A COMPARISON OF LABOR MOBILITY IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES

by

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INTRODUCTION

Labor mobility as a generalized topic concerns itself with the willingness of workers to move, whether that movement be between industries, occupations, or geographic areas. Whether or not it is planned by some central authority, labor mobility brings about a transfer in the location, function, and amount of human resources used in the production of goods and services. This transfer is affected by changes in the labor requirements of the economy. It should be emphasized that labor mobility is generally considered to be the effect of changes in labor requirements, and not the cause. In some instances however, the movement of individuals into an expanding economic area can cause changes in labor needs by increasing the demand for goods and services.

The study of labor mobility can be approached from any of at least three directions: economic, sociological, or psychological. The economic aspects of labor mobility are perhaps the most obvious. Of special concern here are the factors of supply and demand in the labor market, types of labor markets (for example, structured vs. unstructured markets), and labor force classifications.

Labor mobility can be studied with an emphasis upon its sociological aspects. Such a study would be concerned with the class structure of society, and the movements of groups of workers within a society. The dominant theme centers around a worker's mobility while a member of a given social group.

An additional context in which labor mobility can be studied deals with the psychological nature of the worker. It is perhaps more difficult to analyze labor mobility in this framework than in either the economic or the sociological approach. Here one must attempt to deduce the personal motivations

that bring about labor mobility. The factors that compel individuals to move, substituting a new circle of friends for ones they have known, and replacing a familiar environment with an entirely new one, are complex and varied. The drawing of exact conclusions based on psychological studies involving these factors is indeed difficult.

It is not the intent of the present appraisal to restrict itself to any of the factors discussed above. Rather, the approach will be of a general nature, with the emphasis leaning more toward the economic side, and less toward the psychological side. It is anticipated that by employing a general approach instead of a more specific one, the comparison will be more informative.

The decision to employ an integrated approach in the writing of this report was made in the hope that the utility of the comparison would increase. Although a format could have been used which treated labor mobility in the United States and then the same topic for the Soviet Union, it is probable that the comparison would suffer. The integrated approach to be used will treat first an aspect of labor mobility in one country, and then deal with the same aspect in the other country. If the comparison is not evident from the material presented, it will either be worked into the discussion for a given country, or introduced apart from the main discussion.

This report is divided into three main sections. The purpose of the first section is to explore the nature of labor mobility. A treatment of the physical extent of labor mobility will constitute a large portion of this section. The main economic considerations in the report will center around the topic of supply and demand in the labor market. The concluding portion of the first section will deal with the types, or patterns, of labor mobility.

Included in the first section of the economic nature of labor mobility, and discussed as a facet of labor market supply and demand, will be a treatment of governmental policies as they affect labor mobility. The political ideologies that are dominant in the two countries can be expected to have quite different influences upon labor mobility. Among the topics to be explored are the means and extent of labor allocation and use in the capitalistic vs. the socialistic economy.

The second section will concentrate on some of the determinants of labor mobility. This analysis will be more sociological and psychological in its approach than the first section, and will treat such controlling factors as age, living conditions, and working conditions.

The concluding section will serve two purposes. First, it will summarize and tie together the loose ends of the comparison brought out in the main body of the report. Second, it will provide a look at the future of labor mobility in the Soviet Union and the United States.

All this now brings us back to the beginning: what is the purpose of this report? This report has been undertaken because, to the author's knowledge, no comparative study of labor mobility in the United States and the Soviet Union has been made. Much information is presently available concerning certain aspects of labor mobility in the United States. Unfortunately, a large amount of this information suffers two shortcomings: it is not current, and it is often restricted to limited geographic areas. Although the published information dealing with labor mobility in the Soviet Union is not as extensive as information about the United States, it is generally more recent.

The purpose of this report then is to partially close the gap in the literature on labor mobility, and to provide a comparative analysis of the subject

that is hoped can make a positive contribution to the body of knowledge of labor mobility.

THE NATURE OF LABOR MOBILITY

Labor mobility may be conceived in three different ways: (1) as the capacity or ability of workers to move from one job to another, or into and out of the labor force; (2) as their willingness or propensity to make such moves, given the opportunity; or (3) as their actual movement.[1]

The ability of workers to change jobs is meaningful only when one considers the aptitudes and skills required for particular jobs. Even through the aptitudes and skills or workers are known, the ability to change jobs will be modified by the job requirements of employers and the training of workers. Once the extent to which workers are able to perform different jobs is known, the levels and patterns of production that could be achieved by shifting workers among jobs may be estimated.

Labor mobility may also be regarded as the propensity, or willingness, of workers to move. But the actual movement of workers is a function not only of willingness, but also of opportunities for movement.[2] The propensity of workers to change jobs is then of fundamental consideration; noting only the capacity of workers to switch jobs will overstate the true degree of labor flexibility.

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[1]Herbert S. Parnes, Research on Labor Mobility (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1954), p. 13.

[2]Ibid., p. 14.

Extent of Labor Mobility

The extent of labor mobility in the United States may be studied from two view points: occupation (or industrial) mobility, and geographic mobility. The former deals with the movement of workers between different occupations (or different industries), and the latter is concerned with changes in residence. It should be emphasized that the term "labor mobility" will be used here to indicate the combination of occupational (or industrial) mobility and geographic mobility. "Labor mobility" itself is a general term; the specific term, such as industrial mobility, will be used whenever possible. A discussion that more fully develops the nature of these patterns of mobility is presented in a later portion of the report.

Before discussing some of the quantitative aspects of labor mobility, it may prove beneficial to classify the components of the general term "labor mobility." The following are commonly recognized types of labor mobility:

1. Interfirm mobility - a change of employer.
2. Occupational mobility - from one occupation to another.
3. Industrial mobility - from one industry to another.
4. Geographic mobility - from one geographic area to another.

In addition, there may be movement from an employed to an unemployed status, and from an unemployed to an employed status. Finally, the term "job mobility" will be used to indicate a change of jobs, i.e., occupational and/or industrial mobility.

One measure of the extent of mobility is the amount of geographic mobility as a percentage of the working population. This figure has been remarkably constant in the United States over the past twenty years at approximately twenty percent. For the period March 1964 to March 1965, 20.1% of the U.S.

population changed their place of residence. Of this percentage, 13.4% were involved only in intracounty changes, 3.5% took part in intercounty, intrastate movements and 3.3% moved from one state to another.[3] As pointed out in the next paragraph, this population change says nothing, per se, about job mobility.

In 1961, the rate of job mobility in the United States was 10.1%.[4] This figure refers only to people who worked in 1961 that changed jobs during the year. Although this data is not directly comparable to the more recent information on geographic mobility, the apparent indication is that of those workers that change their place of residence, only about one-half change their job at the same time.

Geographic mobility in the Soviet Union, as may be expected, is substantially less than in the United States. In 1959, the rate of internal migration was slightly over three percent of the population. As in the United States, there appears to be a fairly constant trend for geographic mobility in the Soviet Union. With a population in 1964 of 226 million people, slightly under 7 million people changed their place of residence during the year.[5] This wide divergence between the United States and the Soviet Union in the amount of geographic mobility is explainable when one considers such factors as transportation

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[3]United States Bureau of the Census, "Mobility of the Population of the United States, March 1964 to March 1965," Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 156 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 9.

[4]United States Department of Labor, "Mobility and Worker Adaptation to Economic Change in the United States," Manpower Research Bulletin No. 1 (Washington: Manpower Administration, 1963), p. 24.

[5]Murray Feshback, "Manpower in the U.S.S.R.: A Survey of Recent Trends and Prospects," New Directions in the Soviet Economy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 725.

and housing. Unlike the United States, transportation facilities are not as widespread in the Soviet Union. Even if a Soviet worker manages to obtain adequate transportation to a new locality, he will find that the general lack of housing serves as yet another deterent to mobility.

Although the rate of geographic mobility is lower for the Soviet Union then the United States, the rate of job mobility in the Soviet Union is higher. The rate of Russian workers changing jobs during 1963 was 20.9 percent.[6] That this rate is more than double the same rate for the United States may at first seem surprising. Although the author could find no rationalization of this apparent anomaly, a possible explanation lies in the recent liberalization of restrictions on labor mobility in the Soviet Union. In 1956, and again in 1960, legislation was enacted which eliminated some of the previous restraints on the amount of worker movement. Although other job mobility data is not directly comparable to the 1963 figure, trends seem to indicate that changes in policy led to noticeable increases in job mobility in the early 1960's. Apparently the changes in policy had the same effect on job mobility that a dam does on the flow of water behind it. The policy change had an outcome similar to a break in the dam; the new-found freedom brought a rush of job changes. It is pure speculation at this point, but it is possible that once the "novelty" of changing jobs wears off, the level of job mobility in the Soviet Union will more closely appraoch the level in the United States.

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[6]Ritchie H. Reed, "Estimates and Projections of the Labor Force and Civilian Employment in the U.S.S.R.: 1950-1975," U.S. Bureau of the Census, International Population Reports, Series P-91, No. 15 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 9.

Supply and Demand in the Labor Market

The supply of labor is defined as the quantity of labor units which will be offered on the market at various levels of wages; the demand for labor is a function of labor's productivity. Supply expresses a relationship between quantity and price, while demand relates the effective productivity of labor to differences in wage levels.[7]

A market is generally thought of as a place where exchanges occur, and where the "laws" of supply and demand apply. The labor market, as the term will be used in this report, is certainly less tangible than such markets as the New York Stock Exchange. The labor market then refers to the area wherein labor exchanges take place. A labor market cannot be thought of as having a physical location, although (except for most professional men and skilled workers) it is typically local in nature.

In a capitalistic economy such as the United States, where a relatively free market exists, labor is allocated by the functioning of supply and demand. In a broad sense, labor supply may be thought of as the total population of a country. However, practically speaking, labor supply will refer to the number of persons aged 14 years and over. Employing this qualification, the labor supply in the United States in 1964 was 134 million persons. Of this total, 73 million people comprised the working force, and 4 million were unemployed.[8] The potential labor supply consisted of 70 percent of the population (191 million), and the working labor force was 54.5% of the available

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[7]Allan M. Cartter and F. Ray Marshal, Labor Economics: Wages, Employment, and Trade Unionism (Homewood, Ill.: Irwin, 1967), p. 226-30.

[8]United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, Vol. 11, No. 7 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1965), pp. 1-2.

labor supply over 14 years of age.

The demand for labor is tied ultimately to the demand for goods and services produced by that labor. Perhaps the best quantitative method for measuring labor demand is to determine the level of unemployment. During periods of low demand for products, the demand for labor will also be low, and unemployment will be at a high level. The current level of unemployment in the United States is approximately 4%. Economists and others may argue with this statement, but based on the foregoing, the "demand" for labor may be said to be at the 96 percent level.

Unlike the United States, the labor market in the Soviet Union depends on planned economic measures. Supply and demand functions in the Soviet Union to the extent that there is a given supply available and that a certain level of demand exists. Determining the demand for labor, and seeing that the supply is available to meet it is the responsibility of the Central Economic Planning Section of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. Each regional economic council is then responsible for estimating labor supply and demand in its geographic area.[9] These analyses then serve as the inputs for nation-wide planning. The regional economic council (the sovnarkhoz) then works out specific requirements for industrial needs.

Measured as the number of persons 14 years of age and older, the labor supply in the Soviet Union in 1964 was estimated[10] at 161 million people.[11]

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[9]Emily Clark Brown, Soviet Trade Unions and Labor Relations (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 17, citing A. S. Kudryavstev (ed.), Ekonomika truda v SSSR (Economics of Labor in the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1961), p. 392-395, 550-558.

[10]Soviet population figures are derived from the latest census in 1959. Figures of a date more recent than 1959 are based on projections and extrapolations of trends by both Soviet and Western Economists.

[11]Reed, op. cit., p. 15.

A working labor force of 116 million people gives a participation rate of 72 percent, and the labor supply was 71.3 percent of the total population of 226 million.

That the available labor supply aged 14 years and over is almost the same percentage of total population in the United States as it is in the Soviet Union is not surprising. What is significant is that while the working labor force is 72 percent of the available labor force in the Soviet Union, it is only 54.5 percent in the United States. This difference can be accounted for when one considers the sex of the workers. In the United States in 1964, men comprised 66 percent, and women 34 percent, of the working labor force. During the same time period in the Soviet Union, the labor force distribution was almost evenly divided between men and women. This difference is explainable by the nature of "work" in the two countries.

In the United States, work is generally considered to be the responsibility of the male head of the family. Many married women do work, but as one climbs the ladder of increasing affluence and family income, the probability that a wife will work decreases. The standards of living of most American families is high enough that it is not an economic necessity that the wife work. In the Soviet Union however, the comparative standard of living is such that often times both male and female family members must work to obtain an adequate income. In the Soviet Union, work is considered not only an economic requisite, but also a social responsibility.

The demand for labor in the Soviet Union, measured as the rate of unemployment, can only be approximated. Since the end of 1930, no registered unemployment data has been collected by the Soviet government. Although the Soviets would like to ignore the fact that unemployment exists - the official

term is "in need of placement", not unemployment - one rough measure of unemployment is available. According to the 1959 census of population, the portion of the "able-bodied population" of working age (men 16-59, women 16-54) not working or studying was slightly greater than 10 percent.[12] It should be noted that most of these were women occupied at home in household duties and caring for children.

In view of the fact that the unemployment rate in the U.S. in 1959 was 5.5 percent,[13] it is probably reasonable to assume that during 1959 the demand for labor was higher in the Soviet Union than in the United States (given that the majority of unemployed Russians were not actively seeking work). The higher demand for labor in Russia is to be expected; the Soviet government has the responsibility to provide work for all those who seek it, and the American government does not.

Demographic Trends

Ultimately, any aggregate supply of labor is determined by two statistical criteria: the birth rate and the death rate. Although such factors as wage differentials and governmental policies are short-run determinants of labor supply, any protracted analysis must primarily consider the two elements mentioned above. Any nation's labor supply will decrease if the birth rate declines while the death rate increases; the labor supply will rise if the reverse situation occurs.

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[12]Brown, op. cit., p. 12.

[13]United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 1.

Birth and death rate data for the United States indicate that the labor supply is proportionately decreasing. While the birth rate has decreased over the past few years, the death rate, while fluctuating, has remained relatively constant. Thus, although the potential supply of labor is increasing from year to year, it is doing so at a decreasing rate. The data referred to above is presented in Table I.[14]

TABLE I

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES IN THE UNITED STATES PER 1000 POPULATION

YEAR	BIRTH RATE	DEATH RATE
1950	24.1	9.6
1955	25.0	9.3
1960	23.7	9.5
1963	21.7	9.6
1964	21.0	9.4
1965	19.4	9.4

Data on birth and death rates in the Soviet Union are presented in Table II.[15] The comparison with like data for the United States is interesting. While birth rates in the two countries display similar levels and trends, the death rate for the Soviet Union is not only lower, but is generally declining. Thus, the potential labor supply is increasing not only in numbers, but proportionately well.

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[14]United States Department of Commerce, Pocket Data Book, USA 1967 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 55.

[15]James W. Bracket and John W. DePauw, "Population Policy and Demographic Trends in the Soviet Union," New Directions in the Soviet Economy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 657.

TABLE II

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES IN THE SOVIET UNION PER 1000 POPULATION

YEAR	BIRTH RATE	DEATH RATE
1950	26.7	9.7
1955	25.7	8.2
1960	24.9	7.1
1963	21.7	7.3
1964	19.6	6.9
1965	18.5	7.3

Both the size and trend of the movements of workers from one geographic area to another may be partially measured by the shifts in population among the States. As pointed out earlier, the major portion of geographic mobility in the United States consists of intracounty movements. However, an analysis of interstate migration will show which states and sections of the country are enjoying economic growth and have prospects for further growth. Implicit in such an analysis would be trends in labor supply and demand, wage differentials, and geographic preference.

Recent migration rates in the United States indicate that the States in the West and Florida have gained the most via interstate migration. States losing more population than they gained through migration were chiefly in the Southern, New England, and North Central regions of the country. Migration trends over the past several years have been away from rural areas and central cities and toward the smaller metropolitan and suburban areas. Figure I presents average annual interstate migration figures.

The type of migration trend found in the Soviet Union appears to be similar to that of the United States. The migration pattern is generally

away from the rural areas to the more populous industrial centers. Rural areas of the western regions of the country have experienced the highest levels of out-migration. Principal areas of in-migration have been the cities of Moscow and Leningrad, and the areas beginning on the eastern shore of the Black Sea and running eastward into Central Asia. Scattered regions in Siberia and the Far East have also experienced net in-migration. A map showing the areas of net migration in the Soviet Union is presented in Figure II.

The movement to develop the Siberian frontier is analogous to the 19th Century westward movement in the United States. Like the American West, the Siberian region of the Soviet Union represents an area ripe for economic development and population expansion. The industrial development of the Siberian and Far Eastern regions of the country, rich in natural resources, has recently become a prime goal of the Soviet government. In order to encourage new settlers to migrate to these areas, more incentive such as better living conditions and higher wages must be offered. Also, cultural advantages available in the Western population centers must be extended to the more remote regions.[16]

Wage Differentials

Traditional economic theory holds that the existence of wage differentials has a positive influence upon the degree of labor mobility. The assumption that labor will move to seek a higher monetary reward is partially valid only under conditions of full employment.

From studies of various labor markets within the United States, there is no overwhelming evidence that labor will always respond to wage differentials

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[16]Bracket and DePauw, op. cit., p. 620-625.

FIGURE I. Net migration in the United States. Average annual percent change in population through migration, by States: 1963-1964.

SOURCE: United States Bureau of the Census, "Estimates of the Population of the United States, July 1, 1966", Population Estimates, Series P-20, No. 380 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 15.

FIGURE II. Net migration in the Soviet Union as a percent of the population: 1963-1964

SOURCE: James W. Bracket and John W. DePauw, "Population Policy and Demographic Trends in the Soviet Union", New Directions in the Soviet Economy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 624.

and move to better-paying jobs. In analyzing several of these studies, Parnes states that "The limited data suggest that manual workers increase their earnings as a result of voluntary movement only slightly more often than they do not."[17] In a study of the New Haven labor market by Reynolds,[18] the finding was that labor mobility and wage determination are much less intimately related than would be theoretically expected. Reynolds concluded that wage differentials were not as significant in producing labor mobility as were differentials in job opportunities.

Data reviewed by Parnes indicate that 50 to 60 percent of workers who voluntarily change jobs achieve an immediate financial gain as a result. That this figure is not higher is not surprising. The average manual worker seems to have very limited knowledge of job opportunities in the labor market, and even less information regarding the specific characteristics of jobs in establishments other than his own.[19] Exceptions to this generalization occur primarily among skilled craftsmen and professional people; union members generally can be expected to possess better labor market information than non-members.

With the introduction of the New Economic Policy in 1921, Lenin decreed that there should be the greatest possible equalization of wages. Under Stalin in 1931, there existed a policy of widening the gap between the higher-and the lower-paid jobs. By 1956, supply schedules had shifted, and a more highly skilled working class was indication that wage differentials, although they

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[17] Parnes, op. cit., p. 190.

[18] Ibid., p. 183 citing Floyd G. Reynolds, The Structure of Labor Markets (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), p. 59-61.

[19] Ibid., p. 187.

were to remain, should be diminished.[20]

The "socialist principle" prescribes that every worker be paid according to his work. The worker's employer, the Soviet government, evaluates job performance and establishes wages accordingly. Both levels and differentials for given industries are administered by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. By American standards, wage differentials in Soviet industry are small. In 1964, the approximate ratio of the wage range between bottom and top grade jobs in Soviet industry was 1:2.[21]

The Soviet system of centrally administered wage standards is very effective in bringing about the desired level of labor mobility. Wages and mobility are primarily left for determination by market forces and private decisions in the United States. But in the Soviet Union, the setting of wage differentials is an important policy tool. Wage differentials are set to induce entrance into needed occupations and exit from nonessential ones.[22] Differentials are also used to attract workers into needed industries and geographic areas (such as Siberia). It should be pointed out that although there are many differences in Soviet and American wage systems, there is one important similarity. Even though the Soviet wage strategy is centrally planned, both systems must respond to changing conditions of supply and demand.

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[20]Murray Yanowitch, "Trends in Soviet Occupational Wage Differentials", Industrial and Labor Relations Review, XIII (January, 1960), p. 30.

[21]Robert Conquest, Industrial Workers in the U.S.S.R. (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 52.

[22]Brown, op. cit., p. 41.

Governmental Policies

The Federal government of the United States has no specific policies governing labor mobility *per se*. However, regulations exist at the Federal and lower levels of government that directly affect labor mobility.

An example of a Federal policy that indirectly affected labor mobility was the restriction of immigration in the 1930's. It is probable that if this policy had not been formulated, the level of mobility in the United States would have increased. The continued influx of cheap foreign labor would have presumably increased somewhat the rates of geographic and job mobility.

An area where all levels of government strongly influence mobility is employment. Of the non-agricultural labor force in 1965, nearly 10 million people, or 16 percent, were employees of either local, state, or Federal government.[23] It is obvious that significant changes in the level of governmental employment would result in marked transformations in the mobility rate.

In addition to the above examples, there are many other government policies that might reasonably be expected to bring about changes in the volume and/or patterns of labor mobility. Shister has pointed out that except when manpower controls are designed to govern the amount of movement by workers during wartime, the principle government influence on mobility "is exerted through the indirect impact of its fiscal and monetary policy on the state of business activity".[24] Such diverse government functions as the Job Corps, urban renewal,

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[23]United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, Vol. 11, No. 5 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 13.

[24]Parnes, op. cit., p. 125, citing Joseph Shister, "Labor Mobility: Some Institutional Aspects", Industrial Relations Research Association Proceedings of Third Annual Meeting, 1950.

state employment agencies, minimum wage laws, and unemployment compensation may affect the propensity of workers to make voluntary changes.

The extent to which governmental policy influences labor is much greater in the Soviet Union than in the United States. In the United States, the emphasis is upon programs that only indirectly (and in many cases unintentionally) bring about labor mobility. The Soviet government is much more directly involved in influencing the level of mobility. For example, as pointed out in the previous section, wage differentials are often established so as to distribute the labor force in the manner which the government desires. In addition to controlling internal mobility to a great degree, the Soviet government has complete control over external migration: no Soviet worker is permitted to leave the country.

Within the past dozen years however, the Soviet government has greatly relaxed labor controls, making labor mobility more an individual and less a government decision. The decree of March 8, 1956 abolished the penal liability of workers for unauthorized quitting or absences. A decree nine months later forbade the hiring of juveniles under 16 years of age.[25] Prior to 1960, numerous official documents were required of a Russian worker who applied for a new job. These documents served as an effective means by which the government could control the volume of labor mobility. On March 4, 1960, it was declared that a worker's passport and workbook would be sufficient when applying for a new job.[26] The Soviet passport is an identification document required of all

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[25]Edmund Nash, "Recent Changes in Labor Controls in the Soviet Union, New Directions in the Soviet Economy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 851.

[26]Ibid., p. 853.

citizens 16 years of age and over. The workbook contains the worker's identification, and includes records of education, training, employment, and reasons for any previous job separation.

Thus, Soviet controls over labor mobility are both more rigid and more overt than controls in the United States. The degree of supervision over such factors as wages, housing, and transportation result in a comparatively high degree of labor mobility regulations.

Patterns of Mobility

Occupational, Geographic, and Industrial Mobility

Occupational mobility involves the movement from one job category to another. Any measurement of occupational mobility depends to a great extent upon the degree of detail in classifying occupations. The United States Census currently classifies 11 major groups of occupations and 269 detailed occupational catagories.

It is simple enough to differentiate qualitatively between occupational and industrial mobility. The latter involves shifts between different types of industries (e.g.-from manufacturing to construction). However, quantitative data that distinguish between the two types of mobility is difficult to obtain.

That this is true may be seen from information on mobility in the United States in 1961. Of manufacturing employees, 10 percent changed jobs during 1961. About half of these changed to other industries; data on any occupation changes involved is unknown. Workers in the construction industry had the highest rate of job change of any industry grouping in 1961 with 25 percent

changing jobs during the year.[27]

Although rather dated, a study of labor mobility in six cities during the 1940's provides much of the available information on occupational and industrial mobility.[28] Three fourths of the shifts made by workers in the six cities during the decade 1940-49 involved a change in industry. Sixty percent of the changes involved a change in occupation. Three conclusions are evident from the material discussed by Palmer: (1) the worker's strongest attachment is to his community, (2) he is considerably less strongly attached to a given occupation, and (3) he is even less attached to an industry. In Reynolds' study of the New Haven Labor Market, he concluded that the great majority of employed workers are not really in the job market at any given time, and have a pronounced attachment for their current jobs.[29] Table III summarizes Palmer's data on the incidence of the different classifications of mobility referred to above.

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[27]United States Department of Labor, "Mobility and Worker Adaptation to Economic Change in the United States", Manpower Research Bulletin No. 1 (Washington: Manpower Administration, 1963), pp. 23-4.

[28]Gladys L. Palmer, Labor Mobility in Six Cities: A Report on the Survey of Patterns and Factors in Labor Mobility, 1940-1950 (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1954), pp. 74-75.

[29]Parnes, op. cit., citing Lloyd G. Reynolds, The Structure of Labor Markets (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), p. 79.

TABLE III

PERCENT OF WORKERS IN SIX CITIES, 1940-49, MAKING JOB CHANGES INVOLVING EMPLOYER, INDUSTRY, AND OCCUPATION.

CLASSIFICATION	PERCENT OF WORKERS CHANGING
Employer, Industry, and Occupation	55
Employer and Industry	20
Employer and Occupation	5
Employer	20

The evidence of research on labor mobility indicates that job changes from one local labor market area to another are much less frequent than those from one occupation or industry to another. This conclusion may seem anomalous in view of an earlier statement that the rate of job mobility is on the order of 10 percent, while geographic mobility is almost double this amount. However, the majority of geographic mobility (recently, about 13 percent) involves intra-county moves only. Since the rate of intracounty movement is greater than the overall rate of job mobility, it seems logical to conclude that the majority of intracounty moves involve only a change of residence, and not a change of job at the same time.

Information on industrial and occupational mobility in the Soviet Union is scarce, especially data on the latter. Although a comparison of occupational mobility in the Soviet Union and the United States is impractical due to the lack of available data, a comparison can be made of industrial mobility based on rather crude approximations of this factor for the Soviet Union.

The Soviet government has published no known statistical information that indicates the level of industrial mobility *per se*. However, Soviet labor force data by industry can be used to arrive at a rough measure of industrial mobility

Table IV presents the percentage of annual change in the non-agricultural labor force by industrial classification.[30] Unfortunately, one can only conclude which classifications had increases or decreases in employment, and not the volume of movement between classifications. For example, the average annual increase in construction employment was 1.1 percent, compared with 4.1 percent for all workers. While there was a net gain in construction employment over the period, it seems safe to conclude that more workers changed from construction to some other industry than did workers in general. We cannot conclude to what other industries these workers might have changed.

TABLE IV

AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT
IN SELECTED NONAGRICULTURAL SECTORS:
1960 TO 1964. FIGURE IN BRACKETS DENOTE DECREASE.

	YEAR					
SECTOR	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	AVERAGE
All Workers	5.6	3.6	3.3	4.1		4.1
Heavy Industry	5.4	3.8	3.4	3.6		4.0
Construction	2.8	(1.9)	1.2	2.5		1.1
Transportation	3.8	2.3	2.5	2.9		2.9
Communication	6.8	5.0	4.8	5.7		5.6
Education	7.5	7.0	5.5	6.4		6.6
Science	14.2	10.0	7.3	5.2		9.2
Public Health	6.0	3.8	3.1	3.8		4.2
Average	6.6	5.7	4.0	4.3		

No information concerning internal migration in the Soviet Union prior to 1959 is available. However, two conclusions at this point seem probable:

[30] Reed, op. cit., p. 26.

(1) in the late 1940's and early 1950's (especially prior to Stalin's death in 1953) the rate of internal migration per year was less than 3%, and (2) the internal migration during the 1960's has exceeded 3% due to the liberalization of policies which formerly served as a check on geographic mobility. Although Figure II indicates that the Far Eastern region of the country has the highest rate of in-migration, the average Soviet worker still prefers staying in the west of the country or moving there, to working and living in the eastern provinces. Even though wage rates and differentials have been increased in the eastern section of the country to induce migration there, such factors as the high cost of living and the lack of cultural facilities serve to increase the relative attractiveness of Western Russia for the typical worker.

Due to the nature of Soviet labor statistics, quantitative comparisons of the types of mobility with the United States are difficult. However, qualitative comparisons lead to the same conclusions presented earlier about mobility in the United States. The low Soviet rate of geographic mobility relative to the United States indicates that the Russian worker's strongest affinity is for his community. As in the United States, occupational attractions seem stronger than attractions to a specific industry. If anything, this latter distinction is probably stronger in the Soviet Union. The nature of wage differentials is such that the main road to economic betterment for many Russian workers is to change industries.

DETERMINANTS OF LABOR MOBILITY

The section on the determinants of labor mobility will explore some of the factors that influence mobility on two fronts. First to be considered are the

personal characteristics of workers such as age and sex. The second type of study involves some of the institutional forces working in the labor market, such as labor unions and employers, and tries to determine the impact of such factors on labor mobility. The difference in the two approaches is largely one of method, and the distinction is made here only to facilitate the organization of the discussion.

All of the determinants outlined below are actually only secondary causes of labor mobility. Acting as primary mobility determinants are the economic and political structures of the countries involved. For example, working conditions influence labor mobility, but only to the extent that governmental control and instutional forces determine working conditions. The impact of governmental control on mobility determinants is much greater in the Soviet Union than it is in the United States.

Age

Of the determinants of labor mobility, there is probably more empirical evidence that positively correlates age and labor mobility than any other factor. It should be noted at this point that age is really only incidental to labor mobility; it is the changes in individuals resulting from increasing age that determines labor mobility. The characteristics of workers as a result of their age, and not age itself, governs labor mobility.

Studies by Reynolds, Kitagawa, Palmer, and Slichter all point to the fact that labor mobility declines with advancing age. Reynolds has concluded that older workers not only made fewer changes of employer than younger workers, but that when they do move, their industrial and occupational mobility is lower. It was also found that complex job shifts (involving th simultaneous

change of employer, occupation, and industry) were more characteristic of the younger than of the older workers.[31]

The inverse relationship between age and labor mobility, although complex, is explainable when one considers related factors. The high mobility of young workers is probably derived from the numerous part-time and temporary jobs held while attending school. Also, due to the often less than rational job selection process used by the typical manual worker, the choice of a first job is frequently the initial step of a trial and error procedure. As a worker's mobility decreases with increasing chronological age, so also does it decrease with increasing employment age, or seniority. To a certain extent it is the worker's length of service that reduces his willingness to make a change, and not his chronological age. Security plays an important role here. A worker may not easily give up a job for which he has considerable seniority to take another ("better") job that does not provide for transferring his seniority. Of course, contracts specifying seniority conditions largely affect only union members; stating that seniority rather than age primarily influences mobility is inexact. Many non-union members and professional people also experience declining mobility with increasing age.

Both geographic and job mobility show similar responses to increasing age. Based on his study of New Haven workers, Reynolds has concluded that "the propensity to change jobs...is slight after three years and negligible after 10 years of work in the same plant."[32] Hence job mobility rates are highest for young people and lowest for older workers. As the data in Table 5

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[31] Parnes, op. cit., pp. 102-109.

[32] Ibid., citing Reynolds, op. cit., p. 21.

indicate, there is a corresponding trend for geographic mobility.[33] The pattern of geographic mobility related to age tends to reflect the family cycle. Mobility rates are higher when young people leave home, marry, and establish households of their own. Once a career is established, job mobility rates and the rates for geographic mobility decline.

That the influence of age on labor mobility in the Soviet Union closely parallels the data for the United States is not to be unexpected. The family cycle, a major determinant of both geographic and job mobility, is similar in the Soviet Union and the United States. Of job changes in the Soviet Union in 1964, the great majority were by young workers. Fifty percent of the workers were under 25 years of age, and 85 percent were under 35. Running analogous to the trend in the United States, most of the job changes were by persons who had not worked more than 3 years.[34]

Although no data is available on the extent of age influence on geographic mobility in the Soviet Union, the existing information would seem to indicate that the geographic mobility trend is very similar in Russia and the United States. Except for the large number of working wives, the family as a social unit in Russia is not much different than in the United States. It is probable that the typical Russian worker is most geographically mobile in the late teens and early twenties. As he assumes a career and family responsibilities, his propensity for relocation in all likelihood diminishes, and then rapidly falls off as old age is approached.

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[33]United States Bureau of the Census, "Mobility of the Population of the United States, March 1962 to March 1963", Population Characteristics, Series P-20, No. 134 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 3.

[34]Brown, op. cit., p. 36.

Sex

Numerous studies have compared the mobility rates for men and women. Although it is difficult to draw definite conclusions, the indication seems to be that men have higher mobility rates. Except for the higher job mobility rates among females in some age classes, the conclusion from the figures in Table 5 is that males generally have higher rates of job mobility.

TABLE V

THE RATE OF JOB MOBILITY (PERCENT OF THE POPULATION CHANGING JOBS) IN THE UNITED STATES, BY MARITAL STATUS, AGE, AND SEX: MARCH, 1963.

Marital Status and Sex	Total, 14 years and over	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 65	65 to over
Married, spouse present:						
Male.	18.3	62.1	30.7	15.9	9.8	6.8
Female.	18.4	54.0	24.0	14.0	8.4	6.7
Single:						
Male.	17.0	19.5	25.6	19.0	10.2	14.1
Female.	16.5	23.2	21.2	10.2	8.0	8.2
Other marital status:						
Male.	26.2	51.3	51.8	35.7	22.7	15.8
Female.	20.0	60.7	43.6	28.7	16.3	11.9

Ten year work histories of several groups of Philadelphia workers collected by Palmer point rather strongly to the conclusion that women change their jobs less frequently than men.[35] Palmer's six-city survey provides the most

[35] Parnes, op. cit., p. 102, citing Gladys L. Palmer and Constance Williams, Reemployment of Philadelphia Hosiery Workers After Shut-downs in 1933-34 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1939), p. 2.

comprehensive data on the relative mobility of men and women. The study did not include information on geographic mobility, but this omission is not serious. Although it would be difficult to predict the job mobility rates for single persons, geographic mobility rates for married persons should be nearly identical. The differences between men and women in the average number of jobs held during the period studied (1940-1949) were slight. Men had an average of 2.7 jobs, and women had 2.5. For the six cities combined, the mobility of men was higher in all age groups, and the differential was most pronounced at ages 35-44. In this age group, men held an average of 3.0 jobs during the decade, compared with 2.6 for women.

A 1961 survey of employment patterns provides a measure of industrial mobility by sex. The findings show that 11.0 percent of males and 8.6 percent of females changed jobs (industries) during the year. If this overall figure is broken down by industry types, the greater mobility rate for males is still dominant.[36] When classification is made on the basis of major occupational and industrial groups, the sex differential in mobility tends to persist, but varies in size depending on the classification. Among professional workers, there was no difference in the mobility of men and women. At the other extreme, among craftsmen, the average number of jobs held by men was 2.8, compared with 2.0 for women.

One might expect that wives holding either full or part-time jobs would boost the female job mobility rate above that for males. Palmer's study of labor mobility in six cities found that there was no difference in the amount

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[36]United States Department of Labor, "Mobility and Worker Adaptation to Change in the United States," loc. cit.

of job movement by men and women with full-time participation in the labor force.[37] Thus the higher mobility rate for men is almost exclusively concentrated among workers with less than full-time participation in the labor force. Apparently working wives do not greatly contribute to increasing the female mobility rate.

The preceeding illustrates some of the difficulties involved in trying to interpret data on the relative mobility of men and women. Since over long periods of time men have a greater continuity of labor force participation, it is probably not accurate to assume that their higher mobility is evidence of a greater propensity to change jobs. The fact that more job shifts were made by men involved in part-time employment than by women is probably attributable to differences in their ages, and to the circumstances accounting for their being in the labor force less than full time.[38]

Data from the Soviet Union on sex differentials in labor mobility is practically non-existent. The only applicable information pertains to the amount of time lost between job changes for men and women. According to the results of a survey in Leningrad, the break in work during job changes did not exceed 1 week for 36 percent of the men involved; it was between 1 week and 1 month for 50 percent, and it exceeded 1 month for 14 percent. The corresponding percertages for women were 20, 37, and 43 percent respectively.[39] The higher initial percentages for men could be due to a more careful (and hence time consuming) job selection process. The significantly greater percentages

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[37]Palmer, op. cit., p. 54.

[38]Parnes, op. cit., p. 114.

[39]Feshbach, op. cit., p. 733.

of women than men who were out of the labor force for over one month could have two explanations. First, the higher percentage could be due to women staying out of the labor force longer for reasons of pregnancy. Second, a common Soviet custom is for mothers to take their children away for the summer season. It is possible that upon returning, these women then find new jobs. This custom is not restricted to women in the upper economic classes, but there are probably fewer women in lower income classes who take their children away for the summer.

A comparison of labor force participation rates in the United States and the Soviet Union may prove helpful in an attempt to describe the influence of sex on labor mobility. Since the end of World War II in the United States, men have comprised approximately two-thirds of the labor force, and women one-third. This is so partly because of the tradition that "the woman's place is in the home", and partly because it is usually not economically necessary that a married woman work. In Russia, the labor force distribution between men and women is nearly equal. Most Soviet women work, unless they are either pregnant, starting to raise a family, or too old. Based on this information, it is possible, (although not entirely safe) to assume that the rate of job mobility in the Soviet Union is higher among women than men. In the United States, the husband is the basic provider in the family, and the wife in many cases is not employed. In Russia, men and women are treated more nearly as equals in the labor force. It is the author's impression that Soviet women may have a higher rate of occupational and industrial mobility than men. If it is assumed that they will have to spend some time in raising a family, women are more likely to be periodically absent from the labor force.

Living Conditions

Although it is difficult to quantify the impact of living conditions on labor mobility, a relationship, supported by empirical evidence, does exist. (The term living conditions will be used here to refer only to such factors as home ownership and attachment to a community). Although few attempts have been made to measure its effects, home ownership has been suggested as a factor that reduces the mobility of workers. Home ownership is probably a greater deterrent to geographic mobility than it is to the other mobility types. Some home owners may be more likely to change industries and/or occupations while retaining the same residence, than to change job classifications and places of residence.

Studies of New England textile workers show that strong ties of family, environment, tradition, etc., tend to hold most workers--but particularly the middle-aged and older ones--to their home town even when job opportunities are declining.[40] The textile workers demonstrated a particularly strong attachment to their trades and their communities. Of the workers survey, 58 percent indicated that, if the textile mills were liquidated, they would not want to leave, even if they knew of a job (or better job) elsewhere. Community ties ranked second only to home ownership as a deterrent to labor mobility. Reynolds' study of the New Haven labor market showed that tenants had a greater willingness to move than did home owners.[41] Lower geographic mobility among home owners than among renters is not hard to understand, but it is difficult

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[40]"Labour Mobility in the United States", International Labour Review, LXXIX, No. 3 (March, 1959), pp. 302-303.

[41]Parnes, op. cit., pp. 123-124, citing Reynolds, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

to explain why home ownership as such should restrict movement among occupations or industries within local labor markets.

Living conditions play a role in restricting labor mobility in the Soviet Union, but not in the same manner that they do in the United States. As pointed out in an earlier section, the low rate of Soviet geographic mobility can be at least partially attributed to the housing situation. Difficulty in finding housing, especially in the larger cities, is a major check on labor mobility.[42] Housing in rural areas, although somewhat more plentiful, is generally of poorer quality than city apartments. Since the cost of housing is heavily subsidized by the state, the Soviet government permits little freedom of choice in the selection of apartments. A major obstacle in the path of mobility is the degree of bureaucratic red tape that the prospective mover must contend with.

No Soviet studies have been made which show the impact of living conditions on labor mobility. It is impossible to conclude what effect community attachment may have on labor mobility. The lack of adequate transportation facilities serves as an additional check on mobility, especially geographic mobility. It is much more difficult for the Soviet worker to transport himself and his family great distances than it is for the American worker. If the Soviet worker succeeds in obtaining transportation to a distant labor market, he is then faced with the problem of securing housing, which, as mentioned, is both poor in quality and scarce.

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[42]Brown, op. cit., pp. 36-38.

Working Conditions

Working conditions undoubtedly have an impact on the volume of labor mobility. Working conditions probably have their strongest influence on occupational and industrial mobility, just as living conditions exerted their greatest effect on geographic mobility. A variety of working conditions can induce job mobility, ranging from insufficient wages to only the hope of finding a "better" job. To categorize some of these conditions, Table 6 presents a summary of factors involved in job changing.[43] The results are based on a 1949 study of a New England manufacturing town.

TABLE VI

FACTORS IN JOB MOBILITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Factor	Reasons for Leaving Previous Job (%)
Wages	24
Physical Characteristics of Job	23
Independence and Control	16
Left to take Better Job	15
Fairness of Treatment	13
Job Interest	8
Relations with Fellow Workers	1
Total	100

As is shown, wages play a major role in bringing about labor mobility. How typical the results are is open to question. But it is probable that wages, which are important to almost every worker, have a great deal to do

[43] Lloyd G. Reynolds and Joseph Shister, Job Horizons: A Study of Job Satisfaction and Labor Mobility (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), pp. 6-7.

with influencing job mobility in all labor markets. "Physical characteristics of the job" included three items: the nature of the job itself--clean or dirty, light or heavy, safe or dangerous; physical plant conditions--cleaniness, ventilation, lighting, etc.; and the type of machinery--modern or obsolete, and in good or bad condition. It should be apparent that the negative items listed go a long way in reducing employee morale, and hence in increasing labor mobility.

A study of labor turnover by the Soviet Institute of Labor provides an interesting comparison with the above data for the United States. A difficulty lies in the fact that different classifications were used, so exact parallels are impossible. The study, shown in Table 7, was performed in Leningrad in 1962-1963, and covered over 10,000 persons. Some of the classification factors have been re-stated to provide a closer comparison with the data in Table 6.[44]

TABLE VII

REASONS FOR JOB CHANGES IN LENINGRAD, 1962-1963

Factor	Reasons For Changing Jobs (%)
Dissatisfaction with Job Characteristics	50.8
Wages	21.4
Work not Corresponding to Skill or Interest	9.8
Relations with Co-workers and Management	2.5
Other Reasons	15.5

[44]Feshbach, op. cit., pp. 727-730.

Although the classifications do not coincide, a comparison of the Soviet and American studies shows that two factors, dissatisfaction with the physical characteristics of the job, and wages, are very important in influencing voluntary job changes. It may be argued that neither study is sufficiently large to be statistically meaningful for each of the two countries as a whole. However, the fact wages and job characteristics led the list of factors influencing job mobility in each of the countries is significant.

Employers' Policies

Many factors controllable at the employer level influence the amount of labor mobility. Such elements as hiring practices, promotions, and liquidation of the firm all directly affect labor mobility. Promotion policies influence the amount of voluntary job mobility. Most firms, particularly large ones that have a policy of promoting from within, bring about greater intrafirm occupational mobility. If it were not for such policies, the volume of interfirm movement would surely increase. Maximum age limits in hiring have the effect of reducing the mobility of older workers. Finally, employers can significantly influence the degree of labor mobility by liquidation of their firm. The mobility so induced is both involuntary and often of great magnitude.

There are other, less overt forms of employer influence on mobility. Mobility may be influenced by such factors as scientific and technological advancement. Automation is a case in point. The development of automation, with its implications for changing labor requirements places new demands on the job mobility of the labor force. The great technological progress of American industry over the past few decades has led to increased occupational

mobility. Even workers not displaced by automation may have to learn new job skills. Employees who fail to adapt to the requirements of automation may experience not only increased occupational mobility, but quite possibly a greater degree of geographic and industrial mobility as well.

The policies of employees in the Soviet Union are largely the policies of the Soviet government. Such checks on mobility as housing and wage differentials have been previously discussed. The present discussion will center on the attitude of the Soviet government toward technological change.

The first Soviet Constitution of 1918 stated the principle "He who does not work, neither shall he eat". The second Constitution, in 1936, moderated from this position somewhat, and stated that "Citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment...The right to work is ensured by the Socialist organization of the national economy..."[45] Although unemployment has been more of a problem than the Soviet government would like to admit, the displacement of workers due to the introduction of new technology has apparently not been serious. Automation may not lead to increased unemployment in the Soviet Union, since the government is responsible for providing work to its citizens, but it does result in a certain degree of labor mobility. A survey taken during the years 1960-1962 indicates that 80 percent of workers displaced by automation were absorbed within the basic organization and 20 percent were considered redundant.[46] Relocation of redundant workers requires retraining, which is not undertaken centrally, but by individual enterprise managers.

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[45]Conquest, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

[46]Feshbach, op. cit., p. 735.

It would seem, qualitatively at least, that automation and the resultant worker displacement have similar effects in the Soviet Union and the United States. Automation in both countries serves to increase labor mobility, particularly occupational mobility. Considering the nature of the socialist economy, it may be reasonably assumed that automation results in less unemployment, and hence less geographic mobility in the Soviet Union than in the United States.

Influence of Unions

The consensus among students of the labor market is that the net effect of trade unionism has been to diminish labor mobility. Shister believes that trade union policies play an important role in reducing voluntary movement.[47] Even though conflicting evidence as to the effects of unions on voluntary job shifts is available, the effects tending to reduce mobility are much the stronger. Two factors have been mentioned which might tend to increase voluntary movement. One is the greater knowledge of labor market conditions which union members are likely to gain through union or other channels. The second is the general practice of fixing wages for a specified period of time, often a year. In a "tight" labor market, workers may move to other plants where wage scales are higher.

Many union policies however, operate to reduce voluntary labor mobility. The presence of seniority, referred to earlier, provides an inducement to workers to build up their length of service with a given firm. Pension plans

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[47]Shister, op. cit., pp. 43-48.

have a similar affect, particularly for older workers.[48] The removal of sources of job dissatisfaction reduces the force of unsatisfactory job conditions in causing voluntary separations. Also, the standardization of wages and working conditions by unions results in a narrowing of differentials in the "net advantage" of alternative jobs. Another factor may be the sense of "belonging" to the union group, which may act to strengthen the attachment of a union member to his job. Shister concludes that the amount of involuntary labor mobility (brought about primarily through discharge or layoff) is unaffected by union policies. He feels that the extent of involuntary mobility is determined not by unions, but principally by the level of business activity.

Trade unions in the United States are primarily economic institutions, and act only secondarily as political organizations. In the Soviet Union however, the union is fundamentally a tool for political action. Early Soviet trade unions were established as voluntary organizations, led and controlled by the Communist Party. Lenin called the unions "school of administration, school of management, school of communism".[49] Present-day Soviet trade unions, although still governed by principles established by the party, are charged with "participating in economic construction" and serving the needs of the working people.[50]

Trade unions in Russia probably have an influence on worker mobility similar to that in the United States. A prime function of Soviet trade unions

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[48]Arthur M. Ross, "The New Industrial Tensions", Review of Economics and Statistics, XXX (May, 1[illegible], p. 137.

[49]Brown, op. cit., p. [illegible]

[50]Ibid., p. 63.

is to promote the welfare of worker members. To this extent, voluntary labor mobility is in all probability lessened. The union is responsible for administering the State Social Insurance (a form of disability insurance), pensions, and measures directed towards improving housing and living conditions. In addition to working with management on the setting of hiring, firing, and layoff policies, the unions are responsible for establishing standards for safety and working conditions. Although it is not an established proposition, it is probably safe to hypothesize that unions in Russia do serve to reduce the level of voluntary mobility. Soviet trade unions offer some of the advantages found in American unions, and it is often the case that the advantages that unions provide are factors that lead to decreased labor mobility.

SUMMARY

It has been the purpose of this report to compare, briefly, the topic of labor mobility in the Soviet Union and the United States. The report has been structured to provide first an insight into some of the different types of labor mobility, including quantitative data pertaining thereto, and second, to examine some of the determinants of labor mobility. It is felt that a better overall picture of labor mobility in the two countries is presented by discussing briefly many of the aspects of the subject. An in-depth analysis of only a few of the factors of labor mobility would probably have made the comparison less meaningful.

The following synopsis is given as a means of quickly summarizing some of the comparative portions of the report. The purpose of the report is to compare labor mobility in Russia and the United States, but often the essence of the comparison may be lost amid the detail presented.

Extent of Labor Mobility - The rate of geographic mobility in the U.S. (20.1%) is substantially greater than in the Soviet Union (between 3 and 4%). On the other hand, job mobility levels are over twice as high in the Soviet Union (20.9%) as in the United States (10.1%).

Supply and Demand in the Labor Market - The labor supply, in physical units, is larger in Russia than in the United States. The demand for labor (based on questionable unemployment data) also seems to be higher in the Soviet Union.

Demographic Trends - Birth rates in the two countries have been approximately equal. The Soviet death rate is lower than in the United States, and is declining. Migration patterns are also similar--away from rural areas and toward small metropolitan areas.

Wage Differentials - Soviet industries have smaller wage differentials than their American counterparts.

Governmental Policies - The Soviet government exerts much more influence upon labor mobility than does the United States government.

Patterns of Mobility - Job changes by American workers involving simultaneous shifts of employer, industry, and occupation occur more frequently than changes involving only one or two of the factors. Soviet workers apparently have a lower rate of occupational mobility than do American workers.

Age - All types of labor mobility decrease with increasing age, both in the Soviet Union and the United States.

Sex - Soviet women may have higher job mobility rates than men. The rates for American men and women are nearly equal, with men sometimes displaying higher rates of mobility.

Living Conditions - A larger role is played by living conditions in

restricting mobility in the Soviet Union than the United States.

Working Conditions - The working conditions that induce mobility in Russia are essentially the same as those in the United States.

Employers' Policies - Employers' policies restrict the rate of geographic mobility more in the Soviet Union than they do in the United States.

Influence of Unions - Trade Unions in Russia and the United States both exert similar influences on labor mobility. The unions generally act to decrease the amount of labor mobility.

Although the rates of different types of mobility vary significantly between the two countries, there are more similarities among the factors influencing the rates than may at first glance be expected. There is no appreciable difference in the impact of unions, working conditions, or age upon labor mobility in Soviet Union and the United States. In addition, some aspects of demographic trends and living conditions are similar in the two countries.

This brings us to a main point: whom or what is responsible for the differences in labor mobility that have been noted? Certainly the people themselves are basically not too dissimilar. Although there are many differences in the cultures prevailing in the Soviet Union and the United States, the people comprising those cultures have many attitudes and feelings in common. The Soviet and American worker presumably both desire the best possible living standard for themselves and their families. In all likelihood, they both prefer the best possible working conditions, and the greatest achievable amount of leisure time in which to enjoy the benefits of their labor. People in both countries work because it is economically essential; a worker must spend a certain amount of time providing labor in return for pay in order to obtain food and shelter. So basically, without the sociologists insight

into the nature of things, we will assume that workers are similar with respect to many of their attitudes and feelings.

Some of the immediate causes of differences in labor mobility have been presented in the section on the Determinants of Labor Mobility. Factors such as age, sex, unions, etc. definitely influence labor mobility. However, these factors are really only secondary causes. There are actually two fundamental, underlying causes, and these in turn help explain why the determinants of labor mobility have the effect that they do.

The key to the issue lies in the economic structure of the countries involved. Communism (actually socialism) in Russia is the polar opposite of capitalism in the United States. In the Soviet Union, the state owns the factors of production, supply and demand are almost non-existent economic factors, and there is redistribution of income intended to equalize extreme income classes. In the United States, free enterprise tends to be the dominant theme, the economy is based on the functioning of supply and demand, and investments are determined by private decision, not state control. It is not surprising that differences do exist in labor mobility, considering the economic character of the two countries.

A second issue, perhaps more important for our purposes, but still related to the discussion above, is the degree of governmental control over the life of the individual. The Soviet worker is subservient to the state; the American government is controlled by the people. This vast difference largely speaks for itself in terms of some of the fundamental causes of labor mobility. The degree of control exerted will first have an effect on the determinants of labor mobility, such as employers' policies, wage differentials, demographic trends, etc. These will in turn influence the labor mobility that takes place.

Future Outlook for Labor Mobility

The economic growth and business conditions that prevail in the United States in the years ahead will to a large extent determine the levels of future labor mobility. If an economic growth rate such as experienced over the last seven years is assumed to prevail in the future, then some assumptions about labor mobility can be made.

Projections for the American labor force indicate that is will grow at a decreasing rate from the present until 1980.[51] Given that the economy as a whole will grow at an increasing rate during this period, the implications are that labor mobility in general may increase. A proportionately smaller number of workers seeking a proportionately larger number of jobs may be expected to increase competition with the labor market. Increased competition may react to alter the impact of wage differentials, working conditions, and the influence of unions. The over-all effect should be to increase the levels of all types of mobility.

Both geographic and job mobility may increase somewhat in coming years due to possible changes in the technological structure of society. Increasing technological advancement will undoubtedly occur in the future, promoting mobility (especially job mobility) by creating new industries and occupations and closing old ones. Growth in the communications area will provide workers with better knowledge of opportunities in the labor market. Improvements in transportation facilities should increase both geographic and job mobility.

Of course, in the event that the national economy suffers a decline in

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[51]United States Department of Commerce, Pocket Data Book, op. cit., p. 128.

the years ahead, our projections of labor mobility would not hold. A future economic recession would tend to reduce all levels of mobility (as the depression in the 1930's did).[52] Involuntary job changes would be high during the initial phases of recession, but mobility rates over-all would decline due to the shrinking of opportunities within the labor market.

The level of job mobility in the Soviet Union, already comparatively high, may reasonably be expected to increase in the near future. This assumption is based on recent increases in the demand for Soviet Consumer goods, and prospects for much greater demand in the future. The commitment of the Soviet leadership to greater emphasis on consumer production is not likely to change unless there is an urgent threat of war.[53] Greater production of consumer goods, even at the expense of industrial and military production, would have the effect of creating different types of jobs, and causing a redistribution within the labor market.

The possibility does exist that Soviet job mobility may not increase noticeably in the coming years. Although increased consumer goods production may contribute to a rise in job mobility, this rise may be offset by the "novelty" aspect of mobility referred to earlier. One explanation of the high rate of job mobility is the recent easing of restrictions on job change. Perhaps the notable increase in mobility in the early 1960's will subside once workers become accustomed to a freer choice among jobs.

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[52]E. W. Baake, et al., Labor Mobility and Economic Opportunity (New York: The Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1954), p. 62.

[53]J. P. Nettl, The Soviet Achievement (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), pp. 247-254.

Unlike the American labor force growth rate, the Soviet growth rate is predicted to increase at least through 1975. A growing consumer economy, plus a steadily increasing labor force may well result in rising geographic, as well as job, mobility.

Geographic mobility should be enhanced by continued Soviet attempts to increase the productivity of the eastern regions of the country, especially Siberia. Many of the natural resources of Russia are to be found in this area, and an increasingly technology-oriented society will find these resources invaluable. The Soviet government is presently stimulating movement by workers and their families to the Siberian area, and will probably increase their efforts in the future. One would not expect a noticeable change in the geographic mobility rate overnight however. For the Soviet rate to even approach the high rate of geographic mobility in the United States will take many years.

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A COMPARISON OF LABOR MOBILITY IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES

by

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In this report, an attempt has been made to compare labor mobility in the United States and the Soviet Union. Labor mobility itself is a general term that denotes several specific types of mobility. Geographic mobility is the change from one geographic area to another. Occupational and industrial mobility represent changes in occupations and industries, respectively. Interfirm mobility refers to a change of employer.

A comparison of job mobility (a term which encompasses occupational, industrial, and interfirm mobility) shows that Russian workers change jobs more frequently than do American workers. This trend is recent however, and may be due to liberalization of restrictions on job changes that took place in 1960 in the Soviet Union.

The rate of geographic mobility is substantially greater in the United States than in the Soviet Union. The difference in the two rates may be at least partially attributable to the scarcity of housing and transportation facilities in the Soviet Union. Also, the Soviet government places many restrictions on the volume of internal migration that are totally absent in the United States.

There are many factors that may be classified as determinants of labor mobility. Evidence shows that age has the strongest influence upon all types of labor mobility. Labor mobility is generally high in the late teens and early twenties, and declines very noticeably with advancing age.

Sex is also a determinant of labor mobility. Although the differentials are not well-defined, men appear to be slightly more mobile in the United States and slightly less mobile in the Soviet Union.

Living conditions exert an influence on mobility, especially geographic mobility. The impact of working conditions is largely on job mobility. In both type and amount, the working conditions that influence mobility in Russia are essentially the same as those in the United States.

One of the most important determinants of mobility is the policies of employers. The personnel policies of American employers play a large role in governing the extent of labor mobility. The government, the principle employer in the Sovier Union, determines labor mobility to an even greater extent.

Trade unions in both countries act to lessen somewhat the amount of voluntary labor mobility. Unions are a more important factor in the American industrial setting than in the Russian industries, and probably exercise more influence on mobility.

The outlook for mobility in the two countries depends to a large degree on future economic conditions. Soviet geographic mobility will probably increase over its present low level, and job mobility may be expected to increase as a result of greater Soviet emphasis on consumer goods production. Labor mobility in the United States will conceivably increase in response to increased automation and a higher level of technology.