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Social Services for Families and Children in the Soviet Union Since 1967

The history and development of social services for families and children in the Soviet Union prior to 1967 have been studied quite extensively.¹ Soviet writings published since that time, more critical and probing than most earlier materials, as well as a field trip in October 1971 by this writer, make it possible to update our knowledge and to suggest what the future Soviet policy will be in this increasingly important area.

Programs for Children Living in Their Own Homes

Among the important programs in this context are day-care services, extended-day schools, and children's allowances—as well as legal provisions to strengthen the family.

Day-care Services. In 1960, permanent nurseries and kindergartens accommodated almost 4.4 million children, and seasonal facilities were available for 3 million. This meant that almost 23 percent of the children of preschool age were served. In 1970, there were 9.3 million youngsters in permanent institutions and 5 million in seasonal ones.² These are impressive and steady gains; yet they mean that in 1970 only 50 percent of all urban children were attending preschool facilities, while the figure for rural children was a low 30 percent.³ These levels fell considerably below the 65 percent of *all* children predicted for the end of the decade just three years earlier.⁴ In large cities most three-to-seven-year-olds are accommodated at first demand; but in smaller cities the

1. Bernice Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union* (Stanford, 1968), pp. 35–49, 69–75, 147–76.

2. *Izvestiia*, Feb. 4, 1971, p. 2. Summer vacations were enjoyed by 19 million children and adolescents, relieving their parents of child care.

3. "Glavnaia zadacha," *Ogonek*, 1971, no. 9, p. 3.

4. M. A. Prokof'ev, ed., *Narodnoe obrazovanie v SSSR, 1917–1967* (Moscow, 1967). Material on preschool education was translated in "Development of the Soviet Preschool Education System," *Soviet Review*, 9, no. 2 (Fall 1968): 18.

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situation is far from satisfactory. Everywhere the shortages for those under three years of age are serious. According to Soviet experts, the unification of preschool facilities—nurseries with kindergartens—was initiated in 1959, with plans requiring thirty-six places for nursery-age children out of every hundred made available. Today, more than nine-tenths who attend are in these combined facilities, administered by the Ministry of Education. But from the outset it has been the practice to decrease the contingent of under-three-year-olds in order to make room for the three-to-seven-year-olds. As a result, by 1971 almost one million places meant for the younger children have gone to the older children. During 1969–70, the longest waiting list of under-three-year-olds in the country was for mothers employed in light industry—150,000 mothers. During 1966–70 this industry fulfilled the plan for building preschool facilities by only 52 percent. As a matter of fact, during the last ten years not one province in the Russian republic built as many combined facilities as had been planned, although money was available.⁵ The situation on collective and state farms is similar. Thus in the Russian republic in 1968 only 61 percent of the construction required by plan for state farms was completed, and only 51 percent for collective farms; in 1969 the percentages were 59 and 49, respectively.⁶ According to the USSR deputy minister of education, for the country as a whole during the past five-year plan funds for “kindergarten-nurseries with more than 660,000 places were not put into operation.” Hence by January 1972 one million children were on the list of “pending applications” (*Pravda*, December 28, 1971).

Equally important are the qualitative inadequacies. One problem is the “thoughtless and inconvenient location” of nursery-kindergartens, which causes pronounced “transportation sufferings for parents and children.” Another problem is overcrowding and overloaded personnel. Groups of twenty-five to thirty children per caretaker have apparently become common,⁷ although Soviet specialists on the subject know that when there are that many, individualized upbringing is difficult or impossible. This is especially true now, it is claimed, when a large proportion of the kindergarten activities are devoted to preparing the children for elementary school.⁸ Nursery children get sick oftener than “home children.” The most serious problems are inadequate

5. Larisa Kuznetsova, “Kak byt' s mladentsem?” *Literaturnaiia gazeta*, June 24, 1970, p. 11; and D. Novopliansky, “The Waiting List,” *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Aug. 17, 1971, pp. 8–9 (original article in *Pravda*, July 17, 1971).

6. L. Martynova, “V kolkhozakh i sovkhovakh RSFSR,” *Doshkol'noe vospitanie*, 1971, no. 3, pp. 4–6.

7. A. Baskina, “Ot trekh do semi,” *Izvestiia*, Jan. 22, 1971, p. 3.

8. Upravlenie po doshkol'nomu vospitaniiu Ministerstva prosveshcheniia RSFSR, *Programma vospitaniia v detskom sadu* (Moscow, 1970); and E. I. Radina, ed., *Umstvennoe vospitanie detei rannego vozrasta* (Moscow, 1968).

qualifications and high turnover of personnel. They leave because pay is low, the occupation is not socially prestigious, and opportunities for creative work are minimal. In 1971 in the Russian republic (usually the most advanced), from among 57,000 directors and child-care personnel in kindergartens on state farms, 20 percent did not have secondary general education.⁹ Among major reasons cited for cutting back on nursery groups is the shortage of nurse-counselors and the fact that 40 percent of such nurses have had no special training. While praising the Soviet system of nursery care as being the world's most advanced, authorities emphasize that given the rising cultural level and the improved well-being of the Soviet family, this system is no longer able to satisfy parents consistently and everywhere. More parents are hiring private nurses. As one rapporteur cogently put it, "We must struggle to achieve a situation wherein a mother will place her child in a preschool facility, not because she does not know what to do with him, but because he is well off in such a facility—perhaps better off than at home."¹⁰

Problems generated by the present state of day-care services are made more worrisome by the changing patterns of family life in Soviet society. Working mothers can no longer rely on their mothers or mothers-in-law to care for their children, because more and more the older and younger generations are living apart. So far, however, the Soviet Union has not been willing to follow the plan introduced in Hungary in 1967 and in Czechoslovakia in 1970 of paying mothers (they receive grants roughly equal to the minimum wage) to remain at home and care for their children until age three. A similar measure, proposed by a demographer as a way to raise the birth rate, was vigorously discussed in the press and at an important women's symposium, and was rejected.¹¹ Whether or not such a measure, if adopted, would have raised the birth rate is debatable. But it would have had the immediate effect of easing the day-care shortages, as well as providing care for many children by their own mothers, which in the view of a growing number of Soviet experts is an essential ingredient in the development of healthy personalities.

Extended-day Schools. The development and purpose of extended-day schools have been discussed by this writer.¹² The fact that within a decade

9. Martynova, "V kolkhozakh i sovkhovakh RSFSR," p. 5.

10. L. Velikanova, "Kruglyi stol 'LG,' 60,000,000 semei," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, July 1, 1970, p. 11.

11. V. Perevedentsev, "Skol'ko imet' detei? Ekonomicheskii aspekt," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Nov. 20, 1968, p. 12. For a discussion of this proposal see this weekly for Jan. 22, 1969, p. 11; Mar. 19, 1969, p. 11; Apr. 16, 1969, p. 11; and Aug. 13, 1969, p. 12. The symposium referred to is described by M. Pavlova, "Zhenshchina doma i na rabote," in the same weekly, May 27, 1970, p. 12.

12. Madison, *Social Welfare*, pp. 75, 154-55.

this type of facility has become available for 5.2 million children is impressive,¹³ even though it does not confer on extended-day education the “prevalent mass-type school” position that supporters in 1962 predicted it would occupy. The extended-day school, usually for children in grades one to four, and sometimes for those in grades five to eight as well, was created to meet the needs of children who during out-of-school hours are without family supervision, as well as for those who are not making normal progress in school.¹⁴ These schools are expected to cut down on dropouts and repeaters. Among parents whose children attend extended-day schools, 10 percent are at present excused from all payments for the two meals their children are served at school, and 15 percent have their payments reduced.¹⁵ But they are not relieved of other parental duties. Although parents can no longer be called to account for their child’s lack of progress in school, we are told, they can be expected to provide a “higher level of culture and care for the child.” Apparently the regime has accepted the unwillingness of parents to “give” their children to boarding schools, where they are brought up almost completely without parental influence and control. As far back as 1962 the more perceptive educators saw the advantage of extended-day over boarding schools to be their “organic tie-in with family upbringing.”¹⁶ The economic factor has also played a decisive role. The cost of boarding-school education was found to be five to six times higher than education in extended schools.¹⁷

That the program of extended-day education is not fulfilling expectations consistently is suggested by the fact that its ideal image is quite different from the image that exists in the minds of parents and the general public, as described by experts in 1969: “If one has a good life, one does not send his child to an extended-day school.”¹⁸ The family situation must be “really hopeless,” and the child is pitied. The experts also noted that the number of extended-day schools is growing slowly, the level of pedagogical work in them is not high, and many children “run away” from them because they are bored. In short, in some places the extended day does not guarantee the many-sided development of the child, but is rather an extended blind alley. One reason for this is the practice of organizing the extended-day schools in groups rather than classes, which means that because the teacher has to deal with children of different ages, her efforts are reduced to merely supervising homework rather

13. *Izvestiia*, Feb. 4, 1971, p. 2.

14. N. Lebedeva, “Svet i teni prodlnennogo dnia,” *Sem’ia i shkola*, 1970, no. 2, pp. 4–5.

15. *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 19, p. 32.

16. P. Grankin, “Preimushchestva shkoly s prodlnennym dnev,” *Shkola-internat*, 1962, no. 3, p. 79.

17. E. G. Kostiashkin, *Shkola prodlnennogo dnia* (Moscow, 1965), p. 4.

18. Kruglyi stol nedeli, “Prodlnnyi den’ shkol’nika,” *Nedelia*, 1969, no. 44, p. 18. Led by Baskina and Mushkina.

than responding to individual needs. Agreement is also lacking on whether the extended-day educator should be a "regular" teacher, an expert in subject matter, or an "upbringer" who presumably is especially skilled in personality development. Another problem is that the children remain after school in the same building they were in during the regular school day, an arrangement that is depressing and monotonous and makes more artificial the organization of sports, games, and walks—or getting away from the usual grind.

Children's Allowances. The 1936 law prohibiting abortion also established a limited family allowance system. This system was appreciably improved in 1944: monthly payments became available to a mother after the birth of a fourth child and all subsequent children, starting in the month the child reached the age of one and continuing until the month before he became five. The amount increased with succeeding children. For unmarried mothers, payments started from the child's birth and continued until he reached the age of twelve. On January 1, 1948, allowances were cut in half—a cut that has never been restored, although all other income maintenance and social insurance grants have been liberalized. Because Soviet wage levels have increased substantially since World War II, the value of allowances in relation to the rising wages has drastically declined. In 1971 the average monthly cash earnings of workers and employees amounted to 126 rubles.¹⁹ For the fourth child the allowance amounts to four rubles a month for the next four years.²⁰

Since most Soviet parents want to have only one or two children, and are increasingly able to limit their families to that size, it follows that as time goes on, fewer children are benefiting from the allowance program. In 1966, in the entire country, the number of families with four or more children was only 558,000, or 1 percent of the total number of families.²¹ In 1970 only 3.2 million mothers were receiving family allowances—a drop of 238,000 since 1960.²² Expenditures reached a peak of 496 million rubles in 1960, but by 1969 they had dropped to 438 million. The major beneficiaries are youngsters in rural and Central Asiatic communities where large families are still fairly numerous.²³ The quantitatively shrinking role of the allowance system and its low benefits have made of it a weak instrument either to improve the welfare of children or to raise the birth rate—a function ascribed to it by certain Soviet demog-

19. Information given to author in October 1971, by Gosplan.

20. It should be added that for the third child there is a lump sum of twenty rubles; and for the fourth the lump sum is sixty-five rubles.

21. R. Kallistratova, "Rozhdaemost' i pravo," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1971, no. 2, p. 15.

22. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1971 g.*, p. 220.

23. In 1971 in the Uzbek republic, with a population of 14 million, there were 650,000 mothers receiving allowances. In the Ukraine, with a population of over 47 million, only 400,914 mothers were receiving allowances (information secured by author in October 1971).

raphers, although without any support in the experience of the Western democracies.²⁴ A radical revamping is foreshadowed during the current plan, which calls for the introduction in 1974 of cash allowances for children in families in which aggregate per capita income, including all types of income, does not exceed 50 rubles per month.²⁵ It is interesting that the effort to bring the resources of low-income families to what is considered an adequate level is to be implemented through a horizontal more than a vertical redistribution of income, from childless families to those with children—a redistribution that will have little impact on the nonegalitarian nature of Soviet wages.

Legal Provisions to Strengthen the Family. In 1968 this writer noted that a major effort was being made to help the family do its job “correctly” while the child is part of it, rather than removing the child from its influence. Developments since then have reinforced this effort. Parents are still chided when they object to their children doing clean-up work at school, but this is done in a conciliatory tone at the same time that cooperation and understanding are requested.²⁶ Parents are still taken to task for pressuring their children to become doctors, engineers, or geologists, rather than workers and craftsmen, but teachers are criticized for the same kind of pressure. Both, it seems, have forgotten that “there is no higher calling in the world than that of the worker.”²⁷ In short, the vitriolic, head-on collisions of former days between parents and the state have gone out of style. “Bad” parents are certainly not pampered, but there is more willingness to help them reform, rather than merely condemning them. Perhaps the authorities have become convinced that to raise “new” young people is indeed a difficult and expensive task that often defies achievement.

The new law on marriage and the family, which went into effect on October 1, 1968, promises that the state and society will help the family with the “communist” upbringing of children, but insists that such upbringing remains “a very important duty of the family.”²⁸ Depriving parents of this duty is a last resort to be used only when it is *clearly* established that they are failing to do what is required or are abusing their powers, or when they treat

24. Vincent H. Whitney, “Fertility Trends and Children’s Allowance Programs,” in Eveline M. Burns, ed., *Children’s Allowances and the Economic Welfare of Children: The Report of a Conference* (New York: Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York, Inc., 1968), pp. 124, 137.

25. Twenty-fourth Congress of the CPSU, March 30–April 9, 1971, *Documents* (Moscow, 1971), p. 192.

26. *Sem’ia i shkola*, 1969, no. 9, pp. 42–43.

27. G. Chernov, “For the Family’s Advice: My Working Class,” *CDSP*, Mar. 9, 1971, p. 17.

28. Law of RSFSR on the Adoption of the Code on Marriage and the Family, *Soviet Law and Government*, 9, no. 2 (Fall 1970): 104.

their children cruelly or exert a harmful influence on them by amoral or antisocial behavior. If the parents try conscientiously but are still unable to bring up their child properly, there is no basis for depriving them of parental rights.²⁹ At the same time, restraint toward parents must not outweigh the interests of children.³⁰ There is a middle ground: a court may decide to transfer the child to the care of a guardianship or trusteeship agency without depriving the parents of their rights.

Loss of parental rights does not free parents from support obligations. Furthermore, the new law enlarges the circle of persons from whom child support may be expected. An interesting new provision requires support from individuals who intended to raise the child and who actually have done so on a *permanent* basis but are not related to him by birth or through adoption.³¹ These persons are called "factual upbringers" (*fakticheskie vospitateli*), and the children are called "those who are being raised" (*vospitanniki*). In these instances, the source of rights and responsibilities concerning mutual support is not kinship but the juridical fact of upbringing. The position of "factual upbringers" vis-à-vis other responsible family members is defined in the following provision: if there are no biological parents, the duty to support minor children devolves, first, on the stepfather, stepmother, or factual upbringer, and only in the second instance on economically able brothers, sisters, grandfathers, and grandmothers. In turn, *vospitanniki* are equated with biological children when it comes to the duty to support adult family members who are unable to work and are in need.³² These provisions are said to strengthen family and kinship ties and are considered to be in keeping with Soviet morality.

The new law retained the previous scale of support payments for minor children. Although collection of such payments had been facilitated by garnisheeing them, a procedure established by a decree of July 21, 1967,³³ it was noted at the end of 1970 that the number of complaints by women about the failure of fathers to carry out court orders regarding child support was "impressive."³⁴ As a matter of fact, the problem was important enough to be singled out by a Standing Committee of the USSR Supreme Soviet as an area

29. N. Ershova, "Lishenie roditel'skikh prav," *Sotsialisticheskaja zakonnost'*, 1971, no. 4, pp. 46-47.

30. N. Shtuchnaia, "Lishenie roditel'skikh prav," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1971, no. 7, pp. 15-16.

31. G. V. Podelshchikov, "Fifth Session of the Seventh Russian Republic Supreme Soviet: Most Important Is the Concern for Man," *CDSP*, Aug. 27, 1969, pp. 18-19.

32. N. Ershova, "Alimentnye obiazannosti rodstvennikov: Drugikh lits," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1971, no. 4, pp. 20-21.

33. A. Gorkin, "Concern for the Soviet Family," *Soviet Review*, 10, no. 3 (Fall 1969): 47, 52.

34. A. Lugovskaia, "Ispolnenie sudebnykh reshenii o vzyiskanii alimentov," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 23, pp. 10-11.

that required attention when the need "to observe strictly and precisely the existing legislation" on family questions was discussed.⁸⁵

Another new provision in the law deprives the husband of the right, without the consent of his wife, to institute divorce proceedings while she is pregnant and for a year after the birth of the child, even if the child is not his. During this period both the mother and child are entitled to support from the husband;⁸⁶ this is, of course, the main purpose of the provision.

Despite these efforts to strengthen the "communist" family, families are falling apart at an increasing rate. In 1950 there were three divorces per one hundred marriages; in 1960 there were ten; and in 1967, thirty.⁸⁷ The liberalization of the divorce process in 1965 is not the only or even the major reason for this huge rise. If it were, the formalization of delayed *de facto* marriages would have decreased the percentage of divorces as time went on. But this has not happened. Of all civil cases coming before the courts in 1967, those arising out of marriage-and-family relationships made up more than half, of which divorces were 30.6 percent. And about half of all divorce cases were initiated in families in which there were minor children. Most cases ended in divorce: in only one-fifth of them did court reconciliation efforts succeed.⁸⁸ Letters from divorced fathers and mothers in periodicals and newspapers, complaining about problems connected with visitation rights, stepfather behavior, and a variety of emotional and economic deprivations—as well as about occasional successes in raising children when divorced parents are intelligent, tolerant, and perceptive—are not infrequent.⁸⁹ Courts do not find it easy to decide on custody when the divorcing spouses are at odds. The new family law urges courts to involve organs of guardianship and trusteeship in these situations in order to gain as deep an understanding as possible. But even then, the need to analyze a variety of interrelated conditions and facts (material, housing, and other life circumstances of parents, the relationships between them and their children, the moral qualities of the parents, the state of their health) makes these cases difficult.⁴⁰ Soviet social scientists find that "no amount of care by the government and by social organizations can take the place of a father."⁴¹ The state,

35. G. Ustinov, "In Standing Committee of the USSR Supreme Soviet Chambers: Know and Carry Out the Law," *CDSP*, Jan. 6, 1971, p. 28.

36. V. Riasnitsev, "Rastorzenie braka v sude," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1971, no. 6, pp. 15–16.

37. V. I. Perevedentsev, "Kak raspadaitsiia sem'i," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Sept. 3, 1969, p. 11.

38. Gorkin, "Concern for the Soviet Family," pp. 47–49.

39. *Sem'ia i shkola*, 1969, no. 1, p. 33; 1969, no. 2, p. 33; 1969, no. 5, pp. 29–30, 36; 1970, no. 7, p. 19.

40. A. Nechaeva, "Razreshenie sporov o detiakh pri rastorzenii braka," *Sotsialisticheskaia zakonost'*, 1971, no. 2, pp. 31–35.

41. Boris Uralnis, "Bezotsovshchina," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Jan. 7, 1970, p. 12.

although it concedes the importance of keeping the welfare of children uppermost, is concerned about costs. Consequently there is pressure for "scrupulous" exposure of persons who evade making alimony and child-support payments, as well as for more consistent use of steps aimed at reconciliation of the spouses.

Since the emotional development of children is of such importance in this study, it is worth noting that most divorce actions are initiated by women, that in 50 percent of them the reason given is the husband's alcoholism, that wife-beating still occurs, that infidelity of the husband is not infrequent, and that a majority of divorces follow marriages of long duration (in 1967 more than 70 percent had lasted more than five years).⁴² There are many reports about the moral and psychological harm inflicted by alcoholic fathers on their children. Demands still abound for "forms and means to pressure drinking fathers so that they find it very awkward to behave as they do and come to regard their parental duties differently."⁴³ Alcoholism appears to exacerbate the crisis that the Soviet family is experiencing.⁴⁴

Services for Children Not Living at Home

Among the important services in this context are substitute family care, homes and boarding schools for normal children, and institutional care for defective children.

Substitute Family Care. The 1968 law introduced only one new feature for children deemed to be in need of substitute homes: guardians and trustees are no longer required to support the children entrusted to their care. If the ward does not possess adequate means of his own, an allowance for his support is made out of public funds. This change was probably made in order to recruit a larger number of suitable persons willing to raise other people's children on a long-term or permanent basis, but not willing to adopt them. Temporary foster-family care, while the child's own family is being rehabilitated, was never extensive in the network of Soviet child-care arrangements, and by now is nonexistent.

Adoption continues to be a resource for children who have no parents or have been deprived of the opportunity to live with their parents. Although adoption enjoys official endorsement in principle, services to adoptive applicants remain rudimentary. Prospective parents continue to rely on their own

42. Velikanova, "Kruglyi stol 'LG,'" p. 11; S. Morozov, "Assignment at Readers' Request: Not Subject to Termination," *CDSP*, Oct. 8, 1969, pp. 20-21; V. G. Viktorovich, "Drama v sem'e," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 6, pp. 24-26.

43. E. Popov, "On the Subject of Morality: 'Difficult' Fathers," *CDSP*, Mar. 31, 1970, p. 14.

44. A. Ianov, "Tak govorit zdravyi smysl," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Sept. 24, 1969, p. 11.

efforts to find a child, and they encounter many legal and other frustrations. A recent report, quoting physicians from children's homes, says: "Although there are many fine people who would like to adopt children who have been abandoned at maternity homes, we cannot always give them a child, for the child's mother often neglects to give the home an official waiver of her rights to the child. Without these papers no child can be handed over to another family. Sometimes a child's birth is not even formally registered until three or four months later, and then the mother's identity and whereabouts are unknown. Are we not being too lenient to such parasites?"⁴⁵ Furthermore, Soviet practice suggests that the adoptive process itself fails to assure proper protection for all concerned. For example, "to assure the secrecy of adoption" the Russian republic's law allows the birthplace of the adopted child and the date of his birth to be changed (but by no more than six months) in the documents that are drawn up. Circumstances that justify annulment of adoption are of two kinds: when the interests of the adopted child require it, and when the adoption was completed contrary to regulations spelled out in the law.⁴⁶ If, for example, the child is found to be mentally retarded after placement, annulment must be granted, because although such children are not usually offered for adoption, "sometimes mistakes are made." When the court grants an annulment, it must also decide what to do with the child. A rather surprising alternative, from an American point of view, is the return of the child to his natural parents. As a matter of fact, if such parents are alive, able-bodied, and not deprived of parental rights, and are not themselves plaintiffs in the case, an annulment obligates them to assume the care and support of the child. The existence of this alternative appears to nullify the adoption concept itself. Its downgrading is also implied by the exclusion of adopted children from the five or more who, if raised to the age of eight, confer on their mothers the right to retire at fifty (if they have a work record of fifteen years) instead of the usual fifty-five.⁴⁷

The complete absence of statistics concerning children living with guardians, trustees, and adoptive parents, and the pervasive silence in the literature about any and all aspects of their lives, suggest that from the official perspective these arrangements are considered relatively unimportant. Child-care experts know, however, that their impact on the children involved is basic and lasting. Inevitably one is left with the uneasy feeling that at least some of the most

45. G. Dmitrin, "Pedagogical Reflections: And a Family Unit," *CDSP*, Feb. 9, 1971, p. 24.

46. V. Riasentsev, "Otmena usynovleniia i priznanie ego nedeistvitel'nyh," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 16, pp. 25-27.

47. Editors, "Otvechaem na voprosy," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 22, p. 32.

disadvantaged children are not receiving the kind of upbringing proclaimed as essential for the rising generation in Soviet society.

Homes and Boarding Schools for Normal Children. This writer noted in 1968 that planning for the future is taking two forms: for children of preschool age, homes of 100–150 capacity will continue; for children of school age, homes will be transformed into boarding schools, each serving 300 to 600 children. That these plans, eliminating mixed-age institutions, have made considerable headway since then is clear from the literature. For example, a 1971 report explains that in Cheliabinsk there remain two homes for preschool children but none for youngsters of mixed ages: upon reaching school age, they were transferred to boarding schools. The author of the report lists the reasons for this transfer: the pupils' standard maintenance allotments were somewhat higher at the boarding schools, the staff salaries were higher there, and the boarding-school buildings were better equipped with up-to-date amenities. Subsequent experience showed, however, that the transferred children paid dearly for these advantages. They lost "the most valuable, the most cherished thing"—atmosphere. By this is meant a milieu that gives the feeling "of a big and friendly family, where one person felt responsible for another, where the older members cared about the younger ones, where housekeeping was a communal enterprise, where labor was performed in earnest. The children developed normally and in no way felt deprived."⁴⁸ The author goes on to say that the transferred children find it difficult to adjust to living among schoolmates who have parents and families and who can spend weekends and vacations with them. Boarding-school administrators agree. No matter how model the boarding school, they say, it lacks family feeling. They now think that smaller homes, for 120 to 150 occupants of mixed ages, are the best variant and that mixed children's homes were closed too hurriedly. But, they add, they are powerless to change the decisions of central authorities.⁴⁹

The movement into boarding schools described above should not be taken to mean that these schools have become relatively more important in the network of facilities serving children. Children's homes and boarding schools, from their very beginnings, were designed primarily for dependent, neglected, and disadvantaged youngsters—children of unmarried mothers, of war and labor

48. Dmitrin, "Pedagogical Reflections," p. 24.

49. That the quality of personnel is also of great importance in children's institutions is underscored by a story about five youngsters of Anzhero-Sudzhensk Children's Home No. 1 who sneaked into the garden and got away with seven cucumbers. Their teacher left their punishment to the older children, who beat them in a shed. Only the echoes of her "educational" treatment reached the teacher. One of the punished children ran off that day. See Egor Iakovlev, "Assignment at Readers' Request: Material Evidence," *CDSP*, Aug. 13, 1969, p. 27.

invalids, orphans, members of large families, of poor families, and of “problem families” (*neblagopoluchnye sem'i*). As time went on, this contingent became predominant—a majority difficult to educate and to raise because of the deprivations and gaps in their backgrounds. As far back as 1961 there was disagreement over whether or not boarding schools ought to accept *only* backward children.⁵⁰ Those who prevailed urged a continuation of the policy of filling up boarding schools with children from “problem families.” They claimed that 30 to 50 percent of these children were “normal” and that the main difficulty was the school staff’s totally negative attitude toward their families.⁵¹ Whatever the reasons, boarding school children have not done as well educationally as youngsters living in their own families, even in fatherless ones.⁵² Efforts to raise the level of pupil performance have not been furthered by consolidating boarding schools into “giant” institutions—a policy hotly debated during the 1960s, with the proponents of “giants” winning. As time went on, disillusioned educators also raised questions concerning the purpose of boarding schools. Osborn summarizes them as follows: “Just how different are they supposed to be from the regular day schools? Is the boarding facility merely a dormitory next to a school? Is it intended to be first of all a convenience for parents? . . . What are boarding-school children supposed to do during after-school hours? Is there any good reason for providing a setting which encourages them to lead lives separate from those of their parents?”⁵³ Nor has bigness cut down on costs, which were high from the outset. Osborn gives (p. 59) the per capita annual expenditure as 500–650 rubles, compared with 150 rubles for extended-day schools, and 80–90 rubles for regular primary and secondary day schools. Not only is the cost high, but almost all of it falls on the state, because perennially boarding schools have been unable to collect the money due them from parents. Soviet attorneys find that certain parents do not realize what their obligations are to the boarding schools and fail to make the payments required of them by law. And yet the parents’ contributions are one source of budgeted finances for the schools, and are depended on to cover the cost of certain essential items. Poor parents may be excused or their payments may be reduced, but these adjustments cannot be applied to more than 25 percent of all children who have parents. Delayed or partial payments make it impossible to equip

50. I. A. Kairov, “Nekotorye problemy razvitiia shkol-internatov,” *Shkola-internat*, 1961, no. 3, p. 9.

51. R. Medvedev, “O nekotorykh voprosakh razvitiia shkol-internatov,” *Shkola-internat*, 1962, no. 1, pp. 70–78.

52. Perevedentsev, “Kak raspadaitsiia sem'i,” p. 11.

53. Robert J. Osborn, *Soviet Social Policies: Welfare, Equality, and Community* (Homewood, Ill., 1970), p. 248.

schools properly. The whole educational undertaking is affected adversely, and the quality suffers.⁵⁴

Qualitative and cost factors, combined, explain the rapid abandonment of initial plans to develop boarding schools into mass facilities. The journal *Shkola-internat*, which began publication in January 1961 with the announcement that "to boarding schools belongs a tremendous future," ceased to exist in December 1965. There is no mention of boarding schools in current or future plans, and no statistics concerning them are given when the numbers of children in other kinds of schools are proudly recited. Placements in them have probably become stabilized—a development that contrasts sharply with forecasts made by early boarding-school enthusiasts, who wished to make this kind of care well-nigh universal.

Homes for "Defective" Children. No fundamental changes in philosophy or provisions for these children have occurred in recent years. Apparently it is believed that the general direction of efforts on their behalf is correct, although refinements, experimentation, and improvements are called for.

The separation of educable defective children (88.5 percent of the total "defective" group) from the noneducable is being continued.⁵⁵ It is predicted that separation or "typization" among the noneducable will be further refined as time goes on: the 60 percent who are imbeciles and can be taught to work will be separated from idiots and the "debilitated" with serious physical handicaps who need only constant care. Institutional workers also consider it essential that the mentally retarded youngsters, upon reaching age eighteen, be transferred to special "psychoneurological" boarding schools for youth. At present there are none. As a result, work habits so painstakingly taught in the homes are not reinforced in the regular schools to which these young people are transferred, and they gradually atrophy.⁵⁶ Although teaching suitable occupations to as many as possible in the homes is still said to be the main objective,

54. N. Ershova, "Alimentnye obiazannosti roditel'ei," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 18, pp. 8–9. As late as 1969 it was reported that a boarding school in the Tatar republic occupied an ancient, squalid building. Firewood had not been prepared in time, and pupils had to saw huge logs in freezing weather and snowstorms. Often the children went without hot food, because there was no kitchen in the school itself and it was too expensive to feed them in the central city restaurant. See Editors, "Internat privoditsiia v poriadok," *Sem'ia i shkola*, 1969, no. 7, p. 39.

55. This estimate is based on the figure of 160,912 mentally retarded educable children in schools in the Russian republic in 1969 (see Editors, in *Narodnoe obrazovanie*, 1969, no. 10, p. 123), and the figure of 21,000 noneducable mentally retarded in homes in the Russian republic in 1969 (see Editors, "Doma budut tipizirovany," *Sotsial'noe obespechenie*, 1969, no. 1, pp. 38–39).

56. Editors, "Trebovaniia vremeni: Na kustovykh soveshchaniakh RSFSR," *Sotsial'noe obespechenie*, 1968, no. 6, pp. 36–39.

there is some resistance to wholesale and indiscriminate transplantation of experience from one home to another.⁵⁷ It is also thought that experience in teaching certain trades to “defective” children is by now extensive enough to warrant a “program” and a “methodological guide,” which, it is urged, should be produced by a republic-wide center devoted to the educational and the upbringing problems of the severely retarded.

Apparently there has been some improvement in the quality of staff in the homes. Complaints about dishonesty and incompetence are not as frequent as formerly.⁵⁸ But there are still not enough homes. At least 16 percent of the children who are adjudged in need of this kind of special care are not accommodated. And the homes that are built do not always have the shops and equipment needed.⁵⁹

Services to Unmarried Mothers and Illegitimate Children

The situation of these mothers and children was studied by this writer, who concluded that many of them need counseling and other services that they do not get, and that the mothers are far from being complete mistresses of their own and their children’s destinies. This position remains essentially unchanged.

The 1968 law on marriage and the family provides for the establishment of paternity by a joint statement of the unmarried parents at a registrar’s office. To what extent this voluntary procedure is used is impossible to say. In 1969 it was claimed that even before 1968 “adoption of illegitimate children by their fathers was not rare,”⁶⁰ and in 1970 it was stated that “recognition of paternity is accomplished in the majority of cases voluntarily.”⁶¹ But in neither year were supporting data produced. If there is no joint statement, paternity may be established through a court suit instituted by the mother, but this applies only to children born after October 1, 1968, because the law is not retroactive. Only one exception is made: in case of the death of the person who supported the

57. Such transplantation is advocated in Editors, “Metallo-obrabotka v detskom dome,” *Sotsial’noe obespechenie*, 1968, no. 1, p. 40. The doubt is expressed by Iu. Zubrilin, “Polezny-li absolutnye otsenki?” *Sotsial’noe obespechenie*, 1968, no. 8, pp. 38–41.

58. For the period January 1968 to June 1971 *Sotsial’noe obespechenie* published only one story about a home in which the director, her husband, and the accountant employed by her were caught misusing funds. They had neglected the mentally retarded children. See Editors, “Direktor sniat s raboty,” *Sotsial’noe obespechenie*, 1968, no. 11, pp. 42–43.

59. This percentage is suggested by the figure of 4,000 children awaiting placement in March 1968 in the Russian republic in which, in 1969, 21,000 children were already in placement. The plan called for the construction of fourteen new homes with a capacity of 2,355 places by the end of 1970, and for making sure that by this date all of the homes had workshops capable of being used for production. See Editors, *Sotsial’noe obespechenie*, 1968, no. 3, pp. 40–41.

60. Editors, *Sem’ia i shkola*, 1969, no. 4, p. 33.

61. Ustinov, “In Standing Committee,” p. 28.

child born before October 1, 1968, and who admitted he was the father, the child's paternity may also be established through the courts. The child then becomes entitled to an orphan's pension. But a Soviet authority states that court cases to establish paternity are few, because many unmarried mothers prefer to support and raise their children without making demands on the children's fathers. When there is no voluntary acknowledgment and no court determination, the child cannot claim support either from his father or from the father's relatives; neither can he inherit from them. In such instances, the child is registered in the mother's surname; the first name and patronymic of the father are recorded according to her instructions.⁶²

Although it appears that disapproval of out-of-wedlock births has become less sharp among the intellectuals and the young, there is no convincing evidence that these less punitive attitudes are significantly shared by the general population. Yet in 1970 one out of every ten live births was illegitimate, which means that 400,000 of the babies born that year were illegitimate. It is claimed that this figure represents a sizable drop from the 1950s.⁶³ But in cumulative terms it means that millions of children still grow up in economically and socially deprived circumstances: their mothers' rights have not changed since 1944, so that only inadequate allowances until they reach the age of twelve or placement in an institution are available. And it is still true that those among them who need social services (legal, economic, and psychological) do not get them at all, or only rarely.

Services for Juvenile Delinquents

Although statistics on juvenile delinquency are not adequate, there can be no doubt that the authorities are deeply concerned both with its magnitude and its characteristics. In the past five years, descriptive studies of delinquents have appeared more often than in earlier periods, more criticism has been voiced about the work of responsible agencies, and decrees spelling out adminis-

62. L. Vul'f, "Nekotorye voprosy ustanovleniia ottsovstva v sudebnom poriadke," *Sotsial'noe obespechenie*, 1970, no. 8, pp. 54-55; and M. Materova, "Zakonnost' i obosnovannost' sudebnykh reshenii po delam ob ottsovstve," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 6, pp. 11-12. V. S. Tadevosian, "Okhrana prav odinokoi materi i ee rebenka," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, 1971, no. 11, p. 30.

63. Uralnis, "Bezotsovshchina," p. 12. Uralnis states that in the Ukraine the relative number of illegitimate births during 1960-64, compared with 1950-54, dropped by 16 percent in rural communities, and by 33 percent in cities. He does not say, however, that this magnitude of decrease would be applicable to the entire USSR. What is more important from the standpoint of the kind of homes available for children is that for many of them legitimacy results from hastily arranged marriages—some of them, at least, unwanted. See V. Perevedentsev, "A Statistical Commentary: It's Time to Marry," *CDSP*, May 11, 1971, pp. 35-36.

trative structure and functions have been promulgated more often. In April 1971 the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences convened the first all-union "scientific-practical" conference on the problem of preventing delinquency and re-educating delinquents.⁶⁴

Characteristics of Juvenile Delinquents. We learn that "in the overwhelming majority of cases, minors (those under eighteen) who have taken the path of crime have a low level of general education and a narrow range of interests, dropped out of school between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, were left to their own devices on the street, at first committed immoral acts and then, grave criminal offenses."⁶⁵ Delinquents fall into four personality categories: (1) those with a firmly established criminal view of life: 10 to 15 percent of the total, (2) those with firmly established negative personality characteristics: 30 to 40 percent, (3) those with fluctuating personality patterns: 25 to 35 percent, and (4) those who committed crimes by chance, contrary to the generally positive patterns of their personality: 25 to 35 percent.⁶⁶

A study comparing crime among minors in the city and in the countryside—said to be the first of its kind in the Soviet Union—was published in 1969.⁶⁷ Crime among minors occurs three to five times as often in the city as in rural communities. Significant similarities in the crimes committed by the two groups were uncovered: (1) about 60 percent of the crimes in both were thefts of state and public property and hooliganism; (2) group crimes accounted for 78 percent in the city and 70.4 percent in rural localities; (3) the percentages of juveniles who committed crimes in a state of alcoholic intoxication were 66.6 percent in the city and 64.2 percent in the countryside; (4) in a breakdown of the juvenile offenders by age and occupation the ages sixteen and seventeen dominated in both; the highest percentage of crimes (more than half) were committed by working teen-agers; (5) in most cases the juveniles lived in families with two parents before committing the offense; (6) the parents had a low level of education; 84 percent of the fathers and 78 percent of the mothers in the city, and 84 percent of the fathers and 83 percent of the mothers in the

64. V. Obukhov, "Voprosy perezovspitaniia nesovershennoletnikh pravonarushitelei i preduprezhdenie prestupnosti," *Sovetskaia pedagogika*, 1971, no. 4, pp. 157-58.

Since this article was submitted Walter D. Connor has published his *Deviance in Soviet Society: Crime, Delinquency, and Alcoholism* (New York, 1972). The reader interested in a more detailed discussion of delinquency is referred to pages 80-147 in that book.

65. T. Dudina, "Crime Prevention Is the Main Thing: One Guarantee for Reducing Crime Among Minors," *CDSP*, May 21, 1969, p. 8.

66. G. M. Min'kovsky, "Effektivnost' mer vozdeistviia na nesovershennoletnikh pravonarushitelei," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, 1971, no. 4, pp. 106-7.

67. B. S. Vorontsov, graduate student at the All-Union Institute for the Study of the Causes of Crime and the Elaboration of Crime Prevention Measures, and N. I. Gukovskaia and E. B. Mel'nikova, senior staff scientists at the Institute, *CDSP*, May 21, 1969, pp. 9-13.

countryside, had only an elementary-school education; (7) the juveniles themselves had a comparatively high educational level; 56.8 percent in the city and 53 percent in the country had a seventh or eighth-grade education. The typical family in both city and countryside has two working parents; hence there is a great need to organize the free time of juveniles constructively. This is more difficult to do in the city, because the positive role of work is much more diffuse, while its negative features (artificiality, boring character) are much more concentrated. There is also the factor of impersonality in urban life: for example, among rural youngsters 97 percent knew their neighbors, but only 63.1 percent of their urban counterparts knew theirs. The author also found that "cultural-upbringing" institutions reach a greater proportion of teen-agers in rural communities than in cities: in 1965 the percentages were 53.9 and 11.0, respectively. He found that in the absence of school guidance, the large number of cultural opportunities in the city and their diversity are actually conducive to infrequent and ineffective use. In rural localities, although the opportunities are much more limited, they are used more intensively and fully. School upbringing is more individualized in rural areas. The author concludes by calling for a rapid elimination of differences in living patterns between urban and rural communities—an oft-repeated objective of the regime. He fails to note, however, that because Soviet society is already rapidly becoming more urban, his findings do not bode well for a lessening in the rate of juvenile delinquency in the foreseeable future.

The all-union conference mentioned earlier also emphasized that a significant number of crimes are committed by juveniles when they are drunk. This problem must be especially disturbing to Soviet authorities in light of a recent study which shows that between 75 and 95 percent of the boys in grades eight to ten had used alcohol. This was true of 40 to 90 percent of the girls.⁶⁸ The "pathological habit" of vodka drinking (as well as other forms of "deca-dence") is often implanted in juvenile delinquents by their fathers—themselves alcoholics and "hooligans"—and by the generally "unhappy" atmosphere in their homes.⁶⁹ Yet, according to Uralnis, when children grow up in fatherless homes, they are more likely to learn bad habits and to become juvenile delinquents than when the father is present.

Responsible Agencies. The network of agencies responsible for apprehending and dealing with delinquents continues to include children's rooms in militia wards, reception and assignment centers, children's commissions, and labor colonies.

The structure and functions of the children's commissions were spelled out

68. B. Levin, "Devushki, iunoshi i vino," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Jan. 6, 1971, p. 13.

69. Popov, "On the Subject of Morality," p. 14.

in the statute of June 8, 1967, and further elaborated by the decree of January 23, 1969.⁷⁰ Their main tasks are to organize supervision over minors, to place minors who cannot live in their own homes and to protect their rights, to coordinate the efforts of state agencies and public organizations involved in similar tasks, to hear cases of law violations by minors, and to exercise control over the conditions of custody and upbringing of minors in labor colonies. Membership of each commission consists of a chairman, a vice-chairman, an executive secretary, and six to twelve members. Additional personnel may include public inspectors and public counselors recruited from community organizations. In certain situations, commissions exercise control. A minor may not be expelled from school without the consent of the commission; neither may he be transferred from a general-education school, if he has not completed eight grades, to a school for working or rural youth without such consent; nor may minors be dismissed from jobs without such consent. If a minor under eighteen is to be released from a labor colony, in the absence of parents or surrogate parents, the commission at the place of his permanent residence arranges to have him placed in a job or enrolled in study and also provides follow-up supervision. In exceptional cases, where sending the minor to his former place of residence is inadvisable, the commission makes similar arrangements for him in the place where the colony is located.

Commissions are empowered to apply certain sanctions to parents or surrogate parents: (1) issue a public reprimand; (2) impose the obligation to recompense the damage caused by a minor, not in excess of twenty rubles; (3) levy a fine of up to thirty rubles. They may transfer a case to a comrades' court, or request the district or city court to deprive parents of their parental rights. They may send minors to labor colonies (or to children's homes or boarding schools) without the consent of parents or surrogate parents. Commission decisions are made by a simple majority of the members and may be appealed to the executive committee of the respective soviet—district, city, regional, or the Council of Ministers of an autonomous republic—whose decision is final.

The functions of labor colonies and their tie-in with educational authorities and children's commissions are regulated by the decree of June 1968.⁷¹ Colonies are penal institutions for minors who have been deprived of freedom. Their major task is character reformation, through the use of a penal regimen, socially useful labor, general-educational and technical-vocational schooling, and political

70. Statute on Commissions on the Affairs of Minors, *CDSP*, Oct. 11, 1967, pp. 15–19. Decree of Presidium of Russian Supreme Soviet: On Making Changes in and Additions to the Russian Republic Criminal Procedure Code and the Statute on Commissions on the Affairs of Minors, *CDSP*, Mar. 5, 1969, pp. 23–24.

71. Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet: On Ratification of the Statute on Labor Colonies for Minors and the Procedures for Promulgating It, *CDSP*, July 3, 1968, pp. 3–7.

enlightenment. There are two kinds of colonies: standard-regimen and strict-regimen. The "standard" colonies are for male minors sentenced for the first time (unless their crimes are especially serious) and for all female minors sentenced to imprisonment. The two sexes are kept separate. "Strict" colonies are for male minors who had been incarcerated previously, as well as for those sentenced for the first time for serious crimes, such as banditry, planning and causing a train wreck, robbery in aggravated circumstances, and so forth. If a minor reaches eighteen while serving his sentence, he is transferred to a labor colony for adults to finish out his term.

Although labor colonies for minors are administered by the USSR Ministry for Safeguarding Public Order, the actual reforming work is controlled and guided by the children's commissions. Classroom work adheres to standards set by the ministries of education. The inmates are called "those being brought up" (*vospitanniki*). Sponsorship by industrial enterprises, state and collective farms, educational institutions, cultural establishments, and other organizations is sought in order to keep communications open with the community and to assist the colonies' staffs with character training.

But all of these blueprints are only partially implemented in practice. Many youngsters who drop out of school without completing eight years of compulsory education are not helped to find jobs or to continue their schooling, either because the commission did nothing for them or because they never were referred to a children's commission.⁷² A study of parolees from one labor colony during 1965–69 shows that notices sent to children's commissions requesting that arrangements be made for schooling, jobs, and housing were ignored in more than half of the cases. Among answers that were received, many were so vague as to be meaningless. In only 32 of 125 cases did the commissions undertake to plan for the minors' return to society. During the three-year period 1967–69 only fourteen minors were assigned for supervision to "social upbringers" (*obshchestvennye vospitateli*), but, according to the author, these unpaid volunteers exerted no influence whatever on their charges, because they did not know how.⁷³

In the Russian republic, by a decree of December 13, 1967, these volunteers were transformed into paid probation officers attached to children's commissions. But the decree has been only partially implemented. In 1970, of all juveniles who appeared in court, 25 to 30 percent were put on probation, but only 12 percent of them were assigned probation officers.⁷⁴ This may be one reason

72. Min'kovsky, "Effektivnost'," p. 109, and Dudina, "Crime Prevention," p. 9.

73. L. Khaldaev, "Nabliudenie za osvobozhdaemyi iz vospitatel'no-trudovykh kolonii," *Sovetskaiia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 15, pp. 28–29.

74. G. Gaverov and G. Moiseenko, "Ob effektivnosti uslovnogo osuzhdeniia nesovershennoletnikh," *Sovetskaiia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 6, p. 10. Prikhod'ko, "Obshchestvennye vospitateli nesovershennoletnikh," *Sovetskaiia iustitsiia*, 1970, no. 8, p. 20.

why recidivists among probationers number between 20 and 50 percent. Soviet specialists also find that there are substantial differences between courts in the way they use probation, and in the quality of work done by probation officers, as well as in the degree of community involvement, which, it is said, is priceless.⁷⁵ Schools also play a key role in prevention, according to Soviet authorities, and it is crucial that they embark on this role at the very moment the child comes within their sphere of influence. Unfortunately, in current practice, preventive work is undertaken after the fact, so to speak—when criminal behavior, attesting to long and chronic neglect of aids to normal personality development, has already shown itself.⁷⁶

Conclusions

What does our analysis suggest concerning Soviet policy in the area of social services for families and children in this decade? Overall, it appears that the problems encountered by Soviet society in socializing children and the methods and programs developed to deal with these problems reflect the exigencies and pressures of rapid industrialization—more than they do the demands of a given ideology. The movement toward what is now called the postindustrial society is apparently much more rapid and more clearly directed than the slow and often erratic transition to a communist society. In this context, the early policy of the Soviet government regarding the family—which sought to provide its members with emotional fulfillment and intellectual stimulation, without at the same time holding them responsible for material support—was found to be ineffective and even counterproductive. The Soviet regime has not been able to make good on its promise that it would create human relationships so satisfying and genuine that social diseases would wither away. Hence the Soviet Union has gone back to an orthodox family policy—just as it has gone back to a nonegalitarian wage policy and an earnings-related social security design.

It is likely that provisions which help parents carry out their childrearing functions will continue to be expanded. Indeed, the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1971–75) calls for the building of preschool facilities to accommodate an additional 2 million children, and for extended-day facilities for an additional 1.5 million children. The plan is silent, in contrast, about boarding schools. Child-care facilities are regarded as crucial in providing women with the means of self-fulfillment and of avoiding entrapment in compression-chamber nuclear families.

75. A. Kozhevnikova, "Preduprezhdenie retsediva prestuplenii nesovershennoletnikh osuzhdennykh k nakazaniyam, ne sviazanym s lisheniem svobody," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, 1971, no. 7, pp. 21–22. One successful effort to involve the community is described by E. Lebedeva, "From the Experience of Local Soviets: Young People at the Center of Attention," *CDSP*, Nov. 19, 1969, pp. 24–25.

76. Obukhov, "Voprosy perevospitaniia nesovershennoletnikh pravonarushitelei," p. 157.

The movement of women away from the confines of the home minimizes the chances for destructive frustrations in the home, which are bound to affect all family members. Hence, Soviet policy-makers insist, such movement is desirable not only because it produces badly needed workers for the economy but also because it enhances home life.

New programs, however, will have to be created if the government is to respond to demands for a "science" of the family—demands that are being more insistently and loudly voiced. Social scientists, the liberal press, educators, managers of enterprises, and legal experts are all becoming more alarmed by such phenomena as the rising divorce rate, the greater incidence of juvenile delinquency, the persistent and widespread alcoholism, and the failure of quite a number of parents to support and bring up their children. Family-centered social services, as a resource for the treatment of malfunctioning and maladjustment both among individual family members and the total family unit in relation to the larger society, appear to be called for. The Soviet authorities may perhaps have to consider the possibility of permitting a variety of family forms, rather than only the nuclear one. And they will certainly have to begin to provide training for volunteers and for professionals, such as social workers and probation officers, if the needed social services for families and children are to be effectively delivered.

Appreciable differences in the economic and social position of children and their families have always existed in Soviet society—differences that have kept many in poverty. Significantly it was not until 1971, when under conditions of growing affluence it was no longer possible to avoid facing these inequities, that it was decided to do something about the gap that exists between the present income (from all sources) of families with children and the two hundred rubles per month which is apparently considered an adequate income for a family of four. The proposal envisages paying allowances for the children involved. Although studies and research have been undertaken to implement this proposal, it is not yet possible to predict what form the new program will eventually take (in 1974). But some questions that will undoubtedly have to be considered include the cost of the program, whether it will stimulate procreation, what its effect will be on initiative and the desire to work, whether parents can be trusted to spend the additional money wisely (that is, for the benefit of the children or for the benefit of the entire family), whether allowances will relieve the state from the pressure to raise wages, and whether allowances should cover the entire deficit between a family's total income and two hundred rubles per month, or only a part of the deficit. Even though it is easier to establish a "poverty line" in a tightly controlled economy than it is in a pluralistic society, answers to these and other questions are bound to produce contradictory positions which ideology is not likely to reconcile. Rather, final action will probably

depend on the desire to raise the tempo of industrialization—a drive which will undoubtedly generate new and unforeseen social problems of its own.

Given the difficulties in keeping together and strengthening families in rapidly industrializing societies, there is likely to continue to be a sizable number of children in the Soviet Union who will not be able to live in their own homes. The individual needs of such children will require study and attention. However, Soviet practice is so embedded in “typization,” in separation, in grouping according to certain prejudged characteristics, that a reversal in direction will be difficult to initiate—especially because such practice is carried out in the name of better services, a stage of development we in this country went through in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some “typization” is essential; but it is also a matter of tested knowledge that overdoing it is stigmatizing and stunting.

The administrative pattern which centralizes policy-making and research and decentralizes the giving of services will probably continue. It has been tested by experience and on the whole has not been found wanting, although one continues to wish for more initiative and imagination at the local level, and for more skill and depth at the center. Perhaps the most important prediction affecting future policy for social services for families and children is that the regime will have to allocate ever *greater* resources to such services. They will be required to maintain social balance and to further “normal” functioning and growth. Relatively greater resources will be demanded to build a bulwark against the tremendous strains experienced by Soviet people, along with those in postindustrialized societies everywhere. Greater expenditures are also inescapable, because so far the Soviets have not been conspicuously successful in dealing with problems that beset their families and children. If their preventive and therapeutic tools are to be sensibly sharpened, they must be prepared to invest more, rather than less, in research and experimentation—innovative, imaginative, and bold—as well as in exchanges with Western social scientists, whose understanding of the problems of “affluence” is by now substantial.