortcomings in the work of the rural cells. In addition, rural cells were criticised for not having been able to lead a mass movement of farm labourers, and poor and middle peasants, while conducting the agricultural reconstruction at the initial period of collectivisation and in the party's struggle against the kulaks. In some cases, whole rural raikoms were dismissed due to their not following the party's line regarding class. Apparently many rural communists were expelled due to their resistance to collectivisation. In general, the political and cultural level of rural communists was evaluated very low, which led to serious shortcomings in party work in rural areas.⁶⁷

5.2 The 1933 party purge

5.2.1 The general background of the 1933 party purge

The second general purge under Stalin came only two and a half years after the completion of the first purge of 1929-1930. The desire to launch the general purge of rank-and-file party membership was first expressed by the Central Committee in December 1932. Its short decree contained the basic decision to undertake a purge of

Secondly, the first counted multiple reasons, leading the total sum more than 100 per cent, whereas the latter seems to have counted a single reason for each expulsion.

⁶⁷ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2711, p. 63.

party membership in 1933 and to halt temporarily new admissions to the party.⁶⁸ The Central Committee's decision to launch a general purge was approved at a joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on 12 January 1933. However, the January plenum had only approved the purge in principle, leaving its organisation to the Politburo and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.⁶⁹ It was not until April that a decree concerning the details of the purge was issued in the name of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission.⁷⁰

The official reasons for the launching of the mass purge were embodied in a decree issued in April. The decree noted that 'during the mass acceptance into the party, which at the local level was frequently indiscriminate and lacking the necessary verification, alien elements penetrated into the ranks of the party and are using their sojourn in the party for careerist and self-seeking purposes; double dealers made their way in - persons who swear fidelity to the party but are in fact trying to undermine the conduct of its policy. On the other hand, the unsatisfactory state of the marxist-leninist education of party members has meant that the party contains not a few comrades who, although honest and prepared to defend the Soviet Union, are either insufficiently stable - failing to understand the spirit and the demands of party discipline - or are politically almost illiterate, do not know the Programme, the Rules, and the fundamental decisions of the party, and for this reason are not able to carry out its policy actively.'⁷¹ It was also proclaimed that the purge was 'to ensure iron proletarian discipline within the party and to cleanse the party's ranks of all unreliable and unstable elements and hangers-on.'⁷²

Judging from the passage above, it appears that the main focus of the 1933 purge was on weeding out the undesirables who had flooded into the party since 1929. To the party leadership, it seemed that many of recent recruits had been taken into the party without proper verification, and as a consequence, a considerable number of what party leaders called 'alien,' 'parasitic,' and 'unreliable' persons had entered the

⁶⁸ *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 5, p. 440.

⁶⁹ The same resolution also announced the halt of the recruitment of party members until the purge was over. See *ibid.*, (1985), vol. 6, p. 32.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-50.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

party. Moreover, in the eyes of the party leadership, these new members were often 'insufficiently stable' and 'politically almost illiterate'. Therefore, it seems that the 1933 purge was supposed to prune the swollen ranks of the party after the huge influx of 1929-32.

There might be some truth in the claim that mass admission had allowed undesirable elements to join the party. Indeed, the whole party membership had grown by 1.4 million since 1931, and to recruit as many as 1.4 million people in only two and a half years' time, the recruitment procedure could not have been as strict as in previous years. As shown in the previous chapter, from 1930 onwards the quality of party recruits deteriorated in terms of length of industrial experience and skill level both in the All-Union and Leningrad party organisations. Workers who had just started to work in industry could join the party without much difficulty. Taking into consideration the fact that a considerable number of workers were drawn from the countryside and many of them still retained ties with the countryside, one might safely assume that it was these particular workers who expressed discontent with the party's policy in the countryside.

Another problem caused by mass admission was the poor party education. Even though the party tried hard to educate new recruits by establishing various kinds of party educational system, it was far from sufficient to cover the rapidly growing candidate group. The size of candidate group had increased enormously by 1932 partly due to the massive recruitment and partly due to the delay in transferring candidate members to full members. Many remained candidate members long after the recommended probationary period, which, in the case of industrial workers, was six months. This, in turn, led to the increase in the proportion of candidate members of the total membership. In Leningrad, for instance, the actual number of candidate members had almost trebled in two years by the beginning of 1932, and in some industrial raions candidate members accounted for as much as 40 per cent of the total membership.⁷³

There were plenty of evidence that the party leadership was not satisfied with the quality of party membership, especially those who were admitted to the party

⁷³ *Partrabotnik*, no. 4, February 1932, p. 41.

during the years of mass admission. Throughout 1932, complaints about the poor quality of party membership were often expressed in party journals and newspapers, and there were voices which argued that a smaller, qualitatively purer, more disciplined and better organised party organisation was preferable to the current organisation, which appeared to be large in terms of size, but was much diluted in terms of the quality of membership.

The complaints about the poor quality of party members and candidates were also expressed in Leningrad. In the early months of 1932 articles began to appear complaining about the vast number of candidates, and stating that many candidates played no practical role, failed to observe elementary party rules, such as the regular paying of dues, or else had a poor record of party education.⁷⁴ Thus they requested that candidates should demonstrate in their daily lives that they were worthy of honour in order to become full party members. Later, in September 1932, another article in *Partrabotnik*, calling for significant improvement in party work and discipline, complained about those who failed to pay party dues. The article went on to stress: 'we cannot have a party member who, according to his own wishes, takes part only occasionally in our work; he must work systematically under the control of the party. He must fulfil party duties, and must be answerable for them before the party'.⁷⁵ It was also admitted that 'at the moment there is a certain amount of foot-dragging, party members who are indistinguishable from non-party workers, waverers who are either supporters of "liberalism" and conciliation, or else are remnants of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism'.⁷⁶ It was argued that a weakening of control from 1929 onwards had undone the work of the 1929 purge, and had allowed careerists, hangers-on and outright alien elements and class enemies to enter the party. Too many 'waverers', a large number of whom were from dubious class backgrounds in the countryside, had slipped into the party during the years of mass entry, and they had to be watched much more closely to ensure that they remained faithful to the party's cause.⁷⁷ In particular, the quality of the newly recruited proletarian *aktiv* was

⁷⁴ See, for instance, *ibid.*, no. 9, May 1932, p. 2; and nos. 11-12, June 1932, pp. 14, 21.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1932, p. 8.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

questioned, and it was claimed that bourgeois and petit bourgeois elements had slipped into the factory-plant cells.⁷⁸

All of the following concerns - the easing of entry to the party since 1928, the surfeit of candidate members, the large percentage of candidate members with little experience of industrial labour, the shortcomings of the party's educational functions, and the appearance of discontent (or, at least, disillusionment) within the ranks - seem to have led the party leadership to call a halt to all recruitment into the party and to announce a mass purge of the party at the end of 1932.

Although there might have been a political motive behind the decision to launch party purge in 1933,⁷⁹ it was, after all, a mass purge and so aimed to remove not only 'conscious opponents' but also 'unconscious and backward elements'. It appears that the leadership intended to use the purge as a means to remove political opposition to Stalin's policies, on the one hand, and to strengthen party discipline and labour discipline, on the other hand. It was claimed at that time that by the launching of the mass purge, the party leadership attempted 'to strengthen the party, to raise the ideological level of its membership, and to increase the authority of the party among the masses' by purging itself before them.⁸⁰ The official history of the Leningrad party organisation, making a similar remark on the purpose of the purge, stated that the

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, nos. 23-24, December 1932-January 1933, p. 31.

⁷⁹ Undoubtedly, as in 1929, there was a political element to the purge in 1933. The question is whether the political motive was the sole or the most important motive of the purge. Two different interpretations have been put forward. Emphasising the political side, T. H. Rigby regards the 1933 purge as a first step towards the elimination of the 'Old Bolsheviks', which came to a head in the great purge of 1937-1938. Vadim Rogovin has a similar opinion about the 1933 purge, and in his book *Stalinskii NeoNEP* explained that the 1933-36 purge was launched to get rid of the possible opponents to Stalin's power and that it was not a mere technical and office procedure, but a preparation for the forthcoming Great Terror. In his opinion, the main victims of the purge were the old party members, especially those who had been in the opposition faction. J. A. Getty, by contrast, considers the 1933 purge to be a continuation of that of the 1920s, and to be an organisational-administrative operation rather than a political witch hunt. In his study on the purge in Smolensk, he emphasised the apolitical character of the purges prior to the police terror of 1937-1938. P. O. Gooderham put forward a similar interpretation. He emphasised the chronic organisational confusion into which the party apparatus had been thrown during the years of mass recruitment, and argued that a major element of the successive party purges in the mid-1930s was to try to sort out this mess and thus help to re-establish a more efficient nomenklatura system. See Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 52; Vadim Rogovin, *Stalinskii neoNEP* (Moscow, n. p., 1994), pp. 149-158; Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, chapter 1 and 2; and Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 9.

⁸⁰ *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1985), vol. 6, p. 46.

mass purge aimed at increasing the efficiency of the party by fortifying it in political and ideological terms.⁸¹

Indeed, facing the successive agricultural crises and the intense pressures of the industrialisation drive, the leadership could maintain the necessary degree of control only by increasing discipline further. In fact, party discipline had worsened and party records were in a mess during the years of mass entry and of enormous membership turnover. Thus the central leadership instructed lower level organisations to amend the situation by conducting a mass purge and it seemed that the mass purge was to establish stricter and more centralised control of the rank-and-file membership.⁸²

At the same time, it appears that the party leadership had been concerned about maintaining labour discipline. The ambitious economic targets and over-optimistic expectations that characterised these years ended up with disillusionment with the results of the first FYP. This made it more difficult to compel workers to endure the economic hardship of the industrialisation period. Another factor that threatened labour discipline was that the rapid industrialisation drive had engendered a transient and increasingly non-proletarian labour force who had little work experience and were not prepared to uphold strict labour discipline. Many of them had failed to come to terms with the rigours of 'socialist transformation' and had found labour discipline to be too strict. It appears that the purge was used as a method of raising standards of labour discipline within the factories.

In the countryside, the purge was used as a means to secure the implementation of collectivisation and of other tasks set by the central party leadership. Taking into consideration that resistance and conscious opposition against the forced collectivisation was quite strong in the countryside, it appears that the 1933 purge was aimed, at least partly, at rural cadres who were unwilling to implement the harsh policies directed at peasants.⁸³ In particular, the party leadership used the exposure of

⁸¹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 242.

⁸² At the same time, there were voices that demanded relaxation of party discipline and greater party democracy. Riutin was one of those who were against stricter party discipline.

⁸³ Between 1930 and 1933 a number of regional purges had already taken place to remove 'right opportunists' and 'deviationists' in regions such as Georgia, Voronezh, the middle Volga and Western Siberia. Indeed, those areas of the country which were considered to be particularly rotten with kulak and right opportunist elements were actually purged at the end of 1932, before the main purge started: the North Caucasus, to remove 'organisers of kulak sabotage', the Ukraine

the so-called Riutin platform in the autumn of 1932 as the justification for the launching of purges in the countryside.⁸⁴

According to a further decree issued in April, the categories for expulsion were detailed as follows: class alien and hostile elements who made their way into the party by deceit and tried to deceitfully demoralise the party; double dealers who deceitfully undermined party policy; violators of discipline who failed to carry out party decisions and who were pessimistic about the 'impracticability' of party measures; degenerates who merged with and did not struggle against kulaks, loafers, thieves; careerists and self-seekers who were isolated from the masses and who disregarded the needs of people; and moral degenerates whose unseemly behaviour discredited the party.⁸⁵

People who hid their class origin in order to get into the party were purged as class alien or hostile elements, those unwilling to struggle against the class enemy were classified as degenerates, and those having taken part in oppositional activity, especially between 1925 and 1927, were purged as double-dealers. Persons who were unwilling to carry out collectivisation, those who did not understand the policies of the party, and those non-political persons who simply joined the party for the patronage, position, or power associated with membership were also to be expelled.⁸⁶

In factories, any member who had failed to come to terms with the rigours of 'socialist transformation' fell a victim of the purge. As one article in *Partrabotnik* had put it, any worker who failed to pull their weight such as 'the absentees and shirkers, bad workmen, loafers and rolling stones' was to be gotten rid of.⁸⁷

In the countryside, any members who failed to show sufficient enthusiasm for the party's policies in collectivisation ran the risk of being condemned as a political opponent of the party. Anyone who refused to 'struggle against the kulak,' could be expelled for being a 'double dealer,' 'underminer,' or 'violation of discipline'. Indeed, in an article in *Partrabotnik* it was claimed that the general purge was launched to eliminate all kulak elements and right opportunists from the rural cells. It suggested

('bourgeois nationalists'), Eastern Siberia ('remnants of old white-guardists'), the middle Volga, Kazakhstan, some cells in the Donbass, and the rural raions of Leningrad and Moscow oblasts.

⁸⁴ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 21-22, November 1932, p. 6.

⁸⁵ *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 4, pp. 46-47.

⁸⁶ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 23-24, December 1932-January 1933, p. 31.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

that each communist should be judged by how seriously one implemented the obligation of grain and meat procurement, how actively one had fought against the kulaks and kulak's henchmen, and how eagerly one had participated in kolkhoz production.⁸⁸ Rural cadres who were unwilling to implement the harsh policies directed at peasants were condemned as being kulaks who had somehow sneaked into the party and had attempted to wreck the party's procurement policies in the kolkhoz.⁸⁹

Purge categories such as 'degenerates,' 'careerists,' and those 'isolated from the masses' seemed to target full-time party officials. Attacks on bureaucratism were one of the constant themes in party purges in the 1920s, and the 1933 purge was no exception.⁹⁰ Even though there were some worries about excessive attacks directed against the bureaucracy, the central leadership passed strictures on local bureaucracies by means of rank-and-file criticism during the purge, calling for the denouncing of bureaucrats who discredited the party among the masses. The official announcement called for 'open and honest self-criticism of party members' and a verification of the work of each party cell, suggesting obliquely that the work of party leaders would be scrutinised.⁹¹

In non-production party cells, the purge aimed to root out the careerists who had used their party cards to further their own ends, the bureaucrats and double-dealers - that is, those who pretended to carry out party directives without actually doing so - the politically and morally corrupt, degenerates, and alien elements. Amongst state and economic administrators those guilty of lax attitudes towards the spending of state money, employing excessive numbers of staff, heartless bureaucratism and lack of attention to the needs of the workers, and 'turning a blind eye' were all to be removed.⁹²

At the same time, the leadership showed a cautious attitude towards the purge of the rank and file members, in order to prevent some of the abuses encountered in 1929

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁸⁹ These people were to be removed and replaced by new, highly-qualified technical graduates from the higher party schools, and by experienced urban officials who would man the new *politotdely* that were to be set up in MTS and sovkhozes. See *ibid.*, nos. 21-22, November 1932, pp. 3-5.

⁹⁰ Getty claimed that the 1933 purge had a stronger antibureaucratic emphasis than its predecessors. See Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 52.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁹² *Partrabotnik*, nos. 23-24, December 1932-January 1933, p. 32.

relating to unjustified expulsions.⁹³ Local purge officials were warned not to expel large numbers of rank-and-file members on such flimsy pretexts as 'passivity' or simple political illiteracy. The 1933 announcement enjoined those conducting the purge to take into account the 'overall development' of the member - not to try to trick him or her with technical questions on the intricacies of the party programme and not to expel loyal workers and collective farmers just because they had not had time to improve their level of political education. Moreover, a member found to lack sufficient political knowledge or discipline was to be demoted from a member to a candidate, or from a candidate to a sympathiser.⁹⁴ The creation of the sympathiser category meant the establishment of a 'half-way house' for party members who were considered to be politically trustworthy, but who lacked the discipline which the party was now demanding of its membership and who could benefit from further party education. It is therefore tempting to see the whole notion of the sympathiser as a compromise solution arrived at between proponents of an all-out attack on 'passive' party elements who had failed to demonstrate their devotion to communism in some positive way, and more 'moderate' purgers, who wanted only the politically suspect and undisciplined to be singled out for treatment.

5.2.2 The conduct of the party purge in the Leningrad region

In spite of the central leadership's effort to conduct the purge effectively and thoroughly, the purge process was quite slow. Although the launching of the mass purge was announced in January 1933, the purge did not officially get under way until June. The original instruction had ordered that the purge should run from June in seven oblasts, two krajs, and one republic and finish by the end of November 1933.⁹⁵ The Leningrad region was one of those regions where the purge had started in June

⁹³ *Pravda*, 28 April 1933.

⁹⁴ Sympathiser was a category regularised at the seventeenth Party Congress in January 1934 primarily as a staging ground for would-be recruits unable to be admitted as candidates because of the ban on recruitment during the purge. Later on, however, the rationale lying behind the sympathiser category had been constantly attacked until 1939, when Zhdanov announced its abolition and the return to mass recruitment campaign.

⁹⁵ A joint resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, dated 23 April 1933, named those ten party organisations: Moscow, Leningrad, Urals, Donets, Odessa, Kiev and Vinnitsa oblasts, Eastern and Far Eastern krajs and the White Russian Republic. See *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniiakh* (1985), vol. 6, p. 50.

1933. The purge of the Leningrad party organisation actually lasted till December 1933.⁹⁶

The organisation of the 1933 purge differed from the previous purges in the 1920s in that responsibility for the conduct of the purge was taken out of the hands of the Central Control Commission, and entrusted to a specially formed Central Purge Commission, which was to head a hierarchy of ad hoc purge commissions down to the raion level of the party.⁹⁷ A specially organised Central Purge Commission, which had eight members, was headed by Ia. E. Rudzutak, and by the order of the Central Committee, local purge commissions were to be composed of staunch communists who had been in the party for at least ten years, had never been in the opposition or in other parties, and enjoyed authority among members.⁹⁸ The names of members were to be published in advance of the purge process and challenges to the suitability of the purge commission members were to be allowed.⁹⁹

In mid-May 1933, the Leningrad oblast purge commission was set up by the Central Purge Commission. Its members were as follows: V. I. Shestakov, chairman of the oblast control commission; M. V. Bogdanov, chairman of the city control commission and also a member of the Central Control Commission; I. A. Kiselev, secretary of the city control commission; A. N. Petrovskii, chairman of the Leningrad oblast union of machine-builders and a member of the oblast committee. All these members had joined the party before the October revolution in 1917. At the lower levels ten purge commissions were set up within raions and nine purge commissions were set up at the following factories - the Izhorskii, Krasnyi putilovets, Galoshnyi, Elektrosila, Metal, Baltic, Bol'shevik and Skorokhod factories - and at Torgovyi port.¹⁰⁰ The following were chairmen of the raion party commissions: P. A. Alekseev (Narvskii raion, the Central Committee member, year of enrolment to the party: 1914), G. N. Pyraev (Moskovskii raion, the Central Control Commission member and a plenipotentiary of the national commissariat of heavy industry: 1912), B. P. Pozern (Vyborgskii raion, candidate member of the Central Committee and secretary of the

⁹⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 448.

⁹⁷ Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 51.

⁹⁸ *KPSS v resoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 4, p. 49.

⁹⁹ *Pravda*, 28 April 1933.

¹⁰⁰ *Leningradskaya pravda*, 28 May 1933.

Leningrad oblast: 1903), I. V. Vasil'ev (Prigorodnyi raion, obkom bureau member: 1912).¹⁰¹ Out of 57 members within these raion and factory purge commissions, 38 had joined the party before the Revolution. Purge commissions in rural raions were organised a little later. They were composed of a total of 234 people, made up predominantly of workers who had been party members for more than 13 years. The majority of chairmen of these rural purge commissions were said to be old communists.¹⁰² It was claimed that local purge commissions were manned with communists who had proved capable of dealing with practical work. More than 75 per cent of the members of cell commissions were workers who had been in the party for at least 10 years, and chairmen of commissions had been party members for at least 13 years.¹⁰³ Moreover, in Leningrad, of the 1,932 members of the city's purge commissions, three-quarters were industrial workers with a party membership dating back to before 1921.¹⁰⁴

In other words, it was the 'old Bolsheviks' who were put in charge of purging the party, and they were given specific instructions to pay particularly close attention to members who had joined since 1928. This gave the impression that newly recruited proletarian activists were to be attacked and disciplined by the old red Bolsheviks who had gone through the hardships of the Revolution, the Civil War and the retrenchment that followed. However, it is not quite clear whether it meant that a generational conflict arose between younger and more senior members during the course of the purge.

It was claimed that the purge was conducted in a well-organised manner in the Leningrad region.¹⁰⁵ Unlike previous purge operations, the 1933 purge commissions not only scrutinised the behaviour of individual communists and decided their fate, but also investigated the performance of party organisations by analysing the materials which had been accumulated during the purge process. The results of their analysis were formulated as concrete conclusions and proposals, and members of purge commissions were associated with the very organisations where they were

¹⁰¹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 449.

¹⁰² *Leningradskai pravda*, 17 August 1933.

¹⁰³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 449.

¹⁰⁴ *Itogi chistki Leningradskoi oblastnoi organizatsii VKP(b)* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskoi oblastnoi komissii po chistke, 1934), p. 14.

¹⁰⁵ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 451.

conducting purges, in order to implement the decisions of the purge commissions.¹⁰⁶ Although the purge was conducted by the purge commissions organised at various levels of the party, the whole process was under the control of the party committees. The oblast and city committees had constantly monitored the course of purges, and they intervened whenever any serious negligence was reported.

During the 1933 purge process, the importance of public scrutiny and maximum party and non-party participation was frequently emphasised. It was agreed at that time that mass participation in the purge process would uncover alien elements, reveal shortcomings and demonstrate examples of good work.¹⁰⁷ The purge process took place at open party cell meetings where each party member and candidate in turn was obliged to give an account of his background, career and performance in his job and party activities.¹⁰⁸ Non-party members were informed of the aims and functions of the purge in advance of the party cell meetings¹⁰⁹ and also allowed to take part in the purge process. Any party member or candidate could be questioned or criticized by anyone present.

Reportedly, the purge was carried out with the active participation of party and non-party masses in the Leningrad region. The first party meeting on the purge which was held to hear the reports of party secretaries on 1 June 1933, for instance, was an open meeting with extensive participation of non-party workers. In general, the degree of participation of those who attended the party purge meetings was assessed as being quite high. For example, more than 25 per cent of those present spoke out about the secretaries and communists who were going through purges. Support from the Komsomol and non-party members played an important role in the purge. The percentage of Komsomol members attending purge meetings was about 50 per cent in June and it had risen to 67 per cent by October. The percentage of non-party members present ranged from 29 to 42, and moreover, one tenth of them spoke out at the meetings with critical remarks and proposals. In rural areas, the participation of non-party members was even higher. At 1375 party meetings held in 50 raions, in which 10,000 communists had to account for themselves, 10,500 Komsomol and 31,000

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 452.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 450.

¹⁰⁸ *Pravda*, 29 April 1933.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 28 April 1933.

non-party members attended. Moreover, 10,000 party members, 1,200 Komsomol members and 6,500 non-party members participated actively in the discussions.¹¹⁰

However, the purge was not always carried out with sufficient mass participation and criticism. For instance, some party meetings within state administrative sector reportedly took place without sufficient criticism. 'Turning a blind eye' was reported at the Prigorodnoi raion and the Ostrovskii and Miaksinskii raions of the oblast. These reports led to the cancellation of the purges which were currently being carried out and the initiation of new purge process within these areas.¹¹¹ However, this was a rather exceptional case.

5.2.3 The result of the 1933 purge

The purge process went slowly in 1933. Although the original instruction had specified that the purge should be completed by the end of November 1933, less than half the membership had been dealt with by the scheduled completion date.¹¹² Only in eleven regions, the purge had been completed by December 1933, and the Leningrad region was one of these eleven regions. In other regions the purge dragged on for up to two years. In another 14 regional organisations and some organisations in the Red Army and in the transport sector, the purge process started only after the seventeenth Party Congress in 1934.¹¹³ The purge process was not officially concluded and its commissions were not disbanded until December 1935, when the purge was superseded by the 'verification of party documents'. Even then, the purge had not yet begun in seventeen territorial organisations, and some parts of the Red Army and of the transport sector.¹¹⁴

Nevertheless, the 1933 purge had a far-reaching impact on the party membership. At the seventeenth Party Congress, it was reported that 93.2 per cent of

¹¹⁰ *Leningradskaia pravda*, 14 September 1933.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 26 September and 3 October 1933.

¹¹² Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 202.

¹¹³ P. N. Pospelov et al., *Istoriia Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1971), vol. 4, part 2, p. 283.

¹¹⁴ The dragging on of the purge served as an evidence for local party officials' resistance to the purge in order to protect their machines. That was the reason that Rudzutak, chairman of central control committee and Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, blamed local party officials. According to him, many party leaders had not helped with the organisation and implementation of the purge, and even more, some of these leaders had actually obstructed the successful conduct of the purge. See Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 52.

the entire party membership (or 1,149,000 members and candidates) had been examined by the end of 1933. Nationally 17 per cent of those examined were expelled, 9.8 per cent were transferred to candidate status, and 6.3 per cent were reclassified as sympathisers.¹¹⁵ However, figures given in later years were slightly different: they showed that in the country as a whole the purge had resulted in the expulsion of 16.3 per cent of the party membership, the demotion of 6.2 per cent from full to candidate membership and the demotion of a further 5.8 per cent to the status of sympathisers.¹¹⁶

In the Leningrad region, 19,484 party members (10.4 per cent of the total) and 11,169 candidates (20.5 per cent) were expelled from the party, resulting in an average expulsion rate of 12.7 per cent. Out of the 30,653 expelled, 22,071 were expelled from the Leningrad city party organisation, and the rest (8,582) from the rural raion party organisations. In other words, Leningrad city party organisation lost 11.6 per cent of its membership, while the rural raion organisations lost 16.8 per cent of their membership. However, subsequent rehabilitations reduced these figures to 8 per cent and 15.2 per cent respectively. This, in turn, resulted in the average expulsion rate being reduced to 9.5 per cent.¹¹⁷

Table 5-6. Expulsion rates in Leningrad oblast, 1933 (percentages)

	<i>Full members expelled from the party</i>	<i>Candidate members expelled from the party</i>	<i>Total</i>	
Leningrad city	n. d.	n. d.	11.6	(8.0)
Rural districts	n. d.	n. d.	16.8	(15.2)
Total	10.4	20.5	12.7	(9.5)

Note: Figures in brackets are the expulsion rates after appeals.

Source: *Itogi chistki Leningradskoi oblastnoi organizatsii VKP(b)* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskoi oblastnoi komissii po chistke, 1934), pp. 53 and 69.

In addition, a total of 16,425 party members (or 8.8 per cent) were demoted to candidate status, 1,800 party members (or 1 per cent) to sympathisers, and 7,369 party

¹¹⁵ These are incomplete figures given by Iaroslavskii in his speech to the seventeenth Party Congress in early 1934. See *XVII s'ezd VKP(b), 26 ianvaria-10 fevralia 1934 g.: Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Partizdat, 1934), pp. 287 and 299.

¹¹⁶ *Partiinaia zhizn'*, no. 20, October 1947, p. 79. Different figure (18.3 per cent expelled) was given in Pospelov, et al., *Istoriia KPSS*, vol. 4, part 2, p. 283.

¹¹⁷ *Itogi chistki*, p. 53.

candidates (or 13.5 per cent) to sympathisers in the Leningrad region.¹¹⁸ Following the appeals from the expelled members to the oblast and raion purge commissions, the figures changed to 7.5 per cent of party members demoted to candidate status, 0.8 per cent of party members reclassified as sympathisers, and 12.6 per cent of candidates reclassified as sympathisers.¹¹⁹ As can be seen in table 5-7, in general the demotion rates in rural raions were higher than in Leningrad city, which suggests that the purge was more severe in rural raions than in the city. This table reveals that rural communists did indeed suffer more heavily than urban ones. The total percentage of those expelled in rural organisations was almost twice as high as in urban organisations, and the percentage of those converted to candidate or sympathiser in rural organisations was also much higher. This shows that urban party organisations in Leningrad got off much more lightly than rural organisations.

Table 5-7. Demotion rates in Leningrad oblast, 1933 (percentages)

	<i>Transferred from full to candidate membership</i>		<i>Transferred from full membership to sympathiser</i>		<i>Transferred from candidate membership to sympathiser</i>	
Leningrad city	8.3	(6.9)	0.8	(0.6)	12.1	(10.9)
Rural districts	10.8	(10.4)	1.7	(1.6)	16.4	(16.1)
Total	8.8	(7.5)	1.0	(0.8)	13.5	(12.6)

Note: Figures in brackets are the demotion rates after appeals.

Source: As for table 5-6.

All in all, the figures for the Leningrad region were much lower than the figures for the all-Union party, showing that as a whole the Leningrad party organisation had been relatively less severely affected than other regional organisations. In fact, similar to the 1929 purge, the 1933 purge was markedly more severe in other rural regions, especially in the national republics. According to data given at the seventeenth Party Congress, which covered ten regions, the expulsion rate in the Leningrad region was one of the lowest, together with the Moscow region where an expulsion rate of 13.6 per cent was recorded, whereas in five other regions the expulsion rate had exceeded

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

20 per cent.¹²⁰ This is why at the seventeenth Party Congress the Leningrad and Moscow party organisations were singled out as the strongest and most stable ones.¹²¹ It is accordingly no wonder that the official history of the Leningrad party organisation stated that 'the purge showed that party *kollektiv* in industrial enterprises and the overwhelming majority of rural party organisations [in the Leningrad region] were healthy, solid and eagerly fighting for the implementation of the party policies.'¹²²

What is noteworthy here is the fact that the significance and the gravity of the 1933 purge had been much greater than in 1929-30 purge. While the latter resulted in an expulsion rate of 11 per cent nationally in its initial stages, the expulsion rate in 1933 reached 17 per cent.¹²³ This was also the case for the Leningrad party organisation. In the Leningrad region, the 1929 purge had resulted in 5.1 per cent of the party membership being removed,¹²⁴ however, in 1933, prior to hearing appeals from members, almost 23 per cent of 208,000 party members had been affected in some way by the purge. Furthermore, unlike the 1929 purge which was conducted in conjunction with an enthusiastic recruitment campaign, the 1933 purge was conducted in a different atmosphere, with the imposition of a ban on further recruitment. Therefore, while the 1929 purge had barely affected the growth of the party's industrial membership in the region, the 1933 purge had a far more serious effect on the membership generally, at least in absolute terms. Indeed, the total membership in the Leningrad region shrank from 278,280 to 193,262 within a year.

The 1933 purge resulted in a slight increase in the proportion of party members classified as workers. At the seventeenth Party Congress, Rudzutak, speaking for the Central Control Commission, indicated that 23 per cent of those expelled were from a peasant background and 14.6 per cent were from a white collar background at the

¹²⁰ The regions where their party organisations were severely hit by the 1933 purge were as follows: East Siberian krai (the expulsion rate 25.2 per cent), Urals oblast (23.1 per cent), Far Eastern krai (21.9 per cent), Odessa oblast (21.9 per cent), Karelian Autonomous Republic (20.3 per cent). See *XVII s'ezd VKP(b)*, p. 287.

¹²¹ Rudzutak stated, in his speech to the seventeenth Party Congress, that the expulsion rates in the Leningrad and Moscow regions were lower than the average of ten other regions. See *ibid.*, p. 287.

¹²² *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 451.

¹²³ In the first month of the purge, the expulsion rate was over one-third, and then it had been cut in half by the end of the year. See Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 53.

¹²⁴ *Otchet o rabote Leningradskoi oblastnoi kontrol'noi komissii VKP(b) i raboche-krest'ianskoi inspeksii III Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii* (Leningrad, 1930), p. 9.

national level. Although giving no figure for workers, he noted that in some areas where mass admissions had been most flagrant, large numbers of workers had been expelled.¹²⁵ It seems reasonable to surmise that around 62.4 per cent of those expelled were workers by social situation. Later, Iaroslavskii, also speaking for the Central Control Commission in a supplementary speech to Rudzutak's, noted that after the 1933 purge, the proportion of workers in the party had increased by 2 to 4 per cent, depending on the organisation, and that, in the ten regions for which data were available, the proportion of workers had increased from 67.7 per cent to 69.4 per cent.¹²⁶ These reports together suggest that a large number of workers were expelled, but that their percentage in the party actually increased because of higher rate of attrition among other, less numerous groups.¹²⁷

Table 5-8. Social composition of those expelled in Leningrad oblast, 1933

	<i>Those who had gone through the purge</i>	<i>Those expelled from the party</i>	<i>Those transferred to candidate</i>	<i>Full members transferred to sympathiser</i>	<i>Candidate members transferred to sympathiser</i>
Workers	177,549 (72.5%)	17,655 (68.9%)	11,366 (78.1%)	1,183 (77.0%)	4,421 (63.0%)
Peasants	34,731 (14.2%)	5,785 (22.5%)	2,144 (14.7%)	269 (17.5%)	2,281 (32.5%)
White-collar workers	32,471 (13.3%)	2,197 (8.6%)	1,046 (7.2%)	85 (5.5%)	313 (4.5%)
Total	244,750 (100%)	25,634 (100%)	14,556 (100%)	1,537 (100%)	7,015 (100%)

Note: Percentages are my own calculations.

Source: Adapted from *Itogi chistki*, pp. 72-73.

As can be seen in table 5-8, this was also the case for the Leningrad region. Out of the 25,634 expelled, those from a working class background comprised 68.9 per cent and those from a peasant background 22.5 per cent. At first glance, it seems that those from a working class background were more severely purged. However, taking into the consideration the fact that those from a working class background comprised 72.5 per cent of those who had gone through the purge, it is no wonder that they

¹²⁵ *XVII s''ezd VKP(b)*, p. 287.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

¹²⁷ Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 53.

comprised the largest group among those purged. In actual fact, those who were from a peasant background were much more severely affected. Interestingly, those who were from a white collar background were purged relatively lightly.

Although there are no exact figures of those purged broken down by occupation at all-Union level, it appears that most of those purged were workers or peasants. In the Leningrad region, almost half of those purged were production workers or agricultural workers, and one fourth were white collar workers. Peasants accounted for nine per cent of those purged. Rural leaders, party and Komsomol officials, and specialists comprised seven per cent of those expelled (see table 5-9). This clearly shows that the majority of those expelled were either workers or peasants.

Table 5-9. Occupational composition of those expelled in Leningrad oblast, 1933

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Those expelled</i>	
	N	%
Production and agricultural workers	12,521	48.8
Kolkhozniks	2,221	8.6
Individual peasants	124	0.4
Kolkhoz, rural soviet and rural consumer society chairman	908	3.5
Party and Komsomol officials	230	0.9
Specialists	663	2.6
White collar workers	6,662	26.0
Students	1,296	5.0
All others	1,089	4.2
Total	25,634	100.0

Note: Percentages are my own calculations.

Source: Adapted from *Itogi chistki*, p. 71.

A further breakdown by area also confirmed that workers and peasants were the most severely affected by the purge (see tables 5-10 and 5-11). In the city of Leningrad, production workers had the highest rate of expulsion and demotion,¹²⁸ whereas party and Komsomol workers were least affected by the purge. In the rural areas, individual peasants showed the highest expulsion rate (51.5 per cent), followed by kolkhozniks (29.6 per cent). Production and agricultural workers also showed a high expulsion rate, 18.9 per cent and 22.7 per cent respectively. On the other hand,

¹²⁸ Those reclassified as sympathisers were mostly of worker candidate members who had only recently joined the party

party officials and personnel in the Soviet, trade union, and other institutions showed a relatively low expulsion rate, less than 10 per cent. As for transfer to candidate or sympathiser status, workers and peasants also showed a higher expulsion rate than other occupational groups. Here, again, party and Komsomol officials showed the lowest demotion rate. This suggest that the 1933 purge was more like a mass purge than a purge to attack officials or bureaucrats.

Table 5-10. Party purge in Leningrad, broken down by occupation, 1933

	<i>Those who had gone through purge</i>	<i>Those expelled</i>	<i>Those transferred to candidate</i>	<i>Those transferred to sympathiser</i>	
	N	%	%	Members	Candidates
Production workers	86,752	11.8	9.4	1.0	12.5
Party and Komsomol workers	3,081	2.8	0.7	-	3.1
Specialists	9,727	5.3	3.0	0.2	4.8
Students	26,120	4.8	4.6	0.4	9.4
White-collar workers	62,041	6.6	6.1	0.3	8.5
Others	5,625	13.7	7.1	0.8	10.0
Total	193,346	8.8	7.0	0.6	11.0

Source: Adapted from *Itogi chistki*, p. 72.

Table 5-11. Party purge in the rural raions of Leningrad oblast, broken down by occupation, 1933

	<i>Those who had gone through purge</i>	<i>Those expelled</i>	<i>Those transferred to candidate</i>	<i>Those transferred to sympathiser</i>	
	N	%	%	Members	Candidates
Workers	10,680	18.9	16.6	3.0	16.5
Agricultural workers	1,020	22.7	23.1	5.0	25.0
Kolkhozniks	7,362	29.6	20.4	4.0	22.0
Individual peasants	241	51.5	17.2	2.0	23.9
Rural chairmen	5,502	16.2	7.7	1.0	11.1
Party and Komsomol officials	2,417	6.0	2.2	0.2	6.7
Personnel in Soviet, trade union and economic organs	4,925	9.3	3.6	0.2	7.8
All others	19,257	<i>n. d.</i>	<i>n. d.</i>	<i>n. d.</i>	<i>n. d.</i>
Total	51,404	16.8	10.8	1.7	16.3

Source: Adapted from *Itogi chistki*, p. 73.

Table 5-12. Composition of party full members expelled in Leningrad oblast, broken down by year of entry into the party, 1933

Year of entry into the party	Those who had gone through purge			Those expelled from the party			Those transferred to candidate			Those transferred to sympathiser		
	N	%		N	%	among those who had gone through purge	N	%	among those who had gone through purge	N	%	among those transferred to sympathiser
Up to 1920	17,861	9.4		620	3.5		202	1.1		23	0.1	1.5
1921-1923	2,975	1.6		155	5.2		52	1.7		6	0.2	0.4
1924-1926	36,534	19.3		2,444	6.7		1,673	4.6		159	0.4	10.4
1927-1928	26,981	14.2		1,864	6.9		1,384	5.1		139	0.5	9.0
1929-1930	35,386	18.6		2,851	8.1		2,803	7.9		238	0.7	15.5
1931	32,392	17.1		3,126	9.7		3,564	11.0		378	1.2	24.6
1932	37,517	19.8		4,098	10.9		4,878	13.0		594	1.6	38.6
Total	189,646	100.0		15,158	8.0		14,556	7.7		1,537	0.8	100.0

Source: Adapted from *Itogi chistki*, p. 70.

The purge took its main toll upon workers and peasants who had entered the party during the mass recruitment drive of the first FYP era and scarcely touched those older party members from whom most of the party's cadres were drawn.¹²⁹ According to Rudzutak's speech to the seventeenth Party Congress, the 1933 purge had affected mostly those who had joined the party during the previous three to four years.¹³⁰ As we have seen, the purge resulted in a 17 per cent expulsion rate at the national level, and about two-thirds of those expelled had joined the party since 1928.¹³¹ Figures released in 1935 indicated that approximately one-half of those expelled had joined after 1929.¹³² The data on the purge in the Leningrad region also confirm that the purge fell particularly heavily on the most recent recruits. As can be seen from the table 5-12, the longer the party membership, the less likelihood one had of being purged. While only 3.5 per cent of those who had joined the party before 1921 were expelled, the figure was 10.9 per cent for those who had joined in 1932.¹³³ Likewise, about 13 per cent of those who had joined the party in 1932 were transferred to candidate status and about 1.6 per cent of them were transferred to sympathiser status, whereas less than 2 per cent of those who had joined the party before 1923 were transferred either to candidate or sympathiser status. Altogether those who had joined the party after 1929 comprised approximately two-thirds of those expelled, 77.3 per cent of those transferred to candidate, and 78.7 per cent of those transferred to sympathiser. In Leningrad itself, out of the 30,653 expelled, as many as 62 per cent had joined the party only after 1929.¹³⁴

Candidate members were most severely dealt with during the 1933 purge. Almost 20 per cent of them were expelled and 12.7 per cent were demoted to sympathiser status. Of the candidate members expelled, as many as 48 per cent had joined the party in 1932. Although no further breakdown is available, it seems reasonable to assume that most of those candidates expelled had joined the party after

¹²⁹ Cited from Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 203.

¹³⁰ *XVII s'ezd VKP(b)*, p. 287.

¹³¹ Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 53.

¹³² N. A. Zolotarev, *Deiatel'nost' kommunisticheskoi partii po ulushchenii sostava svoikh riadov v period stroitel'stva sotsializma v SSSR, 1917-1939* (Moscow, 1970), p. 199.

¹³³ *Itogi chistki*, p. 70.

¹³⁴ *Leningradskaya pravda*, 12 December 1933.

1929. Here again, it is clear that most recent recruits were severely affected by the purge.

Table 5-13. Composition of party candidate members expelled in Leningrad oblast, broken down by year of entry into the party, 1933

	<i>Those who had gone through purge</i>		<i>Those expelled from the party</i>			<i>Those transferred to sympathiser</i>		
	N	%	N	%	% of total candidates expelled	N	%	% of total candidates transferred to sympathiser
Candidates	55,104	100.0	10,476	19.0	100.0	7,015	12.7	100.0
The 1932 recruits	31,444	57.1	5,072	16.1	48.4	3,865	12.3	55.1

Source: As for table 5-12.

The higher expulsion rate of the 1929-1932 recruits can be explained in several ways. In general, all party purges tended to result in greater proportions of new party members being removed and the 1933 purge was not an exception. Moreover, as the 1930-1932 recruits had not been through a purge before, it was more likely that they suffered most. It is not surprising that the 1929-1932 recruits were most closely examined during the 1933 purge, because from the official decree it was quite clear that these new members were the main target of the purge.

More importantly, the 1929-1932 recruits joined the party during the years that the leadership subsequently described as ones of 'mass, indiscriminate recruitment' into the party. Therefore, the heavy rate of attrition that newer members suffered was the price that the party was paying for the years of 'mass, indiscriminate recruitment' into the party. Young communists who had only recently joined the party were blamed for not possessing a 'Bolshevik' character, and many lacked a political training. Therefore, it is not surprising that they were among the first victims of the 1933 purge. Some of the recent recruits who needed political training were transferred from member to candidate status, or from candidate to sympathiser status.

In addition, it is necessary to point out that those who had joined in 1929-1932 made up a sizeable proportion of the total membership in 1933. For example, in the Leningrad region, 1931-1932 members alone accounted for about 20 per cent of the

total membership, and those who had joined the party after 1929 for about 55.5 per cent.¹³⁵ Among candidates, those who had joined the party in 1932 alone comprised 57 per cent.¹³⁶ This alone contributed to the high proportion that they represented among those expelled and among those transferred to candidate or sympathiser status. Nevertheless, the Leningrad party organisation had a particularly high percentage of expulsion of recent recruits, higher than the national average. This presumably means that either recruitment methods had been particularly lax in Leningrad from 1929¹³⁷ or that the purge commissions in the city had been abnormally severe in their assessment of those newer members.

Table 5-14 gives a breakdown of the total figures of those purged into the various categories of reasons for expulsion. For the Leningrad region, two different figures are presented in column 1 and 2. It is not clear why these figures are different. Nevertheless, the discrepancy between them is not so big that it is ignorable. For the analysis and comparison, the figures given in column 1 will be used. No official breakdown at the all-Union level is available regarding the grounds on which expulsions were made in the 1933-1934 purge.¹³⁸ As presented in column 4 and 5, only incomplete data were given. However, the all-Union figures presented in column 4 and 5 seem to derive from the same source, and this makes it possible to deduce the all-Union figures for each expulsion category. The categories were more or less similar to the classification of those identified for expulsion under the April 1933 decree, and there was not so much difference between the purge categories in 1933 and in 1929-30.

As can be seen from table 5-14, those expelled for so-called 'passivity' comprised the largest single group both in the country as a whole and in the Leningrad region, despite the fact that passivity had not even been listed as a criterion in the original purge instructions. At the national level, more than seventy thousand members, including many workers and peasants, were excluded for so-called passivity,¹³⁹ and passivity accounted for 23.2 per cent of those expelled.¹⁴⁰ In the

¹³⁵ *Itogi chistki*, p. 70.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹³⁷ It is very likely since Leningrad party organisation had been in the forefront of the collective recruitment of whole workshop cells.

¹³⁸ Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 203.

¹³⁹ Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 54.

Leningrad region the percentage was even higher, reaching 33.6 per cent. Those expelled for violations of party and state discipline comprised the second largest group in the Leningrad region as well as in the country, accounting for one in five of those expelled from the party. Those purged as class alien or hostile comprised the third largest group, accounting for 16.5 per cent in the country and 13.8 per cent in Leningrad region.

Table 5-14. Reasons for expulsion in the Leningrad region in comparison with All-Union figures, 1933 (percentages)

	<i>Leningrad oblast</i> (1)	<i>Leningrad oblast</i> (2)	<i>Leningrad oblast</i> (3)	<i>All-Union</i> (4)	<i>All-Union</i> (5)
Violations of party and state discipline	20.1	21.3	17.0	20.9	20.9
Class alien elements	13.8	14.0	13.0	16.5	16.5
Passivity	33.6	31.8	27.0	n. d.	23.2
Moral corruption	12.6	n. d.	18.0	n. d.	21.5*
Careerists, self-seekers, bureaucrats etc.	7.7	n. d.	8.0	n. d.	n. d.
Degenerates	5.7	n. d.	11.0	10.2	n. d.
Double-dealers	4.4	n. d.	5.0	4.7	n. d.
All others (those not accounted for)	2.1	32.9	1.0	47.7	14.9

Notes: Figures in column 1 did not take appeals into consideration; figures in column 3 cover only those expelled in the rural raions of the oblast; figures in column 4 are based on national data excluding 17 party organisations where the purge did not take place separately, but merged with the verification of party documents of 1935; the figure for those expelled for being morally corrupt in column 5 includes those expelled for being careerists and bureaucrats.

Sources: (1) Adapted from *Itogi chistki*, p. 71; (2) *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 452; (3) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 1, January 1934, p. 22; (4) V. Beliaikov and N. Zolotarev, *Partiia ukrepliaet svoi riady* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1970), p. 133; (5) P. N. Pospelov et al., *Istoriia Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1971), vol. 4, part 2, p. 283.

Figures only for the rural districts of the Leningrad region show some interesting variations (see table 5-14, column 3). In the rural areas, passivity and violations of party and state discipline operated as important factors in contributing to the purge. However, the figures for these two groups in rural districts were much

¹⁴⁰ *Istoriia KPSS*, vol. 4, part 2, p. 283.

lower than the figures for the oblast as a whole, accounting only for 27 per cent and 17 per cent of those expelled respectively. Instead, the proportion of those expelled for being morally corrupt and being degenerate were larger than the average percentages for the oblast. They accounted for as much as 18 per cent and 11 per cent respectively. Those not accounted for were expelled for other reasons including violations of inner-party democracy, chauvinism, nationalism and anti-Semitism.

One notable feature of table 5-14 is the fact that the Leningrad region had a much higher expulsion rate of those purged for being passive than the national average, 33.6 per cent as against 23.2 per cent. Taking into the consideration the fact that the overwhelming majority of the first two largest groups of those expelled - those expelled for passivity and violations of party discipline - was made up by party members who had only recently joined the party,¹⁴¹ it appears that ordinary rank-and-file members, especially recent recruits, were more harshly treated in the Leningrad region than other regions in the country. This might suggest that the recruitment process had been particularly loose in the Leningrad region in the previous years or that the purge commissions had been severe in their assessment of their rank-and-file members.

Nevertheless, it shows that the 1933 purge led to the mass expulsions of rank-and-file members at least in the Leningrad region, despite specific warnings not to expel them en masse on the grounds of passivity. It is not clear who should be blamed for the mass expulsions of rank-and-file members in the 1933 purge. First of all, the directives issued by central organs were rather confusing: on the one hand, they ordered not to expel rank-and-file members en masse; on the other hand, they also called for the removal of party members who lacked enough political training or enthusiasm. At the same time, one can not deny that local party secretaries were more ready to purge rank-and-file members than to purge more highly placed officials. Local party leaders probably wanted to protect any skilled administrators they had in order to fulfil the plan.¹⁴² Nevertheless, there were complaints about the excesses of the 1933 mass purge later on, in that the purge had removed good, honest communists

¹⁴¹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 452.

¹⁴² Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 54.

solely on the grounds of passivity although in reality a majority of them were staunch party people.

All in all, it appears that the 1933 purge was mainly a sort of membership cleansing rather than a means of getting rid of political opponents. Figures available suggest that political considerations played a relatively small part in the 1933 purge. Even though there was a strong emphasis on removing 'enemies of the party' who were trying to damage its interests and to obstruct its policies as set out in the April 1933 decree, the great majority were removed either because they made unscrupulous use of their party membership to secure personal benefits, were immoral or undisciplined in their personal lives or at their job, or simply failed to participate in party activities.¹⁴³

Table 5-15 gives more detailed data about the reasons for expulsion in the 1933 purge, broken down by occupation. An analysis of this table reveals some interesting variations in the grounds for expulsion from the party among the different types of occupation. Among production and agricultural workers, passivity and violation of party discipline were particularly important factors in contributing to the purge, accounting for 44.4 per cent and 23.5 per cent of expulsions respectively. Among kolkhozniks and individual peasants, passivity was also the major factor in contributing to the purge, accounting for 31.7 per cent and 37.9 per cent respectively. However, the percentage of those expelled for violations of party discipline among these groups was rather low. In particular, individual peasants showed the lowest percentage of those purged for violations of party discipline (12.1 per cent). On the other hand, a substantial proportion of the kolkhozniks were purged for degeneration and for corruption. Individual peasants showed a slightly different pattern. A sizable proportion of them were purged for degeneration, but corruption claimed only a small proportion. Instead, they had the highest percentage of those purged for being double-dealers. Rural leaders such as the chairman of the kolkhoz, the rural soviet, and the rural consumer society showed a greater propensity to be purged for degeneration (21.2 per cent) and for corruption (20.5 per cent). However, only a few of them were purged for passivity. Among party and Komsomol officials, violation of party

¹⁴³ Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R.*, p. 204.

discipline, class hostile and dangerous elements and double-dealing were the most important factors, accounting for 23 per cent, 19.6 per cent and 12.2 per cent respectively. Specialists and students showed a similar pattern: they had the highest percentage of those purged as being class hostile and dangerous (23.5 per cent and 34.9 per cent respectively) and had a relatively high percentage of those purged as careerists (14.2 per cent and 8.6 per cent respectively). On the other hand, they showed a relatively low percentage of those purged as violators of party discipline (15.3 per cent and 13 per cent respectively) and of those purged for corruption (8.2 per cent and 6.3 per cent respectively). Among white collar workers, passivity, violation of party discipline, class hostile elements, corruption, and careerism were the most important factors.

Table 5-15. Party purge in the Leningrad region, broken down by occupation and reason for expulsion, 1933

	Total number of those purged	Violators of party discipline	Class hostile and dangerous elements	Degene- rates	Double- dealers	Passive elements	Corrupt elements	Careerists etc.	Others
	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Production workers and agricultural workers	12,521 (100%)	23.5	10.0	2.4	3.1	44.4	10.3	4.6	1.7
Kolkhozniks	2,221 (100%)	16.5	12.7	12.2	5.5	31.7	15.5	5.6	0.3
Individual peasants	124 (100%)	12.1	13.7	12.9	14.5	37.9	7.3	1.6	-
Kolkhoz, rural soviet and rural consumer society chairman	908 (100%)	17.8	14.4	21.2	10.6	5.7	20.5	8.3	1.5
Party and Komsomol officials	230 (100%)	23.0	19.6	10.4	12.2	10.9	12.2	6.5	5.2
Specialists	663 (100%)	15.3	23.5	5.4	8.8	19.2	8.2	14.2	5.4
White collar workers	6,662 (100%)	17.3	17.1	7.1	4.5	20.5	16.7	14.2	2.6
Students	1,296 (100%)	13.0	34.9	6.6	8.2	16.4	6.3	8.6	6.0
All others	1,089 (100%)	19.0	7.4	5.2	1.9	49.6	11.3	4.6	1.0
Total	25,634 (100%)	20.1	13.8	5.7	4.4	33.6	12.6	7.7	2.1

Source: As for table 5-9.

6. Party Personnel

As the party membership expanded rapidly and the party experienced organisational developments during the first FYP, the party faced a problem of supplying a much larger number of party workers to the party organisations at all levels. As the party intended to restrict the expansion of the number of salaried full-time officials, the party tried to mobilise and make use of non-paid, volunteer party activists for the party work, especially at the lower level party organisations. This policy inevitably brought about a change in the composition of party workers. By the end of the first FYP, the party workers constituted a mixture of, on the one hand, full-time, salaried officials who manned positions of responsibility in the party committees and bureaux, and on the other, unpaid, volunteer party members who carried out important duties in the organisation, the so-called *aktiv*.

The pressure put on the Leningrad party organisation to recruit party workers was rather great during the first FYP. Even though Leningrad possessed a relatively large number of party activists, it was not always easy to find suitable personnel for the rapidly expanding party organs, especially those at factories. Furthermore, Leningrad was expected to supply party workers not only for their own party apparatus, but also for the party organisations in other parts of the country. Therefore, the pressure to recruit new party workers was even greater than any other regions in the country. A substantial number of Leningrad's party activists were recruited for party work and many of them promoted into more responsible posts within the party, in some cases to the posts in other regions. As a result, the composition of Leningrad's party workers experienced a serious change in terms of education, social origin, occupation and work experience over the first FYP.

This chapter examines how the Leningrad party organisation coped with the pressure on recruiting party workers during the first FYP. It also investigates the compositional change of Leningrad's party workers caused by the massive recruitment of party activists for party work. The composition of the party workers from the obkom level down to the party cells is considered, with special attention given to those at the factory party organisations. The emphasis is on whether the

recruitment of party activists prevented the party from being bureaucratised, as the party hoped.

6.1 Party personnel at the oblast, city and raion levels

6.1.1 The expansion of the party apparatus

In the first three years of the first FYP period, much effort was made on restricting the overall growth of the party apparatus. From 1927 onwards, restricting the overall growth of the party apparatus became official policy. This was triggered by the campaign for the so-called 'regime of economy', which got under way in 1926 following the fourteenth Party Congress.¹ Even though the Soviet apparatus, the industrial organisations and the enterprises were the main target of the 'regime of economy' campaign, the party's own bureaucratic apparatus was also subject to the 'regime of economy', and furthermore, it was compelled to take the lead in the 'regime of economy' campaign, and to set an example to other administrations.²

Then, in the period immediately following the fifteenth Party Congress, the notion of reducing and simplifying the apparatus was discussed as one of the 'rationalisations' of the apparatus. A Central Committee Commission had been set up at the beginning of 1927 to look at ways of 'rationalising' the party apparatus at all levels,³ and over the next three years the need to make the structure more streamlined, and therefore more cost effective, became of key importance in all discussions of the party apparatus.⁴ Then the Central Committee resolution of 9 August 1928 on the party apparatus gave official approval to many of the ideas discussed earlier in the year - reducing the total size of the apparatus, introducing the principle of part payment for party work, increasing the amount of unpaid work and the number of

¹ For the conduct of 'regime of economy' campaign at the shop-floor level, see John Hatch, 'The Politics of Industrial Efficiency during NEP: The 1926 *Rezhim Ekonomii* Campaign in Moscow', in Stephen White, ed., *New Directions in Soviet History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

² *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 2, February 1928, p. 21.

³ *Organizatsionno-partiinaia rabota: Iz istorii partiinogo stroitel'stva* (Moscow, 1969), vol. 1, p. 240.

⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 323.

nagruzki on party members, reducing the time of decision-making, simplifying the statistical and accounting system and eliminating superfluous sub-departments.⁵

In terms of the size of the party apparatus, the Central Committee resolution of 9 August 1928 established standard staff levels for party organisations according to a number of factors such as population and size of party membership.⁶ This resolution, as well as recommending the dismissal of 2,500 party bureaucrats (around nine per cent of the total), called for the greater proportionate reductions in staff levels to be borne by the regional and urban district party organisations. The Leningrad obkom was one of the largest committees in the country and the number of its staff was specified in the resolution. For instance, it was suggested that the Leningrad obkom have a maximum of 105 staff including 51 technical staff (see table 6-1).⁷ When compared to the staff number suggested for the Moscow committee, the Leningrad obkom was to have about 35 fewer staff. However, the main difference was in the number of technical staff they could employ: the Moscow committee was allowed to have a much larger number of technical staff. When compared to other obkoms, it is obvious that the Leningrad obkom could have a much larger number of staff (see table 6-1).

Table 6-1. Standard number of party staff suggested for the Leningrad, Moscow and Ural oblast committees, September 1928

	<i>Leningrad obkom</i>	<i>Moscow committee</i>	<i>Ural obkom</i>
Secretaries	2	2	2
Managers	4	5	3
Managers *	43	72	30
<i>Orgaspredotdel</i>	23	23	12
<i>Orgaspredotdel</i> *	5	9	4
<i>Agitpropotdel</i>	14	14	9
<i>Agitpropotdel</i> *	2	4	2
Department for women	5	5	3
Department for women *	1	1	-
Department for rural affairs	6	5	5
Total (<i>responsible staff only</i>)	105 (54)	140 (54)	70 (34)

Note: Those party workers marked with an * were technical staff, and the rest were responsible staff.

Source: Adapted from *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 27, 10 September 1928, p. 8.

⁵ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 27, 10 September 1928, p. 6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁷ This meant that, counting responsible staff only, the obkom staff was to be cut from 68 to 54.

On the other hand, an urban raikom could have maximum of nine staff if it contained more than 3,500 communists. Each of Leningrad's six urban raikoms had over 9,000 communists in July 1928, and therefore they were entitled to have the maximum number of staff. The nine staff included the following positions: a secretary, an instructor, an agitation-propagandist, a women's organiser, a head organiser, a technical secretary, an accounting clerk or statistician, an operator and a messenger or office-cleaner. The first five were responsible staff and the rest were technical staff.⁸ Even though Leningrad's raikoms could have the maximum number of staff available, this was far from enough to accommodate the previous party officials who had held their posts in Leningrad's raikoms. Taking into account the fact that in 1927 the number of staff at raikom level in Leningrad was around 200, six urban raikoms had to shed around one third of their staff.⁹ In other words, around 70 raikom personnel in Leningrad were to lose their jobs in this re-organisation.

Table 6-2. Actual number of party staff in the Leningrad region, March 1929

	<i>Responsible staff</i>	<i>Technical staff</i>
Obkom	60	60
Urban raikoms	124	96
Factory party cells	409	101
Okruzhkoms	119	50
Rural raikoms	184	72

Source: Stenograficheskii biulleten' II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii (Leningrad, 1929), no. 9, p. 17.

However, data on the number of staff at each level of the Leningrad party organs in 1929 show that the recommendation of 1928 was not strictly adhered to. In total, the party apparatus in the Leningrad region had grown to 593 responsible and 257 technical/operative staff by March 1929,¹⁰ excluding over 400 staff employed in the countryside of the newly formed oblast (see table 6-2). The Leningrad obkom and Leningrad's six urban raikoms had a larger number of staff than they were supposed to have. The Leningrad obkom had 60 responsible and 60 technical staff instead of 54

⁸ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 27, 10 September 1928, p. 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

responsible and 51 technical staff. In Leningrad's urban raikoms, there were still about 220 party workers including 96 technical staff (see table 6-2). Taking into account the huge size of the party membership in each raion, it seems that the maximum nine staff allowance must have been far too small for Leningrad's urban raikoms.¹¹

No comprehensive data on the number of party officials in the early 1930s were found, but it seems that the party apparatus at the obkom, gorkom and raikom levels had expanded. First of all, the reorganisation of the party organs in 1930 and 1931 contributed greatly to the expansion of the party apparatus. With the introduction of a functional-sectoral system, a larger number of party officials came to work in party committees. The obkom secretariat and bureau also expanded: for instance, the number of obkom secretaries increased from two in 1929 to five in 1932. Furthermore, the creation of a separate Leningrad gorkom in 1931 led to an increase in the number of party officials engaged at this level. For instance, in 1932, there were four gorkom secretaries and four department heads in Leningrad. Leningrad's urban raikoms also saw an expansion. In 1930 an additional two raikoms were established in Leningrad, and this also led to an increase in the total number of the staff working in the urban raikoms. All these factors contributed to an increase in number of party workers at the obkom, gorkom and urban raikom levels. Indeed, we know that over 3,000 party and Komsomol officials were checked in the 1933 purge, a figure which should be compared to a total party apparatus of around 850 at the beginning of 1929.¹²

Since the key posts at the obkom and gorkom level were occupied by paid full-time party officials, the expansion of the party organs must have led to an increase in the number of full-time party officials. However, at the same time, the party sought to

¹⁰ This meant an increase from 210 officials in 1921. See *Sbornik materialov Peterburgskogo komiteta RKP(b)* (Petrograd, 1921), no. 3, p. 91.

¹¹ A maximum of 9 staff were allowed for a large raikom, containing more than 3,500 party members and candidates. However, already in 1928, 5 raikoms in Leningrad had more than 10,000 party members and candidates, and only one raikom (Petrogradskii) had 9,000 party members and candidates. Therefore, Leningrad urban raikoms seem to have needed a larger number of staff. For the party membership in each raion, see *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 10, 1928, p. 30.

¹² Cited from P. O. Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan: The Case of Leningrad* (CREES Discussion Papers, SIPS, no. 24, University of Birmingham, 1983), part 2, p. 28.

make full use of the unpaid party activists. Indeed, there were numerous unpaid party workers in the obkom and Leningrad's raikoms. For instance, there were 77 unpaid instructors in the Leningrad obkom in June 1929.¹³ However, it seems that most party positions were occupied by full-time officials. It seems reasonable to assume that Leningrad, as an important industrial centre, with a large network of party committees and cells in its factories, must have had a larger number of full-time party officials than many other regional organisations.¹⁴

By the beginning of 1928, the number of communists and party workers in rural areas was extremely small. Rural raion party organisation was weak. For instance, in 1928, there were some rural raions in which there were only a few communists (10-15 communists). In such raions, almost all party members were elected into the leading party organs such as the raikom, the raion control commission, and the plenipotentiary control commissions, in order to fill the post of raikom, which was set up as seven to nine party members and three candidates, and that of control commission, which was set up as three members and two candidates.¹⁵

Table 6-3. Standard number of party staff suggested for okruzhkoms, September 1928

<i>Number of communists in one okrug</i>	<i>5,000 - 10,000</i>	<i>2,500 - 5,000</i>	<i>1,500 - 2,500</i>	<i>800 - 1,500</i>
Secretary	1	1	1	1
Managers	1	1	-	-
Managers *	6	5	4	3
<i>Orgraspredotdel</i>	7	5	4	3
<i>Orgraspredotdel</i> *	-	1	1	1
<i>Agitpropotdel</i>	4	2	2	1
Department for women	2	2	2	1
<i>Total (responsible staff only)</i>	<i>21 (15)</i>	<i>17 (11)</i>	<i>14 (9)</i>	<i>10 (6)</i>

Note: Those party workers marked with an * were technical staff, and the rest were responsible staff.

Source: As for table 6-1.

¹³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2710, pp. 29-30.

¹⁴ Despite growth in the size of the apparatus, the ratio of full-time officials to party members in the Leningrad oblast dropped considerably over the 1920s. The main reason for that was the rapid growth of party membership. At all-Union level, the ratio of party officials to party members fell from 1:22 in 1924 to 1:49 in 1928, and was down to 1:82 in 1930. See *XIV s'ezd VKP(b): Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1926) and *K XVI s'ezdu: Materialy k organizatsionnomu otchetu TsK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1930), no. 1, pp. 99-100.

¹⁵ *Partrabotnik*, no. 18, 25 October 1928, p. 44.

According to a Central Committee resolution of 9 August 1928, which established standard staff levels for party organisations according to a number of factors such as population and size of party membership, okruzhkoms could have a minimum of seven staff and a maximum of 30 staff. Since eight okruzhkoms in the Leningrad oblast had less than 10,000 party members each, the size of the population was not taken into account when deciding the number of party staff.¹⁶ Instead, the number of staff was decided in accordance with the number of communists within the okrug. For instance, the Leningrad okruzhkom, the largest okruzhkom in the Leningrad oblast with over 8,000 party members and candidates, could have a maximum of 21 staff including six technical staff. Pskov, Novgorod, Velikie luki, and Cherepovets okruzhkoms, containing between 2,500 and 5,000 communists, could have 11 responsible and six technical staff. Luga okruzhkom, containing about 1,700 communists, could have nine responsible and five technical staff, and Lodeinoe pole and Murmansk okruzhkoms, having less than 1,500 communists could have only six responsible and four technical staff (see table 6-3).¹⁷

Table 6-4. Standard number of party staff suggested for rural raikoms, September 1928

<i>Number of communists in one raion</i>	<i>1,200 - 3,000</i>	<i>800 - 1,200</i>	<i>500 - 800</i>	<i>100 - 500</i>	<i>Up to 100</i>
Secretary	1	1	1	1	1
Instructor	1	1	-	-	-
Agitation-propagandist	1	1	1	-	-
Women's organisers	1	1	1	-	-
Accounting clerk / statistician *	1	-	-	-	-
Clerk / operator *	1	1	-	-	-
Clerk *	-	-	1	1	-
Total	6	5	4	2	1

Note: Those party workers marked with an * were technical staff, and the rest were responsible staff.

Source: As for table 6-1.

In the same way, the standard number of staff for the rural raikoms was decided by the party membership size (see table 6-4). It was recommended that a rural raikom

¹⁶ Only when a okruzhkom contained more than 10,000 party members and candidates, the size of population mattered.

¹⁷ The size of party membership in each okruzhkom was based on data from the first of July 1928, given in *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 10, 1928, p. 30.

have a maximum of six party workers. In general, rural raikoms were to have slightly fewer staff than okruzhkoms and urban raikoms containing a similar number of party members.

However, in July 1930 the standard staff levels for the rural raikoms were re-established according to a number of factors such as the size of population and the number of their party membership, party cells, and rural soviets (see table 6-5). Some industrial raions, fully collectivised raions, raions on the border, and those closely linked to large city organisations, were allocated the number of staff associated with the category above them.¹⁸ For example, those who were placed in category four were allocated the four responsible and three technical staff associated with category three. When compared with the standard number of staff in 1928, the rural raikoms could have a slightly larger number of staff. This might be an reflection of the growing importance of the rural raikoms, especially after the abolition of the okruzhkoms.

Table 6-5. Maximum number of party staff suggested for rural raikoms, 1930

	<i>Number of party members</i>	<i>Number of party cells</i>	<i>Number of population</i>	<i>Number of responsible staff</i>	<i>Number of technical staff</i>
Category 1	over 1,000	over 50	over 70,000	5	3
Category 2	750-1,000	40-50	50,000-70,000	5	2
Category 3	500-750	30-40	40,000-50,000	4	2
Category 4	200-500	15-30	30,000-40,000	4	1
Category 5	under 200	under 15	under 30,000	3	1

Source: RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p.123.

Even though each rural raikom had a relatively small number of staff, the total number of party workers employed in the rural raikoms significantly increased due to the expansion of the rural raion party organisations in the countryside. This was the case especially after 1930. Most of the expansion of the party apparatus in these years took place primarily in the countryside, where party officials in the collective farm and village, though still far from ubiquitous, became far more commonplace. In addition, re-organisations of the party apparatus in 1930 served to considerably increase the number of officials employed in the rural raikoms. Following the abolition of the okruzhkoms in 1930, a substantial number of the former okruzhkom

¹⁸ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 123.

officials were transferred to the rural raikoms.¹⁹ In addition, a large number of party workers from the city were sent to the countryside, to help in the establishment of the party organisations in the countryside. For instance, by February 1931, some 4,000 party workers and specialists were sent from the city of Leningrad to the countryside.²⁰ Some came to the countryside only for couple of months, but many for a longer period.²¹

Consequently, a total of 425 staff employed in the countryside in 1929 (including those employed in the okruzhkoms) increased to 518 staff a year later. In total, some 380 responsible and 138 technical staff were working in 111 rural raikoms, excluding the raikoms of the Murmansk okrug.²² The total number of staff for 111 rural raikoms was set to be 380 responsible and 138 technical staffs. The increase in the number of party workers in the countryside seems to have continued in the following two years. By 1933 there must have been well over 2,000 party officials in the rural organisations of the Leningrad oblast. This was a considerable increase when compared with the figure of around 400 in 1929.²³

6.1.2 Party workers within the Leningrad obkom and gorkom

Party workers within the Leningrad obkom, the highest party organ in the region, carried a major amount of responsibility for party work within the region. Likewise, those in the Leningrad gorkom were in charge of the city's political and economic life. Therefore, the most experienced party members were chosen to be party workers at these levels. Even though there were some voluntary party activists who were carrying out party work at the Leningrad obkom and gorkom, the most important party posts were occupied by full-time party officials. The leading party officials at the regional and city level included secretaries, department heads, and bureau members of both the Leningrad obkom and gorkom. The importance of these

¹⁹ For instance, in 1929, there were 119 responsible and 50 technical staff in the okruzhkoms. See *Rezoliutsii ob 'edinnennogo plenuma Leningradskogo obkoma i oblKK VKP(b) 15-16 fevralia 1931 g.: Ob itogakh likvidatsii okrugov i ukreplenii raionov* (Leningrad: Ogiz-Priboi, 1931), p. 3. See also table 5-3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²¹ For instance, it was recommended that leading party workers be sent to rural raions for a period of one to three months. See *ibid.*, p. 12.

²² RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2751, p. 123.

²³ Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 28.

posts was reflected in the fact that appointments to these posts required the approval of both the obkom and the Central Committee.

Between 1928 and 1932, the following were obkom secretaries: M. S. Kirov (first secretary throughout this period); M. S. Chudov (second secretary between 1928 and December 1931 and again from May 1932 onwards); P. I. Struppe (second secretary between December 1931 and May 1932); B. P. Pozern (third secretary from April 1930 to December 1931); P. A. Irklis (third secretary from December 1931);²⁴ A. V. Osinov (fourth secretary between December 1931 and May 1932); A. A. Nikulin (secretary in charge of transport from December 1931) and P. L. Nizovtsev (secretary from May 1932).²⁵ In the city of Leningrad, the Leningrad gorkom secretaries, elected on 29 January 1932, were as follows: Kirov (first secretary); Chudov (second secretary); Pozern (third secretary) and I. I. Gaza (fourth secretary).²⁶ Later in May when Chudov was transferred to the obkom, he was replaced by Gaza. Instead, A. I. Ugarov, former head of the department for culture and propaganda, was elected as the gorkom secretary.²⁷

Official biographies show that most of the obkom and gorkom secretaries had had prominent careers within the party. The most important figure was the first secretary of the Leningrad obkom, Sergei Mironovich Kirov (1886-1934). He had been an outstanding party leader, even before his appointment as the Leningrad obkom secretary. Having joined the party early in 1904, he took an active part in the revolutionary movement as a party organiser and propagandist in Tomsk, Irkutsk, and Vladikavkaz between 1904 and 1918, and this led to him being imprisoned on four occasions during this period. Between 1919 and 1924, he undertook party work as a leading party official in the Transcaucasian area in such places as Astrakhan krai, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.²⁸ Then in 1925, after the fourteenth Party Congress, Kirov, along with Molotov, Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, and Kalinin, was sent to Leningrad in order to persuade those supporting Trotsky and Zinoviev to defect to Stalin. In the following year, Kirov became a secretary of the Leningrad gubkom and of the Severo-

²⁴ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2697, protocol 7.

²⁵ Ibid., delo 2697, protocol 7; and delo 2698, protocol 3.

²⁶ Ibid., delo 2698, protocol 1.

²⁷ Ibid., protocol 3.

²⁸ In 1921, he was elected secretary of the Central Committee of the communist party in Azerbaijan.

Zapadnyi bureau of the communist party. When the Leningrad province was transformed into the Leningrad oblast in 1927, he became a Leningrad obkom secretary, and later in 1932, he also headed the Leningrad gorkom. He had been the most powerful figure in the region until his assassination in December 1934.²⁹ During his leadership over the Leningrad party organisation, he had been extremely popular among Leningrad's party members and workers, and was often acclaimed as an outstanding organiser and party leader. It has been said that he often visited factories and construction places without giving prior notice, talked to workers and knew a great deal about the situation in the factories, sometimes even more than the factory managers did.³⁰ At the same time, he was a figure of national prominence: he was chosen as a candidate member of the Central Committee at the tenth Party Congress in 1921, as a member of the Central Committee at the twelfth Party Congress in 1923, as a candidate member of the Politburo in 1926, and as a Politburo member in 1930.³¹

Chudov (1893-1937), who was born into a peasant family, joined the communist party in 1913. While working in the printing factory in Petrograd, he took part in the revolutionary activity among Petrograd's printers, and became a member on the board of printers' union. Immediately after the 1917 February Revolution, he was involved in trade union and party work in Petrograd. From 1918 to 1928, he held the post of the head of the Bezhetskii *uispolkom*, the head of the Tver gubkom, the secretary of Donkom, and the secretary of Severo-Kavkazskii raikom in Rostov-on-Don. Then in 1928, he returned to Leningrad as a secretary of the Leningrad obkom. He was also a party leader of national standing. Since he became a Central Committee member at the twelfth Party Congress, he managed to retain his post at the Central Committee with an exception of the thirteenth Party Congress in 1924.³²

Unlike Kirov and Chudov, who were brought from outside Leningrad, the other obkom and gorkom secretaries had held their party posts in Leningrad before their promotion. Struppe, Irklis, Nizovtsev and Gaza had been Leningrad's raikom secretaries, while Pozern, Osinov and Ugarov had been heads of the obkom

²⁹ *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, 2nd edn (Moscow: Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1953), vol. 21, pp. 111-114.

³⁰ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, pp. 383-384.

³¹ *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 21, pp. 111-114.

³² *Ibid.*, vol. 51, p. 317.

departments before their promotion (see tables 6-7 and 6-8). It seems that the creation of additional secretarial posts within the obkom³³ and the establishment of the separate Leningrad gorkom with four secretaries of its own led to greater opportunities of promotion for some leading party officials in Leningrad.

Party membership dating back to before 1921 seems to have remained an almost essential prerequisite for entry into the high level of the party apparatus throughout this period. The 1925 Party Rules did not specify any requirement in relation to the length of party membership for the secretaries of the regional party organisations, but did require at least seven years' party membership for the secretaries of the provincial organisations. Assuming that a similar length of party membership was expected for the obkom and gorkom secretaries, it follows that they should have joined the party before December 1920. Later in 1934, new Party Rules stipulated that secretaries of a regional organisation must have at least 12 years' party membership and those of a city organisation must have at least ten years' party membership. This leads us to hypothesise that in 1934, the obkom and gorkom secretaries were expected to have joined the party by 1924 at the latest. Indeed, almost all the Leningrad obkom and gorkom secretaries on whom data are available had joined the party before 1920 (see table 6-6). Kirov, Chudov, Struppe and Pozern had joined the party before the Revolution, whereas Nizovtsev, Gaza and Ugarov had joined the party between 1917 and 1919.³⁴ Not all secretaries at these levels were of working-class background (see table 6-6). Chudov, Pozern, Nizovtsev and Gaza were workers by social origin, while Kirov, Struppe and Ugarov were white-collar workers. It is not very clear whether this means that one's social background was not a deciding factor in being appointed as an obkom secretary or a gorkom secretary.

The bureau members of the Leningrad obkom and gorkom included the most powerful figures of the party organisation and government in the area. Unfortunately, information on the composition of the obkom bureau members has not been found. However, information on the gorkom bureau members, which is available, gives a rough idea of their composition. Table 6-6 shows social origin, year of entry into the party, and the post held by the gorkom bureau members elected on 29 January 1932:

³³ The number of obkom secretaries increased from two in March 1929 to five by the end of 1931.

³⁴ No data were found on the year of entry into the party of Irklis, Osinov and Nikulin.

Table 6-6. Leningrad gorkom bureau members, January 1932

Name	Social origin	Year of entry	Post
I. I. Alekseev	worker	1917	secretary of Narvskii raikom
P. A. Alekseev	worker	1914	chairman of Leningrad oblast council of trade unions
S. I. Afanas'ev	employee	1912	chairman of cauldron-turbine (<i>kotloturbina</i>)
D. P. Belitskii	employee	1919	technical editor of <i>Leningradskaiia pravda</i>
P. I. Bushuev	worker	1911	secretary of Moskovskii raikom
V. S. Voltsit	worker	1912	secretary of Vasileostrovskii raikom
I. S. Vaushlia	worker	1925	second secretary of the Leningrad committee of Komsomol
I. I. Gaza	worker	1917	secretary of Leningrad gorkom
I. F. Kadatskii	worker	1914	chairman of the Leningrad Soviet
S. M. Kirov	employee	1904	first secretary of Leningrad obkom and gorkom
I. I. Kondrat'ev	worker	1905	chairman of union trust of shipyard
F. D. Medved'	employee	1907	head of Unified State Political Administration: the political police
A. S. Miloslavskii	worker	1918	secretary of Smol'ninskii raikom
P. L. Nizovtsev	worker	1919	secretary of Volodarskii raikom
M. A. Osvenskii	employee	1917	secretary of Oktiabr'skii raikom
B. P. Pozern	worker	1902	secretary of Leningrad gorkom
G. N. Pylaev	worker	1912	chairman of Leningrad oblast Council for the National Economy
M. M. Serganin	worker	1912	chairman of Leningrad union of consumers' society
P. I. Smorodin	worker	1917	secretary of Vyborgskii raikom
S. M. Sobolev	worker	1918	secretary of Petrogradskii raikom
P. I. Struppe	employee	1907	second secretary of Leningrad obkom
I. E. Slavin	employee	1917	head of political control of military district
A. I. Ugarov	employee	1918	head of the culture and propaganda department (gorkom)
F. F. Tsar'kov	worker	1906	chairman of <i>Lenobispolkom</i>
M. S. Chudov	worker	1913	secretary of Leningrad gorkom
L. K. Shaposhnikova	worker	1917	secretary of Leningrad oblast council of trade unions
V. M. Petrovskii	employee	1920	deputy chairman of Leningrad oblast council for the National Economy

Note: The posts of Nizovtsev and Voltsit are from *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1968), vol. 2, p. 385.

Source: Adapted from RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, pp. 10-11.

Out of the 27 gorkom bureau members, 18 were workers by social origin, while nine were white-collar workers. Most of the gorkom bureau members elected at this time had joined the party before 1920. About half (14) had joined the party before 1915, twelve between 1917 and 1920, and only one had joined the party after 1920. This

reveals that almost all gorkom bureau members, made up with leading party officials and government functionaries in the city, had been party members from the Civil War or earlier. Taking into account the fact that there was a significant overlap in personnel between the obkom bureau members and those of the gorkom, we can assume that the composition of the obkom bureau members, in relation to social origin and length of party membership, seem to have been similar to that of the gorkom.³⁵

Department heads, who were in charge of carrying out all the routine work of the obkom or gorkom, were another category of leading party officials. All department heads were full-time party officials. Those who were appointed as department heads of the obkom between 1929 and 1932 were as shown in table 6-7. In the Leningrad gorkom, the following people were appointed as department heads in January 1932: S. Ia. Shul'man (the department for organisation and instruction), M. N. Rozov (the department for cadres), Ugarov (the department for culture and propaganda) and F. N. Ivanov (the department for mass work).³⁶ When Ugarov was promoted to a gorkom secretary in October 1932, L. V. Ermolov was appointed as the head of the department for culture and propaganda.³⁷ No overall data on their social origin or year of entry into the party were found, but selective information on some department heads who were also the gorkom bureau members in 1932 suggests that most department heads had a long period of party membership (see table 6-6).

As table 6-7 shows, the turnover in the post of department heads were relatively high over this period. It appears that the re-organisation of the party apparatus, such as the re-structuring of the departments in 1930 and 1931 and the establishment of the separate Leningrad gorkom in December 1931, caused some personnel changes at this level. Heads of the key departments, such as the organisation and instruction department and the assignment (or cadres) department, had changed three times

³⁵ For instance, in January 1932, out of the 22 obkom bureau members, 13 were also chosen to be the gorkom bureau members. Out of the nine obkom bureau candidate members, one person was also appointed to the Leningrad gorkom bureau. One of the differences between the obkom bureau and the gorkom bureau was the number of raikom secretaries it included. All the first raikom secretaries were appointed to the gorkom bureau, whereas only the secretaries of the three largest raikoms (Narvskii, Vyborgskii and Smol'ninskii raikoms) were appointed to the obkom bureau. See RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, protocol 1.

³⁶ Ibid., protocol 1.

³⁷ Ibid., protocol 4.

within five years. On the other hand, in the less important departments, such as the department responsible for party history and for general work, there was no staff change in the post of the department head for five years. The frequent personnel changes in the post of department heads seem to have been caused by the promotion of some department heads into more senior party positions. This was the case of personnel changes in key departments such as the cadres department and the culture and propaganda department. Indeed, A. I. Stetskii was promoted to the Central Committee, Pozern and Osinov were appointed as Leningrad obkom secretaries, Ugarov as Leningrad gorkom secretary, and Voltsit as Leningrad's Vasileostrovskii raikom secretary.

Table 6-7. Head of departments attached to Leningrad obkom, 1929, 1930 and 1932

<i>Department</i>	<i>March 1929 (1)</i>	<i>March 1930 (2)</i>	<i>Sept. 1930 (3)</i>	<i>Jan. 1932 (4)</i>
<i>Orgraspredotdel</i>	M. S. Chudov	-	-	-
Organisation and instruction	-	P. N. Sirotinin	A. V. Osinov	A. P. Sorokin
Assignment (Cadres)	-	A. V. Osinov	V. S. Voltsit	A. A. Nekrasov
<i>Agitpropotdel</i>	A. I. Stetskii *	-	-	-
Agitation and Mass campaigns	-	F. Ivanov	F. Ivanov	B. B. Rodenkov
Culture and propaganda	-	A. I. Ugarov	A. I. Ugarov	A. E. Romanov
Party history	P. F. Kudell'	P. F. Kudell'	P. F. Kudell'	-
General work	N. F. Sveshnikov	N. F. Sveshnikov	N. F. Sveshnikov	N. F. Sveshnikov
Rural affairs	N. Ia. Kuz'min	-	-	-
Women	L. K. Shaposhnikova	-	-	-

Note: * A. I. Stetskii was promoted to the Central Committee in December 1929, and was replaced by B. P. Pozern.

Sources: (1) RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, protocols 1 and 2; (2) Ibid., protocol 10; (3) Ibid., delo 2696, protocol 2; (4) Ibid., delo 2698, protocol 1.

Even though the most important party posts were occupied by salaried full-time party officials, some of the most active party workers were promoted into the obkom as well. Already in the spring 1928 party elections, those party activists who had had the right social credentials and who had showed a particular enthusiasm in carrying out their duties were elected into the obkom. For instance, there were 77 unpaid

instructors in the Leningrad obkom in June 1929.³⁸ Data on their year of entry into the party present that the majority of them had a long period of party membership. Out of the 77 instructors, 66 (86 per cent) had joined the party before 1921, and eight (10 per cent) had joined the party between 1921 and 1927. These unpaid instructors held positions in various sectors such as the state administration, factories, local newspapers and educational institutions.³⁹ However, as a whole, the proportion of those voluntary party activists working in the Leningrad obkom appears to have been small. According to the results of the 1930 elections, the proportion of workers by occupation among party workers at the Leningrad obkom level was only 20 per cent.⁴⁰ On the other hand, about 74 per cent of party workers were of working-class background in 1930,⁴¹ which was quite high compared to other levels of the party apparatus.

6.1.3 Party workers in urban raikoms in Leningrad

The post of the raikom secretary in Leningrad city must have been of importance, considering the size of the party membership and the number of industrial workers in each raion. Therefore, the most experienced party officials were chosen as secretaries of Leningrad's raikoms. In March 1929 when the second Leningrad oblast party conference was held, P. A. Alekseev, A. M. Amenitskii, Tsar'kov, Pylaev, Serganin and Struppe were secretaries of Leningrad's six raikoms.⁴² Soon after the second Leningrad oblast party conference, Alekseev, the secretary of the Moskovsko-narvskii raikom, was promoted to the position of chairman of the Leningrad oblast council of trade unions.⁴³ This triggered some transferrals between the different party posts: Serganin, the Petrogradskii raikom secretary, moved to the Moskovsko-narvskii raikom as a secretary,⁴⁴ and M. N. Zernov was promoted to the post of the

³⁸ Unpaid instructors were selected from the most active party members, and they were to instruct and give help to lower party organisations. They worked on the basis of no more than 2 weeks in a month. However, they sometimes went to the countryside on an official journey for a longer period. See *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP (b)*, no. 4, 1929, p. 10.

³⁹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2710, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁰ This was an increase from 15.1 per cent in 1929. See *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁴¹ This was an increase from 73.5 per cent in 1929. See *ibid.*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁴² *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 321.

⁴³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, protocol 2.

⁴⁴ *Leningradskaya pravda*, 10 September 1929, p. 3.

Petrogradskii raikom secretary.⁴⁵ Later that year, Ameniskii, the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom secretary, was dismissed after the September 1929 *Pravda* expose on the shortcomings in the party work of the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom. Subsequently, he was replaced by Irklis.⁴⁶ It is not clear whether these secretaries mentioned above held the same posts in 1930. However, due to the promotion of Struppe to the post of the head of the oblast control commission and the division of the Moskovsko-narvskii and Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion party organisations into two separate party organisations respectively, at least three new raikom secretaries must have been appointed. The composition of Leningrad's raikom secretaries in 1931 suggested that all the raikom secretaries of 1929, except Tsar'kov, had been replaced by new party officials: Bushuev, Gaza, Nizovtsev, Osvenskii, Smorodin and Sobolev.⁴⁷ Then in January 1932, there was yet another change in personnel. Only three were to hold the same posts (Bushuev, Osvenskii and Sobolev), two were promoted (Gaza and Tsar'kov), two were shifted to other raikoms (Nizovtsev and Smorodin), and three new party officials were appointed as Leningrad's raikom secretaries (I. I. Alekseev, Miloslavskii and Voltsit) (see table 6-8).

Table 6-8. First secretaries of Leningrad's raikoms, 1931 and 1932

<i>Leningrad's raikoms</i>	<i>In 1931</i>	<i>In 1932</i>
Moskovskii	P. I. Bushuev	P. I. Bushuev
Narvskii	I. I. Gaza	I. I. Alekseev
Oktiabr'skii	M. A. Osvenskii	M. A. Osvenskii
Smol'ninskii	P. L. Nizovtsev	A. S. Miloslavskii
Vyborgskii	F. F. Tsar'kov	P. I. Smorodin
Volodarskii	n. d.	P. L. Nizovtsev
Vasileostrovskii	P. I. Smorodin	V. S. Voltsit
Petrogradskii	S. M. Sobolev	S. M. Sobolev

Note: The posts of Nizovtsev and Voltsit are from *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 385.

Source: Adapted from RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2698, pp. 10-11.

The importance of the post of Leningrad's raikom secretary was reflected in the fact that most of those chosen as secretaries of Leningrad's raikoms were party

⁴⁵ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, protocol 3.

⁴⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 331.

⁴⁷ Smorodin and Sobolev built up their career in the Komsomol organisation before taking up their party posts. See *ibid.*, p. 385.

officials with a long period of party membership and working-class background. Out of the 14 raikom secretaries mentioned above, with the exception of Amenitskii, Zernov and Irklis, on whom no data were found, seven had joined the party before 1917 and the rest had joined the party between 1917 and 1920 (see table 6-6). This meant that all of them were communists with either pre-revolutionary underground resistance experience or militant experience during the October Revolution and the Civil War.⁴⁸ By social origin all of them, except Osvenskii and Struppe, were of a working-class background.

Given the importance of Leningrad's raikoms, it is no surprise that the party leaders in the raion party organisation were expected to have great responsibility for party work. Not all leading party officials at the raikom level managed to carry out the responsibilities expected of them effectively. Poor party work and the distortion of party lines could lead to the dismissal of leading officials in the raion party organisation, as actually happened in September 1929. Following the *Pravda's* exposure of the shortcomings in the party work of certain leaders of the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion party organisation on 1 September 1929, virtually all party leaders of the Tsentral'no-gorodski raikom were dismissed.⁴⁹

However, those who had successfully carried out their duties during their leadership in Leningrad's raikoms were later promoted to more senior party posts. In fact, many raikom secretaries were later promoted to key posts within the party and government of the Leningrad oblast. Those who were promoted to government posts included Alekseev (chairman of Leningrad oblast council of trade unions), Tsar'kov (chairman of *Lenobispolkom*), Pylaev (chairman of Leningrad oblast Council for the National Economy), and Serganin (chairman of Leningrad union of consumers' society). On the other hand, Struppe, Irklis and Nizovtsev were promoted to obkom secretaries, and Gaza was promoted to a Leningrad gorkom secretary.

Apart from the key posts in raikoms, a considerable amount of party work was carried out by party activists. In the spring 1928 party elections, party activists who

⁴⁸ Gaza and Osvenskii had been active participants in the Civil War and Miloslavskii used to be a sailor in the Baltic Fleet. See *ibid.*, p. 385.

⁴⁹ *Pravda*, 1 September 1929. For the Leningrad obkom's resolution, see *Leningradskaiia pravda*, 3 September 1929. Plenum of Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom revealed serious flaws in work of raikom bureau and elected new staff of raikom bureau with its head Irklis.

had the right social credentials and who showed a particular enthusiasm for carrying out their duties were elected into the raikoms. As a consequence, among party workers in the urban raikoms in Leningrad the ratio of workers from the bench was relatively high. Thus, at the end of 1928, 35 per cent of the party workers of Leningrad's six raikoms consisted of activists from the shop floor.⁵⁰ After the 1930 elections, the proportion slightly increased to 37 per cent. When compared with the proportion of production workers in other-level party organs, this figure was almost as high as the figure for the *kollektiv* bureaux in Leningrad.⁵¹ This meant that, by 1930, a relatively large number of party activists from the workshop bench were elected into Leningrad's urban raikoms.

At the same time, a lot of attention was paid to improving the social composition of party workers. For instance, in March 1928, the Leningrad obkom suggested that the social composition of instructors in Leningrad's raikoms, 42 per cent of whom were classified as employees, should be improved in favour of workers.⁵² As a result of deliberate efforts, the proportion of workers by social origin among party workers of Leningrad's urban raikoms remained relatively high. For instance, in 1929 and 1930, the percentage of those having a working-class background was 84 and 87 per cent respectively.⁵³

6.1.4 Party workers in okruzhkoms and rural raikoms

Party officials within the okruzhkoms in the Leningrad oblast appear to have been less important and less powerful than those leading party officials in Leningrad. In March 1929 when the second Leningrad oblast party conference was held, the eight okruzhkom secretaries were Irklis, R. P. Bauze, F. R. Ivanov, A. A. Babitsyn, I. E. Glushenkov, V. P. Vinogradov, Voltsit and A. Ia. Faivilovich.⁵⁴ The post of the okruzhkom secretary appears to have been less important posts than Leningrad's

⁵⁰ *Leningradskaia oblastnaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrah* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1929), no. 1, p. 40.

⁵¹ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, pp. 38-39.

⁵² In particular, in Vyborgskii and Moskovsko-Narvskii raions, it was recommended that party activists should be attracted to party instruction work. See RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2739, pp. 59-60.

⁵³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁵⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 321.

raikom secretary, seeing that Irklis and Voltsit were later appointed as Leningrad's raikom secretaries.

Among party workers in okruzhkoms, the proportion of those with a working-class background accounted for 64 per cent in 1929 and 65 per cent in 1930. These figures were ten to 20 per cent lower than the figures for party workers at Leningrad's urban raikoms and those at the Leningrad obkom.⁵⁵ By contrast, the proportion of those who were actually engaged in production among the party workers within the okruzhkoms was relatively high in 1929: 25 per cent. This figure was higher than the figure for the obkom party workers, but lower than the figure for Leningrad's raikom party workers. However, in 1930, the percentage decreased considerably to 18 per cent. This figure was the lowest one when compared to figures for the party workers of the obkom, Leningrad's urban raikom and Leningrad oblast's rural raikoms. Later in 1930 when the okruzhkoms were abolished, most of the party workers within the okruzhkoms were transferred to the rural raikoms.

Lower down at the raikom level, party workers in the Leningrad oblast appear to have had less impressive qualifications, especially in terms of social origin. Not surprisingly, a large number of the rural raikom party workers were from peasant backgrounds, and, as a result, the proportion of those having a working-class background was smaller than among party workers within the Leningrad obkom or Leningrad's urban raikoms. For instance, among the rural raikom party workers of the Luga okrug, those from a working-class background accounted for only 35 per cent after the 1928 spring elections,⁵⁶ while those who were of peasant origin accounted for 46 per cent. There was a greater proportion of party workers with a working-class background among the rural raikom secretaries than among the party workers as a whole. Out of the 11 rural raikom secretaries of the Luga okrug, seven were of worker origin, three were of peasant origin, and only one person was of white-collar origin.⁵⁷

Therefore much attention was paid to improve the social composition of party workers within the rural raikoms. As a result, the proportion of those from working-class background among the rural raikom party workers gradually increased over the

⁵⁵ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁵⁶ In the 1928 spring elections, the turnover rate in Luga okrug was 47 per cent. See *Partrabotnik*, nos. 12-13, 1 August 1928, p. 69.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

period. The average percentage of workers with a working-class origin increased from 49 per cent in the spring of 1928 to 53 per cent in January 1929.⁵⁸ Between 1929 and 1930 it increased further from 55 to 59 per cent.⁵⁹ Yet, despite the increase, this figure was much lower than among party workers within the obkom and Leningrad's urban raikoms.⁶⁰ In addition, the ratio of those who were actually engaged in production also increased after the 1928 autumn elections,⁶¹ and stabilised at about 21 per cent in 1929 and 1930.⁶²

Rural raikom secretaries assumed the direct responsibility for party work in the countryside, for example, carrying out the collectivisation drive. Therefore, the ability and readiness to carry out the duties placed upon them were considered as the most important factor in successful fulfilment of party policy in the countryside. In 1930, in connection with the collectivisation drive, the composition of the rural raikom secretaries was thoroughly reviewed. According to information on the 146 rural raikom secretaries that was published in May 1930, about 63 per cent of the rural raikom secretaries were of working-class origin, 26 per cent had a peasant origin, and 11 per cent were of white-collar origin. However, there was great variation within each okrug. Despite the seemingly large proportion of those from a working-class background among the rural raikom secretaries as a whole, in some okrugs the proportion of those who were not from a working-class background were quite large. For instance, in the Borovichi okrug, the percentage of those of white-collar origin reached 42 per cent. On the other hand, in the Leningrad okrug they accounted for only 13 per cent. Therefore, it was demanded that the social composition of the rural raikom secretaries should be improved in favour of workers, farm labourers and poor peasants.⁶³

In terms of the length of party membership, the majority of the rural raikom secretaries had a sufficiently long period of party membership, but there were also a

⁵⁸ At the same time, the percentage of workers by social origin increased from 52.1 to 57.7 per cent in rural cell bureaux. See *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 1929, p. 19.

⁵⁹ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁶⁰ After the 1930 party elections, the proportion of workers by social origin among obkom level party workers was 74.3 per cent, and among urban raikom workers, it was 86.7 per cent. See *ibid.*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁶¹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 1929, p. 19.

⁶² *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, no. 12, May 1930, p. 41.

number of rural raikom secretaries with only four or five years' party membership. Some 60 per cent (88 secretaries) had been party members for over ten years, 21 per cent for between six and nine years, and 18 per cent for four and five years.⁶⁴ Here again, the picture was quite different for each raikom. For instance, in the Leningrad okrug, among the raikom secretaries those who had been party members for more than ten years accounted for 83 per cent, whereas in the Novgorod okrug they accounted for only 37 per cent. On the other hand, those who had been party members for only four or five years accounted for four per cent in the Leningrad okrug whereas in the Novgorod okrug, they accounted for 37 per cent.⁶⁵ Consequently, the okrugs with a high proportion of rural raikom secretaries with less than five years' party membership were criticised.

Most of the rural raikom secretaries appeared to have some kind of experience of party work before they became secretaries. Out of the 146 secretaries, 72 per cent (105) had worked in the party beforehand: among them 38 per cent had worked in the okruzhkoms as either instructors or department heads and 44 per cent as either secretaries or agitation-propagandists in the raikoms or Komsomol raion organisations. Some 22 per cent had work experience within the party *kollektivy* and party cells.⁶⁶

Facing the hardships experienced in the countryside as a result of the collectivisation drive in the winter of 1929 and 1930, the rural raikom secretaries served as scapegoats when anything went wrong. Already in April 1930, the obkom secretariat acknowledged the necessity of strengthening the staff of the rural raikom secretaries within the five okrugs of the Leningrad region. It was recommended that in total, 29 rural raikom secretaries be replaced and ten secretaries be transferred into other raions. It seems that those who had carried the collectivisation to extremes, those who lost directions in the face of hardships and those who could not cope with their responsibilities were subject to dismissal. Their places were filled by party workers from other institutions and party organisations within okrugs, or those sent to the countryside by the obkom. It was recommended that party workers with a long

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

period of party membership (especially those who had gone through the Revolution), or those who had been industrial labourers for a long time, be chosen as rural raikom secretaries. In particular, it was instructed that the proportion of party workers with a relatively short period of party membership be reduced in the Novgorod okrug. As regards the Borovichi okrug, it was instructed the proportion of those party workers of white collar origin be decreased.⁶⁷

In May 1930, following the evaluation of the party work of the rural raikom secretaries, about 21 per cent of the rural raikom secretaries under review were said to be in need of replacement. In particular, nine per cent of them were to be replaced due to their poor work and failure in implementing party's class policy. In addition, five per cent were to be replaced due to their poor health, or due to the fact that they were undertaking studies. In total, 26 per cent of the rural raikom secretaries in the region were in need of replacement. Besides, 15 rural raikom secretaries were to be transferred into other raions.⁶⁸ The rural raikom secretaries in the Pskov okrug were affected most severely: some 61 per cent were subjected to replacement or transfer. In this particular okrug, the mistakes made by the secretaries while carrying out the collectivisation process were said to be the main reason for their dismissal. In the Murmansk okrug, about half the rural raikom secretaries were to be replaced, and most of them were replaced mainly due to their relatively short length of time spent as a party member and their lack of experience in party work. Some 48 per cent of the rural raikom secretaries in the Karelia okrug and 30 per cent in the Cherepovets, Luga and Novgorod okrugs were to be dismissed. In the other okrugs the rate of replacement was slightly lower, being 23 per cent in the Borovichi okrug and 26 per cent in the Leningrad okrug. The Lodeinoe pole okrug experienced the smallest percentage of replacement (20 per cent).

Among the rural raikom secretaries dismissed, those who had four to five years' party membership accounted for 33 per cent, those with six to nine years' party membership 32 per cent, and those with over ten years' party membership 31 per cent.⁶⁹ Even though the proportion of rural raikom secretaries with less than five

⁶⁷ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2750, p. 255.

⁶⁸ *Partrabotnik*, no. 12, May 1930, p. 42.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

years' party membership was the greatest, the proportion of those with much longer party membership was almost as large as those with less than five years' party membership. It appears that the review had a far reaching effect on the rural raikom secretaries regardless of the length of their party membership.

It seems that those who were from peasant backgrounds were most severely affected. About 13 rural raikom secretaries dismissed were classified as being of peasant origin, six had a working-class background, and seven had a white-collar background. Among those 13 rural raikom secretaries with a peasant background, nine were dismissed due to their poor party work, and four were dismissed due to their failure of implementing of the party's class policy.⁷⁰

Those who had not had any experience of party work in the countryside were more likely to be dismissed. For instance, out of the six persons promoted from production, half were dismissed due to their lack of experience in party work in the countryside. In addition, those who had no experience in any party work before accounted for 29 per cent of the 35 rural raikom secretaries dismissed. This was a slightly bigger proportion than among those who had some previous party work experience (25 per cent).⁷¹

It seems that many rural raikom secretaries were dismissed for their poor work or insufficient qualifications in relation to social origin, length of party membership and party work experience, and that they were subsequently replaced by those who had better qualifications. As a result, by the beginning of 1932, the proportion of those from working-class background had increased to 68 per cent, a five per cent increase from the 1930 level. In addition, those who had joined the party before 1924 increased to 66 per cent.⁷²

6.1.5 Stability and mobility within the party apparatus

A striking aspect of the party apparatus in this period was the frequent personnel changes within it. Even though the leading party officials within the Leningrad obkom, gorkom and Leningrad's urban raikoms were not subject to elections, they do

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁷² *Otchet Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b) III-i oblastnoi partiinoi konferentsii* (Leningrad: 1930), p. 119.

not seem to have retained the same party position for a long period. Probably Kirov and Chudov were the only exceptions: Kirov held the same position as the first obkom secretary throughout the first FYP period, and Chudov held the position of the second obkom secretary except for five months where he was the second gorkom secretary. As regards the rest of the leading party officials, they were subject to frequent transfers between positions within the party apparatus. As already stated, the party officials were often moving from obkom to gorkom or vice versa, from one department to another, and one raikom to another. In particular, it is notable that there was a considerable degree of turnover within the post of the obkom department heads and the Leningrad's raikom secretary. These frequent changes in the leading party posts seems to have caused by the reorganisation of the party apparatus, such as the restructuring of the departments in 1930 and 1931 and the establishment of the separate Leningrad gorkom in 1932.

Moreover, it appears that the transfer of the leading party officials to positions within the government administration also took place quite frequently. For instance, among the Leningrad gorkom bureau members in January 1932, many of those who held a government post had been party officials before. In fact, the most responsible government posts, such as the chairman of the *Lenobispolkom*, and the chairman of the Leningrad oblast Council for the National Economy, were occupied by former leading party officials (see table 6-6).

The frequent changes within the party posts are also reflected in the changes that occurred in bureau membership. If one compares the Leningrad obkom bureau membership in March 1929 and January 1932, it is clear that the personnel changes were considerable. Out of the 29 members and nine candidates, who were included in the obkom bureau in March 1929, 14 members and seven candidates failed to retain their bureau membership either in the Leningrad obkom or gorkom in January 1932. This meant that only 43 per cent of the 1929 obkom bureau members and candidates remained in the obkom or gorkom bureau by the beginning of 1932.⁷³

Not only did horizontal movement occur within the party posts of the same level, but also upward mobility occurred in this period. The organisational

⁷³ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2694, protocol 1; and delo 2698, protocol 1.

development of the party apparatus between 1928 and 1932 created a larger number of leading party posts, and this made it possible for certain party officials to be promoted. The case of Gaza provides a good example of party officials who was promoted to the top position within the regional party organisation. Gaza (1894-1933) had been a young worker from the *Narvskaa Zastava* and had a distinguished Civil War career.⁷⁴ He had been a secretary of the party *kollektiv* in the Krasnyi putilovets factory for six years, and then he became an *orgotdel* head of the Narvskii raikom and later a secretary of the same raikom.⁷⁵ In January 1932, he was promoted as the fourth gorkom secretary, and in May of that year he became the second gorkom secretary, being Kirov's first assistant. The case of Struppe provides another example of party officials who were rapidly promoted into a higher position during the first FYP. In 1929 he was a raikom secretary, and in 1930 he became the head of the oblast control commission. Then in December 1931, he became the second secretary of the Leningrad obkom, and in May of the following year, he became the chairman of the *Lenobispolkom*. Thus Struppe's fast promotion led to his repositioning into three different posts over a four year period. This may be an extreme example, but in general, it can be said that some party officials were promoted very quickly, and undoubtedly this led to frequent transfers of the party officials within the apparatus.

Another notable feature was the relative stability that the leading party officials within the obkom, gorkom and Leningrad's urban raikoms enjoyed over this period. Even though there was a great deal of mobility within the different posts, only a few of the leading party officials were demoted or dismissed over this period. Already by the beginning of 1928, virtually all of the leading officials from Zinoviev's time had either been removed or demoted, replaced to a large extent either by those who had been promoted from Leningrad's factories or by 'outsiders' brought in by Kirov. These party officials who occupied the most senior posts in the Leningrad oblast party organisation in 1928 seem to have enjoyed considerable stability and by the end of 1932 most of them retained their positions of prominence.

Even though these high ranking officials were also under direct attack during the self-criticism campaign in 1928 and 1929, most of them managed to get off

⁷⁴ Evan and Margaret Mawdsley, *Moscow and Leningrad* (London: Ernest Benn, 1980), p. 332.

⁷⁵ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 384.

lightly. The self-criticism campaign, which had a strong anti-bureaucratic tone, was intended to expose 'bureaucratic practices' in the apparatus.⁷⁶ Although the main focus of this campaign was undoubtedly aimed at the soviet, trade union and economic organs, it was clear that this campaign was to include the party's own bureaucratic apparatus. Workers, non-party members and junior party workers were encouraged to criticise the shortcomings of party officials. Therefore, the party officials came in for a direct attack from below. However, the impact of these calls for self-criticism on the Leningrad party apparatus appears to have been minimal, at least in its initial stages. Certainly in 1928 there was very little mention in the press of self-criticism directed specifically at the party officials. In fact, by 1929 the most common complaint was advanced that the party apparatchiki were attempting to suppress or bypass the actual process of self-criticism at party meetings.⁷⁷ While the state apparatus was undoubtedly the target for heavy criticism, the party apparatus, at least in Leningrad, got off much more lightly.⁷⁸ It seems that an apparently deep-rooted fear on the part of the rank and file party members to speak out against the party authorities served to exclude the party authority from criticism.⁷⁹ This remained a major feature of the campaign in 1928.

However, in 1929 when the self-criticism campaign was stepped up, the rank and file party members were given further encouragement to expose shortcomings in the work of the party apparatus. For instance, a strongly-worded article in *Leningradskaia pravda* at the end of March 1929 criticised the party apparatus in general, and singled out certain obkom officials who were said to 'wear out more than one pair of trousers sitting through interminable sessions and commissions.'⁸⁰ Then later in May 1929, some 214 open party meetings were held in order to review the

⁷⁶ In an article in *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)* in March 1929, it was declared that the self-criticism campaign was exposing the apparatus' 'rotteness, its bureaucratic sloth, dissoluteness, drunkenness and wilful lack of attention to the needs of the masses, its presumptuous servility and grovelling to its superiors, ignorance, stagnation, conservatism, and routineness.' See *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 7, 20 March 1929, p. 7.

⁷⁷ For instances of this complaint, see the debate held at the Moskovskii-Narvskii raion party conference in *Leningradskaia pravda*, 10 February 1929; and the review of the self-criticism campaign in Leningrad in *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, nos. 8-9, 31 March 1929, p. 20.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 28, 21 September 1928.

⁷⁹ For evidence of this, compare the articles in *Leningradskaia pravda*, 16 February 1928, p. 3 and 19 February 1928, p. 2 with those in *Partrabotnik* no. 12, 25 October 1928, pp. 25-28.

⁸⁰ *Leningradskaia pravda*, 9 February 1929, p. 3.

work of the city's leading party officials. About 336 leading party officials within the obkom, the oblast control commission and the oblast auditing commission had been subject to review, and out of 336, only 12 received party censures, and none were purged.⁸¹ Yet, the most serious attack on the Leningrad party apparatus did not come until September 1929. On 1 September 1929, *Pravda* published the results of an investigation which revealed a whole range of abuses, along with evidence of 'right opportunist' attitudes, within a number of state institutions in Leningrad's Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raion.⁸² Accordingly the leadership of the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom and the oblast control commission was heavily criticised for failing to uncover those who had sought to stifle self-criticism, had created family circles, and had indulged in favouritism.⁸³ A number of dismissals followed, including G. A. Desov, the chairman of the oblast control commission, and Amenitskii, the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom secretary. At the plenum of the Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom, the work of Tsentral'no-gorodskoi raikom bureau was heavily criticised and new staff of the raikom bureau were elected.⁸⁴

However, apart from this event, the Leningrad party apparatus appears to have been able to defend itself by one means or another from this centre-inspired attack from below. Indeed, throughout this period remarkably few party officials in Leningrad were actually dismissed. This is partly because the Leningrad party apparatus had been affected only marginally by the threat of rightist tendencies in 1928-1929.⁸⁵ Indeed, in many cases, the struggle against bureaucratism was specifically identified with the fight against the right opposition.⁸⁶ It is no coincidence that the self-criticism campaign first began in the spring of 1928 in Moscow, where the right opposition had a strong hold.⁸⁷

⁸¹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 7, 25 August 1929, p. 7.

⁸² The investigation had apparently been triggered by reports sent to the newspaper from the Komsomol and party activists of the raion.

⁸³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 330.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 331.

⁸⁵ However, this is not to deny that the state and economic administrations in the city had shown some opposition to the leadership's policies.

⁸⁶ *Pravda*, 27 November 1928.

⁸⁷ The anti-bureaucratic atmosphere which had prevailed in 1927 was more reinforced by the crisis of 1928, such as the grain procurements crisis in the winter of 1927-1928 and the Shakhty affair in March 1928. These crises led to the purges of state and economic institutions and this was soon extended to the party apparatus, with the announcement of the launching of the self-criticism campaign at the Central Committee plenum of April 1928.

By contrast, party officials within the rural raikoms of the Leningrad oblast suffered more seriously. They were not only subjected to elections every six months,⁸⁸ but also to criticisms when anything went wrong in the countryside. In 1928 and 1929, party officials in Leningrad oblast's rural area were seriously dealt with. For instance, the party leaders in the Murmansk and Sestroretsk okrugs were removed by the end of 1928 for 'suppression of self-criticism.'⁸⁹ In addition, some party officials within the small rural raikoms were purged in the winter of 1928-1929.⁹⁰ Altogether, in 1928-29 some eighty rural officials were censured, of whom forty one were subsequently dismissed.⁹¹ Then in 1930, in connection with the collectivisation drive, the party workers in the countryside became subject to criticism and were subsequently replaced. In particular, many rural raikom secretaries were seriously criticised for their poor work and were subsequently replaced by those who were more suitable in terms of their social origin, length of party membership and party work experience. Indeed, it appears that, during the purges of the party apparatus in 1929 and 1930, it was the party officials in the countryside who were dealt with most severely.⁹²

In conclusion, one can say that the leading party officials within the obkom, gorkom and Leningrad's urban raikoms enjoyed relative stability, especially when compared to those in the countryside and those at the lower party levels. If one looks at the top twenty two posts in the Leningrad party apparatus at the beginning of 1928 (obkom secretaries and heads of departments, raikom secretaries and deputy secretaries), only five failed to retain a leading position within the city at the time of Kirov's death, three of these being removed following the September 1929 *Pravda* expose.⁹³ However, not surprisingly, this stability came to be undermined by Zhdanov's arrival in the city in 1934. He slowly replaced the existing party officials

⁸⁸ The turnover was relatively high.

⁸⁹ *Ko 2 Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b): Otchet oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b), noiabr' 1927 g.-fevral' 1929 g.* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1929), p. 126.

⁹⁰ See *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, nos. 8-9, 31 March 1929, p. 19.

⁹¹ *K XVI s'ezd*, no.1, p. 40.

⁹² For instance, the initial stage of the 1929 purge removed 15.4 per cent of all rural party workers in the Soviet Union, a fifth of whom were described as 'class-hostile elements'.

⁹³ Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 29-30.

with his own men and this process was greatly speeded up following the February 1937 Central Committee Plenum.⁹⁴

6.2 Party personnel in lower party organs

6.2.1 The expansion of the party apparatus

With the huge growth of party membership and the development of party cell network, the lower party apparatus expanded significantly during the first FYP period. Party workers below the raikom level, who were elected every six months, included party *kollektiv* bureau members, their secretaries, workshop cell bureau members and their secretaries. In factories, the party workers encompassed non-salaried members of workshop cell bureaux and their commissions, organisers of party groups and units (*gruporgy* and *zvenorgy*), agitators, propagandists, women's organisers, and members of party factions in non-party organisations within the enterprise.

Already in 1927, Leningrad had a considerable number of party workers. With the expansion of workshop cells and party units in its enterprises after 1925, the party workers were estimated to have grown from 28 per cent of the total industrial membership in 1926, to around 37 per cent a year later.⁹⁵ In the autumn 1927 party elections, about 18,000 party members were elected as the leading party officials in the lower party organs in the city of Leningrad.⁹⁶ Data on their composition shows that 5,439 were elected party *kollektiv* bureau members, 762 as *kollektiv* secretaries, 4,492 as workshop cell bureau members, 702 as workshop cell secretaries, and 5,896 as party unit organisers.⁹⁷ In addition, there were 840 women's organisers and 1,427 *agitprop* workers at *kollektiv* and workshop cell levels.⁹⁸

In the years following, the number of party workers in lower party organs continued to expand rapidly. In Leningrad the largest growth of party apparatus had occurred at the enterprise level. Especially, the lower party workers in Leningrad had significantly broadened and increased with workers from the shop-floor. Results of

⁹⁴ By June 1937, only 17 of the 65 members to the newly-appointed gorkom had held leading posts prior to 1935, and only three could claim to belong to the 1928 party elites of Leningrad. Cited from *ibid.*, p. 29-30.

⁹⁵ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 41, 9 November 1927, p. 2.

⁹⁶ The number of party activists included those in the city of Kronstadt.

⁹⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 2, 15 February 1928, p. 66.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

the May-June 1928 elections in Leningrad show that some 5,555 were elected as *kollektiv* bureau members, 758 as *kollektiv* secretaries, 5,369 as workshop cell bureau members, and 872 as workshop cell secretaries (see table 6-9). Later in January 1930 the total number was estimated to be around 20,000,⁹⁹ and in May 1930 it reached over 26,000.¹⁰⁰

From then on, a huge expansion of the lower-level party apparatus took place, and by the end of 1931 the number of lower-level party workers increased to about 34,921.¹⁰¹ This was mainly due to the party reorganisation in 1930 which brought about the rapid expansion of party cells. As the table 6-9 shows, there was a considerable increase in the number of those elected as bureau members of both party *kollektiv*y and workshop cells. In November 1931, the number of those working at the factory party committees and *kollektiv*y was counted as 10,084, which means that there were almost 4,000 more party workers in this level of the party organs, when compared to the 1927 level. Those working in the factory party committees and *kollektiv*y showed a slightly higher growth rate: from 3,379 to 6,539 between October 1927 and November 1931. The increase in the number of workshop cell bureau members was far greater than among the *kollektiv* bureau members. Between October 1927 and November 1931, the number of the workshop cell bureau members tripled, whereas the number of *kollektiv* bureau members almost doubled (see table 6-9). This reveals that the largest growth of the party apparatus had occurred at the workshop cell level. The growth of party workers at the workshop cell level accelerated even further by transferring officials downwards from the factory party committees to the workshop cells in the 1932 reorganisation. As a result, by April 1933, there were only 710 *kollektiv* secretaries whereas there were as many as 3,000 workshop cell secretaries in Leningrad.¹⁰²

At the bottom rung of the party's organisational ladder, great value was placed on the party unit organisers. In Leningrad's enterprises there were already 5,896 unit organisers at the beginning of 1928,¹⁰³ and their number increased to 7,000 by the end

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 15, June 1930, p. 65.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁰² Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 28.

¹⁰³ *Partrabotnik*, no. 2, 15 February 1928, p. 68.

of 1928.¹⁰⁴ The Central Committee adopted two resolutions, one in January 1929¹⁰⁵ and one in June 1930,¹⁰⁶ reiterating the importance of these unit organisers and the need to increase their number still further. Accordingly the number of unit organisers rapidly increased throughout 1929, and by May 1930 there were as many as 9,304 unit organisers in Leningrad.¹⁰⁷ From July 1930 onwards, party units were set up in almost every primary production unit, and as a consequence, the number of party unit organisers sharply increased to 11,430 by November 1931.¹⁰⁸ However, the 1932 reorganisation, which intended to strengthen the party cells at the party unit and workshop level by abolishing those cells and units which bore no relation to the basic production set up of the enterprise, led to a drop in the number of party unit organisers. Given that the number of party units had fallen to 5363 by January 1934,¹⁰⁹ the number of party unit organisers must have been halved by this time. The lower-level party apparatus which had rapidly expanded between 1927 and 1931 began to shrink from 1932, and by January 1934, the lower-level party workers amounted to only 19,000, a considerable decrease from the 1931 level.¹¹⁰

Table 6-9. Number of party workers in lower party organs in Leningrad, 1927-1931

	<i>Oct. 1927</i>	<i>May 1928</i>	<i>May 1930</i>	<i>Nov. 1931</i>
<i>Kollektiv bureau members</i> <i>(factory kollektiv bureau members only)</i>	5339 (3379)	5555 (3507)	7233 (4945)	10084 (6539)
<i>Kollektiv secretaries</i> <i>(factory kollektiv secretaries only)</i>	744 (412)	758 (408)	n. d.	n. d.
Workshop cell bureau members	4492	5369	10441	13407
Workshop cell secretaries	702	872	n. d.	n. d.

Note: The figure for *kollektiv* bureau members included those working at factory partkoms.
Sources: Figures for 1927 and 1928 are taken from *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 1928, pp. 37-40; figures for 1930 and 1931 are taken from *Partrabotnik*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48.

¹⁰⁴ *Ko 2 Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b)*, p. 127.

¹⁰⁵ *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika* (Moscow, 1930), no. 7, part 1, p. 364.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* (1934), no. 8, p. 302.

¹⁰⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 381.

¹¹⁰ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 21, November 1933, p. 24.

The lower-level party workers were either full-time officials or voluntary activists, often referred to as party *aktiv* (the active members of the party organisation). Full-time officials were salaried bureaucrats, whereas voluntary activists were non-paid. At the beginning of this period, a relatively few lower-level party workers were full-time officials. In October 1927, for instance, only 28 per cent of *kollektiv* secretaries were freed from production work for permanent party work.¹¹¹ About 15 per cent of agitprop workers and women's organisers at party *kollektiv* level were full-time officials, whereas none of those at workshop cell level were full-time officials.¹¹² In May 1928, about 29 per cent of *kollektiv* secretaries were full-time officials. In factory *kollektiv*y, the percentage of full-time officials was much higher: about 48 per cent of Leningrad's 408 factory *kollektiv* secretaries were full-time officials, and fewer than 29 per cent were voluntary activists employed on the shop-floor.¹¹³ On the other hand, all the workshop cell secretaries were voluntary activists, and about 89 per cent were employed on the shop-floor.¹¹⁴

Later that year, the Central Committee adopted a resolution which aimed at rationalising the party apparatus by establishing uniform staff levels for party organisations. This applied particularly to the party apparatus at industrial enterprise level, where strict limits were to be placed on the number of salaried officials allowed in each industrial cell, again according to criteria such as the size of the workforce and party membership in the enterprise.¹¹⁵ One of the main reasons behind the Central Committee's decision of the rationalisation of party apparatus seemed to encourage the principle of using non-paid, volunteer party members to perform certain functions of the apparatus in the course of their party duties.¹¹⁶ Indeed, from 1928 onwards, much emphasis was given to reducing the size of the party's paid staff and using unpaid party activists to perform the duties. The importance of rank and file involvement in the work of party cells was continuously stressed, and more and more non-paid party activists were recruited into lower party organs. In factories, great encouragement was given to the ordinary party members to undertake a whole range

¹¹¹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 2, 15 February 1928, p. 68.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹¹³ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 16 July 1928, p. 38.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹¹⁵ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 27, 10 September 1928, p. 6.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

of functions formerly carried out by full-time officials. They were urged to carry out *agitprop* work, the convening and chairing of open party meetings, observing and reporting on breaches of party discipline, ensuring the payment of membership dues, liaising with higher-level party organs, and taking responsibility for informational and technical work.

However, despite the 'regime of economy' which intended to rationalise the party apparatus from top to bottom, the number of full-time enterprise-level officials had still increased. Nationally, by 1930, top and middle levels of the apparatus as a whole had suffered a 35 per cent reduction in numbers, whereas the low level apparatus, in contrast, had increased by 20 per cent.¹¹⁷ Between June 1930 and January 1934, the huge growth in the industrial party membership meant that the number of cells and candidate groups in enterprises almost trebled in the Soviet Union,¹¹⁸ and in order to maintain control over this expansion, the number of full-time party officials employed in enterprises in the country expanded by 107 per cent.¹¹⁹ As far as Leningrad is concerned, it appears that the increase was even greater, given the strength of its industrial party membership.

It appears that, at factory party committee level, most party workers were more experienced full-time officials and their number seems to have increased over the period. At the beginning of 1929, as a reflection of the increased importance of factory party committees, a decision was taken to draft a number of experienced officials, in some cases selected by the centre, into the most important factory party committees.¹²⁰ Even though the factory party committee tended to be much bigger than the former *kollektiv* bureau, originally there was to be no increase in the number of full-time officials within the enterprise. However, the reorganisation of 1930 accelerated the expansion of party workers, especially full-time workers, in factory party committees. In the summer of 1930 a number of Leningrad's giant industrial enterprises, due to the adoption of the functional-sectoral system, experienced an increase in the number of full-time officials. Unlike the small commissions attached to

¹¹⁷ *XVI s'ezd VKP(b): Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1930), pp. 92-93.

¹¹⁸ Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 28.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹²⁰ See the Central Committee resolution of 7 January 1929 in *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 8 March 1929, and *K XVI s'ezdu*, no. 1, pp. 93-94.

party *kollektiv*y, the factory party committees had permanent sectors staffed by full-time officials to deal with the ever-widening range of party work in the enterprise. As there was a substantial increase in the number of factory party committees in the city in 1931, there must have been an increase in the number of full-time party workers. However, in 1932, when the Leningrad gorkom resolved to strengthen the workshop level of the party organisation by transferring officials downwards from the factory party committees, the number of full-time party officials employed in Leningrad's factory party committees fell from around 400 to 200, while almost all of those removed were subsequently reappointed to take up posts as workshop cell secretaries.¹²¹

The same trend can be traced to workshop cell level, as well. Officially, workshop cell secretaries were not allowed to be free of production work.¹²² However, it was not easy for them to engage in both party and production work. Many argued that taking people away from their normal work for party duties merely increased costs, and party work done in the evenings or in spare time was largely worthless.¹²³ Therefore, both leading apparatchiki in the city and enterprise-level officials began to insist that a number of free hours should be set aside each week to allow workshop cell secretaries to perform their duties.¹²⁴ Indeed, secretaries in the largest workshop cells, some of which had as many as 200 members by 1928, were increasingly converted to full-time officials.¹²⁵ Later in 1932, due to the party's decision to strengthen the party cells at workshop level by shifting full-time party officials into posts in the workshop cells, the full-time party officials in the workshops became a more common sight. About 200 full-time party officials removed from Leningrad's factory party committees were re-appointed to take up posts as workshop cell secretaries.¹²⁶ As a result, by April 1933, merely counting secretaries alone, there

¹²¹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 17, September 1932, pp. 3-4.

¹²² RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 212.

¹²³ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 27, 30 November 1928, p. 1.

¹²⁴ See *Leningradskaia pravda*, 12 February 1928, p. 3; 24 February 1928, p. 3 and 16 March 1928, p. 3.

¹²⁵ The payment for party officials was often considered to be way below the necessary level, often amounting to far less than skilled workers' wages in the same factory. Later, at the sixteenth Party Congress in 1930, the wages fund for the low-level party apparatus had increased by 66 per cent from its 1928 level. See *Stenograficheskii biulleten' II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii* (Leningrad, 1929), no. 9, p. 18; *XVI s'ezd VKP(b)*, p. 93; and *K XVI s'ezdu*, p. 100.

¹²⁶ *Partrabotnik*, no. 17, September 1932, pp. 3-4.

were 592 full-time *kollektiv* secretaries in Leningrad, out of a total of 710, and 501 full-time workshop cell secretaries, out of a total of around 3,000.¹²⁷ This was clearly a considerable advance on the size of the enterprise-level party apparatus, since we know that in 1929 the total number of full-time party officials in Leningrad's enterprises numbered only around 500.¹²⁸

However, lower down the party hierarchy, all party unit organisers were exclusively volunteer activists recruited from within the work brigade throughout this period. They were not allowed to be full-time officials and required to be workers engaged in production, which means that they should not be administrative and technical personnel.¹²⁹ This requirement for unit organisers remained unchanged and confirmed again by the obkom bureau resolution of July 1930, which stipulated that unit organisers should be recruited exclusively among workers. Since unit organisers were to carry out their party duties while engaging in production, it was called for that they should be freed from all other responsibilities.¹³⁰ Again, in July 1930, the obkom bureau adopted a resolution, which stipulated that unit organisers should be freed from all other loads, except from being a member of a workshop cell (or a *kollektiv*) bureau.¹³¹ However, these requirements were not often met. For instance, a review of group organisers in the Volodarskii raion in November 1928 showed that some 60 per cent of them had other party duties.¹³² Therefore, the problem of overloading of unit organisers was often discussed in the party journals.

6.2.2 Social composition of party workers at factory level

In this period, the quality of party workers was judged by their social backgrounds and occupation, and therefore, much attention was given to an increase in the proportion of workers both by social origin and by actual occupation among party workers. The party attempted, in particular, to draw those from a working-class background and workers from the bench into party work. A breakdown of Leningrad's party workers at the level of the lower party organs by social origin reveals that, in

¹²⁷ Cited from Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 2, p. 28.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹²⁹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 217.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, delo 2712, p. 18.

¹³² *Partrabotnik*, no. 20, 25 November 1928, p. 35.

general, a relatively large proportion of them were workers and their percentage had increased over this period. However, the ratio of workers by occupation was less impressive and it seems that the proportion of workers by occupation remained stable over the same period.

Records of party workers at the party *kollektiv* level show that their social composition had been improved in terms of the proportion of workers by social origin between 1927 and 1930 (see table 6-10). In October 1927, about 72 per cent of the city's party *kollektiv* bureau members were of a working-class origin, and from then on, the percentage continuously increased and by 1930 it reached 78 per cent. An especially large increase, from 74 to 78 per cent, took place between 1929 and 1930. The growth of proportional rate of workers among *kollektiv* secretaries was even greater than among *kollektiv* bureau members. In October 1927, those from working-class background accounted for 69 per cent of *kollektiv* secretaries, three per cent below the figure for *kollektiv* bureau members. However, by 1930 the figure increased to 81 per cent, three per cent above the figure for *kollektiv* bureau members. It seems that this increase of workers in the leading staff composition of *kollektiv* was achieved by drawing more workers from a working-class background into leading party work.

According to the data on factory *kollektiv* bureau members and secretaries in 1927, 1928 and 1931, their percentages were much higher than the average ones which included all sort of *kollektiv*. In October 1927, about 85 per cent of factory *kollektiv* bureau members were workers by social origin, and their proportion increased to 90 per cent in 1931. Among the factory *kollektiv* secretaries, the increase was more dramatic: from 80 to 90 per cent over the same period.

Data relating to factory party committees were given only in 1929 and 1930, but it reveals that a considerable proportion of their members and secretaries were from a working-class background. In 1929, about 90 per cent of factory party committee members and 83 per cent of their secretaries were workers by social origin. In 1930 the percentage of workers among factory party committee secretaries increased to 91 per cent, whereas among factory party committee members it remained unchanged. In 1931 and 1932, no separate data were given on factory party committees, but data including factory party committees and *kollektiv* bureaux show that about 81 and 79

per cent of them were composed of workers in 1931 and 1932 respectively. Taking into consideration the fact that factory party committees had a high percentage of workers among them, the social composition of the party committees and *kollektiv* bureaux does not seem to have greatly improved in these last two years.

Table 6-10. Proportion of workers by social origin among elected party workers in Leningrad, 1927-1932 (percentages)

	<i>Oct.</i> <i>1927</i> (1)	<i>May</i> <i>1928</i> (1)	<i>Oct.</i> <i>1928</i> (2)	<i>1929</i> (3)	<i>1930</i> (3)	<i>1931</i> (4)	<i>1932</i> (5)
Factory partkom members	-	-	-	90.7	90.8	n. d.	n. d.
Factory partkom secretaries	-	-	-	83.3	90.5	n. d.	n. d.
<i>Kollektiv</i> bureau members (factory <i>kollektiv</i> bureau members only)	72.1 (85.1)	72.5 (84.6)	73.3	73.7	78	80.6 (89.5)	79
<i>Kollektiv</i> secretaries (factory <i>kollektiv</i> secretaries only)	68.7 (79.6)	72.5 (86.3)	n. d.	78.9	80.7	n. d. (90)	n. d.
Workshop cell bureau members	91.4	89	90.6	90.5	90.4	90.4	89.9
Workshop cell secretaries	94.4	92	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	93	n. d.

Notes: The figure for *kollektiv* bureau members in October 1928 includes those in the Leningrad oblast; the figures for *kollektiv* bureau members in 1931 and 1932 include those working at factory partkoms.

Sources: (1) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 1928, pp. 37-40; (2) *Ibid.*, no. 2, 1929, p. 18; (3) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 39; (4) *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48; (5) *K IV oblastnoi i gorodskoi partiinoi konferentsii: Otchet Leningradskogo oblastnogo i gorodskogo komitetov VKP(b)* (Leningrad, 1932), p. 100.

At the workshop cell level, the proportion of workers by social origin among their party workers were much higher than among those of the party *kollektiv*. About 90 per cent of workshop cell bureau members were reported as being workers from a working-class background. Between October 1927 and May 1928, the percentage of workers had been diminished from 91 to 89 per cent. However, this was soon recovered to 91 per cent by the next party elections held in the autumn of 1928, and from then on it remained more or less stable.¹³³ The ratio of workers among workshop cell secretaries was even higher than that of bureau members, about 92 to 94 per cent. Between October 1927 and May 1928, it also showed a slight decrease from 94 to 92

¹³³ In 1932, there was a slight decrease in the percentage of workers in workshop cell bureaux, to 89.9 per cent.

per cent, and then by December 1931 it stabilised at 93 per cent. In spite of some fluctuations in each election, it seems that there was not so much change in the ratio of workers by social origin among party workers at the workshop cell level over this period.

Table 6-11. Proportion of workers by occupation among elected party workers in Leningrad, 1927-1930 (percentages)

	<i>Oct.</i> <i>1927</i> (1)	<i>May</i> <i>1928</i> (1)	<i>Oct.</i> <i>1928</i> (2)	<i>1929</i> (3)	<i>1930</i> (3)
Factory partkom members	-	-	-	62.7	67.8
<i>Kollektiv</i> bureau members (<i>factory</i> <i>kollektiv bureau members only</i>)	34.5 (50.9)	38.6 (55.5)	42	37.7	38.3
<i>Kollektiv</i> secretaries (<i>factory kollektiv secretaries only</i>)	16.0 (25.7)	18.9 (28.9)	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
Workshop cell bureau members	86.7	85.2	85.6	84.2	86.8
Workshop cell secretaries	88.9	89	n. d.	90.3	90.9

Sources: (1) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 1928, pp. 37-40; (2) *Ibid.*, no. 2, 1929, p. 18; (3) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 39.

Despite the seemingly high percentage of those from a working-class background, the percentage of those actually engaged in production was in general much lower, especially among party workers of *kollektiv* bureaux (see table 6-11). Records of party workers at the lower party organs, elected at the 1927 October and 1928 May elections, show that, in May 1928, only 39 per cent of the party *kollektiv* bureau members were engaged in production, despite an increase from 35 in October 1927. Furthermore, workers by occupation among *kollektiv* secretaries accounted for only 19 per cent, despite an increase by three per cent from October 1927. Among factory *kollektiv* bureau members, the percentage was higher: 51 per cent in October 1927 and 56 per cent in May 1928. Over 25 per cent of factory *kollektiv* secretaries were reported to be workers by occupation in 1927 and its proportion had increased to 29 per cent in May 1928. At the workshop cell bureau level, the proportion of workers by occupation among their party workers were much higher than among those of the party *kollektiv* bureaux. About 85 per cent of workshop cell bureau members were composed of production workers, whereas some 88 to 89 per cent of workshop cell secretaries were workers.

According to the result of the 1928 autumn party elections, the percentage of workers by occupation among party *kollektiv* bureau members had increased to 42 per cent, where it reached its peak, whereas among those of the workshop cell bureaux it remained unchanged. Data from 1929 and 1930 show that among party workers of factory party committees, the percentage of workers by occupation increased from 63 to 68 per cent between 1929 and 1930, whereas among the party *kollektiv* bureau members it fell to 38 per cent in 1929 and stabilised at 39 per cent in 1930. The percentage of workers by actual occupation among workshop cell bureau members increased slightly from 84 to 87 per cent, whereas among workshop cell secretaries it showed no significant change between 1929 and 1930 (about 90 per cent).¹³⁴

Party unit organisers also showed high ratio of workers: in October 1927, 94 per cent were workers by social origin, and about 96 per cent were workers engaged in production.¹³⁵ Later in 1932, all the group organisers in enterprises were said to be exclusively from workers.¹³⁶

When we compare two tables, one by social origin and the other by occupation, one can see there is a greater discrepancy between them at party *kollektiv* level than workshop cell level (see tables 6-10 and 6-11). It is probably because not all party *kollektiv*y were based in factories, and there were fewer workers by occupation in non-factory party *kollektiv*y. But still, even if we compare figures only for factory party *kollektiv*y, the difference between the proportion of workers by social origin and by occupation was huge: for instance, in May 1928, 86 per cent of factory *kollektiv* secretaries were reported as being workers by social origin, but only 29 per cent were actually engaged in production. On the other hand, at workshop cell level, the difference was less than five per cent in most cases. This leads us to conclude that at *kollektiv* level, party workers were drawn from workers from the bench but ceased to work in production, either by converting into full-time party officials or having other jobs, whereas party workers at workshop cell level were largely drawn from workers from the bench and still working in production. Besides, in general, one can say that, despite the party's emphasis on drawing workers from the bench into the party work,

¹³⁴ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 39.

¹³⁵ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 1928, p. 67.

¹³⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 385.

the proportion of workers by occupation among the lower-level party workers did not greatly improve over this period.

6.2.3 Length of party membership among party workers at factory level

According to the obkom resolution of 1928, a factory *kollektiv* secretary, chosen among the *kollektiv* bureau members, was required to have at least one year's party membership.¹³⁷ Likewise, a workshop cell secretary, chosen among the workshop cell bureau members, required at least one year's party membership.¹³⁸ However, appointment to post of secretary of a factory party committee required a much longer party membership. Later, in 1929, a minimum of five years' party membership was made a necessary condition for those elected to the post of secretary of a factory party committee.¹³⁹ In general, the requirement mentioned above was met by those who were selected as secretaries.

However, data on the length of party membership of party workers shows that their length of time spent as a party member significantly shortened over the period (see table 6-12). Data relating to the city's *kollektiv* bureau members and secretaries shows that, in the beginning of the first FYP period, the majority of them were party members who had joined the party before 1924. In October 1927 some 55 per cent of the *kollektiv* bureau members and almost 80 per cent of their secretaries were pre-1924 party members. In factory *kollektiv* bureaux, the proportion of pre-1924 party members was lower: about 45 per cent of the factory *kollektiv* bureau members and 77 per cent of their secretaries. However, the percentage of pre-1924 party members gradually decreased over the period, and by December 1931, they accounted for only 28 per cent of *kollektiv* bureau members and 21 per cent of factory *kollektiv* bureau members. The decrease among the factory *kollektiv* secretaries was most impressive, from 77 to 32 per cent between October 1927 and December 1931.

The main reasons for a decrease in the proportion of pre-1924 party members were partly straightforward transfers to posts elsewhere and partly the overall expansion of party posts at enterprise level. However, more importantly, it was due to the mobilisation and promotion of young party workers into leading party work. Year

¹³⁷ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 202.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹³⁹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 6, 30 July 1929, p. 25.

after year, more and more young communists with only two or three years' party membership were recruited or elected as party workers. Indeed, young party members with less than five year's party membership increased remarkably over the period. As the table 6-12 shows, between 1927 and 1928, there was an increase of party members from 1924 and after among the city's party workers at *kollektiv* level. For instance, after the 1928 May-June election, they composed 51 per cent of the city's *kollektiv* bureau members, an increase from 41 per cent in January 1927, and 45 per cent in October 1927.¹⁴⁰ In factory *kollektiv* bureaux, their proportion was greater. As the table 6-12 shows, their proportion grew from 55 to 60 per cent between October 1927 and May 1928. The same tendency can be traced in party membership change among *kollektiv* secretaries. After the 1928 May-June election, about 64 per cent of *kollektiv* secretaries were still those who had joined the party in the period 1917-1920. Those who had joined the party during and after 1924 accounted for 28 per cent, an increase from 20 per cent when compared to that of October 1927. At the factory party *kollektiv*, the increase was greater: from 23 to 32 per cent.

Already in 1930, the percentage of those who had joined the party during and after 1924 had increased as a whole in all party organs. Additionally, there was an increase, at the lower levels of the party, in the percentage of those joining the party during and after 1927.¹⁴¹ This process, referred to as *omolozhenie*, took place especially at industrial enterprise level. By the end of 1931, the length of party membership of party officials and activists at enterprise level in Leningrad had begun to decrease significantly.¹⁴² Especially, the number of those who joined the party during 1927 enlistment and after increased among elected party workers. For instance, in November 1931, those who had joined the party during and after 1927 comprised over 41 per cent of *kollektiv* bureau members, of which 12 per cent joined the party in 1930 and 1931. At industrial enterprise level, the proportion of those who had joined the party during and after 1927 increased more rapidly and by November 1931, nearly half of the factory *kollektiv* bureau members had joined the party in and after 1927. By

¹⁴⁰ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 12-13, 1 August 1928, p. 92.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 39.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 47.

1932, many of the vacant positions seems to have been filled by recruits from the 1927 *aktiv*.

Table 6-12. Length of party membership of *kollektiv* bureau members and secretaries in Leningrad, 1927-1933 (percentages)

Kollektiv bureau members					
		Pre 1924	1924-1926	1927-1929	1930-1931
October	1927 (1)	55.1	44.9		
May	1928 (1)	48.8	51.7		
May	1930 (2)	33.3	36.8	29.9	
November	1931 (2)	28.1	30.9	29.3	11.7
Kollektiv secretaries					
		Pre 1924	1924 and after		
October	1927 (1)	79.8	20.2		
May	1928 (1)	72.4	27.6		
Factory kollektiv bureau members					
		Pre 1924	1924-1926	1927-1929	1930-1931
October	1927 (1)	45.2	54.8		
May	1928 (1)	40.2	59.8		
May	1930 (2)	27.7	39.5	32.8	
November	1931 (2)	21.2	30.9	26.3	21.6
Factory kollektiv secretaries					
		Pre 1924	1924-1926	1927-1928	1929-1930
October	1927 (1)	77.2	22.8		
May	1928 (1)	68.4	31.6		
October	1928 (3)	62.5	37.4		
October	1929 (3)	55.5	44.5		
May	1930 (4)	42.1	42.3	15.6	
December	1931 (4)	31.8	41.5	26.7	
December	1933 (5)	29.7	50.6		14.0

Sources: (1) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 16 July 1928, pp. 37-40; (2) *Partrabotnik*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48; (3) *Ibid.*, no. 15, June 1930, p. 65; (4) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia partiinaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (Leningrad: Izdanie Leningradskogo oblastkoma VKP(b), 1931), no. 3, pp. 36-37; (5) *Leningradskaia pravda*, 12 December 1933, p. 2.

On the other hand, *kollektiv* secretaries seems to have had a longer period of party membership. In 1930 there was still an overwhelming number of old party members in the leading party organs. It is noticeable that the majority of secretaries had joined the party in the first years of the Russian Revolution and during the Civil

War period.¹⁴³ Even in December 1931, the majority of factory *kollektiv* secretaries had joined the party before 1927 and those who joined the party in and after 1927 comprised only 27 per cent. There was not much change to these figures. According to data given in 1933, among party *kollektiv* secretaries in Leningrad, almost one-third had over ten years' party membership, more than half had party membership of five to ten years, and about 14 per cent had less than five years' party membership.¹⁴⁴

Table 6-13. Length of party membership of workshop cell bureau members and secretaries in Leningrad, 1927-1931 (percentages)

Workshop cell bureau members						
			<i>Pre 1924</i>	<i>1924-1926</i>	<i>1927-1929</i>	<i>1930-1931</i>
October	1927	(1)	22.2	77.8		
May	1928	(1)	20.6	79.4		
November	1928	(2)	19.4	57.9	22.7	
May	1930	(3)	13.1	43.5	43.4	
November	1931	(3)	8.9	30.1	32.3	28.8

Workshop cell secretaries						
			<i>Pre 1924</i>	<i>1924-1926</i>	<i>1927-1929</i>	<i>1930-1931</i>
October	1927	(1)	32.2	67.8		
May	1928	(1)	29.5	70.5		
May	1930	(4)	17.8	49.4	32.8	
December	1931	(4)	11.9	34.0	35.6	18.5

Sources: (1) *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 9, 16 July 1928, pp. 37-40; (2) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia partiinaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh* (1929), no. 1, p. 38; (3) *Partrabotnik*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48; (4) *Leningradskaia oblastnaia partiinaia organizatsiia VKP(b) v tsifrakh*, (1931), no. 3, pp. 36-37.

This tendency was also reflected at the workshop cell level (see table 6-13). Among the workshop cell bureau members, the proportion of pre-1924 party members was relatively small when compared to those among factory *kollektiv* bureau members, about 22 per cent in October 1927. In the years following, their proportion became even smaller, and by November 1931, only nine per cent were those with pre-1924 party membership. Among workshop cell secretaries, the percentage of those with pre-1924 party membership was slightly higher than that of the workshop cell bureau members, but much lower than that of factory *kollektiv* secretaries. In October

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 39.

¹⁴⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, p. 447.

1927, about 32 per cent were pre-1924 party members, but their proportion rapidly decreased over the period, and by the end of 1933, it was only 13 per cent.¹⁴⁵

Instead, the proportion of party members with less than five years' party membership increased over the same period. Between October 1927 and May 1928, the percentage of those who had joined the party in 1924 and after increased from 78 to 79 per cent among workshop cell bureau members, and from 68 to 71 among their secretaries. From 1930, their percentage increased still more rapidly. For instance, between May 1930 and November 1931, their proportion among workshop cell bureau members increased from 43 to 60 per cent, and among workshop cell secretaries from 33 to 54 per cent. Accordingly, by the end of 1931, over half of the party workers in workshop cells were those who had joined the party in 1927 and after. By 1932, the process of *omolozhenie* had proceeded still further. It was reported that in April, about 27 per cent of workshop cell secretaries had party membership of less than two years.¹⁴⁶

Lower down the ladder, a unit organiser was required to be an actual party member, which means that the party did not allow a party candidate to be a unit organiser. It was also required that he (or sometimes she) be politically trained, be able to utilise authority and be trusted by communists and other non-party members.¹⁴⁷ However, these requirements for unit organisers were not often met. For instance, a review of the composition of unit organisers in the Volodarskii raion in November 1928 showed that many unit organisers had only party candidate membership.¹⁴⁸ It was also revealed that many did not have any political education.¹⁴⁹ The increase of party candidates in the composition of unit organisers was criticised, but the situation did not improve even in 1930. It was reported that in a number of factories, one third of unit organisers were composed of party candidates, who were regarded as politically weak and having less authority among party unit members.¹⁵⁰ In 1930, according to data on the composition of unit organisers in three raions of Leningrad, about 78 per cent had joined the party in the period between 1925 and

¹⁴⁵ *Leningradskaiia pravda*, 12 December 1933, p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1980), vol. 2, p. 162.

¹⁴⁷ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2707, p. 217.

¹⁴⁸ *Partrabotnik*, no. 20, 25 November 1928, p. 35.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 19.

1928, and those who had joined the party after 1929 comprised almost 14 per cent, whereas those who had longer periods of party membership (who had joined the party between 1924 and 1925) accounted for only eight per cent. Furthermore, 15 to 20 per cent did not have any political education.¹⁵¹ In December 1931, the ratio of those who had joined the party from 1927 and onwards increased up to 73 per cent, among which 44 per cent had joined in 1930 or 1931.¹⁵² In 1932, more unit organisers had been in the party for a relatively short period. In January, 44 per cent of the city's unit organisers were party members of less than two years standing,¹⁵³ and by April the figure went up to 58 per cent.¹⁵⁴

In 1934, a Leningrad party worker was likely to be somewhat younger than his 1928 counterpart, less experienced both in terms of the number of years he had spent in industry and in terms of his party membership. He was likely to have joined the party in a very different period of party history, during the early years of industrialisation when activism and radicalism were at a premium. In addition, apart from having avoided the political wrangles that marked the 1920s, the party official in 1934 was in every respect likely to be more of a professional bureaucrat - better trained, better paid, and presiding over a much more complex and all-embracing administrative structure.

6.2.4 Instability of lower-level party apparatus

One of the main features of party apparatus throughout these years had been the excessive fluctuation of party officials, especially at the lower levels. First of all, much of this fluctuation was a direct result of elections, which showed an extremely high rate of turnover. Elections of lower party organs were held every six months and leading party workers such as secretaries and bureau members of both *kollektivny* and workshop cells were subjected to these elections. In the May 1928 party elections, Leningrad stood out as an example for others to follow. Enterprises staged a series of preliminary mass meetings prior to the actual election meeting, where candidates could be put to the test by both party and non-party workers. Most of the candidates

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 48.

¹⁵³ *K IV oblastnoi i gorodskoi partiinoi konferentsii: Otchet Leningradskogo oblastnogo i gorodskogo komitetov VKP(b)* (Leningrad, 1932), pp. 100-101.

¹⁵⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 161.

were apparently nominated directly at election meetings, and the number of candidates outweighed the number of available places by two to three and sometimes even by five to six times.¹⁵⁵

The turnover rate at the lower level of party organs was extremely high, as can be seen in the 1928 election results. In the May-June 1928 election, in the city of Leningrad, the turnover rate of *kollektiv* bureau members reached 48 per cent as a whole, and among factory *kollektiv* bureau members, it was slightly higher: 50 per cent.¹⁵⁶ The turnover rate of workshop cell bureau members was even higher than that of *kollektiv* bureau members: 57 per cent, an increase from 54 per cent in the October 1927 elections.¹⁵⁷ The turnover rates of both *kollektiv* and workshop cell secretaries were also high: out of 758 *kollektiv* secretaries elected, only 477 were re-elected, and out of 872 workshop cell secretaries elected, only 469 managed to be re-elected.¹⁵⁸ In the autumn party elections of 1928 the percentage of workshop cell secretaries and bureau members newly elected had exceeded 60 per cent.¹⁵⁹

Initially, the high turnover rate was not considered a danger. Elections were believed to inhibit bureaucratism, and rapid turnover was valued as a good sign. However, in 1928, some party officials began to express negative views about this high turnover rate. The election campaigns, which could go on for several months, were criticised for being an enormous waste of time and energy, and the short term in office that many secretaries and organisers enjoyed was seen as having a negative effect both on the party's work in the enterprise, and on the development of specialists with long experience in a particular sphere of the economy.¹⁶⁰ Therefore, at the beginning of 1929, a long-running debate was published in *Leningradskaia pravda* on a proposal to hold elections to party cells and raion organisations annually instead of every six months.¹⁶¹ However, at the second oblast party conference in March 1929,

¹⁵⁵ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 25, 22 August 1928, pp. 11-12. See also *Leningradskaia pravda*, 15 February 1929, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 12-13, 1 August 1928, p. 90.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, nos. 12-13, 1 August 1928, p. 93.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹⁵⁹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 8 March 1929, p. 19.

¹⁶⁰ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, nos. 2-3, 31 January 1929, p. 19; and *ibid.*, nos. 5-6, 28 February 1929, pp. 23-24.

¹⁶¹ See the remarks of Sokolov, representing the Khalturina factory, at the second oblast party conference in *Leningradskaia pravda*, 15 March 1929, p. 2; Fisunenکو, representing the Baltic

Kirov dismissed the idea, pointing out that regular elections 'have an enormous educational significance, and also undoubtedly reduce bureaucracy'.¹⁶²

Despite the expectations on the value of elections, the excessive turnover inevitably led to the disruption of party work at lower levels. Therefore, much pressure was put on the apparatus to deal with the enormous turnover of its enterprise level officials. In the 1930 elections, the turnover rate slightly lowered, the average rate being 60 per cent. The lowering of the turnover in the city of Leningrad was evaluated as a positive factor, since the excessive turnover of previous elections caused instability of party work. On the other hand, the turnover rate in the countryside increased, which was explained as a way of 'correcting distortion of party lines on the matter of collectivisation'.¹⁶³ However, after 1930, the problems again became more acute. In the November 1931 elections, about 62 per cent of party committees and *kollektiv* bureau members, 58 per cent of workshop cell bureau members and 61 per cent of party unit organisers were newly elected, and the majority of them were promoted into the leading party positions for the first time.¹⁶⁴ This extremely high rate shows that turnover had begun to spin out of control. Much of this 60 per cent plus turnover of the autumn 1931 party elections was described as spontaneous. By 1932, the rate of turnover had become even greater. In April 1932, 39 per cent of the city's workshop cell secretaries and 43 per cent of its unit organisers had held their posts for less than six months. Lack of experience and political training proved to be a major shortcoming for many of them, and as a result they were unable to lead other party members in the enterprise who were themselves often 'politically very backward'.¹⁶⁵

However, the excessive turnover at elections was just one part of the problem. Throughout this period, party activists, many of whom were lower-level party workers, were mobilised for the party work in the countryside, sometimes in their own oblast, but often in other parts of the country, or promoted into either administrative posts within their enterprise or the state apparatus. All these factors caused still greater

factory in *ibid.*, 10 February 1929, p. 3; and the articles in *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 7, 20 March 1929, pp. 19-21.

¹⁶² *Stenograficheskii biulleten' II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii*, no. 9, pp. 19-20.

¹⁶³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 16-17, June 1930, p. 38.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 47.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, pp. 21-22.

fluctuation in lower party apparatus. Taking the example of the giant Karl Marx factory, between February 1929 and the spring of 1930, three party secretaries and four different full-time *agitprop* workers had been appointed; but 21 of the 50 party committee members had left, as had 30 of the 52 workshop cell secretaries and *agitprop* workers. Of those who had left, 43 per cent had been promoted out of the factory, 29 per cent had been mobilised to the countryside, and 24 per cent had left to take up full-time study.¹⁶⁶

Indeed, the city party organisation suffered from having to act as a supplier of cadres to other regions, including its own. From the summer of 1927 the Leningrad organisation based in the city had been in charge of a sizeable agricultural region. The adoption by this large urban industrial centre of a substantial rural region was to change the outlook of the city's party organisation and require it to take responsibility for a large number of administrative units where the party presence was extremely low.¹⁶⁷ In addition, throughout the years of major collectivisation Leningrad was second only to Moscow in acting as a major supplier of cadres not only for its own rural region, but for other parts of the Soviet Union as well. Already in 1928 the Central Committee had dispatched over 500 Leningrad residents out of the city to take up work in such regions as Siberia, Kazakhstan and the North Caucasus.¹⁶⁸ A whole series of special mobilisations of party workers in 1929 to grain procurement regions served to further drain the city's reserve of cadres.¹⁶⁹ The greatest burden came in November 1929, when Leningrad was expected to provide over 4,500 of the so-called 'twenty five-thousanders', who were to act as the vanguard force in setting up and administering collective farms.¹⁷⁰ By 19 January 1930, 5,000 Leningrad's workers were mobilised for kolkhoz work in regions such as Siberia, the Lower Volga, the Severnyi krai, Central Asia and Tambov.¹⁷¹ Information on the composition of 3,543 workers selected by 7 January 1930 shows clearly that most of them were active party

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, nos. 13-14, May 1930, p. 36.

¹⁶⁷ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 12, 25 October 1928, pp. 31-33.

¹⁶⁸ *Ko II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii*, p. 111.

¹⁶⁹ See, for instance, *Partrabotnik*, no. 15, 10 August 1929, p. 12.

¹⁷⁰ *K XVI s''ezdu*, pp. 61-62. For more information on the '25,000ers', see Lynne Viola, *The Best Sons of the Fatherland: Workers in the Vanguard of Soviet Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

¹⁷¹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2750, p. 41.

members with over ten years' industrial experience.¹⁷² They were also experienced in social and political work, and many were full-time party officials, the greatest proportions being apparently metalworkers.¹⁷³ Besides, extensive use of temporary worker brigades sent out to the countryside during campaign periods added to the urban organisation's cadre crisis.¹⁷⁴ Between March 1929 and May 1930, according to Kirov's speech at the third oblast party conference, Leningrad had lost 13,000 party and non-party worker activists to the countryside. To a substantial degree, these workers had gone not to Leningrad oblast, but beyond its confines.¹⁷⁵ Later, a Central Committee resolution of 21 February 1931 resulted in more cadres being sent down to the countryside.¹⁷⁶ Between August 1930 and October 1931 some 550 people were sent out of the city to take up party posts in the oblast, and a further 264 to other rural party organisations.¹⁷⁷ In addition, over 5,500 cadres were dispatched to strengthen rural soviet, economic and co-operative organisations.¹⁷⁸ Altogether, between the beginning of 1931 and October 1932 some 17,500 urban activists would leave the city for work of some kind in the countryside.¹⁷⁹ This kind of massive mobilisation of industrial workers for the party work in the countryside led inevitably to instability in the party apparatus, particularly at lower level.

In addition, problems of instability were further aggravated by the extensive promotion of party activists, which was strongly advocated by the party from 1927 onwards. In the summer of 1928, the Central Committee took a decision to extend the policy of *vydvizhenie* (the direct promotion of production workers into administrative positions) to include the party apparatus itself.¹⁸⁰ However, it appears that, in the beginning, both party and non-party activists were promoted mainly into administrative posts within and outwith the enterprises, and only a few were promoted

¹⁷² Among 3,543 workers, about 75.2 per cent were party members, and those who had been workers over 10 years accounted for 58.7 per cent, over 15 years 33.5 per cent, and over 25 years 7.5 per cent. See *ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁷³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1968), vol. 2, pp. 367-368.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 366-367.

¹⁷⁵ *Leningradskaia pravda*, 12 June 1930, p. 4.

¹⁷⁶ *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika* (1934), no. 8, p. 276.

¹⁷⁷ *K IV oblastnoi i gorodskoi partiinoi konferentsii*, p. 101.

¹⁷⁸ V. K. Beliakov, *Organizatsionnoe ukreplenie Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza v period nastupleniia sotsializma po vsemu frontu, 1929-1932* (Moscow, 1972), p. 168.

¹⁷⁹ *Leningradskaia pravda*, 16 January 1933, p. 1.

¹⁸⁰ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 20, 30 June 1928, pp. 8-9.

into party posts. For instance, in Leningrad, between 1927 and 1928, some 2,500 workers moved into minor administrative posts within their enterprise.¹⁸¹ During the whole of 1928, 602 workers were promoted to administrative posts outside their own enterprise. This compares with 199 promoted into economic positions and 141 who took up posts within the enterprise (which was far more common). Only 62 of these went to party posts. This suggests that the number actually moving into party posts was relatively low.¹⁸² Certainly statistical evidence suggests that few promotions into party posts took place in Leningrad prior to 1929, and that most of those promoted went into minor technical and operative positions within the factory.¹⁸³ Since the majority of those promoted were party activists, this meant that a considerable number of party activists were drawn out of party work. Therefore, the party posts left over by those promoted, as well as the posts created by the expansion of the enterprise level party apparatus, had to be filled by new recruits. This is why from the end of 1929, despite the reservations expressed concerning the promotion of party activists into responsible party posts, the party apparatus had to fill many of the posts with raw, inexperienced, and even insufficiently 'class-conscious' activists.¹⁸⁴ Not surprisingly all these factors made the lower-level party apparatus extremely fluid throughout the period.

Initially, frequent transfers and promotions of party workers were considered as desirable, because it was thought that they would train personnel, help to find new leadership, advance younger party members, and prevent localism. It was not until 1930 that the negative side of these processes was fully felt and expressed. In September 1931, a serious and systematic study of the frequent swapping and shifting around of party workers was called for, because it was felt that the situation 'in the present circumstances is becoming intolerable [since] it wrecks any possibility of creating the necessary degree of specialisation of party cadres'.¹⁸⁵ In 1932, the high *tekuchest'* (turnover) continued, and by then, *tekuchest'* caused partly by the

¹⁸¹ *Ko 2 Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b)*, pp. 148-149.

¹⁸² See the figures for the Vyborgskii raion in *Leningradskaiia pravda*, 14 February 1928, p. 3.

¹⁸³ *Ko 2 Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii VKP(b)*, pp.148-149.

¹⁸⁴ *K XVI s''ezdu*, p. 17 and *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 17, September 1931, p. 35.

¹⁸⁵ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, p. 1.

combination of promotions, mobilisations and extended study leave, but also by straightforward sackings and unauthorised 'resignations', had become rampant.¹⁸⁶

Indeed, the 1928-1934 period was notable for the degree of instability of the party apparatus at enterprise level, the result of the mixture of rapid promotions, transfers out of the city, extended periods of study leave, and the straightforward 'drift' of party activists shifting from one job to the next, in and out of the city. All this made for a very amorphous social grouping, and can hardly have served to alleviate the problems facing the party organisations during these years. In terms of the social and career profile of the party apparatus in the enterprise, the massive turnover was bound to result in a different kind of party official.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 12; and nos. 11-12, June 1932, pp. 35-37.

7. Factory Party Cells in Leningrad

During NEP, the party organisations had concerned themselves principally with organisational matters, internal party questions, and agitational work. However, with the launching of the first FYP, the nature of party work underwent a significant change. The party was expected to play a much more active role not only in these, but also in economic matters. Although the party was not the only body involved in the economy, in general, ultimate responsibility for industrial development lay with party organisations. Party organisations, especially those at factory level, were in turn expected to play a much more complex role to ensure industrial development.

The Leningrad party organisation was no exception. With the remarkable advances in Leningrad's industrial base, combined with the enormous growth in party membership, factory party organisations had to meet much more complex demands. Considering the importance of Leningrad's industry and the status of the Leningrad party organisation as a leading regional organisation, it is not too difficult to imagine how much pressure was put on the party organisations at the factory level. They had to be involved in everything, including industrial management and mass mobilisation. An examination of the role of factory party organisations in Leningrad during the FYP period illustrates the practical effectiveness of the party's involvement in production matters and also provides examples of interaction between the party and industrial workers.

This chapter considers, first of all, the changing nature of party work at the factory level. Even though the factory party organisations undertook various kinds of work, special emphasis is placed on the party's growing involvement in economic matters, and its consequences for the party itself. The central issue is whether party organisations at the factory level could cope with all the demands placed upon them and whether the involvement of factory party cells in production matters was effective. This is followed by an analysis of the development of production meetings and socialist competition movement in Leningrad, which considers whether the factory party cells were capable of mobilising their workers for industrialisation in the way they were now expected to do.

7.2 Party work vs. economic work

7.2.1 'Face to production (*litsom k proizvodstvu*)'

Generally speaking, party work consisted of party-organisational, mass and economic work. Party-organisational work referred to the recruitment, placement and education of party personnel including cadres and the rank and file, the development of an effective party organisation aided by improved intra-party communications, and the monitoring of performance of various party units and individuals. The meaning of 'economic work' changed over time and could mean the direction, supervision, control of and involvement in economic affairs by communists. Mass-party work involved the dissemination of the regime's values and objectives among the general population by means of meetings, speeches and formal instruction.¹ It goes without saying that factory party organisations were involved in other matters as well.

In the earlier 1920s party cells in factories concentrated on mass work, recruitment and intra-party affairs. However, with the launching of the industrialisation drive, factory party cells were expected to become involved in economic questions as well. This change in direction came in 1928 under the slogan of 'face to production (*litsom k proizvodstvu*)'. The slogan 'face to production', which became widespread in 1928-29, meant that party organisations were to concern themselves with basic production questions - rationalising production, lowering costs, increasing productivity, improving the quality of production, and improving labour discipline.² Accordingly the nature and methods of party work at the enterprise level changed considerably. *Perestroika* (restructuring) was said to involve a change in both the 'form and content' of party work, to give it a 'clearly expressed production character' and to enable it to meet the demands of socialist construction. In terms of 'form' of party work, *perestroika* meant shifting the focus of party work to lower party cells. In terms of 'content', *perestroika* meant the party's growing involvement in production questions.³

¹ Daniel Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party, 1927-39* (London: Macmillan, 1988), p. 180.

² See *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 34, 22 November 1928, pp. 1-4; *ibid.*, no. 25, 1 September 1929, pp. 1-7; and *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 2, Decembere 1929, pp. 55-58.

³ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 1, November 1929, pp. 17-30.

Undoubtedly, the main aim of this change was to secure the successful implementation of industrialisation. In the eyes of the party leadership, the success of the industrialisation drive depended on whether the party could ensure that decisions made at the centre were transmitted from higher to lower organs and then carried out properly by those responsible at the periphery. Therefore the active role of factory party cells in production matters was considered to be vital in ensuring successful industrial development. They were obliged to monitor the economic achievement of the factory, and to undertake agitation work to mobilise the masses of workers.

In the Leningrad region, the role of the factory party organisations in facilitating successful industrialisation was considered particularly important. Already at the first oblast party conference held in November 1927, the tasks of party organisations in bringing about successful industrialisation was specified as follows. Party organisations at the enterprise level were to involve themselves deeply in the promotion of labour discipline and the shock-work movement. They were to combat the worsening rate of absenteeism and also ensure the implementation of the seven-hour working day. They were also expected to help reduce the production costs and generally oversee the rationalisation of industry. The first oblast party conference also recognised that at all levels of the organisation the party's propaganda and agitation functions would now become an essential ingredient in the general effort to raise enthusiasm and mobilise public opinion around the industrialisation programme, while at the same time ensuring acceptance of the material hardships that would accompany it.⁴

In Leningrad, the importance of economic matters in party work was continuously emphasised in 1928. At the same time, the main focus of party work shifted to lower party organs - the workshop cells. This was motivated by the belief that workshop cells could decide production matters more effectively. As early as January 1928, for instance, a leading party worker wrote an article in *Partrabotnik* as follows: 'in the coming period questions of the economic life of the workshop must occupy a basic place in the work of the workshop cell and much more independence and responsibility must be given to activists in the cell'.⁵

⁴ *Partrabotnik*, no. 2, 15 February 1928, p. 31.

⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 1, January 1928, pp. 18-20.

Accordingly workshop cells were given wide-ranging responsibilities and expected to become the main focus of party work. In its March 1928 resolution, the Leningrad obkom urged workshop cells to undertake a 'systematic study of various questions of the production life of the workshop'. In order to make it possible for workshop cells to operate properly, the resolution also called for a widening of the rights of workshop cell administrations and for the creation of a trade union bureau in every workshop with a workforce of more than 200.⁶

However, a review of the workshop cells' work conducted in October 1928 revealed that the obkom plenum resolution of March 1928 had not been fully put into practice. Although most Leningrad factories had transferred the focus of party work to the workshop cells by this time, the rights of the workshop cell administration and trade union had not been expanded. In many workshops, the latter did not even exist. This caused a serious problem in the work of workshop cells, as they could not operate efficiently in production matters without the expansion of the rights of workshop cell administrations and the creation of workshop trade union bureaux.⁷

Nevertheless, a significant change took place in the type of questions factory party cells discussed in 1928. Economic questions were part of the agenda of local cells in the 1920s, but it was not until 1928 that the details of economic management began to dominate the meetings of local cells, as well as those of the raikoms and the obkom itself. In 1927 most questions discussed at workshop cell bureaux and plenums were either inner-party matters or mass work. Economic questions were hardly discussed at workshop cell level: they accounted for only four to five per cent of the total questions discussed.⁸ According to a survey of five selected workshop cells in Leningrad, economic questions were discussed only 30 times throughout 1927. Some workshop cells never dealt with production questions of their workshop, and some appeared to be helpless.⁹ Not surprisingly, factory party cells came under criticism for not discussing economic matters with sufficient frequency or confidence. They were roundly censured for failing to take a leading role in production matters.¹⁰

⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 5, 9 April 1928, pp. 3-7.

⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 18, 25 October 1928, p. 32.

⁸ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 15 March 1928, pp. 20-21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁰ See *Leningradskaiia pravda*, 29 January 1928, p. 3; *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 15 March 1928, pp. 20-21.

However, the October 1928 review of workshop cells' work revealed that by this time economic questions had been included in the workshop cells' work plan, and that production matters were often discussed at workshop cell meetings.¹¹ A *kollektiv* bureau at Krasnyi treugol'nik, for instance, had been involved in various economic questions by November 1928. The questions discussed included the results of rationalisation, the accumulation of capital for the next economic year, an examination of the reasons for the high rate of absenteeism, and wages policy.¹²

As factory party cells became more and more involved in production matters from 1928 onwards, the proportion of economic questions in their work increased. As can be seen in table 7-1, in the Moskovsko-narvskii raion the relative weight of economic questions in the work of party organisations, from raikom down to workshop cells, increased considerably between 1927 and 1929. In 1929, economic questions accounted for 20 per cent of the questions discussed at the raikom and *kollektivy* and for 18 per cent at workshop cell bureaux (see table 7-1).

Table 7-1. Proportion of economic questions of the total number of questions discussed by party organs in Moskovsko-narvskii raion, 1927-1929 (percentages)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Raikom</i>	<i>Kollektiv bureaux</i>	<i>Plenums of kollektivy</i>	<i>Workshop cell bureaux</i>	<i>Plenums of workshop cells</i>
1927	8	10.8	4.4	2.4	-
1928	14	18.8	9.8	10.2	8.2
1929	20	20.8	20.4	17.8	17.4

Source: Partiinoe stroitel'stvo, nos. 11-12, June 1930, p. 37.

Party cells' work in production matters, however, proved to be unsatisfactory. First of all, the proposals made and resolutions adopted at party cell bureaux and meetings were often of poor quality. According to the October 1928 review, workshop cell bureaux and meetings heard only general reports on the condition of the workshops, and did not deal with particular problems such as waste, idle time and absenteeism. As a result, most resolutions adopted were not in specific terms. The debates were also often vague, and dwelt on trivial details or criticism of

¹¹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 18, 25 October 1928, p. 33.

¹² *Ibid.*, no. 19, 5 November 1928, p. 32.

individuals.¹³ In addition, workshop cells showed more interest in discussing matters which directly affected the material interests of workers. Therefore, it was recommended that workshop cells should pay proper attention to matters that did not directly affect the material interests of workers, such as absenteeism.¹⁴ Another problem was the possibility of replacing production meetings by workshop cells. Workshop cells often tried to lay down a list of questions which should be discussed at production meetings. On the other hand, some workshop cells did not become involved in economic matters sufficiently on the grounds that they were not willing to meddle with the activity of production meetings.¹⁵

However, the most serious problem was the growing tension between party cells and economic managers. From the first stage of *perestroika*, the call for party cells' involvement in economic questions created serious confusion and tension on the shop floor level. Traditionally, three main organisations were responsible for administrative questions within the factory: the party cell, the trade union committee and the management. Each of these had specific responsibilities, although the precise boundaries between them were uncertain. At the factory level, the 'triangle' (*troika*) consisted of the management director, the party cell secretary, and the chairman of the factory trade union committee. The director was supposed to be in sole charge of economic affairs, and the party was supposed to confine its activities in economic matters to monitoring and exhortation. Not surprisingly, the party's growing involvement in economic questions led to confusion about the respective roles of the party cell, economic management, and trade union at the factory level. As the party turned its 'face to production', the boundary between the responsibilities of the party cell and the director became more blurred. Although party directives continuously emphasised that they should not intervene in the work of managers, party cells often found themselves becoming involved in economic matters that were properly the responsibility of managers.

Tension between party cells and economic management in these circumstances was bound to grow. As was revealed by the October 1928 review of workshop cells'

¹³ *Ibid.*, no. 18, 25 October 1928, p. 33.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

work, there was a growing tendency for workshop cell bureaux or meetings to adopt a resolution calling for a replacement of the workshop administration. In fact, in 1928 a considerable number of resolutions called for the replacement of foremen or brigade leaders.¹⁶ Indeed, there was an enormous abnormality as to the mutual relation between the workshop cells and the directors of the workshop. As the expression '*kto kogo?*' suggests, they were fighting in effect for control over the workshop. When the workshop cell was strong, it often dominated the director by overriding his decisions and obliging him to carry out all the resolutions of the plenum or bureau. In many cases, workshop cells meddled with the functions of administrative-technical personnel, claiming that decisions made by workshop cells should be binding for directors or the factory management.¹⁷

In an article in *Partrabotnik*, an attempt was made to clarify the party cells' rights and obligations in production matters. It was argued that the party cells should take part in production, but not being in charge of production. It was emphasised that party organisations should not get involved in administration and not interfere in the administrative functions of factory (or workshop) directors. Instead, they should discuss production questions and draw the working masses into socialist construction. The roles workshop cells were supposed to play included highlighting the defects, monitoring performance and ensuring the fulfilment of their proposals. At the same time, calls were made to the effect that the economic manager should not ignore the party organisation or prevent it from taking part in management, and that all the workshop cells' proposals, which the workshop cell administrator did not object to, should be implemented.¹⁸

It is doubtful that this clarification could help to reduce tensions on the shop floor. Nevertheless, a procedure was set for the dissolving of disagreement between workshop cells and management. In case the workshop cell administrator did not agree with the decision made by the workshop cell, he could appeal to the factory

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33. It was considered inappropriate for the workshop cells to get involved in personal conflict. Therefore, warnings were made that workshop cells might become distracted from other more important matters by getting involved in such conflicts or personal matters.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

administration. If the workshop cell did not agree with the measures taken by the workshop cell administrator, it could appeal to the *kollektiv* bureau.¹⁹

7.2.2 'Edinonachalie'

Despite various attempts, tension grew quickly between party cells and industrial managers. The former often attempted to meddle in the detailed operation of the enterprise and the latter attempted either to ignore or bypass the suggestions made by party officials and activists. Moreover, it soon became clear that excessive interference in management by party officials and activists with little or no technical expertise could seriously damage the performance of their enterprise. Therefore, leading officials in the city began to feel the need to try to set some limit to the activities of party cells in the enterprise. For instance, in January 1929, G. Pylaev, the Vyborgskii raikom secretary, criticised the attacks on foremen and directors that party cells were making, as being 'unfair' and 'not objective'.²⁰

As confusion continued about the responsibility of the party, especially at lower levels, the principle of one-man management became a topic of debate. At the second oblast party conference in the spring of 1929, the question of *edinonachalie* was raised by a delegate during the debate following the Central Committee report delivered by Voroshilov. In reply to the delegate's question, Voroshilov was keen to stress that *edinonachalie* certainly did not mean that the party organisation should not 'play the very closest role in the leadership of our enterprises'. However, he also pointed out that the party was already promoting to responsible economic work its own cadres, who 'must have the initiative in their own sphere and, most importantly, take upon themselves responsibility for the enterprise as a whole'. 'In future', he went on, 'the party and trade union organisations should give them maximum support'.²¹ Despite his explanation, confusion and dispute remained. Thus at a later session of the same conference a party activist from the Bol'shevik factory criticised his director for

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

²⁰ Cited from P. O. Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan: The Case of Leningrad* (CREES Discussion Papers, SIPS, no. 24, University of Birmingham, 1983), part 2, p. 2.

²¹ *Stenograficheskii biulleten' II-oi Leningradskoi oblastnoi konferentsii* (Leningrad, 1929), no. 4, p. 4.

attempting 'to take all the responsible work of the enterprise solely on [his] own shoulder' and appealed to the obkom for support.²²

In 1929 confusion regarding the role of the factory party cells in industry continued and tension between party cells and factory managers accumulated. Factory party cells kept meddling in the operation of the enterprise and attacking industrial managers who ignored or bypassed their suggestions. According to a review of party cells' work in economic matters carried out in the early summer of 1929, some members showed a negative attitude towards administrative-technical personnel, and, moreover, attempted to stand in the way of the need to raise labour discipline in the factories and opposed raising work norms and labour productivity.²³

The first major attempt to clarify the position came only in September 1929 when the Central Committee adopted a resolution on *edinonachalie*. The resolution proclaimed that the director was directly answerable for the fulfilment of the industrial and financial plan and all production tasks. He was also in charge both of the management apparatus and all the organisational-technical functions of production at the enterprise. As for the party cells, they were responsible for the 'social-political and economic life of the enterprise, so as to ensure the fulfilment of the party's principal directives by trade union and economic organs, without interfering in the detailed work of the trade union committee and [enterprise] director, especially in the operational command of the administration'. On the other hand, the factory trade union committee was expected to become an 'energetic organiser of the production activity and initiatives of workers', listen to management reports, investigate problems with production, make suggestions for improvement, and see to it that they were actually implemented by management.²⁴

Obviously, the main aim of one-man management was to eliminate the parallelism of economic management, party cell, and factory trade union committee. The institutionalisation of one-man management sought to establish sole managerial command by eliminating the parallelism of these three organisations. One-man management was intended to make management strong, efficient, and accountable. On

²² *Ibid.*, no. 3, p. 17.

²³ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 5 June 1929, p. 41.

²⁴ *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniiakh s'ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1984), vol. 4, pp. 556-562.

the other hand, it dictated not managerial but political and social roles to the party and union organisations. They, in turn, were supposed neither to ‘collude’ nor to compete for power with management, but to aid it by educating and organising workers in the spirit of ‘proletarian discipline’. In other words, it was intended to reorient the party and union organisations toward the new offensive by gearing their activity both to the control of management and to the political and social mobilisation of workers.²⁵

Despite the party leadership’s effort to draw a clear distinction between the obligations of party, economic management, and trade union, the decree never adequately defined how the system was to operate in practice. Party and trade union organisations were strictly forbidden to intervene in managerial questions, but were encouraged both to aid management and to control or monitor it. In the real world, these two functions often contradicted each other. Furthermore, as for the party cell, it was not clear to what extent it should get involved in economic matters, since the distinction between monitoring and interference was difficult to identify in concrete instances. Therefore, there remained much ambiguity about the precise role of each of the troika’s three bodies, and this ambiguity and contradiction continued to undermine one-man management in the following years.

Indeed, the party faced serious problems in implementing its directive on *edinonachalie*. In March 1930, it was reported that many party organisations, even those in highly industrialised areas such as Moscow and Leningrad, were not carrying out the directive on *edinonachalie*. Even though reports on *edinonachalie* were heard at factory general meetings, no specific resolutions were adopted. In the eyes of the central leadership, the violation of the principle of *edinonachalie* was the main reason for the poor performance of the industry in the first four months of the economic year 1929-30. Therefore, factory party organisations were asked to implement the party directive on *edinonachalie* so that rights and responsibilities within the ‘triangle’ could be delimited clearly.²⁶

The main obstacle in implementing the party directive on *edinonachalie* was that economic managers and technical personnel disliked the idea of one-man

²⁵ Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers, 1928-1932* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 63-64.

²⁶ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 5, March 1930, p. 37.

management, and often refused to assume the rights with which they had been entrusted. The factory directors and workshop chairmen were to take responsibility for the operating of the economy. In reality, however, many economic managers were not willing to take over responsibility for economic performance. At the same time the party and the trade union, instead of helping the work of economic managers, often interrupted them.²⁷

Problems regarding the interpretation of the party's role at the enterprise continued to surface, especially at workshop level, where interference by workshop cells in 'operational-economic' questions 'diverted and distracted attention' away from the party's real responsibilities, and acted as a brake on the industrialisation drive.²⁸ Parallelism between the work of the director and the party secretary was often reported. Especially when poor economic performance was often associated with political failings,²⁹ the party secretaries and other workers were inclined to get involved in concrete economic questions, even though they were reprimanded for their breaches of *edinonachalie*.

A further resolution in April 1930 had to be published in order to re-emphasise the significance and meaning of *edinonachalie*.³⁰ However, the immediate improvement which the party leadership hoped for did not take place in that year. In May 1930 when the work of the Moskovsko-narvskii raion party organisation was reviewed, Glinskii, the Central Committee instructor, criticised the failure of some factories in the raion to achieve their production targets, and linked this fact to the violation of the principle of *edinonachalie*. He also criticised factory directors for not fully understanding the meaning of this principle.³¹ Buratov, another Central Committee organisational instructor, also complained that many factories in this raion had not implemented the party directive concerning *edinonachalie*. He also noted that the middle-ranking administrative and technical personnel failed to take responsibility.³² A review of the work of the Elektrosila factory carried out in October

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

²⁸ *K XVI s''ezdu: Materialy k organizatsionnomu otchetu TsK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1930), pp. 108-109.

²⁹ The supposed links between political failings and poor economic performance of the enterprises (or region) for which the party organisation was responsible were outlined in more detail in an article in *Bol'shevik* in 1929. *Bol'shevik*, no. 4, 1929, p. 64.

³⁰ *K XVI s''ezdu*, pp. 108-109.

³¹ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 51.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

1930 also revealed that the principle of *edinonachalie* had not been implemented in this factory, and that there was still some parallelism in the work of sections of the factory.

As the case of Elektrosila illustrates, the party directive on *edinonachalie* had not been fully implemented in many factories by the end of 1930. There were a number of reasons for this. First of all, the fact that not all workshops were reorganised along *khozraschet* lines made the implementation of *edinonachalie* less meaningful.³³ Moreover, the 'triangle' did not fully understand the meaning of *edinonachalie*. Apparently, economic managers and technical personnel were so afraid of having to take responsibility for economic performance that they did not want to make full use of their own rights. Combined with this, the inappropriate interference of party cells in the administrative work of directors and technical personnel was seen as evidence that *edinonachalie* had not been fully implemented.³⁴

Therefore, in following years, constant references were made in the party press to the need for enterprise party officials to give their full backing to the principle of one-man management and to ensure that it was not violated.³⁵ For instance, in its resolution on 'party-mass work in workshops and brigades' adopted on 21 March 1931, the Central Committee once again urged the principle of one-man management to be implemented undeviatingly. It emphasised that 'the production work of party organisations must aim at undeviating implementation of the principle of one-man management'.³⁶

7.2.3 Further shift of focus of party work to party units and *zveno* cells

From 1930 onwards, the centre of gravity of party work was transferred downwards to party unit level in Leningrad. An article appearing in *Partrabotnik* in April 1930 called for the focus of party work to be shifted not only to the workshop cells, but also to the *zveno* as the primary party unit. Accordingly the party work of the *zveno* was to be transformed to cope with the new roles expected from it. Unit

³³ The Central Committee resolution adopted on 5 December 1929 called for the reorganisation of the industrial administration along *khozraschet* lines. See *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 5, pp. 60-67.

³⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 2, January 1931, p. 44.

³⁵ See *ibid.*, no. 17, September 1930, p. 5; and nos. 7-8, April 1932, pp. 1-4.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 7, April 1931, pp. 64-66.

organisers, who had previously been informants or agitators of workshop cell bureaux, were now expected to act as organisers or leaders. Henceforward, party units were to operate independently, taking responsibility for all party work within each unit. They were to be created according to the production principle so that various kinds of party work connected with production could be carried out easily. Work plans were to be provided to each party unit so that the 'triangle' of each *zveno* (unit organiser, brigade leader, and trade union organiser) would be responsible for plan fulfilment. It was thought that this would give the work of the *zveno* flexibility and increase the activity of workers. With the creation of *zveno* cells, the factory party committee or *kollektiv* bureau would remain responsible for the guiding and instructing of workshop cells. The latter would be the centre of all economic and political life of the workshop, and it would directly guide the *zveno*.³⁷

One of the aims of transferring the focus of party work was to guarantee the implementation of industrial tasks by mobilising the activity of the masses. It was claimed that where the *zveno* triangle operated properly, the *zveno* fulfilled the plan and other tasks in the due time.³⁸ Taking into the consideration that a radical change in production (the shifting of production tasks to brigades, the shock movement, and the widening of the rights of the lower level administration) took place, it was thought to be necessary to transform the party unit into an organisation that was able to discuss and make decisions on questions regarding the local brigade. Accordingly, unit organisers were urged to act as leaders and organisers of all the political and economic work of the brigades.³⁹

The main task of the *zveno* was the implementation of the production tasks set out for the particular production unit where it was formed. In addition, the *zveno* was expected to make better use of equipment and to prevent waste and absenteeism. It was also *zveno*'s responsibility to guide socialist competition. Moreover, it was to undertake a study of non-party activists, recruit them to the party, and explain party policy to the workers so that the party's political influence would reach every worker.⁴⁰ The relative roles of the 'triangle' were also specified. The 'triangle' were to

³⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 9, April 1930, pp. 27-28.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 12, May 1930, p. 46.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 45.

relate to each other in an appropriate manner, which meant that they should share information, and discuss common concerns. It was argued that this would facilitate the implementation of *edinonachalie*, and help mobilise the workers of a brigade for the implementation of production tasks and the improvement of party leadership. It was admitted that there was a great danger of interfering in day-to-day work, but, it was thought, with the proper guidance provided by factory party committee and cells, the problem could be overcome.⁴¹ Later, in July 1930, unit organisers and party units as a whole were given more rights and they were allowed to show maximum initiative and independence in a new resolution concerning their organisation.⁴²

However, the restructuring process proceeded rather slowly in its initial stage. By May 1930, the restructuring had only started in Leningrad. Even though the production task was to be broken down to the level of each brigade, most brigades did not have their own production workplan. The *zveno* 'triangle' had not been formed within the unit.⁴³ However, by June 1930, party units (*zveno*) had been transformed into basic organs in some factories such as Krasnyi putilovets and Elektrosila. They recruited new members, promoted cadres, and distributed party and social assignments so that everyone would have an appropriate economic-political task.⁴⁴

By 1931, the focus of party work had been transferred to party units or *zveno* cells in many factories. In April of this year, a review of the reconstruction of party work in the Moskovskii raion revealed that in party organisations where party work had been reconstructed, factories (or workshops) had achieved better results in fulfilling the industrial and financial plan. For instance, it was claimed that at Elektrosila the creation of *zveno* cells along production lines had made it possible to implement the plan. The protocols of brigade meetings in other factories showed that by this time brigades had become independent production units. Reportedly, party units exposed the shortcomings of their work, found ways of fighting against waste, and influenced the workers who failed to fulfil their production norm or were absent from work.⁴⁵ The review of the work of party units at Baltic shipbuilding works

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

⁴² *Ibid.*, nos. 19-20, July-August 1930, pp. 56-58.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, no. 11, May 1930, p. 14.

⁴⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 11-12, June 1930, p. 43.

⁴⁵ *Partrabotnik*, no. 7, April 1931, pp. 32-33.

showed the same tendency. By this time most party units had their own work plans, the implementation of which, it was claimed, enabled them to achieve positive production results.⁴⁶ At the Stalin factory, party units and *zveno* cells became the lowest level of party organisation, and they turned their 'face to production'. Almost all *zveno* cells operated according to work plans which they had to abide by. Economic questions comprised the biggest proportion of the work plan agenda of party cells. It was claimed that this led to an increase in party members' activism and also strengthened the leading role of communists in production matters.⁴⁷

At this point, the Central Committee resolution on 'party-mass work in workshops and brigades' adopted on 21 March 1931 called for a radical restructuring of party-mass work in the factories. The main aim of the resolution was to emphasise the social-organisational role of party cells and of individual communists. The tasks were specified as follows: the proper allocation of communists; further raising of the vanguard role of party cells and of each communist at the factory; the transformation of party units into centres of party-mass work with the aim of engaging the masses of workers by influencing the party; and better organisation of the struggle for the implementation of the industrial and financial plan'.⁴⁸

7.2.4 'Concrete' party leadership over production matters

In 1931, the party began to call for 'concrete' leadership over production matters. In January 1931, the party leadership expressed its dissatisfaction with the work carried out by factory party organisations. It complained that party work on economic matters was of a 'declaratory' character, that party directives concerning *edinonachalie* had not been carried out, and that communists did not have sufficient technical knowledge.⁴⁹ By this time, in the country as a whole questions of an economic nature accounted for 45 per cent of questions discussed at workshop level. However, party leadership over production matters was often limited to declaratory and general statements, and the resolutions of the factory party cells were not binding.⁵⁰ Therefore, it was recommended that the party cells should take specific

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁴⁷ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 9-10, May 1931, pp. 33-34.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 7, April 1931, pp. 64-66.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 2, January 1931, p. 42.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

decisions on production matters, and also provide 'concrete' leadership over production matters. The article went on to say that 'without concrete party leadership, without the systemic verification of fulfilment of the basic indicators of the plan, we will not be able to realise the responsible task of the third year of the FYP'.⁵¹ The 'concrete' leadership of the party meant redistributing party strength to the most important sections of the enterprise and mobilising non-party activists and the entire mass of workers in order to obtain the necessary effect in certain sections over a set period of time.⁵²

Indeed, discussions held and resolutions adopted at party cell meetings were vague and of a 'declaratory' nature. In many cases, the party cell bureaux simply replicated resolutions already adopted at the higher level of the party organisation. This led to a call for more focused and specific leadership of the party over economic matters. Now, factory party cells were expected not only to discuss production matters, but also to check the performance of the particular workshop or brigade.

According to a report by Lysakov, a party official from the Krasnyi putilovets, to an organisers' conference held on 29 January 1931, party organisations at the Krasnyi putilovets, from the factory party committee down to *zveno* cells, were involved in questions of an economic nature. They monitored the fulfilment of tasks every ten days, and were also involved in resolving problems connected with the industrial and financial plan, and workers' invention. All these questions were not only discussed, but also decided in specific terms.⁵³ By September 1931, party organisations at Krasnyi putilovets were involved not only in plan examination, but also in a review of the work of the entire enterprise as well as its most important sectors. Earlier, plan fulfilment had been examined on a monthly basis. Now, however, it was examined every ten days. The enterprise, it was claimed, had obtained positive results due to its 'concrete' leadership. The case of the metallurgical department of this factory illustrates how the party organisations provided 'concrete' leadership. When this department fell behind the plan, the factory party committee became actively involved in solving the problem which had caused a systemic delay

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 24.

in the fulfilling of the plan. At first, a report on the condition of the department was heard at the party committee's plenum. Then, the party committee began to control and supervise the department's work on a daily basis and provided assistance. Leading workshops also provided assistance to less advanced workshops which were lagging behind. It was claimed that, as a result, the metallurgical department had fulfilled almost 100 per cent of the plan already by May 1931.⁵⁴

Factory party organisations became much more generally involved in technical matters at this time. Indeed, the practice of 'concrete' party leadership could not be realised without dealing with technical matters. For instance, at Krasnyi putilovets, questions such as the organisation of engine-building, inner-factory transportation, the reconstruction of the factory, and of instrumental matters, became the main concern of the party organisation.⁵⁵ Technical questions constituted the largest part of the resolutions of party committees, *kollektivy*, workshop cells, and the *zveno*.⁵⁶ Likewise, at Russkii dizel', all party cells were involved in specific production tasks. It was also claimed that the factory party organisations played an active role in realising Stalin's 'six conditions'.⁵⁷ It was argued that the fight for accurate organisation of production process and mastering technique had raised party work to a new and higher level.⁵⁸

However, it soon became obvious that without technical knowledge, party cell secretaries or activists were in no position to provide 'concrete' leadership over production matters. One of the problems was that most party secretaries did not have a technical education, and often completely did not understand the production processes at the given production units.⁵⁹ Therefore, in 1931 much emphasis was given to the improvement of the technical level of each communist. An article in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, for instance, suggested that each communist guide production matters

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1931, p. 9.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁷ In his famous speech to a conference of industrial managers on 23 June 1931, Stalin proposed six new tasks; an organised recruitment of the labour force; an end to wage levelling; an end to the confusion caused by the continuous working week; the making of 'a working-class industrial and technical intelligentsia'; the rehabilitation of the old industrial and technical intelligentsia; and the reinstatement of *khozraschet* in industrial management. See *Partrabotnik*, no. 13, July 1931, pp. 1-14.

⁵⁸ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 24, December 1931, p. 48.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 2, January 1931, p. 43.

specifically, be familiar with the equipment, materials, instruments, and products of brigades, and learn the technique of the production which he or she was guiding.⁶⁰

7.2.5 Re-emphasis on party-mass work in 1932

In 1932, the emphasis of party cell work shifted from economic back to political matters and in particular, mass-party work. In the mid-1920s, the party leadership's main fear had been that the cells were not discussing economic matters with sufficient frequency or confidence. By 1932 the problem, from the centre's point of view, was that cells were overruling the directors too frequently. Such practices were usually disparaged officially not only because they violated the principle of *edinonachalie* but also because they had a deleterious effect on party work itself. Indeed, due to factory party cells' excessive involvement in production matters in the previous four years, by 1932 serious damage had been done to their ideological-political work: party mass work was largely neglected in many factories. Already in November 1931, during the re-election campaign to lower party organs, it was acknowledged that there were serious shortcomings in the organisation of party work and the guiding of workshop cells - in particular, *zveno* cells and party units, and that both organisational and party education work had been largely neglected.⁶¹ Furthermore, only a few factories had been undertaking work with leading groups of highly qualified workers. This was thought to be the most serious shortcoming in party mass work.⁶²

Therefore, by 1932 the concern with the need to improve party-mass work in the enterprise had become of paramount importance.⁶³ From the beginning of 1932, the party journal, *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, published articles emphasising mass-party work at the enterprise level. In March 1932, while emphasising the importance of realising Stalin's six conditions and the slogan 'face to production', an article in *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo* argued that the practice of some factory party organisations was completely wrong as they failed to pay attention to questions such as trade union work, agitation-mass work among non-party workers, and party education.⁶⁴ Another

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 17, September 1931, p. 9.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, no. 22, November 1931, p. 41.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁶³ *Partrabotnik*, no. 9, May 1932, p. 15; nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 21; and *Leningradskaia pravda*, 30 May 1932, p. 1.

⁶⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 6, March 1932, p. 33.

article argued that party conferences should broaden their concerns to include 'not only the most important economic questions but also questions of general political and inner-party life'.⁶⁵ The same points were made in a number of other articles throughout 1932.⁶⁶

In March 1932, the party leadership criticised the delay in reorganising party work at the factories. Despite the Central Committee resolution on party mass work in workshops and brigades of March 1931, party work had not been fully reconstructed by this time. Untimely, insufficient and formalistic reconstruction of party work in individual enterprises, and in particular, the incomplete implementation of the Central Committee directive on work in workshops and brigades were thought to be the main reason for the insufficient implementation of Stalin's six conditions.⁶⁷

The situation at Leningrad factories appeared to be slightly better than in other regions. While some factory party organisations elsewhere were criticised for shortcomings in the work of their party units, some *zveno* cells in Leningrad's Narvskii raion were hailed as models to be emulated. For instance, Gartsev's party unit, composed of fitter-assemblers working in the second Kranovii factory, was acclaimed as one of the best. This party unit contained 25 people, all of whom were shock workers. Among them five were party members and five were candidates. A 'triangle' had been formed within the unit, and work plans had been drawn up. This party unit discussed a monthly production plan, heard its foreman's report on plan fulfilment, and discussed questions concerning truancy. From September 1931, all brigades of the *zveno* were operating on a *khozraschet* basis.⁶⁸

However, not all *zveno* cells were working as they were supposed to, even in Leningrad's Narvskii raion. It was claimed that at Krasnyi putilovets, for instance, the *zveno* cells were strengthened as a result of re-election campaigns. The activities of the unit organisers were discussed at *zveno* party meetings at which non-party workers also took part.⁶⁹ However, it was revealed that party units were not organised as instructed. The majority (65 per cent) united communists of two to ten brigades, ten

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 9, May 1932, p. 25

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 1 and nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 1.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 5, March 1932, p. 50.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

per cent of them united communists of more than ten brigades, and 13 per cent united workers of three shifts. Obviously, this made party mass work in brigades and shifts difficult. Thus the question arose of organising party groups in every brigade of ten or more workers - the latest task of party organisational work.⁷⁰

Party units were expected to take the lead in the fight for the industrial-financial plan, and to be the support point of party work at factories. However, a great number of party units were operating very poorly, and many of them existed only on paper. Many factory party committees and workshop cell bureaux did not provide sufficient support to lower party units. Here the work of the *zveno* was lagging behind.⁷¹

Another article on the work of factory party cells of the Narvskii raion revealed that in many factories, there were serious shortcomings in the party-mass work the party cells carried out. It is true that party units had been strengthened and that they operated according to work plans that were drawn up every month and also every ten days. However, many of them did not know how to combine the role of implementing the industrial-production plan with the role of strengthening and developing inner-party work such as party education, work with candidates, party membership growth, and discipline. Therefore, it was emphasised that without strong, well-established inner-party work, without well-established party-education work among party members, in particular, candidate members, it would be difficult to secure a successful outcome in the fulfilment of the industrial and financial plan. Together with this, the importance of party-mass work with non-party workers and of ideological-political work was emphasised.⁷² Unfortunately, factory party committees and *kollektivy* did not provide sufficiently enthusiastic and specific assistance to the workshop cells when the latter promoted party-mass and inner-party work in party units. In addition, when all party organisations were involved in the development of party-mass work in brigades and the strengthening of unit organisers, the economic leadership of some factories showed a formalistic attitude towards them.⁷³

The major turn in party policy concerning the factory party cells came in May 1932, when Kaganovich delivered a speech to the Moscow obkom plenum. In it he

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁷² *Ibid.*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 30-31.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

made a number of disparaging references to the low ideological level of many party members, the poor state of agitation work in the factories, and the over-abundance of workshop cells and party units in some enterprises. At the same time, concerning a number of instances of the abuse of the principle of one-man management, Kaganovich warned both party and economic officials in the enterprise against misinterpreting *edinonachalie* either as complete non-interference or, on the other hand, 'excessive meddling'.⁷⁴

Similar views were expressed in the Leningrad region. While emphasising the need to improve party-mass work at the enterprise, 'good-for-nothing leaders of party organs' were roundly condemned for continuing to attempt to act as a substitute for the economic organs, giving operational orders to the factory managers and 'violating *edinonachalie* in the most flagrant way'.⁷⁵ However, the change in emphasis did not mean that party workers would not be responsible for economic conditions at their factories. As Gaza, one of Leningrad's gorkom secretaries, put it, those officials who argued that because of the 1929 directive they had 'simply become agitators and [were] no longer answerable for anything' were mistaken. He went on to make it clear that 'the party organisation is answerable for the state of economic life at the enterprises, and on this the directive is quite precise'.⁷⁶ This loosely defined, apparently confused and contradictory position of the party official in the supervision of economic life at the enterprise became a recurring theme throughout the 1930s.

Nevertheless, this shift in emphasis in party work soon had an effect in Leningrad region. Following Kaganovich's speech in May, party mass work in the large and medium scale enterprises of the Leningrad region was reviewed in June 1932. The review revealed that inner-party, educational and mass-political work were lagging behind economic work. It was observed that workshop cells, instead of engaging themselves in necessary party political work, were completely engrossed in economic questions, thus violating the principle of *edinonachalie*.⁷⁷ Organisational work was not properly carried out, due to the overloading of secretaries with the

⁷⁴ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, pp. 1-9. For articles containing similar remarks in the Leningrad press, see *Leningradskaia pravda*, 27 May 1932, p. 1 and 30 May 1932, p. 1.

⁷⁵ *Partrabotnik*, no. 9, May 1932, p. 15; nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 21; and *Leningradskaia pravda*, 30 May 1932, p. 1.

⁷⁶ *Leningradskaia pravda*, 9 June 1932, pp. 2-3.

⁷⁷ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 11-12, June 1932, p. 27.

details of economic questions. Party education work was also poorly carried out. For instance, in the building-construction workshop cell of the Mart' factory, despite the relatively high level of party saturation and the correct distribution of party members, there was no agitation-mass and explanatory work carried out in the workshop. The party's economic and political tasks were badly explained to communists and non-party workers; and worker agitators were not properly trained. Kalyrin, a trade union group organiser of an assemblers' brigade, provides another example of poor party-agitation work. Even though he was not even a party candidate, he had to explain party policy to other non-party workers, since there was not a single party member in his brigade, except the brigade leader who was a party candidate member. He requested that a communist be sent to his brigade, but nothing had been done.⁷⁸

The review also revealed that most party members did not carry out any specific tasks. The majority of their assignments were not political but rather economic or organisational-technical ones. Party cells did not monitor whether each communist carried out the work assigned to him, did not instruct them properly, and did not help them with implementing party assignments. In some cases, party cells did not even know who were party members. Party cells were keen to recruit workers into the party, but they did not do enough work to educate them. In general, work with candidate members was evaluated poor.⁷⁹

In addition, party organisations at the workshop level were not always set up in accordance with instructions. In one case, two workshop cells were created within one workshop. This led to a transfer of responsibility from one to the other. The party instruction concerning the creation of shift cells was largely ignored, and as a result, no serious party-mass work was carried out at the evening and night shifts. Thus, it was thought that there was not sufficient party influence on workers of the evening and night shifts, which, in turn, resulted in low labour productivity within them.⁸⁰

Moreover, the majority of communists did not take an active part in party life. Party meetings were held irregularly and their main concern was production matters. The agenda was not interesting enough to stir the workers' attention. Generally it

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

lacked lively political questions. Besides, communists working at night shift were not able to attend party meetings. Some did not attend meetings for several months. Party days were poorly prepared.⁸¹

One of the measures taken to overcome poor party work was the introduction of the 'single party day' (*edinyi partden*). Originally introduced in 1921, the idea was to regularly set aside a day for party work, including study. In 1932, this idea was revived and vigorously implemented. The practice of holding party meetings in all the different units of the factory organisation on one or two days each month was first introduced by the Moscow party organisation and was hailed as a successful way of getting high attendances at party meetings, improving party democracy, raising the political level of rank and file members and so on.⁸² In Leningrad, the party organisation had introduced three such 'party days' per month. This was later criticised as being too many. Another criticism was that they were likely to supplant workers' meetings, especially when they were open to non-party members.⁸³

When the Central Committee organisers' general meeting was held on 8 July 1932, they discussed the question of introducing party days. At this meeting, the representative from Krasnyi putilovets reported that the single party day had already been introduced in May. Attendance at the meetings had been high: almost 90 per cent of party members participated. Open party meetings, in addition, were scheduled to be held three times a month.⁸⁴ The report on party work at Elektrosila showed that serious preparations were carried out prior to these meetings. All party members were notified of the meeting through the unit organisers, individual communists, propagandists and agitators. Not only party cell secretaries, but also unit organisers, propagandists and agitators were called to the party committee. At least three days before the meeting, the agenda of the meeting was conveyed to all party members.⁸⁵

In general, the practice of introducing party days in the Leningrad party organisation was evaluated positively. Now, not only communists, but also the

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁸² *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 13, July 1932, p. 3; no. 15, August 1932, p. 34; no. 15, August 1932, p. 37; no. 16, August 1932, p. 44; and nos. 17-18, September 1932, p. 57.

⁸³ Antony Sadler, *The Party Organisation in the Soviet Enterprise* (unpublished MSocSci dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1979), p.70.

⁸⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 15, August 1932, pp. 19-20.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

majority of non-party workers knew about party days and the agenda of the meetings. Notification work was also carried out more systematically: party days were announced by posters as well as verbal and written announcements. To increase attendance at party meetings, all the other meetings scheduled to be held on a party day were cancelled. Various preliminary work was also carried out: discussions at lunch breaks, newspaper readings on the questions to be discussed, instructing of activists, and recommendations and distribution of literature on the given questions. All these factors contributed to the increase in attendance at the meetings not only by communists, but also by non-party workers.⁸⁶

However, there were also shortcomings. Not infrequently, those who gave a report to the meetings came to that particular factory or workshop for the first time and did not know the local conditions. Also, the agenda of party days was often chosen without appropriate preparation, which made meetings less interesting and even boring. In addition, the proposals made at the party meetings were often not specific enough. Therefore, it was difficult to examine whether the proposals had indeed been put into practice.⁸⁷

Finally, in August 1932, the Central Committee adopted a resolution 'on the work of party cells at enterprises', which in fact reversed the tendency of the previous four years towards the party cells' growing involvement in economic matters. In this resolution, the party called for the full involvement of all workers in political work and party influence; raising the level of political education and mass work among workers; improving the work of party cells by concentrating their strength directly on their own workshops; linking the political education of party members and candidates with current political tasks and slogans; and finally, raising the role of party cells at factories as leaders of political life, party work, and economic measures, and as organisers of struggle to improve workers' daily life and improve supplies to workers.⁸⁸ Evidently, this resolution played down the role of the party cells in the economic life of the enterprises and emphasised a more 'political mass function'.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 16, August 1932, pp. 1-2.

Now, it is clear that emphasis was placed on party-mass and political education work rather than on economic issues.

Based on this resolution, party work was re-oriented to undertake a 'political mass function' and to gradually withdraw from direct involvement in economic matters in the following months of 1932. Much effort was made to ensure that party activists in the enterprise turned their attention to party rather than economic questions. Effectively, this meant their concentrating more attention on purely internal matters such as collecting dues, sorting out membership rolls, raising party discipline, and generally improving the quality of membership via the network of party education courses.

7.3 Mass mobilisation

During the first FYP, party-mass work within the industrial enterprises became increasingly significant. With the party's growing involvement in economic questions, the nature of party-mass work changed considerably. Under the slogan of *perestroika*, party-mass work gained a 'clearly expressed production character' in order to 'meet the demands of socialist construction'.⁸⁹ The main task of mass work was defined as mobilising the mass of workers to enthusiastically fulfil the industrial-financial plan. Here, we shall concentrate upon party work regarding production meetings and the socialist competition movement, which were the two most common forms of workers' participation in production matters.

7.3.1 Production meetings

Before the shock movement and socialist competition got under way in 1929, the most common form in which workers expressed their initiatives was production meetings in the factory. Since wages could not be offered as incentives, and since the party leadership regarded participation by the workforce in certain aspects of decision-making as desirable, the active support of workers for productivity campaigns was sought through the offer of open meetings with management. Production meetings were one forum for this participation, although any general workers' meeting was

⁸⁹ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 1, November 1929, pp. 17-30.

empowered to raise production issues. In these meetings, administrative-technical personnel, the party, union, and Komsomol officials, and workers discussed a variety of production problems and exchanged ideas on how to resolve them.⁹⁰ Workers were encouraged to discuss reports from management and to suggest ways of increasing productivity and efficiency. The purpose of these meetings was to involve workers, specialists and factory administrators in efforts to rationalise production, to improve factory life and to solicit worker suggestions on how to overcome problems caused by mismanagement or which managers were otherwise unable to resolve.⁹¹

In the Leningrad region, production meetings were held at workshop level as well as factory level in 1928. In addition, joint factory production meetings and the production-technology conferences were held. The issues most frequently discussed at these meetings were rationalising production, increasing productivity, and cutting production costs. In 1928, the agenda of production meetings shifted from discussing specific production questions to discussing questions of a planning nature and questions concerning capital accumulation and the re-equipment of workshops.⁹²

Interestingly, the nature of production meetings changed during the self-criticism campaign in mid-1928. In promoting the self-criticism campaign in 1928, the party leadership directed the focus of production meetings toward control over management. In the special appeal on self-criticism that the party issued on 3 June 1928, the Central Committee advocated the ‘punishment of those who are guilty of sabotaging workers’ suggestions’ and called for the ‘conversion of production meetings into mass control organs’.⁹³ It was stated in this appeal that the party alone could not solve the main problems of socialist reconstruction without the masses overseeing the malfunctioning industrial and government administration. The motto of self-criticism, the appeal said, should be the following: ‘criticism coming from the bottom to the top and from the top to the bottom, without exempting anyone.’ The

⁹⁰ Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution*, p. 116.

⁹¹ William Chase, ‘The Dialectics of Production Meetings, 1923-29’, *Russian History*, vols. 2-3, no. 13, Summer-Fall 1986, p. 149.

⁹² A. N. Gutarov, ‘Proizvodstvennye soveshchaniia na leningradskikh predpriatiiakh, 1926-1929 gg.’ in *Istoriia rabocheho klassa Leningrada* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1962), pp. 64-65.

⁹³ *Izvestiia TsK VKP(b)*, no. 18, 8 June 1928, pp. 1-3.

task of the day now, clarified the appeal further, was 'to raise a mighty wave of self-criticism coming from the bottom up'.⁹⁴

The change of tone was soon reflected in the Leningrad region. The self-criticism campaign that followed the 1928 appeal was directed against economic managers at the shop floor level.⁹⁵ However, despite some criticisms of the misconduct of managers, the self-criticism campaign did not bring substantial positive results. In August 1928 when the Leningrad obkom secretariat issued an appeal which called for a review of production meetings, it was felt that the self-criticism campaign had not been fully directed towards the elimination of the specific shortcomings of industry. Criticisms were made of slovenliness, drunkenness, absenteeism and negligent attitudes towards production. However, it was thought that the campaign did not lead to the establishment of a new production culture. For instance, questions of raising labour productivity were not sufficiently discussed at meetings. Accordingly, the obkom secretariat called for the identifying of shortcomings as well as for workers' involvement in eliminating such shortcomings and improving the work of production meetings. In particular, the secretariat instructed that a formalistic and cold-hearted attitude towards workers' suggestions should be fought against and that those guilty of bureaucratic impediment of workers' initiatives should be exposed.⁹⁶

As was revealed during the self-criticism campaign in 1928, workers did not show much enthusiasm towards taking part in production meetings. Even party members did not attend them. 'Production meetings are held, but no party members want to attend.'⁹⁷ Indeed, a review of workshop cells' work conducted in early 1928 showed that the attendance rates of party members at production meetings were low in factories such as Skorokhod, Krasnyi sudostroitel', Svetlana, and Znamia truda. In the Mart' shipbuilding works, the active participation of party members at production meetings was reportedly very rare.⁹⁸

One of the reasons for workers' low participation was that at the meetings, no practical decisions were made in relation to production issues with which the workers

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁵ See Gooderham, *The Regional Party Apparatus in the First Five Year Plan*, part 1, p. 14.

⁹⁶ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 11, 1928, pp. 3-4.

⁹⁷ *Partrabotnik*, no. 14, 15 August 1928, p. 53.

⁹⁸ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 15 March 1928, p. 24.

were most concerned.⁹⁹ The resolutions adopted at production meetings were often too general to bind anybody.¹⁰⁰ The main reason workers shied away from production meetings, however, was that management tended to ignore their views. Workers' suggestions accepted at the meetings, for instance, were not always implemented. Minor suggestions were normally put into practice, but suggestions on important matters were less likely to be realised. When workers questioned why their suggestions were not being implemented, they were given various excuses, or some kind of agreements were made in order to appease them. Finally workers were told that their suggestions were 'not stipulated by the plan'.¹⁰¹ All these factors discouraged workers from attending the meetings.

Therefore, it was argued that economic managers should take responsibility for not implementing workers' suggestions without justifiable grounds, and that workers should be given information as to what was being done concerning their suggestions. Otherwise, the work of production meetings could not be activated in reality. In fact, this claim had been continuously repeated in resolutions of higher party organisations, but was never really realised.¹⁰²

Indeed, the attendance rates at production meeting were rather low in 1928. In general, workers were not so keen to participate in production meetings. According to an article in *Partrabotnik* published in November 1928, about 20 per cent of workers were participating in production meetings in the Moskovsko-narvskii raion. In other raions, attendance rates were lower than this: only ten to twelve per cent of workers attended production meetings.¹⁰³ At Krasnyi treugol'nik, for instance, 12 to 17 per cent of workers attended the meetings and workers did not show sufficient enthusiasm for the meetings.¹⁰⁴

In October 1928 an all-Union review of the production meetings was conducted in order to evaluate the work of production meetings and to eradicate their problems. The review, which continued in 1929, attracted much attention from workers, who put forward various proposals while the review was in progress. However, as was often

⁹⁹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 14, 15 August 1928, p. 53.

¹⁰⁰ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 15 March 1928, p. 24.

¹⁰¹ *Partrabotnik*, no. 14, 15 August 1928, p. 53.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, no. 20, 25 November 1928, p. 34.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 19, 5 November 1928, p. 35.

reported in newspapers, progress towards implementing the proposals was very slow. Many suggestions put forward by workers were not realised in Leningrad's industrial enterprises. Concerning the rationalisation of production, a total of 24,127 suggestions were put forward at production meetings in 1928, but only about half of them were implemented. Some 1,875 suggestions were rejected on sound grounds, but the rest were not put into practice due to what was reported to be administrative negligence. Some administrative-economic officials were blamed for their bureaucratism and sluggishness.¹⁰⁵

In 1929, the party paid more attention to the work of production meetings and it urged the masses of workers to take part in them. At the second oblast party conference held in March 1929, the Leningrad obkom called for a systematic strengthening of production meetings by attracting workers to the study of basic economic questions, by strengthening trade union organs' leadership over its work, and by ensuring that economic organs provided proper assistance.¹⁰⁶ In November 1929, the obkom adopted another resolution concerning production meetings. Again the obkom called for increased participation in production meetings and for the creation of a temporary control commission responsible for rationalising production. Furthermore, the obkom instructed that production meetings should be organised in each brigade and shift, and that the chairmen of production meetings should select permanent cadres responsible for the work of production meetings.¹⁰⁷

In 1929, production meetings gained more importance by amalgamating with the socialist competition movement. With the emergence of socialist competition, the nature of production meetings changed considerably. Just as the emphasis was put on mobilising party cadres to use production meetings to implement the regime of economy from 1926, now, production meetings became a forum where the idea of socialist competition could be explained to workers and discussed. For instance, factory production meetings held in October and November 1929 heard reports on the initial results of the socialist competition movement and its impact on the enterprises'

¹⁰⁵ Gutarov, 'Proizvodstvennye soveshchaniia na leningradskikh predpriiatiakh', p. 68.

¹⁰⁶ *Leningradskaiia pravda*, 16 March 1929.

¹⁰⁷ Gutarov, 'Proizvodstvennye soveshchaniia na leningradskikh predpriiatiakh', p. 69.

economic performance, and discussed the contents of new socialist competition agreements.¹⁰⁸

Apparently, the socialist competition movement played a major role in reviving the activities of production meetings in 1929. Both the number of production meetings held and the attendance rates increased in that year. In the first half of the economic year 1928/29, a total of 561 all-factory production meetings, 3,787 workshop production meetings, and 111 production conferences were held in Leningrad. In the second half, the figure increased to 612, 4,335, and 132 respectively.¹⁰⁹ Attendance at these meetings also increased. In the first half of 1928/29, 59 workers on average participated in all-factory production meetings, 43 workers participated in workshop production meetings, and 250 workers participated in production conferences. In the second half, this increased to an average of 77, 47, and 239 workers respectively.¹¹⁰

Moreover, in 1929 a slight improvement was made in the implementation of workers' suggestions. According to an official report concerning production conferences in Leningrad, in 1927-28, 78 per cent of workers' suggestions were accepted, and 69 per cent were implemented by management. The corresponding figures for 1928-29 rose to 83 and 81 per cent, respectively.¹¹¹ Another report also suggests that more suggestions were accepted and put into practice in 1929 than in 1928. Between April and October 1928, a total of 13,122 suggestions were put forward, and 79 per cent of them were either fully or partially accepted. Among the 10,387 suggestions accepted, 65 per cent were fully or partially implemented. The 1929 figures for the corresponding period suggested a slight improvement in the work of production meetings. More suggestions (a total of 16,040) were put forward and more of them (a total of 12,749) were adopted. Among the suggestions accepted, 72 per cent were fully or partially implemented.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ In addition, they discussed the factory administration's reports on the results of the fulfilment of the economic plan and the perspectives on economic performance for 1929/30. See *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 8, 1929, p. 7.

¹⁰⁹ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona v gody pervoi piatiletki 1929-1932gg.* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 1967), p. 379.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

¹¹¹ *Trud i profdvizhenie v Leningradskoi oblasti 1932 goda: Statisticheskii spravocchnik* (Leningrad: Izdanie oblispolkoma i Lensoвета), p. 65.

¹¹² *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 379.

In order to realise workers' suggestions more efficiently, the party allowed the selection of an assistant director who was mainly responsible for production meetings. The Central Committee resolution of 5 September 1929 sanctioned the selection of the assistant director.¹¹³ In December 1929, the obkom clarified the rights and obligations of the assistant director in realising the suggestions put forward at production meetings. This aimed at utilising worker initiatives more fully and implementing their suggestions in due time in the production process and encouraging workers to take more initiative in production matters.¹¹⁴

The years 1930 and 1931 saw a further increase in attendance at production meetings. For instance, in the Moskovsko-narvskii raion, 38 per cent of workers participated in production meetings in 1930, a huge increase on the 1928 figure of 20 per cent.¹¹⁵ On average, 45 per cent of Leningrad's workers were participating in production meetings in 1930 and by 1931 the figure had reached 70 per cent. At Krasnyi putilovets, for instance, the number of participants in meetings increased from 4,500 to 21,000 workers between 1930 and 1931, and about 4,000 workers regularly attended the meetings.¹¹⁶

The rise in overall attendance in 1930 and 1931 appears to have resulted from the increased attendance at production meetings organised at the brigade level. Production meetings were not held or organised on a systemic basis at brigade level until 1930. In accordance with the shift in the centre of gravity of party work to lower levels, production meetings were held not only at all-factory and workshop levels, but also at brigade levels. It was argued that production meetings organised at the brigade level considered matters concerning their own brigade. Obviously, this attracted workers' attention more to the meetings, and as a result, a high attendance rate was achieved. As can be seen in table 7-2, workers' attendance at production meetings increased considerably in the economic year 1930/31. The increase took place both at the all-factory and workshop production meetings. For instance, in the first quarter of 1931, almost 40 per cent of workers attended all-factory production meetings, and 60 per cent attended workshop production meetings. This was a considerable increase on

¹¹³ Gutarov, 'Proizvodstvennye soveshchaniia na leningradskikh predpriiatiakh', p. 69.

¹¹⁴ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2749, p. 89-90.

¹¹⁵ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 53.

¹¹⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1980), vol. 2, p. 200.

the attendance rates in the previous year: the figures for the first quarter of 1930 were 13 per cent and 21 per cent respectively. Workers' attendance at production meetings was even greater at brigade level. For instance, between October 1930 and March 1931, the attendance exceeded 60 per cent (see table 7-2).

Table 7-2. Workers' participation in production meetings in Leningrad oblast, 1929-1931 (percentages)

	<i>All-factory production meeting</i>	<i>Production meeting at the workshop level</i>	<i>Production meeting at the brigade level</i>
October-December 1929	22.0	34.2	-
January-March 1930	12.9	21.3	-
April-June 1930	10.5	32.3	48.2
October-December 1930	29.5	54.1	64.4
January-March 1931	39.5	59.5	69.0
April-June 1931	30.8	45.9	54.6

Source: *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona v gody pervoi piatiletki, 1929-1932 gg.* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 1967), p. 389.

Moreover, the nature and work of the production meeting changed significantly in these years. The roles expected of production meetings were clearly stated in the Central Committee's resolution of March 1931. The Central Committee instructed, in its resolution on 'party-mass work in workshops and brigades', that the work of production conferences be radically restructured in such a way as to ensure the fulfilment of the industrial and financial plan, and the development and consolidation of socialist competition and the shock worker movement. While calling for the active participation of the best non-party shock-workers, communists, and Komsomolers in production conferences, the Central Committee instructed that production conferences should really be at the forefront of production activity and should help to organise the shockworker movement. At the same time, it emphasised that party organisations should endeavour to carry out workers' proposals which had been discussed and accepted at production conferences. It also approved the practice of holding production conferences at group and shift levels, and instructed that this practice,

together with the practice of holding specialised production conferences of workers in priority occupations, should be extended to all enterprises.¹¹⁷

Based on this resolution, the work of production meetings was reconstructed in the following months in Leningrad. On 19 May 1931, the obkom secretariat adopted a resolution concerning the results of *perestroika* and the immediate tasks of production meetings' work.¹¹⁸ By this time, the number of production meetings had increased significantly in the region, and their work had improved in terms of attendance and workers' participation. It was evaluated that the restructuring of production meetings, by transferring production-mass work to workshop and brigade level, made it possible to increase workers' activity with regard to questions of improving all-factory and inner-workshop planning, rationalising production, and gathering workers' proposals together. Moreover, it was claimed that the leadership of socialist competition and the shockwork movement improved in a number of factories: more specific agreements were set out; the implementation of these agreements was monitored; and workers came to fully understand the shockwork movement.

However, there were also a number of serious shortcomings. Organisational reconstruction had not been completed in factories such as the Stalin and Sverdlov factories. Work plans for production meetings had not been drawn up at the Lenin and Stalin factories and the Mart' shipbuilding works. Positive experiences on production matters were not exchanged between factories, workshops and brigades. Accordingly, the obkom secretariat suggested a number of measures to overcome these shortcomings. It instructed that the work of production meetings should be reviewed within a month and that their work should be restructured in order to transform them into 'operative headquarters' in leadership over the socialist competition and shockwork movement. The obkom secretariat also called for the promotion of exemplary work achieved by the shockwork brigades and by individual shockworkers, and it directed production meetings, first of all, to overcome the shortcomings in production. Furthermore, the obkom secretariat advocated the establishment of a system of

¹¹⁷ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 64.

¹¹⁸ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 16, 1931, pp. 3-7.

periodically reviewing brigades or workshops' fulfilment of socialist agreements and shockwork obligations.¹¹⁹

Insufficient participation by engineers and technical personnel in production meetings was another major problem. Engineers and technical personnel did not show much interest in production meetings and their attendance rates were rather low. In addition, assistant directors and assistant workshop heads who were mainly responsible for the work of production meetings did not pay sufficient attention to the *perestroika* of production meetings and did not provide any assistance. This was the case in many factories. Moreover, they did not provide proper guidance as to the process of realising workers' proposals and invention. In some factories such as Elektrosila, assistant workshop heads responsible for production meetings detached themselves completely from their work.

In some factories, however, the experimental arrangements achieved what were apparently positive results. For instance, at the Karl Marx factory, shock workers and brigade leaders reported directly to production conferences together with administrative-technical personnel. Also at the Znameni truda no. 1 factory, specialists and workers who were highly qualified were attached to each brigade. These practices were positively evaluated, and therefore, the obkom secretariat urged such practices to be promoted in as many places as possible. In addition, the obkom secretariat recommended that competitions for the best engineers, technicians, masters, and brigade leaders be organised in order to raise their participation in production meetings.¹²⁰

Lastly, serious shortcomings in realising workers' suggestions continued to be reported: the arrangement of calculation of workers' proposals was unsatisfactory; there was a delay in realising them; proposals were processed slowly; and there was poor regulation and feedback to the workers. Indeed, in October 1930 alone, as many as 4,785 suggestions that had been accepted were not put into practice. The figure increased to 8,209 in January 1931. The implementation of the accepted suggestions was delayed mainly due to the failure of economic managers. In general, economic managers did not pay enough attention to the realisation of the accepted suggestions.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-7. Also see *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 13, July 1931, pp. 66-67.

¹²⁰ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 16, 1931, pp. 3-7.

Even though assistant directors and assistant workshop heads were responsible for the work of production meetings, they did not guide the process of realising workers' suggestions and inventions properly.¹²¹

Facing such problems, the obkom secretariat instructed that a uniform procedure be established to ensure the realisation of workers' suggestions and inventions. A number of practical suggestions were made in order to improve the situation. First of all, the obkom secretariat called for proposals to be realised precisely and in the shortest possible period. This was already happening at the Baltic shipbuilding works. Secondly, it was recommended that workshop heads, factory administration, and the bureaux responsible for rationalisation and invention (*Briz*) should regularly report back at production meetings on the realisation of workers' suggestions and inventions. Thirdly, all factory administrations and workshop administrations were now obliged to publish quarterly reports on the realisation of workers' suggestions, inventions and the savings achieved as a result of them in local newspapers. Important suggestions and inventions were also to be published in factory newspapers.¹²²

In 1932, production meetings were held in small production units such as shifts. In Narvskii raion, production meetings were organised at group as well as at shift level. Following the Central Committee's resolution of March 1931, the practice of holding of group-shift production meetings spread rapidly in Leningrad's factories. In March 1932, more than 3,000 such meetings were held in 53 factories in the Narvskii raion. For instance, at Krasnyi putilovets, 574 such meetings were held in December 1931 alone, and some 17,000 workers attended these meetings. At the Kirov factory, 13 workshop, 71 group and five shift production meetings were held.¹²³

7.3.2 The shockwork movement and socialist competition

Throughout the first FYP, a mass movement called socialist competition played an important role within the factories. This movement aimed at cutting down on absences, overfulfilling output norms and reducing the unit cost of production. Socialist competition represented the expansion and systematisation of such efforts,

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-7.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-7.

¹²³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, p. 48; *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 29.

usually in the form of open letters, resolutions, and challenges to emulate or outdo the examples of pioneering workers.¹²⁴ Factories, workshops, brigades, and individual workers competed for greater production and productivity, cost reduction, and labour discipline.¹²⁵

The basic form of socialist competition, at its initial stage, was the shock-worker movement, which played an important role in attracting the masses of workers into socialist competition.¹²⁶ 'Shock work', which originated during the Civil War to denote the performance of particularly urgent tasks, acquired new meaning in 1927-8 when isolated groups of workers, primarily members of the Komsomol, organised brigades to fulfill obligations over and above their work assignments. These ranged from cutting down on absences and abstaining from alcohol to overfulfilling output norms and reducing the per unit cost of production.¹²⁷ Simultaneously promoted, the shock movement played a central role in socialist competition. Workers organised into model or shock brigades acted, as it were, as a 'vanguard' on the shop floor in promoting not only competition but also other social and political mobilisations.¹²⁸

In Leningrad, the first shock worker group appeared at the Ravenstvo textile factory as early as June 1928.¹²⁹ The shock-worker movement spread quickly to other factories, and by the end of 1928, shock brigades had been set up in almost 20 factories.¹³⁰ By February 1929, more shock brigades had been organised in various factories. For instance, at the Baltic shipbuilding works, 13 shock brigades began to work in February. Also six shock brigades had been organised at the Kazitskii factory by this time. Shock brigades were also organised at the Krasnyi vyborzhets and the Uritskii tobacco factory.¹³¹ At its initial stage, the majority of the shock workers were, in general, young non-party workers. For instance, Leningrad's first shock worker

¹²⁴ Lewis H. Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity in the USSR, 1935-1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 40.

¹²⁵ Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution*, p. 115.

¹²⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 192.

¹²⁷ Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity in the USSR*, p. 40.

¹²⁸ Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution*, p. 115.

¹²⁹ This shock worker group pursued the following targets: increasing labour discipline; condensing the working day; eliminating absenteeism; reducing breaks in production; cutting waste and prime production costs; and improving the quality of production. See *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 367.

¹³⁰ These included the Vereteno, Krasnyi putilovets, Karl Marx and Kazitskii factories and the Baltic shipbuilding works. See *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p.192.

¹³¹ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 367.

group organised at the Ravenstvo factory was composed of 150 young workers. The shock brigade organised at the Vereteno in August 1928 was also composed of 130 young workers. Likewise, the majority of those workers comprised of the six shock brigades set up at the Kazitskii factory were young non-party workers.¹³²

Early in 1929 the party and the government began to vigorously promote the shock movement and socialist competition. In particular, *Pravda*'s publication of Lenin's article, 'how to organise competition,' on 20 January 1929 played a crucial role in the popularisation of socialist competition.¹³³ As a result, a mass campaign called socialist competition swept through Leningrad as it did in the other parts of the Soviet Union. In Leningrad the socialist competition was first called for by the workers of the Krasnyi vyborzhets. In March 1929, the workers of the Krasnyi vyborzhets, through *Pravda*, called for competition with other factories in the country. This received replies from other factories in Moscow, Khar'kov, Rostov-on-Don and other cities.¹³⁴ This encouraged workers in many other factories to become involved in socialist competition. By 15 April 1929, almost two million workers in 70 factories in Leningrad were involved in competition between factories.¹³⁵ The goals were to implement the production programme sooner than planned, to raise labour productivity, to cut production costs, and to reduce waste in production.¹³⁶ Many of Leningrad's factories competed with Moscow's factories: the Krasnyi treugol'nik competed with the Krasnyi bogatyr'; the Krasnyi vyborzhets with the Serp i molot; and the Ravenstvo factory with the Trigornyi manufactory.¹³⁷

At its initial stage, the socialist competition was a movement spontaneously organised by workers. However, neither management nor political authorities wished to leave the organisation of competition to their independent initiative. In particular in Leningrad, the party apparatus provided seemingly adequate leadership over the movement by adopting two resolutions on how to organise socialist competition. The first one came in April 1929. In this resolution, the Leningrad obkom secretariat emphasised that the success of socialist competition depended on its organisation. The

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 367.

¹³³ *Pravda*, 29 January 1929.

¹³⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 192.

¹³⁵ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 367.

¹³⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 192.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

obkom secretariat stressed in particular the necessity not to disperse strength by organising competition with regard to the most important and specific tasks. In other words, competition should be organised to achieve cost cutting, raising labour productivity, strengthening labour discipline, and the avoidance of waste, absenteeism and breakage. The resolution also clarified that socialist competition could have various organisational forms in order to be flexible. At the same time, the obkom called for the drawing of all organisations - the party, soviet, economic, trade union, Komsomol, and other social organisations - into the movement. In particular, the trade union, economic organs and Komsomol were asked to play an important role in organising competition. It was thought to be necessary to draw all workers as well as administrative-technical personnel (masters, first of all) and managers such as enterprise directors or trust directors. Specialists were also expected to take part in the movement.¹³⁸

The second resolution came only a month later. However, this resolution reflected the important changes which had taken place between the two resolutions. The 'appeal to all workers', made at the sixteenth Party Conference on 29 April 1929¹³⁹ and the Central Committee's resolution of 9 May 1929 'on socialist competition of factories', contributed to the organisation of competition by transforming it into a mass movement. In particular, in its May resolution, the Central Committee, stating the necessity of mobilising 'the conscious and active part of the masses' as well as the most active specialists, resolved to delegate the organisation of competition to the trade unions. The resolution went on to call on *Vesenkha* (Supreme Council for the National Economy) and *VTsSPS* (All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions) to administer a special bonus fund for the most successful competitors.¹⁴⁰

Following the Central Committee resolution of 9 May, the Leningrad obkom adopted a resolution concerning socialist competition on 20 May 1929. This resolution gave further detailed instructions as to how to organise competition. In the resolution, it was clearly specified that the trade union should assume the main role in the development of competition. *Zavkomy* and *mestkomy* (trade union organisations at the

¹³⁸ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 3, 1929, pp. 7-8.

¹³⁹ *XVI konferentsiia VKP(b), aprel' 1929 goda: Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1962), pp. 668-670.

¹⁴⁰ *KPSS v rezolutsiiakh i resheniiakh* (1984), vol. 4, pp. 508-510.

factory level) were responsible for organising and regulating socialist competition. In addition, the obkom strongly called for avoiding a parade-like form, such as challenging plans without specific and carefully prepared tasks, taking excursions not linked with practical necessity of exchanging the experiences, and issuing resolutions which were not specific enough.¹⁴¹

Now, the roles which were expected to be played by each organisation became clearer. Trade unions were supposed to organise competition and record the results, management was to facilitate, and party organs to supervise the process. In fact, from June 1929, the trade union organisations began to supervise the organisation of competition in the Leningrad region, as was revealed from a selective inspection of 96 enterprises at the end of 1929.¹⁴² Party organisations in the region also played an important role in the development of socialist competition. Raikoms appealed to their workers to take an active part in the movement. In factories, the aims and objectives of the movement were explained extensively to workers. Factory party committees, together with the trade union and Komsomol organisations, proposed a number of measures which would strengthen the effectiveness of competition.¹⁴³

At the same time, the party encouraged communists to take the lead in the movement. Communists were now expected to play an active role in socialist competition. Their roles included conducting propaganda and agitation, popularising the idea of competition, verifying its performance, and taking measures to eliminate formalism while guiding it.¹⁴⁴ Local party organisations issued a number of appeals in relation to communists' role in the movement. For example, in April 1929 the Vyborgskii raikom issued an appeal calling for communists to be the leading example. Likewise, the Moskovsko-narvskii and Volodarskii raikoms emphasised the necessity of the vanguard role of communists in the shock movement.¹⁴⁵ Accordingly, more

¹⁴¹ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 4, 1929, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴² *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 368.

¹⁴³ For instance, the party committees in factories such as the Elektrosila, Lenin, Karl Marx, Metal, and Krasnyi putilovets made specific decisions regarding this. See *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 194.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

¹⁴⁵ *Leningradskaia pravda*, 2, 3 and 4 April 1929.

communists got involved in this movement in the following months, although it was still Komsomol members who played a vanguard role in organising competition.¹⁴⁶

In September 1929, the obkom secretariat decided to launch a mass political campaign to check the fulfilment of socialist competition agreements in the course of September and October. The aim of the campaign was to assess the degree to which socialist competition influenced the improvement of production. It was expected that this review would form the basis for the renewal of agreements and lead to the further involvement of workers in socialist competition. Temporary control commissions were set up in all factories for the purpose of conducting a review. These commissions aimed to highlight economic results, all obstacles and the reasons for them. At the same time, they paid special attention to proposals put forward in the process of competition. In October and November, the trade union, together with economic organs, held all-factory and all-trust production conferences.¹⁴⁷ A further resolution gave specific instructions on how to regulate socialist competition agreements.¹⁴⁸

Accordingly, a campaign was carried out in October and November 1929 in order to sum up the results of competition and to prepare for the renewal of socialist agreements. Conferences were held at all-factory and all-trust levels and, reportedly, some 70 per cent of the participants were workers 'from the bench'. Raikoms and okruzhkoms sent special instructors to the factories in order to assist the trade union organisations that were responsible for conducting the review. Even though party organisations did not take direct responsibility for conducting the review, the party committees and *kollektiv* bureaux closely monitored the process by hearing the reports of the party fractions within the trade union organs at the factory and workshop levels.¹⁴⁹

As a result of the review, workers' interest in industrial construction, reportedly, increased considerably. It was claimed that more enterprises became involved in

¹⁴⁶ For instance, in April 1929, as many as 72 per cent of the communists at Krasnyi putilovets participated in competition. At Krasnyi gvozdil'shchik, the number of communist participating in competition doubled in only three months. See *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 195.

¹⁴⁷ *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 8, 1929, p. 7.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 9, 1929, p. 16.

¹⁴⁹ N. B. Lebedeva, *Partiinoe rukovodstvo sotsialisticheskim sorevnovaniem: Istoriia i sovremennost': Deiatel'nost' Leningradskoi partiinoi organizatsii po razvitiu sotsialisticheskogo sorevnovaniia v promyshlennosti 1927-1977* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1979), p. 71.

competition and more workers took part in production meetings and conferences. Various forms of competition emerged and socialist competition grew into more developed forms: from shockworker brigades to shockworker workshops or factories. In addition, more engineers and technical personnel participated in competition. It was evaluated that trade union organisations provided better leadership over the movement, and economic organs paid more attention and provided better help to those competing.¹⁵⁰

The results of the review provided useful information on the development of socialist competition in the region.¹⁵¹ A total of 96 enterprises containing 176,000 workers were examined during the review. By the beginning of the review campaign, most factories in the region had been already competing with other factories or engaged in inner-factory competition. By the time the review was conducted, almost 90 per cent of the region's factories were involved in inner-factory or inner-workshop competition, and almost 30 per cent of the oblast's workers were actively involved in competition. In some factories, the proportion of those engaged in socialist competition was considerable, exceeding 50 per cent (see table 7-3).

Table 7-3. Workers' participation in socialist competition in Leningrad, 1 November 1929

	<i>Total workforce</i>	<i>Workers engaged in competition</i>	
	N	N	%
Krasnyi putilovets	12,000	5,200 *	43.3
Khalturin textile factory	7,000	3,364	48.1
Volodar clothing factory	4,500	2,400	53.3
Lenin factory	3,400	1,700	50.0
Krasnyi treugol'nik	18,000	9,467 *	52.6
Krasnyi maiak	3,845	2,258	58.7
Egorov factory	1,665	1,281 *	76.9
Komintern	955	707	74.0
Krasnyi shveinik	1,344	1,344	100.0

Notes: Percentages are my own calculations; the figures marked with an * included workers engaged in various kinds of competition. All the other figures included only those who were either working in shockworker brigades or competing individually.

Source: *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, pp. 369-370.

¹⁵⁰ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 378.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 367-379.

Various forms of competition emerged in June 1929. Apart from the shock brigades, there were competitions between factories, workshops, brigades, groups, and individuals. Workshops competed with other workshops, so did shifts, brigades, groups, and individuals. Out of the 89 enterprises reviewed, shock brigades were organised in 74 enterprises, brigades competed with other brigades in 64 enterprises, workers competed individually in 42 enterprises, and workers had voluntarily reduced their wage rates in 46 factories.¹⁵²

The competition was organised in a different way in each factory. At Krasnyi treugol'nik, for instance, a total of 65 shock brigades containing 848 shock workers were organised. All the workshops and shifts were competing with each other. Some 8,480 workers competed on an individual basis or as a part of groups, and 130 workers cut their wage rates voluntarily. At the Krasnaia nit', all the workers were engaged in competition: six workshops and shifts competed with each other; there were nine shock brigades containing 261 workers; some 1,946 workers competed on a group basis; and 16 competed on an individual basis. At the Izhorskii factory, some 4,500 out of 6,500 workers were engaged in competition: 15 workshops were engaged in inner-workshop competition; 18 shifts were competing with each other; and 38 shock brigades and 34 rationalisation groups were organised.¹⁵³ In some factories such as the October textile factory, the Baltic shipbuilding works, and the Voskov factory, production communes were organised.¹⁵⁴ These communes were made of workers who shared their wages on an equal basis, irrespective of skill levels or output.¹⁵⁵

Table 7-4 shows the proportion of workers involved in various forms of competition. Shock workers accounted for 14 per cent of a total workforce and some 30 per cent were engaged in competition among brigades. There was a considerable variation across different branches of industry. Within the sewing industry, those who made up of shockbrigades accounted for 48 per cent, whereas in the paper industry they accounted for less than two per cent. Some 30 per cent of workers in the former

¹⁵² Percentages were given in *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 371. Absolute figures are my own recalculation.

¹⁵³ However, there were a number of factories where socialist competition was poorly organised. At Ravenstvo, for instance, no other forms of competition existed except shock brigades and competition between workshops. See *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, pp. 370-371.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

¹⁵⁵ Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity*, p. 46. For more information on the production commune, see *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 6, March 1931, pp. 44-48.

industry were engaged in competition among brigades, whereas in the latter, some 92 per cent were. In the textile industry, some 11 per cent were competing on an individual basis, while the figures for other industries were not more than three per cent (see table 7-4).

Table 7-4. Proportion of workers participating in various forms of competition in Leningrad, 1 November 1929 (percentages)

Union	<i>Shock brigades</i> <i>Proportion among the total workers</i>				
		Shock brigades	Other brigades	Workers competing individually	Workers voluntarily cutting wage rates
	N	%	%	%	%
Metalworkers	860	12.4	30.7	2.2	1.1
Woodworkers	4	1.0	17.8	-	0.2
Textileworkers	404	20.6	33.7	11.5	0.2
Sewingworkers	21	48.0	31.1	1.4	6.3
Paperworkers	3	1.8	92.1	-	-
Foodworkers	29	5.4	28.3	0.1	0.2
Leatherworkers	104	11.1	12.2	1.6	0.03
Chemicalworkers	74	4.5	44.5	0.02	0.7
Printers	67	25.8	29.5	2.4	3.2
Total among 9 unions	1,566	14.4	32.3	4.3	0.9

Source: Adapted from *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 372.

Overall, the proportion of those engaged in various forms of socialist competition among the total workforce was not very impressive. The reasons for that included the following factors: the trade union's putting insufficient emphasis on the development of various forms of competition; the insufficient promotion; the trade union's being incapable of providing leadership over inner-workshop competition; the lack of systematic information on the achievements and shortcomings of each group of workers; the lack of practical help and technical advice from engineers and technical personnel; and the economic organs' poor elaboration of the control figures set for each group of workers.¹⁵⁶

The review also provides information on the composition of those taking part in the shockworker brigades or groups. Over half of the 85,230 shock workers were non-party workers. Some 28 per cent were Komsomol members, and only 19 per cent were

¹⁵⁶ *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 372.

party members. The proportion of party members varied greatly depending on the industrial branches. Among the chemical workers, they accounted for as much as 50 per cent, while among wood workers, they accounted for only six per cent. Among the metal, sewing and food workers, some 25 per cent of shockworkers were party members. On average, 23 per cent of shockworkers were trade union activists (see table 7-5).

Table 7-5. Composition of workers participating in shock brigades or shock groups in Leningrad, 1 November 1929

Union	<i>Workers engaged in shock brigades or groups</i>	<i>Party members</i>	<i>Komsomol members</i>	<i>Non- party workers</i>	<i>Trade union activists</i>
	N	%	%	%	%
Metalworkers	34,357	25.0	40.7	34.3	24.1
Woodworkers	442	5.9	94.1	-	17.6
Textileworkers	29,421	13.0	38.2	48.8	27.0
Sewingworkers	1,848	25.8	9.6	64.6	18.0
Foodworkers	4,951	25.0	14.6	60.4	24.4
Leatherworkers	11,072	6.4	23.3	70.3	-
Chemicalworkers	1,092	50.0	31.3	18.7	31.3
Printers	2,047	42.5	36.8	20.7	35.6
Total among 8 unions	85,230	19.0	27.5	53.5	23.4

Source: Adapted from *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raiona*, p. 373.

Table 7-6. Skill level of workers participating in shock brigades or shock groups in Leningrad, 1 November 1929

Union	<i>Workers engaged in shock brigades or groups</i>	<i>Skilled workers</i>	<i>Semi-skilled workers</i>	<i>Unskilled workers</i>
	N	%	%	%
Metalworkers	34,357	24.0	30.3	45.7
Woodworkers	442	-	100.0	-
Textileworkers	29,421	95.3	4.7	-
Sewingworkers	1,848	100.0	-	-
Foodworkers	4,951	23.2	42.4	34.4
Leatherworkers	11,072	93.4	16.6	-
Chemicalworkers	1,092	81.3	14.3	4.4
Printers	2,047	85.5	11.8	16.1
Total among 8 unions	85,230	60.4	26.0	13.6

Source: As for table 7-5.

On average, 60 per cent of those taking part in the shockworker brigades or groups were skilled workers, 26 per cent were semi-skilled, and 14 per cent were unskilled workers. In the textile, sewing, leather, chemical and print industries, skilled workers comprised the majority of shockworkers. In the wood industry, all the shockworkers were semi-skilled. By contrast, in the metal and food industries, the unskilled accounted for 46 and 34 per cent respectively (see table 7-6).

Table 7-7. Proportion of workers participating in shock brigades in Leningrad, 1 November 1929

Union	Workers	Party members	Komsomol members	Non-party workers	Trade union activists
	N	%	%	%	%
Metalworkers	25,676	2.8	9.9	1.6	12.1
Woodworkers	442	1.7	24.3	-	8.3
Textileworkers	19,184	3.4	14.2	3.7	8.5
Sewingworkers	1,848	97.7	85.2	64.4	79.4
Foodworkers	4,951	14.3	7.3	18.0	18.3
Leatherworkers	449	-	100.0	-	-
Chemicalworkers	1,092	4.0	7.3	0.9	3.2
Printers	2,047	10.1	15.7	3.7	18.4
Total among 8 unions	55,689	7.6	13.4	7.8	15.7

Source: Adapted from *Industrializatsiia severo-zapadnogo raion*, p. 377.

As can be seen in table 7-7, only eight per cent of party members and 13 per cent of Komsomol members were shockworkers. There were great variations across the different industrial unions. Almost all party members in the sewing industry were shockworkers, while in the metal industry only three per cent of party members were shockworkers. In the leather industry, all Komsomol members were shockworkers. Trade union activists were more likely to be shockworkers, than party or Komsomol members: on average, 16 per cent of them were shockworkers. In particular, among sewingworkers, as much as 80 per cent of trade union activists were shockworkers.

In general, the proportion of shockworkers among the total skilled or semi-skilled workers was extremely low (see table 7-8). Only six per cent of the total skilled workers and eight per cent of the total semi-skilled workers were shockworkers. Among the food and print workers, a larger proportion of skilled workers were involved in shock brigades: shockworkers accounted for 16 and 12 per

cent of the total skilled workforce respectively. In the food industry, almost half of the total semi-skilled workers were involved in shock brigades, and in the print industry, about one fifth of semi-skilled workers were involved in shock brigades. The proportion of shockworkers among the total unskilled workers was, on average, higher than among skilled or semi-skilled workers: 11 per cent. This was mainly due to the fact that a considerable number of unskilled workers were shock workers in the food and printing industries. In other industrial branches, there were hardly any shockworkers amongst the unskilled workforce.

Table 7-8. Proportion of workers participating in shock brigades in Leningrad, 1 November 1929

Union	<i>Shock workers</i>	<i>Among women workers</i>	<i>Among skilled workers</i>	<i>Among semi-skilled workers</i>	<i>Among unskilled workers</i>
	N	%	%	%	%
Metalworkers	25,676	9.8	2.7	5.1	8.6
Woodworkers	442	5.3	-	10.6	-
Textileworkers	19,184	7.2	5.1	10.1	-
Sewingworkers	1,848	67.1	2.5	-	-
Foodworkers	4,951	15.8	7.7	55.3	22.1
Leatherworkers	449	-	15.8	-	-
Chemicalworkers	1,092	-	7.6	1.4	-
Printers	2,047	8.7	12.0	22.4	32.6
Total among 8 unions	55,689	12.9	6.0	8.0	10.5

Source: As for table 7-7.

On 26 December 1929, the obkom secretariat adopted a resolution ‘on the initial results and the further development of socialist competition’, declaring that in the first year of the FYP the production programme set out for the Leningrad industry had been largely overfulfilled, and that this was achieved mainly due to the spontaneous activity of the masses of workers and due to socialist competition.¹⁵⁷

In the later years of the first FYP, various new forms of competition emerged. These included cost-accounting brigades, planning-operative groups, shift counterplanning brigades, and periodic competitions for the ‘best shock worker’ in particular branches of industry as measured by the degree of exceeding output norm.

¹⁵⁷ *Biulleten’ Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 2, 1930, p. 3.

In general, they represented a differentiation of goals previously subsumed under shock work, reflecting the party's increased emphasis after mid-1931 on cost accounting, the assimilation of technology and individual piece rates.¹⁵⁸

In Leningrad, 1930 saw the emergence of various new forms of competition: tugboats (*buksiry*), *skvozye* and rationalisation brigades and quality brigades.¹⁵⁹ At Krasnyi putilovets, workers organised planning-operative groups. In addition, the plan was challenged in the form of a counterplan (*vstrechnyi plan*), a proposal to accomplish more within a shorter period of time. The first such plan in the city was put forward by shock workers of the Karl Marx factory in April 1930. In the same month, shock workers of the Znamia truda appealed to all shock workers to get involved in counterplanning. Following this appeal, counterplanning was soon adopted by many factories. Then, in July workers of the Karl Marx factory sent a letter to *Pravda*, explaining their own experience in preparing counterplans, and the practice of this factory spread throughout the country.¹⁶⁰

In 1931 cost-accounting brigades emerged in the city. The first cost-accounting brigade, the first as such in the country as well, was formed by moulders at the Lenin factory. Then another brigade was set up at the Baltic factory and another at the Sevkabel'. The main tasks of cost-accounting brigades were maximising the economic use of resources and ensuring the safe use of equipment while increasing output. Each brigade member was expected to reduce costs.¹⁶¹

Reportedly, the Leningrad party organisation promoted cost-accounting brigades enthusiastically.¹⁶² The aims and advantages of cost-accounting brigades were extensively explained to the factory workers. Party organisations also tried to co-ordinate the creation of cost-accounting brigades and the setting out of specific production tasks. In accordance with an obkom decree, raikom members were sent to factories, and chairmen and members of executive committees of trusts and unions

¹⁵⁸ Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity*, p. 40.

¹⁵⁹ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 196. Terms such as tugboating (*buksirovat'*) and sponsorship (*shefstvo*) were used to express the goal of lifting up the less advanced.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁶² See for example, *Itogi plenuma Leningradskogo obkoma VKP(b), 16-17 maia 1931 g.: Plan-tezisy doklada ob itogakh plenuma obkoma VKP(b)* (Leningrad: Ogiz-priboi, 1931); *Biulleten' Leningradskogo oblastnogo komiteta VKP(b)*, no. 16, 1931, pp. 3-5; *Partrabotnik*, no. 11, June 1931, pp. 22-32; *ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, pp. 53-60; and *ibid.*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, pp. 91-93.

provided assistance to workers. Furthermore, in order to exchange experiences, party activists' meetings were held at city and raion levels, and also conferences of enterprises' triangles were held. In 1931 alone, three massive rallies of workers from cost-accounting brigades and the oblast conference of cost-accounting brigades were held. Special training courses were organised for cost-accounting brigade leaders and, at the same time, consultations were given to them.¹⁶³

All these factors contributed to the expansion of the movement. At Krasnyi putilovets, the number of cost-accounting brigades had increased from 29 on 1 June 1931 to 206 by 1 July, then to 449 by 1 August, and to 715 by 1 September 1931. By September 1931, cost-accounting brigades accounted for 40 per cent of all brigades in this factory.¹⁶⁴ In Leningrad as a whole, there were only ten cost-accounting brigades in February, and this figure had increased to 52 by March, 250 by April, 5,276 by 10 July, 8,263 by 10 August, and finally to 14,421 by 10 October.¹⁶⁵ By the end of 1931, over 26,000 such brigades with 300,000 workers had been established in Leningrad.¹⁶⁶

At the same time, 1931 saw the emergence of shift counterplanning brigades. The essence of shift-counterplanning was that brigades, after studying the feasibility of the counterplans carefully, proposed them and fulfilled them. In Leningrad, workers at Krasnyi treugol'nik were the first to propose such plans. The shift-counterplanning brigades turned out to be effective, and this practice spread rapidly in the city. It was claimed that shift counterplanning, together with cost-accounting brigades, achieved considerable results. By the beginning of 1932, some 1,512 such brigades had been formed in the city's machine-building factories alone, and it was claimed that shift counterplans had resulted in the overfulfilment of the plans by ten to thirty per cent.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 198. For instance, in April 1932, the Vyborgskii raion set up a course specially for cost-accounting brigade leaders, concerning labour organisation, planning, and accounting.

¹⁶⁴ *Otchet o pabote partiinogo komiteta zavoda "Krasnyi putilovets" za vremia s pervogo maia 1930 goda po pervoe sentiabria 1931 goda* (Leningrad, 1931), p. 34.

¹⁶⁵ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 19-20, November 1931, p. 49.

¹⁶⁶ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 198. It was evaluated that these brigades worked economically very effective from the very beginning. Reportedly, out of 990 brigades under review, 940 brigades lowered expenditure on materials considerably and 263 brigades saved more than 42,000 rubles within only two months.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

All in all, workers' participation in socialist competition had increased considerably, at least in terms of their enrolment. As can be seen in table 7-9, in October 1929, only 14 per cent of Leningrad's workers were involved in socialist competition, but by March 1930, this figure had increased to 43 per cent. This shows that 'Lenin's appeal to the shock brigades' published in January 1930 led to the number of workers taking part in socialist competition being tripled. In some factories, those workers participating in socialist competition accounted for over 60 per cent of the total workforce by this time.¹⁶⁸ By 1 April 1930, there were 250,000 shock workers and 39 shock enterprises in the city. Shock enterprises included the Krasnyi putilovets, the Lenin factory, the Krasnyi treugol'nik, and the Bol'shevichka. In addition, 627 workshop cells in various factories became involved in shock work.¹⁶⁹

Table 7-9. Proportion of workers participating in socialist competition in Leningrad, 1929-1931 (percentages)

	<i>Proportion of workers participating in socialist competition</i>	
1 October 1929	14.1	(1)
1 March 1930	42.7	(1)
1 August 1930	51.0	(1)
1 December 1930	65.8	(2)
1 January 1931	70.1	(1)
1 April 1931	75.6	(2)
3 December 1931	79.2	(2)

Sources: (1) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 8-9, April-May 1931, p. 59; (2) *Ibid.*, no. 23, December 1931, p. 59.

Workers' participation continued to increase in the latter half of 1930, and by January 1931, almost 70 per cent of Leningrad's workers participated in socialist competition (see table 7-9). In some factories, the figure was much higher: it was 83 per cent at Krasnyi putilovets¹⁷⁰ and 87 per cent at the Karl Marx factory.¹⁷¹ The

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 196. By February 1930, those workers participating in socialist competition accounted for approximately 70 per cent of the total workforce at Krasnyi putilovets, 60 per cent at the Metal factory, and 90 per cent at the Lenin factory.

¹⁶⁹ *Na fronte industrializatsii*, no. 9, 1930, p. 8.

¹⁷⁰ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 24.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25. This was a considerable increase from the June 1930 figure of 50 per cent and the October 1930 figure of 61 per cent.

increase in the number of workers participating in socialist competition continued throughout 1931. By December 1931, almost 80 per cent of the city's workers were engaged in socialist competition (see table 7-9). In 1932, the figure increased further. For instance, in April 1932, 98 per cent of a total of 30,000 workers in the Narvskii raion were shock-workers.¹⁷²

As already mentioned, party members' participation in the shock movement and socialist competition was not great in 1929. Not all communists in the city showed an interest in taking part in the shock movement at this initial stage. In some factories, only a few communists participated in socialist competition. However, from 1930 onwards, the party strongly urged their involvement and this correspondingly led to an increase in party members' participation.¹⁷³ On 11 February, in its resolution concerning party recruitment, the Central Committee called for 'the involvement of every single communist in shock brigades and socialist competition'.¹⁷⁴ Similar calls had been made in Leningrad on 4 February 1930, when the obkom bureau set out on the task of drawing all party and Komsomol members into the shock movement.¹⁷⁵

Following this, the proportion of communists involved in the shock movement and socialist competition increased rapidly. In particular, the directives of the sixteenth Party Congress regarding the involvement of every single party and Komsomol member in socialist competition and in the shock-worker movement resulted in the number of workers participating in the competition doubling. By the beginning of 1931, the majority of communist workers had already been involved in socialist competition. For instance, at Krasnyi putilovets only 39 per cent of communists took part in socialist competition in February 1930,¹⁷⁶ but the figure reached 72 per cent by 15 April 1930¹⁷⁷ and it increased further to 86 per cent by January 1931.¹⁷⁸ At the Karl Marx factory, as many as 96 per cent of party members were involved in socialist competition in February 1931.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 29.

¹⁷³ At the same time, the party vigorously recruited shockworkers. See chapter 4-2 of this thesis.

¹⁷⁴ *KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh* (1984), vol. 5, p. 88.

¹⁷⁵ *Leningradskaya pravda*, 4 February 1930.

¹⁷⁶ *Partiinoye stroitel'stvo*, no. 2, February 1930, p. 47.

¹⁷⁷ *Otchet partiinogo komiteta zavoda "Krasnyi putilovets"*, p. 21.

¹⁷⁸ *Partiinoye stroitel'stvo*, nos. 3-4, February 1931, p. 24.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 25. It was reported that the other four per cent were those who had only recently arrived at the factory, and therefore, had not managed to join the movement.

Therefore, it is no wonder that in March 1931 certain factories in Leningrad were hailed as the most advanced factories in the country. In these factories, 90 to 95 per cent of party members were engaged in socialist competition. In its resolution 'on party mass work in workshops and brigades', the Central Committee admitted that 'the decision of the sixteenth Party Congress that every single party and Komsomol members must engage in socialist competition remains unfulfilled to a considerable extent.' While 90 to 95 per cent of the party members were engaged in socialist competition in advanced factories such as the Stalin factory in Leningrad, in a number of others only 50 to 60 per cent of communists were participating. Therefore, it urged that the directive of the sixteenth Party Congress should be enforced at once.¹⁸⁰

Table 7-10. Communists' participation in the shockwork movement, March 1932 (percentages)

		<i>Party membership</i>	<i>Communist shock-workers</i>	<i>All shock-workers</i>
Stalin factory	(1)	n. d.	93.0	n. d.
Krasnyi maiak	(1)	n. d.	100.0	n. d.
Krasnyi vyborzhets	(2)	28.1	87.4	79.3
Russkii dizel'	(2)	29.3	100.0	83.1
Karl Marx factory	(2)	32.9	100.0	89.4

Sources: (1) *Partrabotnik*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, p. 51; (2) *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 6, March 1932, p. 31.

In most factories, the proportion of party members engaged in competition was relatively high and increasing continuously. For instance, in November 1931, some 98 per cent of those who participated in socialist competition at Sevkavel' were party members, and 95 per cent of the 1,007 people were Komsomol members.¹⁸¹ By February 1932, some 130,000 of Leningrad's shock workers were either party or Komsomol members. In other words, party or Komsomol members accounted for 30 per cent of the workers participating in the shock movement.¹⁸² The figures for some factories in the Vyborgskii raion were particularly impressive. In March 1932, as many as 25,417 full and candidate party members (or 75 per cent of them) in this raion were engaged in socialist competition. As can be seen in table 7-10, in factories

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 64.

¹⁸¹ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 19-20, November 1931, p. 79.

¹⁸² *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 200.

such as the Krasnyi maiak, Russkii dizel', and Karl Marx, almost all the full and candidate party members were engaged in the shock movement. In other factories such as the Stalin factory, the figure was over 90 per cent.

However, this was not the case for all factories. In some factories, the situation was rather unsatisfactory. For instance, at Krasnyi oktiabr', only 366 out of the 535 full and candidate party members were shockworkers.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, by the end of the first FYP, party organisations in many of Leningrad's factories had achieved the task of involving all party and Komsomol members in socialist competition. These factories included the Metal factory, Russkii dizel', Krasnyi Maiak and Karl Marx.¹⁸⁴

At the same time, party organisations continuously supervised the progress of socialist competition. On 4 February 1930, the obkom bureau called for the transformation of shock brigades into shock workshops and shock factories. In accordance with this instruction, factory party *kollektivy* became deeply involved in the socialist competition movement, encouraging the activities of the trade union and Komsomol organisations.¹⁸⁵

In March 1930, the obkom conducted a review of the movement. This revealed a number of shortcomings. Party and Komsomol organisations, trade union organisations in particular, provided insufficient leadership over the movement. The obkom resolutions of 26 December 1929, 8 February and 19 February 1930, had not been implemented. Hence there was a failure to make economic-political agreements specific enough, to draw engineers and technical personnel into the movement in order for them to provide technical help to shockworkers, to reconstruct all cultural-daily life work on the basis of socialist competition and the shock movement, to establish qualitative and quantitative accounts of the shock movement and to monitor the fulfilment of agreed obligations.¹⁸⁶

Party, Komsomol, trade union and economic organisations as well as the press failed to eliminate such shortcomings. In many factories, self-assessment as a mass economic-political campaign was not conducted. Moreover, it was noticed that the attention paid to socialist competition and the shock movement had recently

¹⁸³ *Partrabotnik*, nos. 5-6, March 1932, p. 51.

¹⁸⁴ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (1980), vol. 2, p. 200.

¹⁸⁵ *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1966), vol. 2, p. 396.

¹⁸⁶ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2752, p. 82.

weakened: in almost all enterprises the number of workers involved in the shock movement had decreased; the efficiency of shock brigades had fallen; labour discipline had worsened; and there had been an increase in waste and absenteeism. It was argued that, despite the resolution of the sixteenth Party Congress regarding the tasks of the trade union, socialist competition and the shock movement had not become the central activity of trade union organisations within enterprises and workshops.¹⁸⁷

In 1930 when the work of the Moskovsko-narvskii raion party organisation was reviewed, Gilinskii, a Central Committee instructor, criticised the fact that the agreements were not specific enough and that it was unclear as to whether these agreements were actually being carried out. He argued that the weak participation of administrative-technical personnel was one of the shortcomings of socialist competition. Factory managers did not make an effort to ensure that shockworkers had what they needed in order to fulfil their agreements. A great number of factory managers even did not know their own shockworkers.¹⁸⁸ In addition, as was admitted by Shul'man, a party worker from the Moskovsko-narvskii raikom, not all of the shock-workers in this raion, which numbered 80,000 at this time, were genuine shockworkers. There were pseudo-shockworkers and hangers-on.¹⁸⁹ Another Central Committee organisational instructor, Buratov, also criticised the formalistic attitude towards socialist competition, the poor disclosure of pseudo-shock workers, the increase in absenteeism and defective articles and delaying the process of cutting costs.¹⁹⁰

A report on the Elektrosila's party work made in October 1930 revealed further shortcomings. In this factory, a total of 162 shock brigades which contained 1,564 young workers were formed after the Central Committee's appeal. However, the emergence of the shock brigades did not contribute to the elimination of breakage. There were shock workers who were not genuinely shock workers. The shock worker movement was rather like a parade. The agreements were not specific and there was

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁸⁸ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 9, May 1930, p. 51.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 55.

no procedure to check whether the agreements were in fact being implemented. Hence, the agreements were never properly realised in this factory.¹⁹¹

In March 1931, the Central Committee, in its resolution 'on party mass work in workshops and brigades', instructed that a resolute struggle should be waged against pretended shock-work, particularly among party and Komsomol members. It was stated that the genuine participation of all party and Komsomol members in socialist competition and the shock-worker movement should be measured by the workshop's or brigade's fulfilment of its production targets as a whole. It therefore instructed that production indices should be registered precisely and visibly, and that the systematic assessment and self-assessment of the persons engaged in competition should be organised.¹⁹²

Nevertheless, a number of shortcomings were continuously reported in 1931. There still were pretend shockworkers, who were not being exposed in many cases. There was inadequate assessment as to whether agreements were in fact being achieved. Moreover, not all communists set an example in the process of production. Some of them lagged behind the rest of the workers. Workshop cells and factory party organisations did not provide the necessary assistance to party units in this sphere of work, and no measures were adopted to eradicate these shortcomings.¹⁹³

In some areas and factories, the number of those who had achieved their agreements slightly increased in 1931. For instance, in the Narvskii raion, some 21,000 workers had achieved their agreements in May 1931, but the figure had doubled by September 1931.¹⁹⁴ However, the general picture could not be considered positive. At Krasnyi putilovets, for instance, only 205 out of the 715 cost-accounting brigades had fulfilled the production tasks set for July and August. In the same months, 657 cost-accounting brigades (92 per cent) fulfilled the norm in relation to expenditure on resources, and 692 brigades fulfilled the norm in relation to expenditure on materials. However, a substantial number of brigades could not fulfil

¹⁹¹ RTsKhIDNI, fond 17, opis' 21, delo 2712, p. 74.

¹⁹² *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, no. 7, April 1931, p. 64.

¹⁹³ N. Emel'ianov, *Na khodu perestroiki - iz opyta partiinoi raboty v Leningrade* (Leningrad : Ogiz-priboi, 1931), pp. 64-65.

¹⁹⁴ *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo*, nos. 7-8, April 1932, p. 29.

the norm in relation to cutting costs or reducing wages: the former applied to 205 brigades (29 per cent) and the latter to 198 brigades (28 per cent).¹⁹⁵

By 1932, it seems that the party had come to place more attention on its own organisational issues and had turned its attention away from socialist competition and the shockwork movement. No major resolutions were adopted in relation to socialist competition and the shockwork movement at either the central or local level.

¹⁹⁵ *Otchet o rabote partiinogo komiteta zavoda "Krasnyi putilovets"*, p. 34.

8. Conclusion

For Leningrad region, as for the whole of the Soviet Union, the first FYP was a period of rapid transformation. Leningrad's industry, in particular heavy industry, was refurbished and rapidly expanded. In the rural area surrounding Leningrad, agriculture was collectivised. Peasants migrated to Leningrad seeking jobs in the rapidly expanding industrial sector. This resulted in a massive increase in Leningrad's working class population and a significant change in the composition of the city's workforce. By 1932 more peasant workers, new arrivals to industry, women and young workers were employed in Leningrad's industry than before, and the longer established workforce comprised only slightly more than half of the total (Chapter 2).

Communist party organisations in the region also experienced a series of far-reaching changes. This was due to the party's own deliberate decisions, but the rapid transformation within the wider society was also a contributing factor. With the launch of the rapid industrialisation drive, the party had to adjust itself to new environments. In order to keep pace with the rapidly expanding industrial sector, the party decided to develop its organisation within factories, enrol more workers, and mobilise activists for party work. The party also had to change its role in production in order to ensure the successful fulfilment of party decisions with regard to industrialisation. This, in turn, led to a significant change in its structure, membership, and role.

The impact of industrialisation on the party apparatus generally meant an increase in its size and complexity, in particular an increase in the size of the lower apparatus relative to the intermediate and central levels. Even though it was claimed that one of the principles of the reorganisation of the apparatus was the reduction and simplification of the apparatus, all levels of the party apparatus experienced a remarkable increase in their size and degree of complexity and sophistication during the first FYP. This was mainly due to the introduction of a functional-sectoral system, which aimed to increase specialisation of work in the party apparatus. The apparatus at intermediate levels expanded, albeit at a less impressive rate than at lower levels. The lowest levels of the party apparatus were to a certain extent affected by the same developments which occurred in upper levels: the introduction of a functional-sectoral

system led to a development of the party apparatus at lower levels. The expansion of the party apparatus within the enterprise was particularly impressive. The concept of 'breaking up' of party cells, which was strongly advocated in the first FYP, led to larger and more complex party structures within factories. Party cells were formed in smaller production units than in previous years, and factory party organisations evolved from one or two-tier structures into multi-tier structures. However, the factory party cell structure was significantly simplified in the summer of 1932 (Chapter 3).

The impact of industrialisation can also be seen in the growth of party membership and the consequent change in its composition. Throughout the first FYP period, the party experienced an unprecedentedly rapid expansion of its membership. In the Leningrad region, its membership grew from 119,446 to 278,280 between January 1928 and January 1933. As recruitment policy strongly emphasised the working class, industrial workers constituted more than 80 per cent of all recruits. In the city of Leningrad alone, the figure reached about 95 per cent. This deliberate recruitment policy had a visible effect on the composition of party membership. The proportion of production workers among the total party membership in the city was over 60 per cent between 1927 and 1930. Although the figure began to decrease from 1930 onwards, it still stood at about 50 per cent in January 1933. These figures were higher than the national average throughout the first FYP period. More importantly, the composition of party membership changed sharply in terms of year of entry. By the end of the first FYP, those who had joined the party during the period of massive worker recruitment constituted the largest group within the Leningrad party organisation: approximately 50 per cent. The effect of the massive worker recruitment on party saturation in the factories, however, was not very impressive. As the industrial workforce expanded rapidly, party saturation did not rise greatly despite the party's intensive recruitment of workers (Chapter 4).

The two party purges that were accompanied or followed by a major recruitment drive had also a visible effect on the Leningrad party membership. However, the 1929-30 and 1933 party purges affected the Leningrad party organisation in different ways. In the 1929-30 purge, it did not suffer a massive expulsion and indeed had the lowest expulsion rate in the country, 5.1 per cent. By contrast, in 1933, a sizeable number of its members were expelled and the expulsion rate in the region reached

12.7 per cent. Moreover, 8.8 per cent of its full members were transferred to candidate status, 1 per cent to sympathiser status, and 13.5 per cent of candidate members to sympathiser. Altogether some 20 per cent of its membership were affected by the 1933 purge. The data available show that in the 1929-30 purge, the main victims were peasants, whereas in 1933 a considerable number of workers were expelled. Those who were expelled for 'passivity' or 'drunkenness' constituted the largest group in 1929-30, while those who were expelled for 'passivity' or 'violation of party discipline' constituted the largest group in 1933. This suggests that the main victims of both purges were ordinary rank-and-file members. Although there is no doubt that political considerations had played a certain role in these purges, they were more a mass purge rather than a purge directed at eradicating political opponents (Chapter 5).

The rapid expansion of party membership and the organisational development of the party apparatus were accompanied by a substantial increase in the number of party workers. Although the party sought to reduce the number of paid workers at all levels by mobilising activists for party work, this objective was only partially achieved. At obkom and raikom levels, the number of full-time party officials increased rather than decreased; and at the lowest level of the party the overall number of party workers increased considerably, mainly due to the rapid expansion of the party cell network in factories. Throughout the first FYP period, a considerable number of party activists were mobilised for party work and this was more the case at the lowest level than at the intermediate level. As a result, by the end of 1932, Leningrad party workers at the lowest level were likely to be much younger than their 1928 counterparts, less experienced both in terms of the number of years they had spent in industry and in terms of their party membership: many of them joined the party during the early years of industrialisation (Chapter 6).

Another aspect which needs special attention is that party workers at all levels experienced great mobility, in most cases upward mobility, in the first FYP. It was partly because the organisational development of the party apparatus resulted in the creation of more posts within the party apparatus. Another major factor that contributed to great mobility was the party policy of *vydvizhenie*: many experienced party workers were promoted into more responsible jobs either in the state apparatus or in the party. Moreover, a considerable number of Leningrad's workers, many of

whom were party activists, were transferred to other regions in order to help local people construct new industrial centres. Here again, this was more the case at the lower level than at intermediate levels. For party workers at the enterprise level, 1928-32 was a period of considerable turnover and promotion. The turnover was considerable throughout the period: almost half of all party workers were replaced at each election. Other factors mentioned above made turnover even greater. Rapid turnover and promotion resulted in the emergence of new kinds of party workers by the end of the first FYP period. In general, they were less experienced, and had often been in the party for only two or three years (Chapter 6).

Meanwhile, the content of party work changed significantly. As the party became involved in directing the industrialisation process, it became more involved in production matters. The relative weight of questions of an economic nature in the work of party organisations, from the obkom down to workshop cells, increased considerably from 1928 onwards. Party cells at factory level were affected the most directly. Under the slogan 'face to production', they became more and more involved in this way. However, this policy had its adverse effects. First of all, the traditional division of work between party cells, trade union units and factory administrations was blurred; and conflicts and confusion arose at the shop floor level. The most negative aspect of the party's growing involvement in economic matters was that party cells often ignored their primary responsibilities in the realm of politics and ideology. Factory party cells simply could not engage in party work when they had to spend most of their time securing the fulfilment of the production and financial plan. It was only in the summer of 1932 that the party undertook a thorough review of factory party cells and tried to reverse the course of events. The poor work of factory party cells in the sphere of political education, mass propaganda and agitation, and party discipline was severely criticised. From this time onwards, the emphasis was firmly placed on party work (Chapter 7).

All in all, party organisations below the oblast level experienced a considerable degree of instability during these years of massive transformation. It was lower party organisations that suffered the most from a chaotic situation. In factories, not only did the workforce expand rapidly, but workers also moved constantly in search of better jobs. New workers arrived and already established workers left their workplace for

jobs in other factories or regions. Those who were engaged in party work in factories were not immune from such a situation. They themselves experienced mobility either as a result of being promoted, taking study leave, or being transferred to the countryside or in some cases to other regions. This adversely affected party work at the factory level. Party work could not be carried out properly when responsible party workers did not retain their posts for more than six months. Moreover, the party policy of mobilising activists for party work had its negative aspects. Party workers at lower level were extremely overloaded, and often unprepared to carry out all the duties and responsibilities expected of them. Nevertheless, they were responsible not only for political work but also for work of an economic nature. A great burden was placed on party activists in factories who were expected to recruit workers and educate them, at the same time explaining party policies to the mass of workers, collecting party dues and securing the implementing of party policies concerning industrialisation. It is easy to imagine how difficult, if not impossible, it was for party workers to carry out their responsibilities in such circumstances.

Given these circumstances, it was extremely difficult for central party organs to keep close control over what was happening at lower levels of the party organisation. Although central party organs sought to control or monitor events at lower levels of the party by issuing decrees and directives or by reviewing the work of party cells or local party committees, they were not always able to achieve their objectives. In general, party directives were not strictly adhered to, and indeed were often ignored. There were reasons for this. First of all, directives from the leadership often offered little concrete guidance. Confusion arose, for instance, when the central authorities did not issue precise, unambiguous instructions as to how to introduce various organisational reforms. Party directives on *edinonachalie* were also ambiguous and did not help to clarify the responsibility of party cells in production matters. Even when party directives were specific enough to provide concrete guidance, they were often not put into practice. For instance, party directives concerning the organisation of cells within the factories were largely ignored and the factory cells did not operate as intended. Likewise, party directives on *edinonachalie* were completely ignored in 1930 and 1931. The central party leadership's warning against the mass expulsion of

ordinary rank-and-file members on the ground of being passive did not prevent ordinary rank-and-file members from being expelled en masse in 1933.

Even when lower party organisations achieved the targets set by higher party organs, it was only at the expense of quality as had been the case in the party's recruitment process during the first FYP. Frequently, central policies were followed only in a very formalistic sense. For instance, the 1932 review showed that many party cells formed in smaller production units existed only on paper. Likewise, not all of those who claimed to be shockworkers were really engaged in the shockwork movement. Lower party organisations simply issued directives similar to those already issued by higher party organs, when they were urged to get involved in production matters.

In the face of such problems, central party organs appear to have been incapable of controlling events effectively. Although the work of party cells or local party committees was reviewed by higher party organs and any evident shortcomings were criticised, the situation did not improve greatly. In general, the party control system did not work as it should have done. In particular, the complicated party structure in factories led to quite serious problems in the regulation of lower party organisations. As was often reported, the connection between different levels of the party organisation within factories was weak, and factory party committees were often unable to control or monitor the activities of party cells below them. As a result, the performance of lower party cells varied considerably; and when irregularities and confusion were reported, these shortcomings were not immediately resolved.

Overall, it appears that the centre's grip on affairs at the local level was not as close as often assumed, and that central party organs could not fully control the way party policy was implemented at the local level. When the party encountered the negative aspects of a certain policy, it had to change the policy to remedy the situation. For instance, the party could not control its own recruitment as much as it wished, and its policies kept changing. The massive expansion of party membership during the first FYP was followed by a complete ban on recruitment that lasted until the end of 1936. Up to 1938 the emphasis was to be put firmly on 'quality' and it was only then that recruitment began to pick up and the party once again took on the task of encouraging workers to join its ranks. Likewise, when the complicated party

structure resulted in a weakening of control, party policy changed to a simpler structure at the factory level. When the party's growing involvement in production matters led to confusion and conflict on the shop floor, the party decided to turn away from production matters in 1932. In almost all of the aspects we have looked at, the party changed its policies either in 1932 or in 1933.

Weak control from central party organs meant that there was some scope for local initiative and modification. At first glance, it appeared that central party organs had decided everything for the whole party. However, when we look more closely into the course of events, this was not always the case. Obviously local initiatives played a less important role in the formation of policy on more important matters. It was in conducting the policy that there was often some local modification. Although major decisions were made by central party organs in most cases, much was left for lower party organs to choose when it came to implementation. In addition, there were other cases where local practice was confirmed later by central organs. This was more often the case in recruitment and organisation than in other issues. For instance, the Leningrad party organisation strongly advocated the mass recruitment of production workers even in the mid-1920s when the party recruitment campaign's priority was not the enrolment of workers. Moreover, it was one of several organisations which had appealed to the Central Committee in favour of the mass recruitment of workers, and this facilitated the Central Committee's decision to step up their recruitment. In addition, it set a higher recruitment target than the Central Committee did. As for organisational matters, local party organisations enjoyed substantial autonomy. In dealing with matters of this kind, the practice of Leningrad party organisations, such as the creation of workshop cells and factory party committees, was confirmed later on by central party organs and adopted nationwide. Factory party organisations were given a considerable degree of autonomy as to how to organise their cells over this period; and party structures varied substantially across factories.

All these factors suggest that regional party organisations still enjoyed some kind of autonomy during these years of 'mass' politics, although to a lesser degree than in the NEP period. In fact, the party policies concerning recruitment, organisation, and personnel that were pursued during the first FYP allowed party organisations at lower levels to find some scope for local initiative. However, with

party policy changes in 1932 and 1933, the scope for local initiative became significantly diminished. Stricter control over recruitment together with the mass purge in 1933 led to tightened controls over party membership. The simplification of the party cell network in 1932 also facilitated tighter control over the activities of party cells. Party activists were then expected to uphold party discipline. In these circumstances, activism on the part of ordinary rank-and-file members was bound to decline. Accordingly, party policy changes in 1932 and 1933 seem to have had important implications for the development of Stalinism; and they contributed substantially to the emergence of full-blown Stalinism in the mid-1930s.

In general, the Leningrad party organisation appear to have been supportive of party policies implemented in the first FYP. Given the fact that Leningrad was a highly industrialised city with a substantial number of industrial workers, it was not surprising that the Leningrad party organisation was supportive of party decisions concerning the rapid industrialisation drive. It was also supportive of party policies concerning recruitment and organisation matters. Indeed, it appears to have been genuinely enthusiastic about the mass recruitment of workers, as can be seen from various aspects of recruitment over this period. However, enthusiasm itself did not guarantee that party decisions were implemented at the grassroots level as had been intended. Even in Leningrad, confusion arose and party work was poorly carried out during these years of turmoil. Leningrad's industrial workers, in spite of their apparent commitment to the industrialisation drive, did not always fully understand the party's directives and the tasks that had now been placed upon them. It is easy to imagine how difficult the situation must have been for party organisations in regions where the impact of industrialisation was greater than in Leningrad.

Indeed, it should be borne in mind that Leningrad occupied a unique position in the Soviet Union at this time. The party apparatus in Leningrad played a very different role than an organisation such as Smolensk, based in a largely rural region. Although Leningrad region contained some rural areas, it was not a major agricultural region. The party apparatus in Leningrad, therefore, was not burdened with collectivisation as much as those in other major rural regions. Party organisations in the Leningrad region enjoyed support from their party members, mostly workers, whereas party organisations in the countryside were not able to rely on their own members when

they encountered serious problems in the course of implementing party policies as the size of party membership in the countryside was not sufficiently large in the 1920s. In general, it was much more difficult for those in rural regions to cope with the pressure caused by rapid collectivisation. Moreover, it was always rural party organisations that suffered the most in both party purges during the first FYP.

Regional variation, indeed, was great even when we look at Moscow. While the Moscow party organisation experienced a turbulent political life which reflected the protracted struggles over policy and leadership in the Politburo,¹ the Leningrad party organisation appears to have been marginally affected by political struggle during the first FYP. Indeed, unlike Moscow, which suffered heavy losses among its party leaders who showed right-wing tendencies at the beginning of the first FYP, senior party officials in Leningrad enjoyed relative stability, hardly being subject to purges. It was only in 1934 that the assassination of Kirov triggered a massive shake-up of the party apparatus in Leningrad.

Despite regional differences, however, there was one outcome that was common to all regions: the creation of an inefficient system. As industrialisation was carried out not based on rational calculations, but on mass mobilisation and activism, the system created during the first FYP was extremely inefficient. Industrialisation and collectivisation were a limited success in the sense that the state's minimum aims were achieved, but at great economic and human cost. The experience of rapid industrialisation and collectivisation had an adverse impact: people learned how to carry out seemingly impossible tasks and how to avoid taking responsibility for their work. The impact of rapid industrialisation and of party policies associated with it lasted longer than party policies themselves. This long-term legacy undoubtedly contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union in the end, and has still to be overcome.

In this the inefficiency which the Leningrad party organisation experienced during the first FYP merely reflected paradoxes evident in the industrialisation of the Soviet Union as a whole. Across the whole period under review, despite repeated

¹ See Catherine Merridale, *Moscow Politics and the Rise of Stalin: The Communist Party in the Capital, 1925-32* (London: Macmillan, 1990); and Nobuo Shimotomai, *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule, 1931-34* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

attempts at both central and local party level, the party continued to prove incapable of ensuring the implementation of its directives. Lower party organisations, responsible for implementing party policies concerning industrialisation, were not properly prepared for their new tasks in terms of personnel and industrial knowledge. Nevertheless, they became deeply involved in directing the industrialisation process, which often caused confusion and tension on the shop floor level.

Indeed, my findings suggest that the process which the party had gone through during the first FYP was far from a process of bureaucratisation in Max Weber's sense.² Although the party apparatus experienced an organisational development with more departments and sectors being formed within the apparatus, this did not lead to specialisation and professionalism. Contrary to the party's expectation, the over-elaborated party structure only made party work more difficult. The recruitment and promotion of industrial workers, who were often not capable of carrying out their new jobs, proved to be unsatisfactory.

If bureaucratisation means red tape, inefficiency, bureaucratic rigidity and routinism,³ there certainly was a process of bureaucratisation of the Soviet state in general, and of the party in particular. Frequently, decisions made by the central leadership were implemented only in a very formalistic sense; and party organs at all levels issued resolutions and declarations that simply replicated those already adopted at higher levels of the party organisation. Both party committees and cells were compelled to do an enormous amount of paper work, and they held too many meetings.⁴ Continuous attempts to make party organisation both more efficient and responsible, through a variety of techniques - from organisational reform and to the self-criticism campaigns and purges - failed to eliminate underlying and long-term inefficiencies.

² Weber defined a bureaucracy as an efficient organisation of which specialisation based on division of labour and professionalism are characteristic. A bureaucracy was seen by Weber as the most developed and technically most efficient system of administration. For Max Weber's discussion of bureaucracy, See Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, edited and translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1947), pp. 329-336.

³ In the Soviet Union, the term '*biurokratizm*' was often used in this sense.

⁴ Apparently this problem was known to the party leadership. See, for instance, Kaganovich's report to the seventeenth Party Congress in 1934 in *XVII s'ezd VKP(b), 26 ianvaria-10 fevralia 1934 g.: Stenograficheski otchet* (Moscow: Partizdat, 1934), pp. 556-557.

All in all, my findings are closer to those put forward by 'revisionists' than by totalitarian theorists.⁵ In my view, the party was not a monolithic, hierarchical and blindly obedient instrument of rule during these first FYP years. There were many developments which indicated that party control was not nearly as strict as the totalitarian theorists had suggested. The party was far from omnipotent and omnipresent, and it was often not able to impose its will on its own members. When the party could not sufficiently firmly control its own recruitment and organisation, it was still less likely that it would exercise effective control over activities outside the party, especially at local level.

This study of the Leningrad party organisation has shown, more generally, that local variations in a formally hierarchical system were always greater than was acknowledged at the time, and greater than subsequent scholarship has normally been prepared to recognise. It follows that further studies on other regions in the future will provide us with a better understanding of the party and of its development during a period that was described at the time as a 'great transformation'. Other subjects for which there was no room for a detailed discussion in the thesis include changing popular attitudes in the region,⁶ and the consequences of the purges at the level of individuals. The present author hopes to be among those who will carry out such studies in the future.

⁵ See for example, J. Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 198; and Graeme Gill, *Stalinism*, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 10 and 34. Contemporary Russian scholarship, on the whole, leans towards the totalitarian approach. A very recent study of the development of Soviet party politics, for instance, suggests that Stalin and his entourage had created a totalitarian system in which society was marginalised and impoverished. See A. I. Zeveleva, Iu. P. Sviridenko and V. V. Shelokhaeva, *Politicheskie partii Rossii: Istoriia i sovremennost'* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000), pp. 459-460.

⁶ In one such contribution, Sarah Davies has examined popular opinion in Leningrad between 1934 and 1941 using NKVD and party reports, letters and other evidence. See Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror, Propaganda, and Dissent, 1934-1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

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