

CHAPTER XI

Conscripting for the Heavy Industries

Alarming fluidity of labour—A slump in production—Executions of experts—The tempo increased—Conscription for the mines—A first 'tying down' of workers—Conscription for loading and wood-rafting—More 'tying down'—Discontinuance of unemployment benefit—Extension of conscription to heavy industries—Also to women and children—Further 'tying down'—Reorganisation of labour exchanges—'Physical gang labour' for 'deserters'—Discipline for railway workers.

THE months which immediately followed the Congress of the Communist Party gave little hope of realising the new slogan. Bad housing, variations in pay of men doing similar work, and intermittent and ill-balanced supplies of food, made labour generally restless. The turnover of labour referred to at the Trade Union Congress assumed alarming proportions. In the three summer months the Leningrad factories engaged no less than 225,000 new workers, and lost 134,000.¹ The position was particularly acute in the coal-mines, where conditions of work were very bad.² Members

¹ *Industrializatsiju*, September 25th, 1930, quoted by Professor Haensel in 'Labor Under the Soviets' in the American quarterly *Foreign Affairs*, April 1931.

² An official report on the Donets Coal Mines, made in 1929, showed dangerous conditions existing, from various causes, in the great majority of the mines. Ventilation was also deficient in most, electric light in all, and

of collective farms who had gone to work in the mines had to be kept at their posts with promises of the maintenance of the rights of themselves and their families in the *kolkhozy*. They were to receive their share of the harvest, and the deductions made from their pay were to be at the lowest rates.¹

In the building trade, less important work had to be suspended, and workers were transferred to the larger undertakings.² A joint circular issued by the Supreme Economic Council and the Commissariats for Labour and Transport on July 11th therefore requested local authorities to provide relief for the families of poor peasants who did not leave their employment in the building trade during the harvest. These peasants no doubt had been conscripted under the circular of March 3rd, earlier described.

Worse still, the engineers and technicians also began to give up their posts. This obviously threatened to disorganise the whole Plan, and a peremptory warning was published that if they left work without leave they would be prosecuted.³

Production, therefore, 'slumped badly' during the late summer months of 1930. The productivity of large-scale industry for the months October 1929

the water supply in the area was found unequal to 44 per cent. of the needs. (*Anthracite Coal Industry of Soviet Russia*, Report to U.S. Congress, 1931, p. 11.) Mrs. Grady says that for the year 1930-1, for every million tons of coal raised there were 1,000 deaths and 13,000 major accidents (*Saturday Evening Post*, June 20th, 1931). She quotes official figures. The deaths mentioned were 250 times those in British coal mines in 1930. In 1896-1900 the Russian figures were only twice the British. Prof. Pazhitenov (*anglicè*), *Labour Conditions in Russia*, 1924, Vol. II.

¹ *Industrial and Labour Information*, December 8th, 1930, p. 385.

² *Ibid.*, p. 385.

³ Zagorsky, p. 46, note.

to July 1930 showed an increase of only 27 per cent. instead of the 32 per cent. which had been intended. Steel, pig-iron, and coal, all fell seriously behind the planned output, more especially coal. Moreover, the supply of meat, and of dairy and poultry products, 'fell off alarmingly in spite of an unexpectedly good grain harvest,' and once more grain collections were slow.¹

These disappointments might well have caused some slowing down in the tempo of the Plan. But the Government was inexorable. To fail in output was a crime. Economists, engineers and other specialists, 'many of them men of international reputation' were therefore arrested, and forty-eight were executed without trial. Not only were scapegoats needed, but warnings that no difficulties were to be allowed to endanger the success of the new slogan. Incredible though it may seem, the figures of output for 1930-1 were actually raised above the original figures for 1929-30. The third year of the Plan, it was decided, must produce an increase of no less than 48 per cent. in output.²

Such a result, it was obvious, could only be achieved by even more drastic methods than had hitherto been employed, and the grip began to tighten all round.

First came a decree allowing military conscripts to perform their 'two years' service in factories, military instruction there being added to industrial work, if they did not belong to the 'deprived'

¹ Hoover, p. 321.

² *Ibid.*, note.

³ Haensel, *Labor Under the Soviets*, p. 395.

classes. Voteless recruits were to be sent to forced labour for two years.

Next came compulsory recruitment for the mines. Early in September the Commissars of Labour of the U.S.S.R. and R.S.F.S.R. and the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. issued orders for the 'recruiting and delivering' of 55,000 workers at the Donets coal basin by October 1st. Of these, 5,000 were to be 'farm hands,' 20,000 Young Communists, and 20,000 workers from collective farms.

Workers 'brought' to the Don basin were to receive railway expenses and 2·50 roubles a day from the date of recruitment until reaching the mines. Enlistment was to be for six months, and when qualified for not less than one year. Any worker leaving of his own accord was to repay travelling expenses and the daily allowance. If, however, he remained for a year, fulfilled the work days, and maintained a normal output, he would receive a bonus of twelve days' pay.¹ It may well be believed that once 'delivered' to the Don basin, workers from a distance would not lightly incur the cost of refunding travelling and subsistence. None the less, it was found necessary to order off half the students in all the mining areas to the mines in the Donets area early in October.²

¹ *The Anthracite Coal Industry of Soviet Russia*, pp. 2-3, quoting from *Za Industrializatsiju*, September 7th, 1930. The exact date of the Order is not given.

² Haensel, *Labor Under the Soviets*, p. 392. Apparently there were special decrees for 'allocating to employment persons who had passed through higher educational institutions or technical schools.' Decree of December 15th, 1930. (Cm. 3775, p. 177.)

Attention was next directed to the industrial worker. Hitherto, as we have seen, if engaged for an indefinite period, he could leave at a day's or a week's notice. Now a Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R., published on September 6th, required labour exchanges to register separately workers who left unemployment of their own accord or violated labour discipline. These were to be deprived of unemployment benefit for periods to be fixed by the exchanges, and only the exchanges could place them in new employment. Those who systematically gave up their work without good reason might be removed altogether from the registers.

The Decree went on to forbid the payment of a wage higher than the one previously received by a worker, and a campaign was to be inaugurated to counteract the desire of workers to change their posts for personal gain.¹

This 'tying down' of workers, foreshadowed at the May meeting of the Trade Union Council, was of course a gross violation of Article 46 of the Labour Code of 1922.

A Decree of the Commissariat of Labour of the R.S.F.S.R.,² published on September 12th, next laid down that in the event of a dearth 'on the spot' of detachments of porters for loading and unloading between September and November, 'all those unemployed on the register of the labour organisations, whether they be physical or intellectual workers,

¹ *The Times*, October 7th, 1930, quoting its Riga Correspondent.

² Cmd. 3775, pp. 160-2.

who are physically fit and generally suitable for such work, must be compulsorily despatched' to it.

'A refusal by the unemployed worker to undertake loading and unloading operations without valid reason is to be considered as a refusal to perform work of any kind, with the consequences arising therefrom (removal of his name from the registers, deprivation of relief, etc.).'

'For loading and unloading work,' the decree continued, unemployed women might be engaged 'equally with the men.' They were to be put to light tasks, however (granular materials), and the standard limits of weight to be carried by women were to be observed.

Article 3 of the decree required labour exchanges to arrange within ten days for the medical examination of all unemployed on the register, and to compile lists of persons physically fit to do loading and unloading work.

If the labour exchanges could not satisfy demands for 'permanent workers' within forty-eight hours, the trusts concerned were to have the right to engage workers independently both in towns and villages, subsequently notifying the exchanges.

The trusts, moreover, were authorised to transfer porters working for them from one task to another, and also to other places of work within the boundaries of the Province.

In order to work off accumulations in loading work, labour exchanges and trade unions were directed to organise 'voluntary brigades' amongst industrial workers who 'desire in their free time or

on their rest days, to undertake loading or unloading work.' Such workers were to be paid on a 'general basis' according to the existing scale and rates of pay for the loading and unloading work in question.

If persons 'enticed' workers from loading and unloading work 'by means of promises of conditions known to be unrealisable' or by means of higher pay, and if this action had a 'mass character' and caused disorganisation of the Plan, the labour exchanges were to prosecute the offender under the Criminal Code.

Finally, labour exchanges were directed to intensify their campaign against 'rapacious' tendencies amongst porters, by taking the necessary measures to prevent workers moving from one job to another.

This Decree, like others, marked further stages in the progress of conscription. That the labour was to be despatched compulsorily was stated without equivocation; and the economic organisations were to have the right to 'engage' (a euphemism for 'conscript') workers permanently, and to transfer them anywhere within one of Russia's huge provinces. This compulsory transference was a breach of Article 37 of the Labour Code.

As in former Decrees, nothing was said as to rates of pay, except of such 'voluntary' workers as might sacrifice their day of rest. And though provision was made for a medical examination of workers, no obligation was laid on the economic organisations to provide even temporary shelter, as in the case of the decrees of March 22nd.

A shorter Decree, also issued on September 12th, from the People's Commissariat of Labour,¹ pressed on the Governments of the Allied Republics much the same measures as had been decreed for Russia proper. Employers, however, were given no power to recruit direct, and were to employ the workers sent to them (particularly women) 'only upon such tasks as shall be indicated by the labour exchange.' In other respects than this, the circular showed more consideration for the worker than the previous one. It decreed that where there was a danger of injury to hands, mitts must be provided. Special clothing was also to be provided 'as far as possible.' 'Safety equipment (hip-pads, shoulder-pads, aprons, goggles, respirators, etc.) must be distributed according to the nature of the work and the load.'

The decree also prohibited the employment of unaccustomed workers on complicated machinery, on handling corrosives or poisons requiring special care, and on specially heavy work.

Women and men who 'were not physically strong' were not to lift single packages of more than 6 kilogrammes, or to pile up material in stack or bales. But it was not stated that any medical examination was required to determine a worker's physical condition.

Labour having thus been ensured for work of vital importance to all exports, a Decree of the Council of Labour and Defence warned all citizens, but chiefly peasants, that, when necessary, they must appear for work with horses and vehicles for the

¹ Cmd. 3775, pp. 162-4.

transport of timber, wood for fuel, for hay carting, for rafting,¹ etc. The Decree suggested a query as to how many peasants were left who owned horses and vehicles, since the expropriation of the *kulaks*.

A little later a more urgently worded Decree was issued in regard to wood-rafting, in which the situation is said to have become critical.²

This required all labourers to remain until the end of the rafting season, and empowered labour exchanges to secure 'by means of compulsory paid work' all the able-bodied population along the rivers where wood-rafting was carried on. The 'utmost discipline' was to be exercised in regard to absenteeism. This was to be ensured by bringing in the dreaded O.G.P.U. to help in the management.

The Decree was part of the special measures already noticed as taken at this time to stimulate the export of timber.³ The Council of Labour and Defence directed the co-operatives to supply no industrial products to workers who did not complete their timber tasks.⁴

Next came an Order of a new Commissar of Labour of the U.S.S.R., Tsikhon, issued on September 23rd. This decreed that a worker in a State undertaking, who, without the consent of the management and the trade union, left his employment, even on account of his employer's bad treatment or failure to pay him, would be treated as if dismissed

¹ Häensel, *Labor Under the Soviets*, p. 395. Wood-rafting=timber-floating.

² *Ibid.*, quoting from *Izvestia*, October 6th, 1930.

³ See above, p. 74.

⁴ *The Russian Conscripts*, p. 2.

'for bad behaviour and repeated infringements against works' regulations.'¹ This order was a further step in the 'tying down' of the industrial worker.

On the 25th the Commissar combined with the Supreme Economic Council and the Central Trade Union Council in issuing a Circular endorsing the Decree of September 6th referred to above, and forbidding the employment of any worker unless he could produce a 'labour card.'²

The various decrees issued in September were accompanied by an appeal to trade unions and Young Communists, made by the new Commissar of Labour, to complete 'recruiting' by October 15th of 103,000 agricultural labourers for the coal mines, of 150,000 workers for the most important building, and of workers for timber-floating, and to assure for the 'shock-quarter,' October to December 1930, no less than 964,000 timber-fellers and 1,109,000 workers who would bring their own horses.³

It is hardly surprising that such tremendous demands should have been followed by drastic administrative action. On October 9th a Decree of the People's Commissariat of Labour of the U.S.S.R. was issued,⁴ peremptorily ordering 'insurance bureaux' to discontinue payment of unemployment insurance benefit.

Labour exchanges were instructed to take all necessary measures to secure that the unemployed were immediately sent to work, and that the first to

¹ Zagorsky, p. 46.

² *Izvestia*, September 26th, 1930.

³ *Pravda*, October 22nd, 1930.

⁴ *Cmd.* 3775, p. 165.

go were those entitled to benefit (i.e. members of trade unions).

Unemployed persons were to be 'drafted', to work not only in their own trades but in other work not 'necessitating special qualifications.' They were also to be trained and re-trained according to the 'needs of any particular trade.'

No excuse for refusal to work, except on account of illness, was to be considered. Refusal would entail removal from the registers of the labour exchanges. Unemployed persons medically certified as unfit would receive benefit out of the insurance fund allocated for temporary incapacity.

As removal from the registers would probably mean loss of the precious ration card which alone entitled a worker to buy food at prices which might be within his reach, the Order put practical compulsion on every unemployed worker to seek work immediately.

But far more than the registered unemployed (some 600,000 in number) were needed for the fulfilment of the new slogan. The total number of new workers required, allowing for unskilled workers and those employed on building, was to exceed 2,000,000.¹ If these numbers were to be secured, more vigorous action than ever was necessary.

An Order issued by the Central Committee of the Party on October 20th² therefore greatly widened the area of conscription.

¹ *Industrial and Labour Information*, December 8th, 1930, p. 384, quoting *Izvestia*, October 26th, 1930. And see later p. 152.

² Cmd. 3775, pp. 194-8.

It opened with an admission of a shortage of labour, due to the 'great successes' of the Socialist administration of the country, and with a denunciation of the People's Commissariat of Labour, which had kept on the 'dole' hundreds of thousands of unemployed, 'and failed to combat the fliers¹ and malingerers.' Ouglanov, who as we have seen, had more than once defended the interests of the workers, had evidently been removed from his post.

The Order proceeds that 'having noted the extremely dilatory and perfunctory manner in which the preparation of labour for the most important branches of State enterprise (metallurgical, mining, transport and constructional industries)' has been executed, the Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariat for Labour of the U.S.S.R. 'are instructed to see that a systematic training and distribution of labour is carried out, and that individuals be appointed who will be held personally responsible for the training and distribution of labour among the different economic units.'

Basic industries required 1,300,000 workers for the year 1931. These must be supplied by training and re-training. There must be 'factory workshop schools,' accelerated courses of instruction in industry, and trained cadres already in existence must be transferred to work requiring higher skill.

The People's Commissariat for Labour, the Supreme Council of National Economy, the People's

¹ i.e. a technical expert in an important industry, who gave up his post. The workman who did this was a 'deserter.'

Commissariat of Education of the U.S.S.R., and the All-Union Council of Trade Unions, were, therefore, within twenty days to draft a 'practical plan' for the supply of labour for 1931, to enterprises in course of construction as well as to existing ones. The plan must make provision not only for their training but also for their housing.

Article 2 reads that 'the People's Commissariat of Labour is instructed to register on the books of the labour exchanges not only those persons who have hitherto had the right to register, but also the following:

(1) Members of workers' and employees' families who are not members of trade unions and whose employment is interrupted, irrespective of the period of such interruption.

(2) Workers' and employees' children who have no specialised training and who have not been previously employed.

(3) Workers' and employees' wives and widows who are not members of trade unions and who have had no specialised training.

(4) Members of craft co-operatives who have been previously employed on a wage basis, and children of individual craftsmen.

(5) Farm labourers who are not members of trade unions, poor peasants, and workers on collective farms.'

'Registration,' it is added, 'is carried out only at the place of permanent residence and does not afford the right to any unemployment privileges.'

The Order proceeds: 'The People's Commissariat

of Labour is instructed together with the All-Union Council of Trade Unions and the organs concerned, to work out within ten days a plan for despatch to work of all the registered unemployed in such a manner that the members of an industrial worker's family are sent to industrial undertakings, and members of families of craftsmen, members of the craftsmen's union, members of the families of farm labourers and poor peasants to the villages.'

'In case of refusal of any employment offered, registered persons are to be at once removed from the books of the labour exchanges. The labour exchanges are to reorganise their work within twenty days in such a way as to cope with the preparation and rational distribution of labour.'

Article 3 of the Order gave the right to Commissars of Labour of the Soviet Union to 'remove and transfer' trained labour and specialists from less important industries to coal, heavy metallurgy, transport and large capital construction work, 'and from region to region.'

Article 4 dealt with the provision of skilled labour. Special courses were to be organised to enable workers to be moved or transferred to industries requiring higher qualifications. If trained labour were being utilised irrespective of its qualifications it must be 're-distributed' to other enterprises according to rules laid down by the 'labour organs.'

Article 5 provided that managers who obstructed transference of workers or of administrative or technical personnel, or who 'improperly' employed

'labour of which there is a shortage, or who persuaded workmen and technical personnel to leave enterprises in which they were employed, or who disregarded rates of wages fixed by collective contracts, or engaged workmen above the requirements fixed by the Plan, were to be 'held responsible.' So were technical personnel who declined to be transferred.

Article 6 stated that in view of the inadequate efforts hitherto made to combat the great fluidity of labour and technical personnel, further steps must be taken to 'tie' them down. Trained workers in productive employment might, therefore, not be transferred for the next two years to any 'administrative organisation,' though this was not to prejudice their promotion 'along the productive or professional line.'

Workers and technical personnel who had shown themselves the best producers (i.e. 'shock' workers and participators in Socialist competitions) and whose quality of work was of the highest, also workers of long service or who had made valuable 'suggestions and inventions' were to be rewarded by (1) 'the offer of the first choice of living accommodation,' (2) by being sent to higher educational or technical establishments, or 'to houses of rest and to health resorts, (3) by being ordered abroad for the purpose of learning the technique and organisation of production, and (4) by receiving preferential treatment in the supply of scarce goods.'

Members of 'shock' workers' families were, if possible, to be found work in the same enterprises,

and were to enjoy preferential treatment in admission to schools and universities.

'Article 7 allowed three extra days' leave or three extra days' pay to all workers who remained for two years from November 1st, 1930, in the mining, metallurgical, chemical, textile, transport and building material industries, and in 'major construction works.'

Article 8 instructed the various authorities already mentioned, plus the all-powerful 'Gosplan,' to work out by January 1st, 1931, a scheme for abolishing the disparity in wages between workers of the same qualifications or in the same districts, which had been one of the causes of the excessive fluidity of labour.

Article 9 was aimed at 'socially foreign elements' who were said to be obstructing industrial enterprises. The various authorities were instructed to take measures for their 'elimination.'

Deserters and 'fliers' were not to be allowed to work in industrial enterprises for a period of six months, and the People's Commissariat of Labour of the U.S.S.R. was directed to re-examine its rules of procedure and tables of fines, 'with a view to strengthening labour discipline, to increase the rational use of labour, and to promote the tying down of workers to enterprises.'

Article 10 referred with pleasure to 'the very numerous examples of voluntary self-immobilisation by important groups of "shock" workers for the Five Years' Plan,' and once more instructed the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions to

carry out 'far-reaching propaganda' for an extension of this 'initiative on the part of the workers.'

It is hardly necessary to emphasise the importance of this Order. Conscription was no longer to be seasonal, but was to mean the training and distribution of the workers among any of the heavy industries within the Soviet Union, and in any part of its huge area.

Another novel feature of the Order was that it extended conscription for the first time to children,¹ and not only to the children of men who could not claim the protection of a union, but also to those of trade unionists. Wives and widows of non-unionists were also to be conscripted. Whether the wife of a trade union member was made liable is not certain.²

Trade unionists who were skilled workers were to be dealt with directly by being 'tied down' for two years to their jobs.

The Commissariat of Labour was not long in showing that it had profited by the lesson read to it. The new chief, Tsikhon, was on his mettle, and went beyond the limits marked out. A 'Decision' published in *Izvestia* on November 5th,³ declared the reorganisation of the labour exchanges essential, and announced the appointment of 'directorates of labour cadres'—no doubt invested with greater powers than the exchanges had possessed.

¹ A 'child' in Russia, in the legal sense, is anyone below the age of sixteen.

² There is inconsistency here between Articles 2 and 6.

³ Cmd. 3775, pp. 172-4.

Hiring of labour was to be carried out exclusively through the directorates. Coal, unskilled work in the metal industry, transport, and the construction of 'giant factories' must have first call on labour.

Directorates of labour cadres 'must' therefore 'select and' register as workers both adults and young persons from among the toilers of the urban and rural population. The selection of labour must be effected according to 'class origin, qualification and physical conditions.'

Any excess of labour was to be transferred to other important industries in which there was a shortage.

The 'Decision' proceeds that it is 'essential to register and assign to work the under-mentioned categories of workers (provided they are not deprived of electoral rights): members of trade unions, members of workers' and employees' and students' families who have slack periods in their work; the children of workers, employees and farm labourers, even if they have no specialised training and have not worked for hire; members of workers' and employees' families serving in the Red Army and also persons discharged from the Red Army, provided that they have applied to the directorates of labour cadres not later than one year from the day on which they were taken on the register of the organs of the local military command.

'The following are also subject to registration: members of industrial co-operatives who have worked in such enterprises for not less than three years; men invalided out of labour or the army; farm labourers; poor peasants; members of co-

operative farms; and all single women who have worked for not less than six months in workshops organised by organisations for the protection of mothers and children.

‘Persons seeking work and registered at the directorates of labour cadres do not enjoy any unemployment benefits.

‘All persons registered at the directorates of labour cadres must be sent to work not later than three days after the day of registration. Soldiers and persons discharged from the Red Army are sent to work on the day of registration.

‘To industrial enterprises there will be sent, besides the basic cadres of workers, members of workers’ families, members of industrial co-operatives, farm labourers and poor peasants of the villages. Members of “shock” workers’ families enjoy a preferential right to be sent to and engaged on work in industrial and transport enterprises in which members of their family are working.

‘Persons who have been combed out of establishments and enterprises under the first category are registered at the directorates and told off for unskilled labour only. Persons combed out under the second and third categories are registered on a general basis, but they cannot be sent to work in those districts, departments, establishments and enterprises in which they have been forbidden to work by the combing-out commission.

‘Deserters and “fliers” are placed by the directorate of labour cadres on a special register, and for six months are not sent to work in industrial

enterprises, but are employed on physical gang labour.

'Persons who refuse work offered for which they are particularly qualified are placed on a special list with deserters and "fliers," and are sent to physical gang labour. If they refuse the latter they are struck off the register altogether.

'Illness vouched for by medical certificates, and lack of living accommodation on transfer to work in another place, are considered valid reasons for refusing work. Women with husbands and children cannot be sent to work in another place without their own consent.'

This Decision, it will be seen, extended conscription to the privileged members of trade unions, though not apparently to their wives. It makes clearer than the Order the fate reserved for those who left work or refused it. 'Physical gang labour' was no doubt the 'mass physical labour' officially defined in a later Decree as consisting of forestry work, timber preparation, peat-cutting, loading and unloading operations, snow-clearing, etc.¹ This was to be the punishment meted out to 'deserters' from factories or those who refused work for which they were specially qualified. If 'physical gang labour' was refused, they would be left to starve.

An interesting point to note in connection with both Order and Decision is, that they extended the right to registration, hitherto jealously preserved to

¹ Decree of the People's Commissariat of Labour of the U.S.S.R. of December 23rd, 1930. Cmd. 3775, p. 184.

trade union members. The 'tying down' was also a reversal of the former practice of engaging many workers temporarily. But there was little left now of the Code by which the permanent worker had benefited a year or two earlier, and a Decree of December 23rd, mentioned below, seems to make clear that none of the new registered workers would be admitted to social insurance.¹

November opened with the issue of new Regulations for disciplinary punishments and awards for transport workers.² The disorganisation of transport that had long been a feature of Socialist rule was seriously retarding the execution of the Five-Year Plan. Indiscipline among the workers would appear to have been a contributory cause. The Regulations now issued were to apply to all workers on railways, sea, river, or motor transport, and gave far-reaching powers to officials of railways, sea fleet basins, and other transport organisations. These were given the right to 'inflict' arrest for periods of from three to fifteen days according to their status. If sentenced to arrest for a period not exceeding seven days 'without service,' workers might be deprived of their wages for this period.

¹ The I.L.O. publication *Industrial and Labour Information*, for November 10th, 1930, pp. 229-30, gives summarised extracts from the Order in which the opening sentence of Article 2, quoted above, is translated 'workers belonging to the following classes will in future be entitled to register'—a wording which suggests that registration might be optional. But the Decision published by the Commissar of Labour makes clear that registration was to be compulsory. The Decision is not referred to in the I.L.O. publication. Very few of the decrees conscripting labour have so far appeared in it, none in full, and their conscriptive character is not made clear.

² Cmd. 3775, pp. 160-72.

For purely 'duty offences' both workers and heads of departments might be arrested for a period of three months with or without 'service.' If arrested 'with service,' the prisoner was to be let out of confinement daily, in order that he might carry on his usual duties.

The director of a railway or manager of a local State river fleet might also discharge a man 'with prohibition of the right to work'—perhaps the most terrible of all the many infringements of liberty perpetrated by Soviet rulers. It would mean loss both of ration card and civic rights.

The infliction of a disciplinary punishment was not to preclude the institution of criminal proceedings for the same offence.

In the course of the month a Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. provided for the opening from January 1st of recruiting offices in localities where seasonal labour was either likely to be specially required or to be found. Much labour was hoped for from collective farms. Recruits were to be medically examined and selected on a 'social and occupational basis.'¹

November also saw further recantation of their views by Bukharin, Tomsy, and Rykov, and Rykov's removal from the Chairmanship of the Council of People's Commissars. Tomsy, as we have seen, had already been removed from the Presidency of the Trades Union Council, and

¹ *Industrial and Labour Information*, February 9th, 1931, p. 168, quoting official *Collection of Laws and Regulations*, R.S.F.S.R., 1930, No. 58.

Bukharin had ceased to be a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party.

This humiliation of well-known leaders of the Revolution confirmed the 'Master's' grip of power and made possible yet further developments of policy in December.