

APPENDIX II: Serious Fluidity of Manpower in Soviet Union

SOVIET working people have again become wage-labourers who must sell their labour to eke out a living. This is the dire consequences of the all-round restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union by the revisionist renegade clique. With manpower on a constant flow the broad masses of workers and peasants lead a life without security.

Under the "new economic system" of Soviet revisionism, those in charge of enterprises can hire, fire and punish workers and fix wage scales as they please. To seek huge profits, they dismiss or employ workers in large numbers at any time. Therefore, workers are not assured of fixed jobs and many find themselves roaming from place to place.

High Floating Percentage

According to figures published by the Soviet magazine *Planned Economy* not long ago, floating workers in the Soviet industrial branches (not including the figures of the building industry, transport and communications) accounted for 19.8 per cent of the total in 1972, with 30.7 per cent in the food industry, 28.7 per cent in the meat and milk processing industry, 26.3 per cent in the building-material industry and 24.2 per cent in the timber industry.

Some reports say the percentage was even higher in some areas: half of the workers and functionaries of the enterprises in Dushanbe, capital of the Tajik Republic, changed places of employment in 1972. The building and assembly departments in the Azerbaijan Republic hired 47,923 workers last year while in the same period 43,696 people left their jobs. Floating workers make up one-fourth of the total in the Georgian Republic, with the rate reaching one-third in Tbilisi, the capital, and half in the Abkhaz Autonomous Republic.

The Soviet magazine *Smena* disclosed that the annual number of floating labourers in the Soviet manufacturing and building industries in the last few years reached 10 million. On average a labourer wastes 23 days during the float period. This means that one million people remain idle or are out of work every year. As a result, the industrial branches alone lost about 4,000 million rubles in output value in 1972, according to *Planned Economy*.

As the gap between town and country widens and labour force becomes a commodity, a large rural population flock to the cities. According to apparently watered-down figures recently published by the Soviet magazine *Journalist*, 16.4 million people in the rural areas migrated to the cities during 1959-70, an average of 1.5 million each year. The outflow of rural population has become increasingly serious in recent years, the number reaching 2 million every year.

From 1960 to 1971, it is reported 10 per cent of the tractor and combine drivers quitted the collective farms and 20 per cent the state farms annually. In the last two years, some 3 million were trained in the Soviet Union to operate farm machines, but within a short time, some 2.5 million of them packed up. The Soviet revisionist leading clique admitted that "a serious problem arose owing to the influx of rural population into cities," that "able collective farm members are becom-

ing aged," that "the average age of those working in the fields in some place is 50" and that "about two-thirds of inappropriate labour in production is assumed by women."

Labour Force Becomes Commodity

Press reports describe the Soviet Union's floating workers as coming from two categories. One category involves workers fired at will by industrial enterprises, many of whom were sacked on trumped-up charges. Another involves workers who allegedly "left their posts voluntarily." According to a survey made in 1973 by the Soviet Central Board of Statistics of 1,105 industrial enterprises, 83.4 per cent of these workers left their jobs because of discontent with working conditions, low wages and shortage of living quarters. In other words, they gave up their work because they could not put up with the oppression and exploitation by the bureaucrat-capitalists. It was much the same reason that goaded the peasants into leaving their land and homestead to find work in the cities or elsewhere. Whether the departure was "voluntary" or "involuntary," the fact is clear that Soviet workers and peasants have been reduced to purely hired labourers and the labour force in the Soviet Union has become a commodity.

Opposition of the workers and peasants to the Soviet revisionists' oppression and exploitation often takes the form of strikes, absenteeism and go-slow. Reports say that 66 per cent of all workers in many units under the Ministry of Agriculture in the Moldavian Republic were absentees at one time or another in 1973 and that the absentee rate in Dnepropetrovsk of the Ukraine reached 20 per cent or even as much as 30 per cent last year.

Planned Economy revealed that absenteeism and go-slow accounted for a loss of 59 million work-days in the Soviet industry as a whole in 1972, more than the combined total loss of work-days by strikes in the United States and Britain (26 million and 23.9 million work-days in the two countries respectively).

The enthusiasm for work of the peasants is still lower. The newspaper *Zarya Vostoka* reported that in the collective farms in some regions of Georgia an average of 30.4 per cent of able-bodied members as a rule do not turn up for collective labour. The attendance rate of many farm members is far from meeting the minimum requirements.

Big-scale floating, absenteeism and go-slow on the part of the Soviet workers and peasants have dealt a heavy political blow to the Soviet revisionists and caused them very serious economic losses. Disturbed by the situation, the Soviet revisionist clique is further strengthening its fascist dictatorship. It has set up "legal sections" in factories and instituted so-called "trials by comrades" and "discipline committees" to "try" those who "violate labour discipline"; it held up their wage and bonuses, deprived the workers of their right to welfare, and even dismissed and expelled them. Where there is oppression, however, there is resistance and struggle. The Soviet revisionist clique's high-handed policy is sure to arouse fiercer resistance and struggle of the working people in the country.