
* CLASS CHARACTER OF SOVIET TYPE ECONOMIES *
* ISSUES AND EVIDENCE *
* RAJENDER CHAUDHARY *

**CLASS CHARACTER OF SOVIET TYPE
ECONOMIES:ISSUES AND EVIDENCE**

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RAJINDER CHAUDHARY

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Rajinder Chaudhary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	(i)
<u>CHAPTER</u>	
I INTRODUCTION	1
II MARX'S CONCEPT OF CLASS	5
III CLASS CHARACTER OF STEs: SOME ISSUES	25
IV CLASS CHARACTER OF STEs: SOME EVIDENCE	47
V SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	132
NOTES	139
BIBLIOGRAPHY	147

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Since Greek civilization upto the present day the problem of 'inequality' among human beings has been a source of considerable concern.¹ Plato, while discussing conditions for genuine egalitarian Communist Society, even went on to say that "Family is the key support of inequality - that is of social stratification...(because)...individuals are motivated to secure for other family members, for whom they feel affection, any privileges they themselves enjoy. Hence in every society there is a built-in pressure to institutionalize inequality by making it hereditary".²

Tumin, while participating in the debate over the thesis by Davis & Moore that there is "universal necessity which calls forth social stratification in any social system", (Bendix & Lipset, p. 47) echoed the same thought in 1952, i.e. centuries after Plato. He wrote that "...all known kinship systems...function as transmitters of inequality. ...all stratification systems...employ kinship system as their agent of transmission of inequalities" (Bendix & Lipset, p. 63).

In the intervening period, various aspects of inequality - its meaning, causation and solution had been debated and continue to be debated. Whether equality is

desirable or not and whether it is possible to remove inequality or not are still unresolved issues. However, we do not intend to participate in this debate regarding inevitability or otherwise of the existence of inequality. Our purpose is different and shall be explained shortly.

1.2 Industrial Revolution sharpened the contrast between the wretched conditions of industrial workers and sharply rising riches of the rich. This stirred people, and consequently interest in the study of this problem received an impetus.

Saint Simon, Fourier, Owen and others, who attempted to find solution to this problem, were later branded "Utopian Socialists" by Marx & Engles whose own "Scientific" theory gave a specific meaning to the term 'inequality', offered a different explanation as to its causation and concluded that emergence of Communist society was inevitable. Communism or its lower form, socialism, was expected to do away with class divisions,³ and pave the way for the establishment of an egalitarian society.

In the wake of World War I and later of World War II, a number of countries have, what they profess to be, a socialist system. There are a number of differences among various countries calling themselves socialist or communist. We shall be restricting ourselves to a section of these

countries i.e. those who have adopted the Soviet model. However, our main - almost exclusive - focus would be on the USSR. With some minor modifications, what is said about the USSR appears to hold for other Soviet type economies (STEs)⁴ in Eastern Europe also (i.e. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary, Poland and Romania) and vice versa.

1.3 In this study, we address ourselves to the following question: Is the USSR (or an STE) a classless society? What is the class character of the USSR (and other STEs)?⁵ Our standard of evaluation shall be Marx's concept of class.

Hopefully this study may also provide tentative pointers as to suitability or otherwise of 'Marxism' in solving various problems that we face in India. However, considerable study would be required to identify such pointers. In the present study we do not address ourselves to this aspect.

1.4 As we shall be judging class character of the USSR by the standards of Marx's concept of class, we discuss this concept in Chapter II. In Chapter III we discuss the main issues involved in the debate about the class character of the USSR. As we shall show in Chapter III, very seldom has any study, on class-character of the USSR put forward

systematic empirical evidence to back its assertion. We try to analyse such material as bears on this question in Chapter IV. Last chapter provides the summary of the study and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER II

MARX'S CONCEPT OF CLASS

2.1.1 As pointed out in the previous chapter, we shall be using Marx's concept of class in studying class character of STEs. However, like many other concepts that he employs, Marx has nowhere defined it. So the only way to define such a category or a concept is to identify its general characteristics from Marx's use of this and related terms. However, this is not very easy to do because:

- a) Large part of Marx's presently available writings was not published in his life time. In fact a part of it has been 'assembled' by others from his rough/working papers.
- b) His published writings differ a great deal in nature and scope. While some of his writings are political pamphlets, others are newspaper-articles and still others are 'more' academic in nature.

In view of this, it would not be reasonable to expect consistent use of the same term for the same phenomena, throughout his writings. However, it may be possible to sort out a 'primary meaning' of these concepts from others which may be treated as aberrations. Hence to evolve most

appropriate definition of these concepts, in itself is a major area of research.

2.1.2 Class, unfortunately for us, falls in the category of such undefined concepts. In Volume III of Capital, Marx does begin, what seems to be a systematic analysis but leaves it incomplete. Latter discussions of Marx's concept of class have centered on scattered remarks and usage in his writings.⁶

As a result, number of interpretations of Marx's concept of class are in currency. Some scholars, who have undertaken detailed research on concept of class and related categories do not contend to have given definitive answer.⁷ In fact/^{some}scholars conclude that "...for variety of purposes, Marx divides society up in as many different ways, speaking of the parts in each case as classes",⁸ meaning thereby that class, in Marxian sense, can be defined in more than one way, all being important. So we are aware that any interpretation that we may come up with would be 'an' interpretation and not 'the' interpretation.

2.1.3 As our starting point we take most conventional/ 'text book' understanding of Marx's concept of class. However, this conception emphasizes certain aspects which, in our view, are specific to capitalism. We attempt to rectify this limitation and come up with a more general

concept of class. Before we do that it must be pointed out that it would have been profitable to critically and specifically review various other interpretations of Marx's concept. However, it has not been undertaken because that would have distracted us from our main focus. Still we have tried to deal with various points raised in literature pertaining to Marx's concept of class, though many times, only indirectly.

2.2.1 Let us begin with Lenin's often-quoted summary of Marx's concept class.

"Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated by law) to the means of production, by their role in social organization of labour, and, consequently by the dimensions of share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people, one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."⁹

Above passage points out the following characteristics of class:

- i) Class is a large group of people.
- ii) Classes differ from each other by the place

they occupy in the system of social production.

- iii) Classes differ from each other by their relation to the means of production.
- iv) Classes differ from each other by their role in social organization of labour.
- v) As a result of (ii) to (iv) classes have different share in social wealth and also a different mode of acquiring it.
- vi) One class appropriates the labour of another.

Some other characteristics of 'class' are brought out by the following passage from Marx (wherein he is referring to French peasantry):

"In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from that of other classes and put them in hostile opposition to latter they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small holding peasants and identity of their interest begets no community, no national bond and no political organization among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests. ..."10

We now make following additions to the list of characteristics of a class:

- vii) Classes differ in economic conditions of existence.
- viii) As a result of (vii), their mode of life, their interests and their culture, differ from each other.
- ix) Classes are in hostile opposition to each other.
- x) Unless 'classes' are conscious of their position and have political organization they do not form a class.

2.2.2 Before we elaborate this list, a digression would be useful.

In every society, production has to take place and for that, different factors of production - labour power and material means of production - have to come together. More often than not, all factors of production are "owned" by some one or the other - an individual, a group of persons or society as a whole. Then again, in specific situation, different factors of production differ in importance/ cruciality. (We will return to the cruciality aspect shortly). So in every society we get a system of distribution of "ownership rights" over the factors of production. How much and how important/crucial factors of production one 'owns' is, in Marx's view, most important aspect of one's social existence. It is to this system of distribution of 'ownership rights' over the factors of production, that Marx is

referring to in the following passage:

"...The specific manner in which this union (of factors of production - labourers and means of production) is accomplished distinguishes the different economic epochs of structure of society from one another".¹¹

Further this system of distribution of "ownership rights" over factors of production is also variously called economic structure, system of production relations or system of social production.

2.2.3 In this light, (ii), (iii) and (vii) above mean that class is a group of persons who have the same place in the system of distribution of "ownership rights" over the factors of production. Further, role and function that one performs in social organization of labour is determined by the same criterion. In Marx's own words:

"It is not because he is leader of industry that a man is capitalist. On the contrary, he is a leader of industry because he is capitalist". (Capital, Marx (1978), Vol. I, p. 314.) So (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vii) are different ways of saying the same thing. There is only one criterion for defining a class, viz., place in the system of distribution of "ownership rights" over the factors of production.

2.2.4 However, this formulation of class differs in two aspects from the more usual one which defines classes in terms of ownership of means of production.

- a) Instead of "ownership" of means of production we use "ownership" of factors of production criterion.
- b) According to our formulation 'owners' of material means of production could - depending on cruciality/importance of the material means that they 'own' - belong to two different classes.

2.2.41 Before we elaborate these two points, it may be observed that we have been putting terms like own, owners, ownership under quotation marks. This is to differentiate our usage from the usual one. We shall first clarify our usage of these terms, and then come to (a) and (b) above.

What is meant by ownership of an object X? "To own an object X is to enjoy a range of rights with respect to the use and situation of that object" (Emphasis added: Cohen p. 63). So ownership refers to a range of rights and following is an illustrative list of 'components' of ownership :

- A) right to use object X
- B) right to prevent others from using X
- C) right to transfer one's rights over X

D) right to destroy X

E) right to income generated by X etc.^{11a}

Now, it is conceivable that some of the component rights of 'ownership' may rest with one person and others with some one else. For example, lease-holder has right to use but may not have right to transfer his rights. As against this lessor, during the period of lease does not have right to use but has right to transfer his right.

In fact, more than one person may share the same component of 'ownership'. Further legal title may remain with a person, but effective possession may rest with some one else.

Hence, "many different ownership patterns may arise if the seemingly natural unity between the legal title and the substantive functions is destroyed or if several agents divide up substantive functions (i.e. component rights) among themselves in different combinations and degrees". (Holesovsky p. 41; brackets introduced).

Strain of the last few paragraphs has been to point out that "ownership" of objects need not take a unique form. Capitalist and feudal landlord both are 'owners' of certain means of production. But does it imply that both have similar set of legal/effective rights over means of production? No, it does not. While a capitalist may decide

to employ any other worker, after the present one expires, to undertake production with the use of means of production that he owns, a feudal landlord does not have such right. (Shaw p. 40).

In fact in Marx's own words:

"To try to give a definition of property as of an independent relation, a category apart, an abstract and eternal idea, can be nothing but an illusion of metaphysics or jurisprudence" (Marx (1975), p. 412).

Importance of this point can hardly be overemphasized. It implies that private ownership of an object need not take a specific form and could consist of different component rights.

Hence both feudal lord and capitalist, in spite of having different sets of 'ownership' rights over the factors of production, constitute dominant classes. (Similarity workers, serfs and slaves constitute exploited classes in spite of differences in sets of ownership rights over the factors of production.) Both capitalist and feudal lord form dominant class because they enjoy such effective control/power (if legitimate, then called right) over such crucial factors of production that they are able to control the "process of production" and the "distribution of produce". (Wesolowski (1967) p. 58.)

Hence it is extent of effective power/control over factors of production and cruciality of these factors of production that determines class affiliation of a person (It needs to be emphasized that power can vary in degree and hence there can be more than two classes).

If we keep aforesaid 'variability' of concept of 'ownership' in mind then a class may as well be distinguished on the basis of ownership of factors of production. However, because notion of ownership is mostly identified with the type of ownership prevalent in the ^{Capitalist economies} ~~West~~, we avoid using it.

2.2.42 Let us now return to other two differences that our formulation has with other, more usual, formulation (as pointed on page 11).

First of these can be partly explained by ambiguity that surrounds Marxian use of term "means of production". While sometimes, it is used as synonymous with 'material means of production', on other occasions it refers to material means of production plus labour power. In its broader usage the term 'means of production' is an equivalent of the term 'factors of production'.

Under Slavery it was ownership of labour power which is not a part of means of production (in its narrow sense) that distinguished slave-owners from freeman. Hence our use of factors of production or means of production (in its broader sense).

Coming to second difference. What distinguishes a capitalist and a worker - both are 'owners' of factors of production? What distinguishes 'owners' of land from those of capital? Under feudalism peasant possessed certain instruments of production (Fundamentals p. 360) yet he did not belong to the class of landlords. Answer to all these question lies in the fact that in the given situation certain factors of production are more important/crucial than others. Hence those who control these factors of production are able to control/influence the 'process of production' and 'distribution of produce' to their advantage.¹²In fact in our view, it is possible that in future 'owners' of sources of energy may be a class apart from 'owners' of other material means of production. Perhaps it is with this conception of class that Marx undertook 'class analysis' in Eighteenth Brumaire (Marx (1977a)) and Class Struggles in France (Marx (1977,b)) and could distinguish financial aristocracy from industrial bourgeoisie; industrial bourgeoisie from petty bourgeoisie.¹³

2.2.5 Returning to our discussion in 2.2.3, we find that other usual approach is to define class in following terms (see characteristic (iii) in the list):

"Class is a large group of persons who have ^{same} / relationship to the factors of production".¹⁴

We don't have any quarrel with this definition, provided it is kept in mind that similarity of relationship to factors of production simultaneously implies two things - similarity in the degree of control exercised and similarity in the cruciality/importance of factor of production over which this control is exercised.

However, the following paragraph, which is akin to simplified version of the first part of Lenin's definition, captures our understanding of Marx's concept of class, more appropriately: "...a class (a particular class) is a group of persons in a community identified by their position in the whole system of social production, defined above all according to their relationship (primarily in terms of degrees of control) to the conditions of production (that is to say, to the means and labour of production)..."¹⁵

2.2.6 So that is how class is defined! But why does one's class affiliation - one's position in the system of social production - matter? It matters because it determines "one's share in social wealth and the mode of acquiring it", "one's mode of life, interest and culture" (See (v) and (viii) in the list of characteristics. We deal with (ix) later in the chapter.) These are essential manifestations of class division. In fact, class division is most crucial 'social distinction', because according to Marx, this explains/leads to various other kinds of 'social distinctions'.

2.2.7 Characteristic (vi) of class listed earlier implies that there can be only two classes - exploiting and exploited. We are of the view that this, at times, is incorrect as well as not so fruitful a way of looking at the structure of a society. Firstly, what about that class which is neither exploiting nor exploited? And an ancient historian tells us that this group of freeman not only constituted majority but also produced major part of social produce (Croix).

This group of neither exploiting nor exploited constituted a class as they had a specific position in the system of social production and their 'own mode of life', 'culture' and a 'share in social wealth'.

Now, it might be said that, even though such third class does exist, it is best ignored because it is the other two who have occupied centre stage in the drama of human history.

We do not deny the usefulness of such abstraction (i.e. two-fold division), but like any other abstraction it is not useful for all purposes. Further, exploiting and exploited classes can be further subdivided on the basis of, what Marx at one place calls *differentia specifica* of a society (See Capital (Marx (1978)), Vol. I, p. 209), viz., 'manner (and perhaps extent) of exploitation'. In

fact, Marx treated peasantry and industrial working class as two different classes although both are exploited. Similarly Marx treated owners of land and capital - both exploiting - to be two different classes.

So, in our view, debate about whether Marx perceived a two-fold, three-fold or multifold division of society is misplaced. Number of classes into which a society could be divided would depend on its specific circumstances and the level of abstraction at which analysis is undertaken. (And our understanding of Marx's concept of class admits of such a possibility.) Besides one has to separate the view of Marx, the activist, from that of Marx, the social scientist. In Communist Manifesto, which is a political document and is also written at a high level of abstraction, only two classes are emphasized. As against this in 'Class Struggles in France' (Marx (1977 b)) and 'Eighteenth Brumaire' (Marx (1977 c)) which deal with specific historical situations and are at a lower level of abstraction, he introduces multi-fold division. Moreover, the dichotomous view of Capitalist society was based on his understanding of dynamics of capitalist development.¹⁶

2.2.81 Point (ix) in the above list is another manifestation of class division. As pointed out in 2.2.6 different position of different classes in the system of social production results in their having different interests. Moreover,

these interests are not merely distinct but also conflicting. Most obvious example is that of distribution of produce. In fact, in Communist Manifesto Marx calls this conflict of interests arising out of differential position of different classes in the system of social production as motor of human history.

In fact, one of the crucial aspects, in which Marxian analysis differs from that of other scholars of Marx's days, is his emphasis on 'conflict' between the classes as against 'harmony' emphasized by others. And this manifestation of class division is perhaps the most crucial one. Hence, if relationship between the classes is harmonious and conflict that arises out of their objective position has been overcome, then it is better to treat such classes as one class.¹⁷ "But to express hopes that it is possible to unite classes with irreconcilable, antagonistic interest, with the help of even the "best" ideas of moral values implies a false, idealist (i.e. non-Marxian) approach..." (Fundamentals p. 369).

2.2.82 In dichotomous class division class conflict is straightforward. What do we mean by it in a multi-class scheme? Further, what is an antagonistic contradiction? Resolution of conflicts/contradictions that are rooted in the system of social production i.e. in system of distribution of 'ownership right' over factors of production,

requires changes in the system itself and hence in class character of the system. Such contradictions are called 'antagonistic' contradictions. So, by definition existence of classes implies existence of antagonistic contradictions.

Of course in case of multiclass schema matrix of class conflict would be quite complex. Conflict of interests between some classes may be more important than that between other classes, and "even radically different social classes, when faced by a common enemy, may find that their interests temporarily coincide."¹⁸

2.2.91 Coming to point (x) of the list it has at times been interpreted to mean that unless groups differentially situated in the system of social production are conscious of it and have a political organization they do not constitute a class. Our contention is that class 'consciousness' and political organization may be essential for class struggle to take place or to make it effective but classes can exist in spite of it. In fact, it is made explicit by Marx in a sentence that follows (X) but, most often than not, it is ignored. Hence, absence of 'class consciousness' cannot be taken to be evidence of absence of class division.¹⁹

2.2.92 Till now we have been discussing mainly those features of Marx's concept of class which distinguish it from other conceptions of class. However, there are certain

other features of class, which are implicit in Marx's concept. Some of these are :

- xi) Class division of society, unlike social division based on caste or biological criteria. (e.g. race, sex, etc.) admits of possibility of inter class mobility. (We are ignoring the fact that now even sex change is possible!)
- xii) In spite of (xi) class affiliation of a person, by & large, remains the same throughout his life and is most likely to be transmitted to his children.

This system of social division is unlike one based on age or literacy. In latter two cases one's class affiliation, more often than not, is likely to change over time. However, this is not so in case of class division. Further, in a system of class division, class affiliation of children is by and large determined by class affiliation of parents.²¹ But, in view of the fact, that class structure can be perceived at different levels of abstraction it is not class affiliation that is 'relatively permanent' but position in the system of social production.

2.2.93 Further not all members of a society are directly involved in the production process; not all of labour power and material objects is used for production. Hence, apparently such persons cannot be counted into any class.

However,

xiii) "...Classes while they may be designated by their members' occupancy of similar relations of production (i.e. similar position in the system of production), also enjoy identifiable social trait, and a common world view; thus individuals sharing the latter lineaments but not all the requisites of that class's relations of production tend to be counted within that class; for example retired workers or non-working children of workers."²² (Shaw p. 51)

2.3.1 To recapitulate, according to Marx's concept of class

- a) Class is a large group of persons who stand in the same relationship to factors of production i.e. they exercise same degree of control over factors of production that are equally crucial/important. (See pages 15,16)
- b) Class analysis can be undertaken at varying level of abstraction. So, there need not be any fixed number of classes in every society and for all purposes of study. (See page 18).
- c) Class affiliation/division is important because it leads to similarity/dissimilarity in number of other socially significant aspects. (See page 16).
- d) (a) above can be expressed in terms of 'ownership'

but it is better not to do so due to the fact that in common usage 'ownership' has a meaning different from the one that underlies Marx's usage. (See page 14).

- e) A society with non-antagonistic class division is better treated as classless society. (See page 19).
- f) Certain persons/group of persons who share manifestation of a class's position in the system of social production without sharing that position itself, may be counted in that class. (see page 22).
- g) Class affiliation is relatively permanent and transferrable across generations. (see page 21).

8.3.2 We are aware that there may be some passages in writings of Marx, wherein our hopefully correct, understanding of Marx's concept of class, does not 'fit in'. As pointed in section 2.1 to look for unique definition would be a misplaced optimism.

What we have tried to do is the following: Beginning with most conventional/'text book' definition of class which is rooted in 19th century capitalism/Europe, we have tried to make explicit, what is mostly implicit in this definition and tried to get rid off what was specific to 19th century capitalism/Europe. In this we have been guided by certain well-known, and hopefully non-controversial, Marxian propositions regarding "modes of production" other than capitalism.

With understanding of Marx's concept of class derived in this manner, we discuss in the next chapter the main issue raised in literature pertaining to class character of the USSR.

CHAPTER III

CLASS CHARACTER OF STES:SOME ISSUES

3.1.1 Since its inception, class character of STEs/Soviet Society has been a controversial issue. We do not propose to provide historic and exhaustive review of the vast literature available. In this chapter we shall focus on the main issues raised in the discussion of class character of the USSR.

We begin (Section 3.2) by reviewing some salient features of Soviet Society as visualized by Marx and Engels. This is followed by a review of main points raised by those who consider Soviet Union to be a classless society. Next, we review main points raised by scholars who are opposed to such conception of the Soviet Society. In Section 3.6, we sum up the basic issues involved and comment on 'evidence' advanced by respective groups of scholars.^{23,24}

It may be pointed out again that focus of our study is to see if there is any dominant class (in Marxian sense as elaborated in last chapter) in the USSR. Specifically, we do not go into the 'causes' and 'appropriate nomenclature' part of the debate.

3.1.2 Before we proceed, a word or two regarding the notion

of 'bureaucracy' would be in order as this is a frequently used term. Various authors have used this term to denote different 'collection of people' and most often have not clearly defined the term. However, we shall not go wrong if we use bureaucracy to designate any of the following or combination thereof:

i) All those who control and direct or have major influence in the running and regulation of the economy constitute bureaucracy. While some authors have included enterprise managers also in bureaucracy, others include only higher officials of the relevant ministries.

ii) All those who 'control' and 'administer' the society. Some authors restrict this category to high party officials while others include state officials as well.

Vagueness of aforementioned definition, if it can be so called, is not of our making but is so because the term has been used variously by various scholars. However one thing, that is rather clear is, that the usage of bureaucracy, in literature under review has wide differences with Weberian notion of bureaucracy.²⁵

3.1.3 Further, as we shall see later, Soviet scholars use the phrase "non-antagonistic classes" to describe Soviet structure. We shall treat a society with non-antagonistic class divisions as on par with a classless society.²⁶ Theories that characterize

the USSR as a classless society or as one with non-antagonistic class divisions shall be called classlessness view-point. Other theories, which characterize the USSR as a class-divided society, shall be called 'class-division view-point'.

3.2 Marx's View of Socialist Society

Before we study Soviet society, it would be useful to point out some salient features of Marx's view of a Socialist Society.

3.2.1 According to Marx, development of productive forces would sharpen the conflict between capital and labour, and at certain stage this contradiction would be resolved by overthrow of Capitalist class. This would mark the beginning of the first phase of building of Communist Society (later on this initial phase has been called socialism) which would be characterized by higher level of productive forces as well as higher relations of production.

However in some of his later and not so well-known writings he warned that his analysis of dynamics of development of Capitalism in Western Europe should not be treated as valid for all nations (Quoted in Bellis, p. 25). Thus, he admitted that, there was a possibility of Russia reaching socialist mode of production without having to undergo "all the fatal vicissitudes of a capitalist regime". (see Bellis, p. 25)

However, these cautions notwithstanding, his outline of

functioning of future society was based on the assumption that it would be a higher mode of production with higher level of productive forces. In fact Socialist society was expected to be a classless society because "development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism."²⁷ Besides a high level of productive forces, socialist revolution was to be preceded by development of high level of proletarian consciousness and as a result it was to be a revolution of majority against minority.

However, October revolution took place in a manner, under circumstances and in a country, not entirely in keeping with Marx's vision of socialist revolution.²⁸

3.2.2 Based on this understanding of what would precede socialist society, Marx went on to discuss (in bare outline) nature and function of socialist society, (see Gotha Programme Marx (1977,f)). An important aspect of future society was withering away of state. This was to happen for two related reasons. Firstly, state, being 'organised power of one class for oppression of another', would be meaningless in absence of antagonistic classes. Secondly, high level of productive forces would allow every one enough time and facilities to enable him to fulfil functions of "control and supervision", "so that all may become bureaucrats for a time" and therefore "nobody may be able to become a bureaucrat".²⁹

However it was realised that to do away with state immediately after revolution may not be possible. Hence, Engels wrote that State pending its future abolition must be regarded as "at best, an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle..."³⁰ It should be replaced by a new and truly democratic "state which would have among other things following characteristics."

i) Standing army shall be abolished and replaced by a popular militia.

ii) The political functionaries will consist of elected and fully recallable delegates rather than representatives. The police, judiciary, and other officials similarly will be elected by universal suffrage and would be recallable.

iii) The delegated officials will receive no special material privileges. Their income will be on par with those of skilled workers.³¹

3.2.3 In this respect and in many others,³² it is quite obvious that Soviet experience does not correspond to Marx's predictions/expectations. This non-correspondence has been used to reject 'classlessness' view-point. Most frequently it is backwardness of productive forces that is highlighted, because in the words of Engels: "The separation of society into exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production."³³

Hence it is argued that with less developed forces of production than those of capitalist economies, the USSR cannot have higher (classless) relations of production.

So we are in a dilemma. Putting it in a highly simplified form, our problem can be stated as follows: On the one hand, Marxian theory rules out the possibility of the USSR being a classless society. On the other hand, Soviet viewpoint asserts that it is classless. In such a situation there are two alternatives: (a) to attribute empirical statement, on a priori considerations, to some mistake/misconception and continue with conclusions based on received theory (b) to put empirical assertion to critical verification and proceed on the basis of results obtained.

We follow the second alternative and in the next chapter we review the information available to verify the authenticity of the Soviet claim that the USSR is a classless society.

Here in Section 3.3 to 3.5 we review main points raised by protagonists of classlessness and classdivision viewpoints respectively.

3.3 Classlessness Viewpoint

In this section we shall be dealing with two questions: (a) Why is Soviet society called classless society? (b) How is existence of various types of inequalities in the USSR explained?³⁴

3.3.1 According to Soviet scholars post-Revolutionary period in the USSR can be divided into following four phases:

- i) October 1917 to 1925 - a period of social revolution.
- ii) 1926-36 - a period of socialist industrialization.
- iii) 1936-56 - completion of the first phase of building of socialism.
- iv) 1956 onwards - Developed socialism.³⁵

While first two phases were together called period of dictatorship of proletariat, constitution adopted in 1936 proclaimed that the "USSR is the socialist system of economy wherein exploitation of man by man" has been abolished. However it is accepted that various kind of inequalities e.g. material, educational, regional, continue to exist. In fact Stalin said that "Equalitarianism owes its origin to the individual peasant type of mentality. Equalitarianism has nothing in common with Marxist socialism." (Cited in Lane, D. (1982), p. 22)

Soviet argument for treating the USSR as a classless society may be summed up as follows:

Various classes are distinguished by their relationship to the means of production. It is the ownership of the means of production by a class that allows it to exploit others. There is no private ownership of the means of production

under Soviet system - all resources are collectively owned by all. So where is the question of exploitation of one by another? Under Soviet system all workers are owners of the means of production. Through numerous channels they participate in the management of economy and society.³⁶ They are the masters of their own destiny. Who can exploit them? How can they be exploited?^{37,38}

3.3.2 Thus/it is argued that, material conditions of existence of exploiting classes do not obtain and hence there cannot be any exploiting class. Of course there exist two forms of social property: "State property i.e. the property of the whole people, and cooperative, collective form property". (Fundamentals, p.386).

Hence two classes, viz., that of workers and of peasants as also one stratum viz., intelligentsia continue to exist. While Kolkhoz workers form peasant class, the State farm workers are included under 'workers'. One stratum-intelligentsia-consists of all non-manual workers including routine non-manual workers such as clerk, typists as well as highest party and state officials such as the General Secretary of CPSU.

3.3.3 It is mainly to the existence of these two forms of social property that various kind of inequalities in education,

material welfare, culture, etc., are attributed. Some other factors, to which existence of these inequalities and conflict is attributed, are: (a) non-correspondence between certain elements of superstructure (e.g. role of women etc.) and central value system and dominant social economic and political institutions (b) influence of remnant elements of previous system (c) low level of productive forces. Further it is asserted that as forces of production develop these contradictions - which are called non-antagonistic contradictions - would vanish and ^{that} the task of building "new classless society" is being carried out by these two classes and one strata "in one harness".

3.3.4 To put it briefly, the main contradiction is between workers and peasants. And it is asserted that this contradiction is of a 'minor' nature and can be resolved within the system.

Even critics of Soviet Union agree that contradictions between peasant and worker are insignificant but they go on to point out the existence of another class viz., bureaucracy.

In view of relative insignificance of peasant-worker 'system of class division' as against another system of class division emphasized by critics of Soviet viewpoint, we label Soviet viewpoint as 'classlessness' viewpoint. It is to critics of classlessness viewpoint that we turn our attention now.

3.4.1 Central pivot of Soviet argument is the assertion that as a result of October Revolution private ownership of the means of production has been abolished and substituted by social ownership of the means of production as a result of which all citizens have the same position in the system of social production.

On the above statement hinges the whole of Soviet case. This assertion has been challenged by many scholars. Paraphrasing Milovan Djilas, one could sum up the argument of protanogists of classdivision viewpoint as follows:

...as a result of October Revolution - private ownership (of a type then existing) of the means of production was abolished and was substituted by private ownership (of Soviet type) of the means of production as a result of which bureaucracy is able to exploit. (see Djilas).

3.4.2 This, we emphasize, is another assertion diametrically opposed to earlier assertion about Soviet system, about actual state of affairs. However Djilas and many other scholars, besides asserting that bureaucracy is a class, have shown that property forms similar to that of the USSR in past have been exploitative. It is pointed out that private property can take institutional form other than that of individual ownership, that certain forms of group ownership could also be exploitative. In this regard they

point out Church in feudal times and modern corporate firm which, in Marx's words, "involves abolition of capital or private property within the boundaries of capitalist production itself". (cited in Sweezy and Bettelheim, p.5.)

Typical argument is that "History has been examples of class antagonistic societies in which state ownership of the means of production has prevailed (the so called Asiatic mode of production). State ownership of the means of production is only a form of ownership. It is exercised by those social groups to which state belongs..."³⁹

In fact, even Bukharin and Lenin were aware of this similarity. In the words of Bukharin: "In the system of State Capitalism, the economic subject is the capitalist state, the collective capitalist. In dictatorship of the proletariat the economic subject is the proletarian state, the collectively organised working class."⁴⁰ But he goes on to add that "Notwithstanding their formal similarity these are diametrically opposite in contents (cited in Cliff, p. 114).

3.4.3. In our view, this formal similarity also implies the possibility of bureaucracy being a class that controls and directs the use of the means of production, controls the 'process of production' and 'the distribution'; in short 'owns' the means of production while mass of ordinary workers

do not have any say in these matters and are silent executors of their directives (see Djilas). That this possibility has in fact become reality or not needs to be proved.

3.5 However, before we review the evidence presented/ available in this regard, we need to deal with argument of those critics of Soviet Union who think that bureaucracy is not a class.

3.5.1 Foremost among these is Trotsky. In his book 'Revolution Betrayed' he writes that "if you remember that the task of socialism is to create a classless society based upon solidarity and harmonious satisfaction of all needs, there is not yet in this fundamental sense a hint of socialism in the Soviet Union". (Trotsky, p.3) However he calls the USSR a 'degenerate workers State',⁴¹ because in spite of being "sole privileged and commanding stratum which does not engage directly in productive labour but administers, orders, commands, pardons and punishes, bureaucracy is not a class".⁴² (Trotsky, p. 249,138) Below we discuss some of the reasons that have been advanced by Trotsky and others for not calling bureaucracy a class.

3.5.2 It is argued that if bureaucracy is the dominant class then why does it not reintroduce private property and capitalist mode of production? As the bureaucracy has not reverted to private ownership (of the type that exists in

Western Capitalist economies) of the means of production and market has not fully replaced planning so, it is argued, bureaucracy cannot be considered a dominant class.

Another related question is: How can bureaucracy be a class when bureaucrats cannot transmit their privileges to their children? After all "Privileges have only half their worth, if they cannot be transmitted to one's children. But the right of testament is inseparable from the right of property. It is not enough to be the director of a trust, it is necessary to be a stock holder". (Trotsky, p. 254).

Answering latter question first, it has been pointed out by some scholars that bureaucrats do transmit their right to "administer, order, command, pardon and punish" to their children but not in the form of ownership right to "a particular piece of property". "In a state which is the repository of the means of production the state bureaucracy - the ruling class - has forms of passing on its privileges which are different from those of feudal lords, the bourgeoisie..." (Cliff, p. 122)

It can be done by restricting entry to higher reaches of bureaucratic hierarchy, by controlling distribution of opportunities for higher education, by a system of informal relations within the dominant class.

However if it turns out that position of parents does

not significantly affect children's position in the Soviet system of social production then bureaucracy cannot be called a class. This is so because across the generation transmission of inequality is an essential aspect of Marx's concept of class. (See Chap. II above).

Coming to the first question (i.e. why has not private property (of Western type) been reintroduced?) one may pose a counter-question: Why should it be reintroduced? Is that form of private ownership of the means of production the only form of ownership which allows exploitation of man by man? In view of our earlier discussions (See 3.4 and Ch. II) the answer is no. In fact, many scholars are of the opinion that present Soviet 'arrangements' give bureaucracy 'unheard', 'unparalleled' opportunity for such exploitation.

Further, there could be another reason for not reintroducing private property. In words of Cliff, "There are numerous historical examples of the rise of a new class which has been reluctant to publicize its coming to power and has accordingly tried to adapt its existence and rights to the framework presented by the past, even though this framework stood in absolute contradiction to it... (He cites examples)...The attempt of a ruling class to hide its privileges under the cloak of the law handed down from the past is most strongly made in the case of a counter-revolution which dare not declare its existence" (Cliff, p. 121)

3.5.3 Another argument against treating bureaucracy as a class takes the following form: If bureaucracy is a class why does not it have its own ideology? In the words of Mandel "The lack of a class ideology specific to bureaucracy - the fact that it remains incapable of independent ideological production, and has to limit itself to "ideologizing" Marxism, which expresses the class interests of the proletariat, that is to revising and castrating it - is only the reflection of this basic state of affairs of the transitional society" (i.e. bureaucracy is not a class)" ⁴³

To this Trotsky adds the fact of their 'concealing income' and 'denying its own existence' and concludes that bureaucracy 'though sole privileged and commanding strata is not a class'.

Part of the answer is provided by Cliff in the passages quoted in Section 3.5.2. Secondly what is the need to have special ideology which is devoid of Marxian jargon? Is it because Marxian/Socialist ideology is egalitarian in nature; does not recommend exploitation of man by man? But did not bourgeoisie engrave on the banner of the French Revolution 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' and use the same for their own ends? Did not advocates of Laissez-Faire put their arguments in terms of maximizing the national wealth for every one's benefit? Cannot the revolutionary/proletarian content of Marxian ideology be discarded while retaining the label?

3.5.4 Further, it is argued that bureaucracy cannot be called a class in view of 'change and conflict within the system such as demonstrated by the course of events in 1956 and 1970-71 in Poland or in 1968 in Czechoslovakia" (Lane (1982), p. 135). Could bureaucracy be the dominant class in view of the violent purges under Stalin that did not spare even highest Party/State officials?

Let us pose a counter-question. Does the "cut throat" competition among capitalists imply that they are not a class different from workers? If no, then in spite of violent convulsions that may take place in relation to bureaucracy in an STE it can still be a class (i.e. if other indicators indicate it to be a class).

3.6.1 If we go through sections 3.3 to 3.5 we shall note that following are the central issues involved:

(a) whether bureaucracy has a different and dominant position (vis-a-vis the rest of the society) in the Soviet system of social production? Whether mass of peasants and workers normally participate, directly or through other representatives who are under their ultimate control, in the management of economy or not?

(b) whether dominant position of bureaucrats is, in practice, transferrable to their children?

(c) whether bureaucracy's dominant position in the system of

social production, is reflected in its different interests, mode of life and culture etc?

Importance of (a) above is obvious. However (b) and (c) are equally important to decide whether bureaucracy is a class or just a 'high powered executive committee of workers and peasants'.

While protanogists of 'classlessness' viewpoint have answered all these questions in the negative, protanogists of classdivision viewpoint answer (or need to answer) all these questions in the affirmative.

3.6.2 But what is the evidence provided by each of them? Most often than not, protanogists of classlessness viewpoint have taken classless character of the USSR to be axiomatically true. They do not recognise the possibility of bureaucracy being a class. They also point to existence of 'soviets', workers production councils' and numerous other channels for workers' participation in the management of economy. In the next chapter we review efficacy and functioning of these channels.

Situation is also unsatisfactory in case of protanogists of classdivision viewpoint. Below we review some evidence that has been offered.

According to Djilas, exploitative character of bureaucracy is evident from the fact that bureaucracy has

larger material goods and privileges than it is entitled on the basis of work performed by it. (Djilas, pp. 44-5). And that bureaucracy is appropriating surplus produce is evident from the fact that general living standards have not kept pace with the rate of industrialization (Djilas, p. 49)

Similarly Cliff, who dates emergence of bureaucracy as a class to First Plan, gives the following argument:

"If the productivity of labour of a worker in Russian industry was about 4/5th's of that of a worker in Britain, while his standard of living was about 1/4-1/3 of that of British worker, can we conclude otherwise than that if the British worker is exploited, his Russian brother is much more so" (Cliff, p. 43). However could it not be that it was collectively decided to consume less and accumulate more? If so, then bureaucracy cannot be called an exploiting class.

Similarly for Trotsky exploitative character of bureaucracy is evident because "no body who has wealth to distribute ever omits himself" and it is bureaucracy which distributes the produce (Trotsky, p. 113). Further he notes that "in scope of inequality, in the payment of labour, the Soviet Union has not only caught up to, but far surpassed, the capitalist countries" (Trotsky, p. 125). Again, he offers no evidence to back his assertion. We can thus see

that no satisfactory evidence is offered to back up their assertion about exploitative character of bureaucracy.

3.6.3 Perhaps these prominent critics of soviet viewpoint had first hand information and were so strongly impressed by what they observed, that they did not find it necessary to collect detailed statistical information. One would have expected that later-day critics of Soviet viewpoint would be able to give more concrete (and verifiable) evidence.

In fact Bernard Chavance of Bettelheim school writes: "A concrete analysis of Soviet society proves..." that this radical separation (of the direct producers from the means of production) exists and is dominant in the society..." (Chavance Bernard, p. 02). Unfortunately he does not mention any book/article where such concrete analysis has been undertaken. Our impression is that it has not been undertaken at all.⁴⁴

More often than not, some or the other of the following have been cited as evidence.

- (a) Divergence of October Revolution from Marx's perception of Proletarian revolution and deviation of present Soviet society from one visualised by Marx. Most important segment of this argument has been low level of development of productive forces.
- (b) Introduction of/persistence of elements of market economy.

- (c) Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and Poland crisis.
- (d) USSR-US relations; specially the USSR's participation in arms race and attitude towards countries of Third World.
- (e) Soviet attitude towards China.
- (f) Lenin's doubts/dissatisfaction with functioning of the USSR in his life-time and continuation of similar policies by later leadership.
- (g) Increasing importance given to material incentives.
- (h) Existence of Labour camps, KGB and suppression of dissidents.
- (i) Undemocratic nature of party organisation.
- (j) Adoption of Non Marxian way of analysis (e.g. attributing mistakes of Stalin era to individuals) etc.

This list has no pretensions to be exhaustive but it is representative of 'kind of evidence' that is offered to reject classlessness viewpoint.

We have already explained (See p. 30) why (a) above is not satisfactory evidence to reject 'classlessness' viewpoint. As regards other points in this list, it would have been a useful exercise to critically evaluate each of these. However it has not been done for following reasons:

- (i) validity of some of the above (those that are factual in nature) has been contested by Soviet Union and data here is impressionistic or based on personal sources.

(ii) Some of these, even if factually correct have implications regarding class character of Soviet Union only indirectly, and intermediate logical steps leading to implications for class character of the USSR are themselves likely to be debatable.

(iii) It is likely to be more rewarding to answer three central questions raised earlier (p. 40) directly.

3.6.4 Perhaps these scholars could not undertake this kind of analysis because information required was not available. And in absence of 'complete scientific evidence' there is no alternative but to go by stray examples, intuition, anecdotal and impressionistic evidence. However, for obvious reasons, judgement thus arrived at cannot be widely acceptable.

So in next chapter we try to answer three central questions raised earlier, on the basis of more reliable/ acceptable evidence. We bring together 'information' from the writings of number of scholars who have studied one or the other aspect of Soviet society but have not directly dealt with class character of STEs.

3.7 Finally we must emphasize that we have neither dealt with the literature pertaining to 'causes'/'factors' leading to present class character of the USSR, nor discussed the direction of future change. We have also not discussed

various viewpoints as regards appropriate nomenclature to describe Soviet society. Various shades of Marxian schools have called it State Capitalism, Bureaucratic Collectivism or a new mode of production. While some of these consider Soviet mode of production to be transitory - either way, others are of the view that Capitalist economies and Soviet economy are moving towards each other. Some other scholars are of the view that the Marx's concept of class at best, is useless/inapplicable in the case of STEs. They use Weberian and totalitarian models to study STEs.

All these questions, though important, are secondary/ derivative to our main theme - whether there is dominant class or not. Hence we have not attended to these questions. Lane (1982) and Bellis provide detailed discussion and exhaustive survey of literature on these aspects.

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CHAPTER IV

CLASS CHARACTER OF STEs : SOME EVIDENCE*

4.1 In Chapter III we have seen that in spite of abolition of individual ownership of the means of production, there is a possibility that bureaucracy may be a dominant class in the STEs. In this chapter we propose to determine class character of the USSR/STEs.

As a first approximation, we would be 'looking for' two fold class division. If 'bureaucracy' and 'workers and peasants' (see Section 4.2 on terminology used) constitute two different classes then two should have a different position in the Soviet system of social production. So in section 4.3 we deal with extent of participation by workers and peasants in the management of the economy. Moreover, to call bureaucracy a class, it needs to be shown that membership of 'bureaucracy' is relatively permanent and transferable across generations (cf Chap. II). This is done in section 4.4. Further if bureaucracy has a different (as compared to workers and peasants) and dominant position in the Soviet system of social production then it must be reflected in its share of social produce, interests, mode

* This Chapter is based on information available in English.

of life, culture etc. We review the evidence available in section 4.5, 4.6 and 4.8.

In course of our search for 'evidence' we have found that sometimes even Soviet and East European scholars tacitly accept the existence of 'disadvantaged' class(es). In section 4.8 we provide some examples. Further Soviet literature often refers to 'new socialist man'. Existence of 'new socialist man' (and culture) who keeps community, society and nation before self is cited as evidence of 'harmonious and classless' nature of Soviet society. In section 4.7 we provide some examples which seem to contradict Soviet assertion about 'new socialist man'.

Before we proceed some terminological issues need to be sorted out.

4.2 On Terminology Used : Possible dominant class that we have in mind consists of all those who have major role in the management of the economy. i.e. economic decision-making. Besides these, those occupying higher positions in other spheres such as academics, police etc. may also be counted as part of this dominant class (cf Chap. II). In literature such class has been normally called bureaucracy and roughly includes managers of enterprises, their senior aides and those above them in industrial hierarchy, chairpersons of Kolkhoz etc., members of council of ministers,

their senior aides, 'apparatus' of the CPSU and those in top ranks of other occupational categories. This definition of bureaucracy is far from being precise and for any kind of empirical research we need well-defined categories. However, as we proceed, it will become clear, that for our present purpose aforementioned definition would do.

Collective farmers, agricultural workers working on state farms, routine employees and industrial workers would perhaps constitute the other category. As our problem is to see whether these two categories constitute two classes or not, we will call former category Group I and latter Group II.

In Soviet literature terms like intelligentsia/non-manual workers/employees are used interchangeably. Each of these terms covers Group I and routine employees which we have included in Group II. So if intelligentsia/non-manual workers/employees have a certain advantage over manual workers and peasants then Group I (a category narrower than intelligentsia etc.) should be presumed to have still greater advantage over Group I.

Further sometimes we would be using term 'workers and peasants' as synonymous of Group II.

Let us now begin our exercise to find out if Group I and II, as defined here, constitute two different classes.

4.31 To state the obvious, for a STE to be a classless society, all its citizens must have same 'relationship to the factors of production' i.e. they must be equal participants in the management of the economy. In fact it is asserted that:

"Each Soviet man has guaranteed opportunity to take part in the discussion and decision of important problems of national, republican, oblast, city or raion scale. Besides that in their work-collectives Soviet people daily decide a multitude of questions connected with administration of their enterprises, institutions and organizations".⁴⁵

If this is so, then, of course, Soviet Union cannot be a classdivided society. In this section we scrutinize the information available as regards functioning and efficacy of various channels of participation.

4.32.1 Workers' and Peasants' Participation in Management of the Economy

Extent of Group II's participation in the management of the economy would be the most important indicator of class character of the USSR. Western authors believe, by and large unanimously, that Soviet economy is centrally planned with little participation from Group II. They also believe that it is by and large Group I that manages the economy independently of Group II. Soviet viewpoint runs counter to it.

They highlight the existence of numerous channels through which workers may participate. These include production conference, party organs, trade union committees, shop-floor level committees etc. at enterprise level. Moreover each enterprise is controlled by relevant ministries which in turn are responsible to 'Supreme Soviet'. So, indirect influence that Group II wields through Party and 'Soviets' is also considered important.

We study the nature and extent of Group II's participation through the Party, and 'Soviets' of various levels later in this chapter. Presently we review evidence available as regards participation of workers and peasants at enterprise level (through channels other than these).

4.32.2 Trade unions are one of the major channels of workers participation cited in Soviet literature. Trade Union Congress - top rung of trade union hierarchy - is said to participate in decisions pertaining to organization of economy, functioning of enterprises, system of wage regulation (i.e. distribution of the produce) and workers' welfare etc.⁴⁶

Cliff (p.21) point out that there was a gap of 17 years between two Trade Union Congress meetings (1932 to 1949). This period saw momentous changes in all the areas wherein T.U. Congress, and through it workers, were expected to participate, in the decision-making. So at least one

channel of participation was not functioning during this time. In fact as late as mid 60's we find Kosygin wanting that "Every worker should be made to feel that he is one of the owners of the factory". (Emphasis added: Yanowitch p.146). If as late as mid 60's worker does not feel 'that he is one of the owners of the factory' on what basis could Soviet Union be called a workers' state?

Perhaps we are reading too much in the words used. Perhaps we are not. Table 4.1 summarizes the results of a sociological study of a rural area in the USSR. This table shows that even in collective farms, more than 60% of workers - skilled as well as unskilled - do not think that they have influence on major decisions in running of the enterprise that they own, whose management is (officially) elected by them. As against this 80 - 90% of specialists of various categories were of the view that they do participate in the major decisions of the enterprise.⁴⁷

4.32.3 That this survey was not an exception is evident from Yanowitch's article 'Work Hierarchy and Management "Participation" (see Yanowitch Chap. V). Unless otherwise stated, following discussion is based on this article. This article in turn is based on 'Soviet literature on enterprise management and industrial and rural sociology'.

In Soviet Union Leninist principle of 'democratic centralism' is taken to be the corner-stone of economic

Table 4.1 : Percentage of individuals having no influence on major decisions at the work place (Rural Area Sample, the USSR 1967).

Occupational category	% of each occupational category that believes that it does not have influence on major decisions, in			
	Collective farms	State farms	Other rural enterprises	Total
High-level managerial personnel and specialists	13	-	20	12
Middle-level managerial personnel and specialists	17	36	-	20
Non-manual employees	33	48	37	38
Machine operators	54	45	45	50
Skilled manual workers	64	51	58	58
Low skilled and unskilled manual workers	69	72	68	69
Total	63	55	50	56

Source : Soviet source cited in Yanowtich, p. 150.

organisation too. From review of Soviet literature, in Yanowitch's article, it is evident that in its application Leninist principle is reduced to 'one man management'. Of course, officially director of an enterprise, and other collective organs at the enterprise level referred to earlier, together run the enterprise. This is not so. In fact in the words of a Soviet scholar 'it is initiative

from below and leadership from above'. In the words of another Soviet scholar "our chief weakness in the sphere of participation of the working people in the management of the production of the enterprise is the frequent non-fulfilment of the recommendations of the trade union committee and the production conference" (cited in Yanowitch p. 155) and as a result there is "hostility" among workers towards factory administration.

Another study found that of all the 'directives' issued by plant management (in the enterprise surveyed) over the course of one year only less than 1% were based on proposals submitted by individual workers and only 9% (mainly concerned with safety regulation) by collective organs (cited in Yanowitch p. 152).

4.32.4 In fact, it is plant manager who is held responsible for fulfilment of production plan and is provided necessary authority for this. And his accountability is to his superiors and not to those below him. Moreover, managerial theory that he is advised to follow is akin to that being followed in capitalist economies. Emphasis is on 'appearing to involve' rather than on 'actually involving'.⁴⁸ Certain quarters in the USSR were perturbed over lack of workers' participation even at enterprise level. As a result there was a proposal in 1965 to make the position of director of the enterprise elective, at least on experimental basis.

This was rejected. But that is not important. What is important, is that a sociological study conducted on the response to such proposal found that response varied according to respondents position in the hierarchy. While most of the workers favoured it, most of 'managerial personnel found it unacceptable.⁴⁹

4.32.4 So on the basis of review of information available, we can say that actual and direct participation of Group II in management of the economy at enterprise level is almost negligible. However according to Soviet view Group II does participate, atleast indirectly, in the management of the economy through Party and Soviets. Now we turn to them.

4.33.1 Article 6 of the Constitution of the USSR says :

"The leading and guiding force of Soviet Society and the nucleus of its political system, of all state organizations and public organizations, is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The CPSU exists for the people and serves the people. The Communist Party armed with Marxism-Leninism, determines the general perspectives of the development of the society". (Hill & Frank, 1981, p.15).

Hence a thorough study of the Party, its role, structure, functioning etc. would throw valuable light on the character of Soviet Union.⁵⁰ In fact democratic centralism, i.e., guiding organisational principle in

general, and party election in particular have been heavily criticised. Further, most of the Western scholars do not accept Soviet assertion that CPSU is an example of highest form of democracy. We here do not go into this aspect.⁵¹

4.32.2 We shall focus our attention on relative importance of Group I and Group II in CPSU because it is asserted that "politics and Government i.e. spheres which previously were the exclusive prerogative of the ruling class, have become a field for the practical activity of all the working people." (Soviet source in Hill & Frank (1981), p. 141.)

Does composition of CPSU reflect it? Further, due to hierarchical structure of the Party, composition of Party, in terms of relative proportion of Group I and Group II, should be studied at all levels. Here we bring together data available in this regard.

4.32.3 Firstly, we must compare proportion of these two groups in overall membership of the Party with their proportion in population. Table 4.2 gives the comparative figures for selected years. However it is not clear whether classification is in terms of current employment or by social origins i.e. status of the parents. In fact unless otherwise stated this ambiguity exists for all statistics pertaining to the Party composition. Table 4.2 clearly shows that employees form a disproportionately (as compared to their proportion in total population) large part of the CPSU membership.

Table 4.2

Category	Proportion of the people in the category to total population in the year			Percentage share of the category in total membership of the CPSU in the year				
	1959	1967	1979	1917	1956	1967	1968	1981**
Manual workers	49.5	53.5	60.0	60.2	32.0	38.1	38.8	43.4
Employees	18.8	23.9	25.1	32.2	50.9	45.9	45.4	43.8
Collective farm	31.4	22.6	14.9	7.5	17.1	16.0	15.8	12.8
Total	99.7*	100	100	99.9	100	100	100	100

Source : Figures for 1967 from Matthews (1972), p. 218; for 1917 from Hill & Frank (1981), p. 36 and rest from Lane (1982), p. 117.

* Rest are self-employed. For other years this category is not given.

** According to Kerblay, p. 249, in 1981 share of specialists in population was 10.5% as against 43.8% in the Party and that of manual workers and routine employees was 74.6% in population and 43.4% in the Party. If Kerblay's figures are correct then distribution of the party members is all the more skewed.

Secondly let us look at percentage of each category that is member of the Party. Table 4.3 gives this information for a number of occupational categories. In fact Lane (1982) p.118 cites Soviet sources to the effect that in 80's only 10% of manual workers were party members. According to another

Table 4.3 : Percentage of each category who are members of the CPSU (Machine building industry of Leningrad in 1965)

Category	% of those who are CPSU member in 1965
Director/Organiser	61%
Technical and Scientific	40%
Skilled non-manual	43%
Semi-Professional	38%
Skilled manual	37%
Semi-skilled, non-manual	27%
Semi-skilled manual	39%
Unskilled manual	14%

Source: Soviet study in Heller, p. 287.

estimate in 1966 only 1 out of 22 workers was member of CPSU. As against this, of all specialists with higher or secondary specialized education, one in three was a member or candidate member of the Party. (Schwartz (1967), pp. 33-34). Another scholar finds this too be so even in 1971 and 1976 (Unger (1977) p. 311). So both composition of the Party and share of the Party members in different occupational categories show that Group I, as compared to its share in the population, has disproportionately higher share in the Party membership.

4.33.4 Next we should consider composition of 'aktiv' Party members and social origins of its 'appratus'.⁵² Unfortunately no information is available in this regard. However "in 1969 there were 1.3 million persons in the 'leading organs' of primary cells, which presumably meant the (elected) secretaries and members of the bureaux. Of these 16.7% were workers and 13.3% were collective farmers, so the remainder 70% must have been employees" (Soviet Source in Matthews (1972), p. 224). Further according to Matthews, 3.1%, 0.4%, 0.1% of employees, workers and peasants respectively occupied elective positions at primary cell level. (Matthews (1972) p. 224). Though it is not clear whether these figures are percentages of total employees etc. or those in the Party, yet disproportionately higher representation of employees even at the lowest rung is evident.

Now, let us consider composition of top leadership i.e. Central Committee (C.C.) and Politbureau etc. Bialer who examined social origins of leading officials in the Party and State apparatuses between 1956 and 1966 found that of those holding positions in Politbureau, Party secretariat, Presidium of the council of Ministers and Presidium of the Supreme Soviet 87% had worker or peasant origins; of Central Committee members 73%, of council of Ministers 76%, of provincial and republican Party-state leadership 82% had worker or peasant origins (Cited in Lane (1982), p. 121). Similarly many other scholars, who have studied social origin

of C.C. and Politbureau members for different years have found them to be, roughly speaking, in proportion to population composition. In 1981 of full members of Politbureau 5 had working class origin, 6 had peasant origin, and 3 had non-manual origin (See Lane (1982), p. 121).

So, we find that worker and peasants constitute a smaller percentage (as compared to their percentage in the population) in the Party, as a whole and in lower level organs, but have adequate share at the highest level. One plausible explanation of this paradoxical situation could be that most of those occupying leading positions in these years must have joined the Party in early post-revolutionary years.⁵³ That was the time when non-manual origins meant bourgeois origins and hence non-manual workers were not normally admitted into the Party. In fact if we classify Central Committee members by their main occupation prior to becoming members of C.C. or by their occupational status at the time of joining C.C. we find that in 1952 and 1956 workers and peasants constituted zero %, in 1961 2.3% in 1966 1.6%, in 1971 3.73% and in 1981 4.73% of total C.C. members. Trade Union personnel formed 0.8%, 0.8%, 3.4%, 2.2%, 0.83% and 1.57% of C.C. members in 1952, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971 and 1981.⁵⁴ While low share of 'practicing' workers and peasant in C.C. is understandable, low share of Trade Union personnel is not.

So one may expect that if this trend continues, in years to come classification of leading officials by social origins would also show greater proportion of non-manual employees. In fact even in Party Congresses of 1961, 1966, 1981, which according to the Party constitution are Supreme Party Authority but are considered by others to be somewhat ceremonial in nature, workers and peasants constituted only about 40% of delegates.⁵⁵

4.33.5 So while, for want of required data, it has not been possible for us to undertake a detailed analysis of the Party composition. We find, on the basis of available information, that employees (and hence Group I) form a disproportionately large part of the Party structure at all levels including Primary cell level. So influence/control of Group II even in the Party, and through the Party on economy, is considerably less than that of Group I. Now let us evaluate Group II's participation in management of the economy through 'Soviets'.

4.34.1 "In Soviet constitutional theory all legislative power is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working peoples' deputies".⁵⁶ And constitutionally the Party is subordinate to the Soviet State/Government i.e. to Supreme Soviet (See Hill & Frank (1981) p.15).

Hence 'Soviets of working Peoples' Deputies' are another major channel through which Group II can participate in affairs of state, society and economy. These have been called 'bulwarks of democracy'.

4.34.2 First of all, how effective are Soviets through which working people are expected to manage their society. Cliff provides a number of instances of their effectiveness and functioning. Some of these are as follows.

- (a) Between 1917 to 1936 'Supreme Soviet' met for less than 6 days per year.
- (b) Since 1920's (to about 1955) every decision of Supreme Soviet has been unanimous.
- (c) To underline the importance of Soviets, it is pointed out that 'those who hold purse-strings hold the ultimate power' and Supreme Soviet controls the budget. However there are number of instances when budget was approved by Supreme Soviet months after it had come into effect and plans were approved after as long as 18 months of their having been put into effect. (Cliff p. 72-73)

In view of this it seems that Soviets, as channels of working peoples' participation, are devoid of much significance.

4.34.3 Further all candidates for all levels of Soviets have to be approved by corresponding party organisations. Here it may be repeated that constitutionally Party is subordinate to State i.e. to Soviets.

However in view of a Soviet scholar, this manner of selection of candidates "not only does not contradict democracy, but on the contrary is an example of the development of democracy, because the ruling party takes upon itself an additional moral responsibility before the electors, for the qualitative composition of candidates recommended and supported by it". (Hill (1976) p. 595)

Let us accept that it is appropriate that the Party should be burdened with this task. Then why have elections at all? Party nominates/appoints number of important state functionaries.⁵⁷ Why does not it do so for Soviets too?

Moreover, in the words of a Soviet scholar "the nomination of several candidates in connection with elections would be artificial" and hence only one candidate contests elections (Jacobs p. 66). Again question arises: why have provisions for more than one candidate on the statutes?

We are at a loss to explain these anomalies. Perhaps Soviets are not what they are claimed to be. However let us go on.

4.34.4 Mostly, results of elections show that candidate have received more than 99% votes. One scholar points out that this figure hides the fact that about 25% people do not vote at all. So the author says that the Party candidate receive support of about 75% of the eligible voters (Zaslavsky & Brym p. 366). This of course needs verification. If about 25%

of the voters are dissatisfied and hence manage to abstain from voting, a harmonious vision of the USSR would be that much less easy to accept .⁵⁸

Moreover, in spite of the fact that there is only one candidate for each post, quite a few, though a miniscule of all contestants, fail to get elected. This happens because a candidate, to win, needs at least 50% of the votes polled and votes polled should be 50% of total registered votes.

In elections to local Soviets, i.e. all Soviets excluding All Union Supreme Soviet and Supreme Soviets of Union and autonomous republics, 133, 167, 182, 249, 195, 208, 129 and 145 candidates failed to get elected in 1955, 1957, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1967 and 1969 respectively.⁵⁹ However what is significant is the fact that of 145 candidates defeated in 1969 and 129 in 1967, 139 and 124 were from "Settlement" (Poselok) and Village (Selo) Soviets respectively, which are Soviets at lowest level and have a very small member of registered voters. As against this no candidate above district (raion) level was defeated.⁶⁰ From this it seems that the lower the Soviet in the hierarchical ladder of 'Soviets' the lesser is the degree of supervision that is exercised by the Party organisation, greater is the freedom of choice for electorate and greater is the extent of expressed dissent.

4.34.5 Lastly, given all this - about nature and functioning of 'Soviets', their election procedure etc. - what is the relative share of Group I and Group II among Deputies to Soviets?

If percentage of manual workers and peasants Deputies in Supreme Soviets elected in 1958, 1962 and 1966 is expressed as a ratio of their percentage in total population in 1959 we get following figures - 0.3933, 0.435, and 0.474 respectively. Corresponding figures for the rest of the population (including routine non-manual workers) are 3.333, 3.316, and 3.016. That means the possibility of a manual worker or a peasant becoming a Deputy of Supreme Soviet was less than 1/6th of other sections of population (i.e. of Group I) (Clarke p. 55). However we find that lower the level of Soviets higher is the share of manual worker and peasant Deputies. While share of workers (including non-manuals) and collective farmers in Supreme Soviet was 46% in 1966, it was 60.8% for all levels of Soviets (Lane (1970) p. 156). However even this was less than their share in population which in 1960 was 80.4% (excluding routine non-manuals) (Yanowitch p. 111).

Not only that workers and peasants had less than proportionate representation, they also had shorter tenure. Table 4.4 gives the tenure of Deputies of one (particular) Town-level Soviet. Data refers to all those Deputies who

joined this Soviet and left it during 1950-1967. It is evident that production workers have relatively shorter tenure.

Table 4.4 : Tenure structure of a town level Soviet (1950-67)

Occupation on entry into the Soviet	% of those who had		
	1-2 terms	3-5 terms	5-9 terms
Production workers N = 306	93.1	5.6	1.3
Industrial Management N = 83	75.9	14.5	9.6
Political Administration N = 92	75	19.6	5.4
Others/information not available N = 174	86.8	10.3	2.9

Source : Soviet Study in Hill (1973), p. 209.

Note : 'N' refers to number of observations in particular category

4.34.6 In this section (4.34) we have attempted to show that functioning of Soviets, specially their election procedure, does not square with the assertion that they are 'bulwarks of democracy'. However, more important is the fact that even here it is Group I that predominates (specially at higher levels of hierarchy of Soviets).

4.35.1 Participation through other channels

Besides Party, Soviets and various factory level committees including Trade Union units, number of local level Committees and organisations e.g. Comrades' Court, Peoples' Militia, Committee of residents of a building etc. are said to provide working people another channel to participate in the management of Community affairs. These organisations are forebearers of things to come and Soviet literature highlights gradual transfer of more and more functions and power to these organisations.

Against this background, let us read the following passage by a Soviet Scholar :

"Until recently (i.e. till 1959) the people lived as if each one was for himself ... by the private ownership precept ... Party activist returned home, shut himself in in his apartment ... neighbours might be committing a variety of anti-social acts, while member of the Party and the Komsomol, of peoples volunteer guards, were detached onlookers ..." (cited in Unger, A.L. (1970-71) p. 556).

Perhaps the above passage is not representative one. But it has a grain of truth because about the same time a number of Central Committee decrees called for strengthening of mass political work in places of residence (Unger, A.L. (1970-71) p. 556).

4.35.2 Let us see if participation in such activities has any relationship with occupational category that one belongs too. Table 4.5 gives percentage of those participating in Public activities by occupational category.

Table 4.5 : Percentage of those participating in Public activities (Machine Building Industry of Leningrad, 1965)

Sr. No.	Occupational Category	Percentage of those participating in Public Activities of various types
1.	Directors & Organisers	84%
2.	Technical & Scientific	70%
3.	Skilled non-manual	82%
4.	Semi Professional	79%
5.	Skilled manual workers	61%
6.	Semi-Skilled non-manual	55%
7.	Semi-Skilled manual	54%
8.	Unskilled manual	35%

Source : Soviet Study in Heller p. 287.

While all categories except unskilled manual working show high rate of participation, it must be noted that participation rate for manual workers is less than that for non-manual categories, particularly the specialists.

Another study shows that amount of time spent on public activities rises from 35 minutes per week for the

head of a family with a monthly per capita income of less than 50 roubles to 1 hour 5 minutes in families where per capita income exceeds 75 roubles" (Soviet study cited in Kerblay, p. 261).

Moreover "surveys of the way people use their free time carried out between 1965 & 1968 in certain Soviet cities showed that among both men & women, political activities came last on the list". Further only 92.5% of party membership and 14.5% of total population was active (Soviet study cited in Kerblay, p. 260-61). And only 30.8% of young workers of Leningrad listed public activity as one of the ways of spending extra time (Soviet Study cited in Matthews (1972), p. 247).

However what is more important, from our stand point, is systematic relationship between time spent on political activities by a person and his occupational category. A national sample survey of Soviet urban adults found that in 1965 67% of intelligentsia, 56% of employees and only 38% of workers 'undertook political study several times a week' (Heller, p. 289).

4.35.3 This shows that even at local and lowest level, Group I's participation in management of community affairs is considerably more than that of Group II.

4.36 On the basis of information presented in 4.32 to 4.35 we can conclude that participation of Group II in the management

of the economy, either directly or through other channels i.e. Party, Soviets or other public organisation, is significantly less than its share in the population. Admittedly, evidence presented is not detailed and comprehensive enough. All the same, information available strongly suggests that Group I has a dominant position in the Soviet System of social production.

However, it must be kept in mind that so far we can only say that Group I has different and dominant position in the system of social production of the USSR. Before we call it a class we need to check if (a) membership of Group I and II is relatively permanent and has continuity across generation, (b) differential position of two Groups results in differences in material rewards, mode of life and culture etc.

We now review information available in regard to former element.

4.41:1 Significance of mobility studies in determination of class character of a society follows from Marx's concept of class. As pointed out in Chapter 2, (a) relative permanency of class affiliation and (b) transmission of class membership across generations are essential characteristics of division of a society into classes⁶¹. While intragenerational mobility throws light on first aspect, intergenerational mobility informs us about the second aspect.⁶²

4.41.2 Before we review the information available in regard to mobility in the USSR few words regarding Soviet attitude to study of social mobility would be in order.

Prior to 1964 there had been no empirical study of "the shift of a part of peasantry into the ranks of the working class, and of workers and peasants into the ranks of the intelligentsia".⁶³ This has been so because, "in sociological literature the view has been expressed that concepts of 'lower' and 'higher' classes or social strata are inapplicable, in principle, to Soviet Socialist society". (Soviet scholar cited in Yanowitch p. 103).

That concepts of lower and higher strata are applicable to Soviet socialist society is evident from our discussion in Section 4.3. Moreover, if these concepts are not relevant why "eulogize" working class or peasant origin of intelligentsia or Soviet leadership? And this is often done.

In view of such attitude towards mobility studies, we find very limited information on mobility in Soviet Union. Most of the times only plant or city level studies are available. However, for some other STEs we do have national level information.

4.41.3 Social mobility has two components - structural mobility and exchange/circulation mobility.⁶⁴ Developmental changes in the economy bring about structural changes in labour force. As a result irrespective of what system

society has, there would be some intergenerational mobility i.e. occupations of children and parents are likely to differ in some cases. Mobility caused in this manner is called 'structural mobility'. As against this circulation/exchange mobility refers to that part of the gross mobility which does not result from structural factors. It is circulation mobility that would differentiate a classless, though hierarchical society, from class-divided society.

In a society where merit is the only criterion for occupational allocation and if intellectual capabilities and natural talent are equally distributed among childrens of all categories(which every Soviet scholar would accept - see Yanowitch, p.60), there would be no correlation between a child's occupational status and that of parents. This would be a case of perfect circulation mobility.

4.41.4 Let us now review information available as regards mobility in the USSR. Table 4.6 gives the results of three inflow studies i.e. gives social origins of present labour force. It shows that only 30 to 40% of specialists had specialist father, and majority of specialists had been recruited from other categories. However, if we study social origin of certain selected ('elite') occupational categories (see Table 4.7) we find that, but for writers and artists (where training is not so important and inheritance is generally low) and medical students (medical profession does

Table 4.6 : Social origin of incumbents of various occupational positions in three Soviet cities

Current occupational position/year	Occupational position of father in %					Total
	Peasant	Worker	Non-manual employ-ee	Specia-list	No answer	
<u>1. Kazan 1967</u>						
Workers	31.9	49.0	4.8	6.9	7.4	100
Lower non-manual employees	24.3	49.7	7.9	11.2	6.9	100
Specialists	11.7	29.6	14.9	37.5	6.2	99.9
<u>2. Ufa 1970</u>						
Workers	33	44.6	8.0	7.2	7.2	100
Lower non-manual employees	21.7	35.1	9.3	18.6	15.3	100
Specialists	17.8	28.1	14.5	32.8	4.8	98.0
<u>3. Leningrad 1970</u>						
Workers	14.5	54.7	6.7	14.5	9.6	100
Lower non-manual employees	8.4	55.4	8.9	16.4	10.9	100
Specialists	6.2	42.4	13.6	31.3	6.4	99.9

Source: Soviet Study in Yanowitch, p. 109.

Table 4.7 : Social origins of selected 'Elite' occupational categories (the USSR)

Sr. No.	Elite Group/year	% of those whose parents were			
		Workers	Peasants	Non-manual employees	Total
1.	Faculty of Khorkov State University, 1969	24.4	15.5	59.0	98.9
2.	Graduate students of Science, Academy of Science				
	1963	8	4	88	100
	1968	15	13	72	100
3.	Engineers at Scientific Institutes and Enterprises				
	1965	24.7	4.2	71.1	100
4.	Students at Medical Institutes				
	1964	29.7	12.1	58.2	100
	1970	30.7	7.4	61.9	100
5.	Artistic Intelligentsia, 1970				
	Architects	19	12	69	100
	Composers	13	10	77	100
	Artists	27	21	47	95
	Writers	20	58	22	100

Source: Soviet Study Yanowitch, p. 113.

not enjoy the same prestige in the USSR as in Western Europe) only 12 to 39.9% of those in these elite positions had worker or peasant origin. As against this their proportion in work force was of the order of 75.2% (in 1970).⁶⁵

Table 4.8 : 'Outflow' of children; one city sample (USSR)

Occupation of father	% of children in following category in 1970				Total
	Intelligentsia	Worker	Lower non-manual	No answer	
Intelligentsia	72.5	14.6	11.0	1.9	100
Worker	31.4	59.1	8.6	0.9	100
Lower non-manual employees	55.2	36.2	7.8	0.8	100
Collective farmer	28.5	62.4	7.6	1.5	100

Source: Soviet Study in Yanowitch, p. 117.

Table 4.8 based on one city sample gives the outflow data i.e. occupational placement of children for different categories of parents (father).

While pointing out that there are no solid grounds to treat city survey of Table 4.8 as typical, Yanowitch notes on the basis of Table 4.8 and other studies that "Most intelligentsia parents are able to transmit their occupational status to their children, while the majority of peasant and working class parents - whatever their aspirations for their children - cannot rise out of manual occupations" (Emphasis added; Yanowitch p. 116).

4.41.5 So little evidence that is available on intergenerational mobility, shows that to a great extent members of Group I are able to transmit their position in the hierarchy to their children. If there is, in a system, continuity across generation relative permanency of group affiliation during life time is bound to be there. Available evidence on intragenerational mobility for STEs confirms this. In Table 4.9 initial and current occupational position are compared. It is evident that only about 20% of those who had started as peasant or manual worker moved up to become non-manual specialist. In comparison to this, lower non-manuals showed greater intragenerational mobility. In this regard it may be pointed out that most of the children of specialists who are unable to go for higher education prefer to start working as lower non-manuals as these jobs provide more opportunity for continuing education (Soviet source in Yanowitch, p. 120).

Soviet Union asserts that it provides extensive opportunities for peasants and manual workers to continue their education. However Table 4.9 does not support this. In fact a Soviet study found that "if a person begins his work activity as a worker, it is most probable that he will remain such throughout his life." (Yanowitch, p. 126).⁶⁶

4.41.6 Lastly, let us review data available from other STEs. Table 4.10 gives the outflow into 'elite'/non-manual category. This table has been adopted from Connor wherein complete mobility matrices based on national surveys are given.

Table 4.9 : Initial and current occupational positions of employed personnel in three cities of the USSR

Entry job	Current job			Total
	Manual worker	Lower non-manual employee	Non-manual special list	
<u>Sample I (1970)</u>				
Collective farmer and agricultural worker	81.5	5.2	13.3	100
Unskilled worker	75.8	9.1	15.1	100
Skilled worker	72.3	9.3	18.4	100
Lower non-manual employee	26.3	26.5	47.2	100
<u>Sample II (1967)</u>				
Unskilled worker	82.9	7.1	10.0	100
Skilled worker	77.8	9.7	12.5	100
<u>Sample III (1967)</u>				
Unskilled worker	78.4	8.6	13.0	100
Skilled worker	71.6	5.4	23.0	100

Source : Soviet Study in Yanowitch, p. 127.

It is evident from Table 4.10 that compared to children of workers and peasants, 'elite'/non-manual children have a higher chance of becoming 'elite'/non-manual worker.

Table 4.10 : Outflow in elite/non-manual categories

Year	Country	Father's occupation in %			
		Elite	Routine non-manual	Worker	Peasant

Part I

% of children in elite/non-manual category in given year :

1967	1967	Bulgaria	54.3	22.6	10.1
	1967	Czechoslovakia	62.7	38.6	13.0
	1962-64	Hungary	56.8	28.8	2.7
	1973	Hungary	54.4	24.9	2.8
	1972	Poland	42.4	27.9	4.9

Part II

% of children taking up first job in elite/non-manual category

	1967	Bulgaria	52.6	19.7	8.6
	1962-64	Hungary	46.3	17.1	1.3

Source : Relevant National Surveys in Connor Tables, pp. 119-125
Methodological notes pp. 112, 118, 125-127.

Table 4.11 shows for each category of first job, percentage of those who are now in elite/non-manual jobs. Results are similar to that of Table 4.9 (pertaining to the USSR). However it also shows that about 15-20% of elite/non-manuals have skidded down.

Table 4.11 : Intragenerational mobility

First job	Per cent currently in elite/non-manual employment in	
	Bulgaria (1967)	Hungary (1962-64)
Elite	(84.7
Routine non-manual	(81.3	29.0
Worker	8.8	3.8
Peasant	1.9	1.1

Source : Relevant National Surveys in Connor, Tables pp. 119-125.
Methodological notes pp. 112, 118, 125-127.

4.41.7 So available evidence, meager though it is, indicates that element of transmission of privileged position of Group I across generations is probably quite strong. However due to large shift in structure of labour force, number of children of Group II parents are also able to get into non-manual jobs (perhaps at lower rung of Group I).

4.42.1 Access to Education

In Soviet literature existence of a hierarchical structure is often accepted. However we may hasten to add, that Soviet Union simultaneously emphasises (a) collective participation all along this hierarchy (b) democratic control of this hierarchy (see 4.31).

It is also asserted that persons are allocated place in this hierarchy on the basis of their merit i.e. on the basis of their educational qualifications. In other words, depending on one's abilities and inclination one receives a certain level of education and that, mainly, determines his/her role in the socialist system of social production.

No Marxist/Soviet scholars would believe that talent and capabilities are unequally distributed among various occupational categories due to natural/biological or genetic factors.⁶⁷ So if children of Group I get disproportionately (as compared to their share in population) 'more' education, it must be due to 'social' factors.

In this section we wish to find out if children from Group I have larger/better educational facilities. We shall also point out the implications of our findings for class character of the USSR.

4.42.2 It is obvious, but needs to be made explicit, that

we are not concerned about existence of unequal educational qualifications per se. If there is division of labour, there is bound to be educational inequality because different jobs require different amount and type of educational training. However if unequal distribution of education is related to one's social origin i.e. if children from particular social categories tend to be discriminated against or favoured, then inequality in education becomes relevant for our purpose.

4.42.3 It may be pointed out that in non-socialist societies family background influences educational attainments of children in two ways. These may be called 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' influences. Legitimate influence may appear in the form of more conducive work environment (e.g. separate room for studies, better books, freedom from household chores or simply family atmosphere). As against this illegitimate influence takes the form of 'pulling strings' or spending large amount of money to ensure admission into institution of higher learning or to get high score in the 'tests'.

In the case of a classless socialist society we would expect illegitimate influence to be almost negligible. However as long as family remains the unit of social organisation, 'legitimate' family influence may continue to exist. All the same, even in this case one would expect that steps would be taken to reduce it.⁶³

Finally let us accept that presently access to education is regulated by merit alone and children from Group I get better and higher education because they are meritorious. However this is not the only system of distribution of education that is possible. 'Standards' of admission could be lowered a bit for children coming from 'disadvantageous' family backgrounds i.e. from worker and peasant families. We do not want to discuss relative merit of these two systems of distribution of educational facilities. It would suffice to note that problem is similar to the well-known 'growth or equity' dilemma.

4.42.4 Coming to our basic question : Are educational facilities unequally distributed? It is commonly accepted, even by Soviet scholars⁶⁹, that students from Group I background form a disproportionately higher share of student population at institutions of higher education. Study of Table 4.12 and comparative study of 4.13 and 4.14 clearly demonstrates that educational facilities are unequally distributed. Not merely that this disproportionality exists in institutions of higher learning but also "more promising the future occupational status associated with completion of any given type of schooling, the lower is the share of manual workers' children and the higher the proportion of nonmanual strata in the student body" (Yanowitch, p. 69).

4.42.5 Sometime this inequality in education is attributed to different vocational aspirations of children from different social categories. And some surveys (e.g. Table 4.15) do show some differences in aspirations. However given the fact that specialist are dominant category in every conceivable respect, lower preference accorded to these jobs by children of workers and peasants cannot be attributed to 'voluntary choice'. In our view, aspirations of these children are partly conditioned by their perception of 'what is possible.'

Table 4.12 : (Hungary, 1962-64)

Father's occupation in 1938	% of Children having following educational levels					
	under 6 yrs	6-7 yrs	8 yrs	9-12 yrs	Diploma	Univ. Degree
Elite	-	3.5	6.7	2.0	33.6	54.2
Routine non-Manual	1.2	13.9	20.7	7.8	34.6	21.8
Worker	15.0	36.1	27.2	5.0	12.1	4.6
Peasant	28.7	52.6	13.4	1.3	2.4	1.6

Source : Hungarian study cited in Connor 135.

Table 4.15 : Expectations on post-graduation of Soviet Secondary School and Polish Elementary School Leavers and real outcomes by social origin.
(USSR - 1963-64; Poland - 1965)

Social origin	Aspirations in %			Real outcome in %		
	To work	To work and study	To study	Working	Working and studying	Studying
<u>USSR</u>						
Urban Non-manual	2.0	5.0	93.0	15.0	3.0	82.0
Rural Non-manual	11.0	13.0	76.0	42.0	-	58.0
Worker: Industry and construction	11.0	6.0	83.0	36.0	3.0	61.0
Worker: Transport and communication	-	18.0	82.0	55.0	-	45.0
Peasant	10.0	14.0	76.0	90.0	-	10.0
<u>POLAND *</u>						
Intelligentsia	-	2.4	96.4	-	1.4	97.2
Skilled worker	0.9	6.5	92.6	6.2	2.1	83.5
Unskilled worker	1.6	6.3	88.1	11.5	5.3	75.2
Peasant-worker	2.4	6.6	87.5	8.2	7.8	80.9
Peasant	7.4	7.0	80.1	30.0	6.0	60.0

Source : Soviet and Polish studies cited in Conor, p. 202.

* Totals do not add upto 100 as "other/N.A." category has been dropped.

Table 4.13 : Occupational status of parents of students at various Universities, the USSR, Late 60's

University/ Year	Occupation of parents in %				
	Specialists	Non-specialist employees	Workers	Collective farmer	Others
Rostov State Univ. 1966	50.4		47.0	2.6	
Gorki State Univ. 1967	46.4	25.6	25.3	1.3	1.4
Novosibirsk State Univ. 1968	51.0	12.5	26.0	2.8	7.9
Perm State Univ. 1969	31.5	29.5	29.4	4.2	5.4
Urals State Univ. 1969	39.0	9.1	27.1	0.9	23.9

Source : Soviet study in Yanowitch. p. 89.

Table 4.14 : Principle social categories in the Soviet Work Force

Social Category	% share in Soviet work force in			
	1950	1960	1970	1973
Manual Workers	42.2	54.4	60.0	60.5
Collective Farmers	40.6	26.0	15.2	13.5
Specialists)	17.2	9.9	14.2	16.0
Lower level non-manual employees)		9.7	10.6	10.0

Source : Soviet Sources cited in Yanowitch, p. 111

Table 4.15 gives aspirations of students prior to school leaving and actual outcome. We find that students from different categories have different rates of fulfilment of their aspirations. Shortfall between aspirations and real outcome is much more for children of workers and peasants than it is for non-manual categories. Variation in case of Poland is less but it is there.

4.42.6 It may be argued that while aspirations of children of intelligentsia/non manual workers were matched by their 'talent' and performance in the 'tests', it was not so in case of others. Table 4.16 contradicts this explanation. This table gives the percentage of students entering 9th grade from amongst the children of particular categories of parents and with particular test score. For example only 38% of the skilled workers' children having test score of less than 3.5, were admitted to 9th grade.

Table (4.16) shows that equally meritorious students from different social categories have different chances of continuing their education. In fact children from manual worker families with better academic record have less chances of continuing their education than academically worse, but from Group I background children.

Table 4.16 : Parental occupation status, pupils' performance and admission to 9th grade in Leningrad in 1968.

Parental occupational status	Percentage of pupils for each category entering 9th grade from amongst those who have following test scores	
	test score less than 3.5	test score of 3.5 or more
Low skilled and unskilled workers and non-specialist employees	19	41
Skilled workers	38	69
Specialists in job requiring secondary specialised education	50	80
Specialists in job requiring higher education	77	89

Source : Soviet Study in Yanowitch, p. 65

4.42.7 There can be two possible explanations of this anomaly. It could be that children from Group II need to start earning as soon as possible and hence can not go for further studies (even if they are meritorious). Or, children of specialists have 'contacts' that get them admission irrespective of their test scores. In either case it means that 'not all roads are equally open to all'. In words of Khrushov "... it sometimes happens that a person is admitted to a higher educational establishment not because he is well-prepared but because he has an influential papa and mama who can help him to get in" (Cited in Heller, p.293)

4.42.8 One reason for (genuine) better performance of children from Group I could be that they are not only privately coached by family members but also by 'hired tutors'. We know that consumption and employment decisions are left to private initiative in STEs. However state does interfere in consumption decisions by providing special stores and special ration cards. Why does not state prohibit hiring of private tutors as this practice leads to self-regeneration of a dominant group?

4.42.9 So on the basis of information presented in section 4.42 we can say that (a) children of Group I have greater access to higher education. (b) This higher access is not always due to their being more meritorious.

4.43 Further, on the basis of our discussion in 4.41 and 4.42, coupled with our conclusions of 4.36, we can say that (a) Group I (as compared to Group II) has a different and dominant position in the Soviet system of social production, (b) membership of this group (and that of Group II) is, to an extent, 'permanent' and has continuity across generations. Hence, prima facie, Group I (and Group II) can be called a class (in the Marxian sense). However there is another aspect.

We pointed out in Chapter 2 that 'class division' (i.e. differential position in the system of social production) is the most crucial 'social distinction' that is emphasised by Marx because this explains/leads to various

other kinds of social distinctions and phenomena.. So we may ask: Does dominant position of Group I in the system of social production manifests itself in 'various other kinds of social distinctions' i.e. in 'different share in social wealth, different mode of life, interest and culture.'

Some East European scholars answer this question in the negative. They assert, not only that there is "uniformity in the ownership relations of various groups to the means of production" (read factors of production in our usage) but also, that there is "gradual diminution of the role of this relationship as a determinant of other attributes of social position and forms of social consciousness" (Wesolowski (1979), p. 113).

Now we turn to see if this is so i.e. whether dominant position of Group I in the system of social production is reflected in its greater share of social wealth and a distinct mode of life, interest and culture etc. or not?

Normally, given our earlier two conclusions about Soviet Society (see beginning of 4.43), most of the scholars would treat answer to aforesaid question as obvious - yes. However for the following two reasons we review the evidence available in this regard:

- (a) because some scholars (e.g. Wesolowski) answer aforesaid question in the negative.
- (b) because it would provide test of our (tentative) conclusion that Group I has a dominant position in the Soviet system of social production and that membership of this group has across-the-generation continuity.

In Section 4.5 we consider distribution of the social produce aspect and in 4.6, we review the evidence regarding other possible manifestations of class division.

4.5.1 Distribution of the Social Produce

Inequality in the distribution of social produce is the major manifestation of class division. However even according to 'socialist' distribution principle - to each according to his work - there would be inequality in the distribution of social produce. Hence existence of unequal distribution of social produce cannot per se imply that there is class division. For, theoretically we must distinguish between 'material inequality arising out of 'correct' functioning of socialist distribution principle and that which is due to its 'mal-functioning'. Material inequality arising out of mal-functioning of socialist distribution principle could only throw light on class character of STEs.

However in practice it is not possible to separate

two kinds in inequalities, to a satisfactory degree of analytical precision . In fact there is no unique operationalization of socialist distribution principle and there is no universally accepted measure of value of labour performed. A cursory glance at systems of wage regulation in STEs would confirm this (see McAuley (1979), Chapter 8).

4.5.2 Before we move on to analysis of data relating to income inequality, we need to consider some more points.

First of all, income inequality can be studied from various viewpoints: rural-urban, male-female, etc. However, our main purpose here is to study inequality in the distribution of income between Group I and Group II. Secondly, measurement of inequality is riddled with various problems - what measures of inequality to use? what should be unit of measurement of income: household, per capita or per standard consumption unit? how to define income? etc. However, we need not go into these aspects here.⁷⁰

Suffice it to note that we would have preferred to study distribution of total income i.e. money earnings from employment plus transfer payments plus interest earnings etc. (collectively these three items add upto money income) / plus share in social consumption expenditure. However, data available mostly refers to money income only and therefore leaves no choice.

/ plus payment in kind (these four constituents add up to personal income)

4.5.3 Sources of information available to Soviet Planners

McAuley points out that there are only two sources of information available to Soviet Planners: (a) family budget surveys conducted regularly and (b) some sample surveys at national level.

Family budget surveys are restricted to wage earners in manufacturing, mining and quarrying and in rural areas to collective farm households (excluding state farm households). Without going into details of family budget surveys suffice it to note that in McAuley's view many of Soviet economists and statisticians themselves treat these as worthless.⁷¹

Other source is sample surveys which have been conducted for few years (only 1958, 1967 and 1972). These however were restricted to non-agricultural population and covered only 0.4% of the total population.

Besides these sources there are sub-population sample surveys dealing with a particular Republic or region. Moreover information on wage scales prevalent in various branches of economy are also available. All these surveys combined together provide only a fragmentary information about actual distribution of social produce in the USSR. However, for other STEs frequency distribution of full-time

civilian wage and salary earners is given for selected months. Another frequency distribution tabulates households or individuals according to per capita annual cash income including transfer payments. Moreover, even this meager information is not available to outsiders.

4.5.4 Sources and extent on information available to an outsider

It is commonly known that data regarding the USSR and countries of East Europe is scantily available. It is also known that notes on methodology adopted and other details are also not available. However only few would be aware of the extent of paucity of data and ignorance of Western scholars about methodological details as far as income inequality is concerned. To our knowledge only two Western scholars have described sources of their information in detail.

Peter Wiles writes the following about data base of his studies on income distribution in the USSR:

"...but scarcely any absolute figure has ever been published. All numerical data are drawn from unspecified areas rather than the whole country, or are marked 'stipulated'. All diagrams are given without absolute numbers on the axes. Recently histograms have appeared where horizontal axes is broken near the origin".
(Wiles (1974) p. 01)

While he describes his analysis as a 'detective story', McAuley titles his appendix, dealing with sources and methods as "The Reconstruction of Soviet Earnings and income distribution". He further notes that 'Soviet sources provide graphs, histograms, or more often frequency polygons, from which all numerical information has been removed... The graphical material is often badly printed.' (McAuley (1979), p. 353). His work "involves a large amount of detective work and some guesstimation" (McAuley (1979),p.06).

4.5.5 So it is obvious that our discussion of distribution of social produce would be very sketchy.⁷² We shall be focussing our attention on (a) distribution of social consumption expenditure and its impact on inequality of distribution (b) share of 'top' of Soviet hierarchy in social produce. However before we do this, there is a minor point to be made.

4.5.6 Irrespective of concept of income used, one would expect that as building of communist society proceeds, inequality of distribution would decline consistently. However there is some evidence that this has not been the case. Periods of 'equalisation' have been followed by widening of 'wage differentials' while immediate post-revolutionary period saw drastic reduction in income inequality, Stalin era saw widening of wage differentials. Period after that has also witnessed similar fluctuations.

Table 4.17 gives the decile ratios of earnings (not the family incomes) of all 'workers and employees' (i.e. excluding collective farm peasantry) for selected years⁷³.

Table 4.17 : Decile ratio of earnings of all workers and employees in the USSR in selected year

Year	1946	1956	1964	1966	1968	1972	1976
Decile Ratio	7.24	4.44	3.69	3.26	2.83	3.10	3.35

Source : Soviet study cited by Nove, Alec (1982) p.286.

Table 4.17 shows that income inequality which declined till 1968 has risen from 1968 onwards. In fact evidence from other STEs also shows that there has not been a unidirectional decline in income inequality. In a recent study pertaining to STEs (other than USSR) it has been pointed out that "inequalities of distributions of wage and salary earners do not exhibit monotonic increasing or decreasing trends but have fluctuations"⁷⁴.

Another study on distribution of earnings in all state sectors (except agriculture) of Hungary showed that dispersion was more pronounced in 1974 than in pre-reform year of 1966 (Flakierski, p. 19).

Similarly decile ratio of distribution of household income, including social benefits in cash but not in kind,

on per capita basis showed similar results. (See Table 4.18).

Table 4.18 : Distribution of household income including social benefits in cash but excluding those in kind; on per capita basis, in Hungary.

Year	1962	1967	1972
Decile ratio	5.8	4.6	5.0

Source : Flakierski, p. 23

So we find that development of socialism has not been accompanied by persistent decline in income inequality, as one would have expected⁷⁵.

4.6.7 Let us now see how social welfare/consumption expenditure is distributed. Social welfare expenditure has two components. One component is for provision of certain goods and services, which enter into everyone's consumption basket at collective level. These include education, medical services, sports, entertainment and cultural services etc. Second component of social welfare expenditure is incurred to meet collectively certain extra-ordinary expenses of individuals. This is in the nature of social security. Some elements of social security may also be differentiated on the lines of wage differentiation. However, on the whole, one would expect that distribution of social welfare expenditure

would reduce the inequality arising out of distribution of earnings.

Inequality inherent in socialist distribution principle-to each according to his work - is at best a necessary evil that follows from low level of productive forces. (Later in this chapter we show that it is not even necessary). Hence in a classless, harmonious society one would expect that certain basic and unavoidable human needs are satisfied equally and adequately so that necessary but 'evil' consequence of low level of productive forces is minimized. It is in view of this that we expect that in STEs distribution of social welfare expenditure would counteract inequality arising out of distribution of earnings.

4.5.72 Let us find out if this is the case in the USSR. Table 4.19 gives the results of four plant level surveys. It shows that although non-cash receipts of bottom income group tended to be highest yet this was not sufficient to offset the tendency of cash receipts to increase with earnings. Table 4.20 which gives earnings and receipts from public funds for 1960 also shows the same tendency. In fact Table 4.20 shows that not only cash receipts, but even subsidized and free services also benefit those with higher earnings more than they benefit those with lower earnings.

Table 4.19 : Earnings and receipts from public funds in roubles per month per capita for 1956, for some enterprises in the USSR

Sample No.	"E"	Upto 70	70-80	80-90	90-110	110-130	Above 130
1	"TR"	14.2	7.1	8.1	6.0	8.3	11.1
2	"E"	Upto 20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-70	Above 70
	"C"	1.6	3.0	3.2	3.2	4.3	6.1
	"NC"	6.7	6.1	5.2	4.2	4.2	3.1
	"TR"	8.3	9.1	8.4	7.4	8.5	9.2
3	"E"	10-30		30-50	50-70	Above 70	
	"C"	2.9		2.9	4.5	4.6	
	"NC"	5.5		4.3	4.6	4.2	
	"TR"	8.4		7.2	9.1	8.8	
4	"E"	Upto 50	50-83.3	83.3-116.7		Above 116.7	
	"TR"	11.1	7.5	7.0		7.8	

Source : Soviet studies cited in McAuley, pp. 91-92

Notes : "E" refers to earnings of head of the household.
 "C" refers to cash receipts from State
 "NC" refers to non-cash receipts from State
 "TR" refers to total receipts from State

Table 4.20 : Per capita receipts from public funds at different levels of per capita money income in roubles per month for 1960

Category of receipt	Per capita money income			
	Less than 35	35-45	45-65	Above 65
Cash receipts from state	2.5	4.9	3.7	4.4
Subsidized services	2.0	1.8	2.8	5.7
Free services	7.7	7.2	6.8	4.7
Total receipts	12.2	13.9	13.3	14.8

Source : Soviet study cited in Yanowitch, p. 94.

Table 4.21 : Composition of social consumption welfare expenditure of the USSR

Year	Expenditure per capita Roubles/Year	Per cent share of the following in total expenditure			
		Holiday pay and pensions	Allowances and sti-pends	Total cash	Non-cash transfer
1950	72.8	31.6	13.0	44.6	55.4
1960	128.5	37.7	11.7	49.4	50.6
1974	330.8	40.6	11.3	51.9	48.1

Source : Soviet documents cited in Yanowitch, p. 262.

Table 4.21 gives the composition of social consumption welfare expenditure of the USSR for a number of years. It shows that share of earning-related cash payments i.e. holiday pay and pensions, increased from 31.6% of total in 1950 to 40.6% in 1974. As against this share of non-earning-related cash payments i.e. allowances and stipends, decreased from 13% to 11.3% over the same period. Moreover proportion of non cash transfer payments fell from 55.4% to 48.1% over the same period. We have earlier seen from Tables 4.19 and 4.20 that cash receipts increase with the earnings; so increased share of cash transfer in total social consumption/welfare expenditure can only mean that distribution of social welfare expenditure must have become more unequal over the years.

4.5.73 Tables 4.19 and 4.20 show cash and non-cash transfer payments to different income groups. However for our purpose, classification in terms of Groups I and II or occupational categories would have been more useful. While this information is not available for the USSR, we do have some data for Hungary. In Tables 4.22 and 4.23 we give distribution of social benefits in kind for Hungary. These tables show that intellectuals (part of which constitutes Group I) benefit more from social welfare expenditure than any other category. Besides this quantitative advantage that intellectuals have in disbursement of social benefits,

Table 4.22 : Per capita utilization of some major social benefits in kind by major population groups as percentage of per capita benefits accruing to workers in 1969 (Hungary)

Category of social consumption good/service	Workers	Peasants	Intellectuals	Total population
Health service	100	82	110	105
Social services	100	64	109	85
Of this: nurseries	100	35	112	73
Education	100	90	144	99
Of this: Kindergartens	100	76	114	85
Higher education	100	74	617	193
Culture, sports	100	54	166	93
Others	100	17	206	93
Of this: - Rent subsidy	100	14	292	115
Canteen meal contribution	100	14	134	72
Total	100	73	140	100

Source: Hungarian Study in Elteto & Lang, p. 309.

Table 4.23 : Social benefits in kind per capita for households by social stratum in 1972 (workers = 100), (Hungary)

Category of benefits	Workers	Peasants	Non-manual workers	Total
Health	100	81.7	105.9	102.6
Education	100	98	140.9	99.7
Food Subsidies	100	25.8	156.6	87.7
Other benefits	100	57.0	203.9	116.5
Total	100	81.1	138.8	102.8

Source: Flakierski, p. 28.

they perhaps have qualitative advantages also. McAuley writes that "there are reasons to believe that the Soviet system suffers from some systematic inequalities (i.e. rich get better services)". (McAuley (1979), p. 287).

4.5.74 We will close our discussion of distribution of social consumption/welfare expenditure by quoting conclusions of some of the scholars who have studied this aspect.

A study pertaining to some STEs, concludes that "the inequalities of per capita distributions (which includes transfer payments) are often greater or are more as less the same as inequalities of wage and salary distributions". (Debroy, B.)

McAuley, on whose work we have relied a great deal in this section, concludes that Soviet System continues "to exclude some of the poorest members of the population from most of the benefits available to the more affluent" (McAuley (1979), p. 284). He also notes that 'transfer payments...reinforce rather than offset the primary distribution of income' (McAuley (1979), p. 261.)

4.5.81 Next what about the level of material welfare of top of Soviet hierarchy? Information available in this regard is very scanty and is of 'anecdotal' type. Following discussion is based on Matthews (1975) and Connor (pp. 248-259).⁷⁶

In the words of Medvedev, a distinguished Soviet scholar, "the disgraceful system of packet, was introduced in the higher state and party institutions. Each month almost every high official would receive an envelope or packet containing a large sum often much higher than the salary ... and (these) were kept secret from the rank, and file officials at the institution" (Medvedev, p. 540). One may argue that these extra payments were in keeping with socialist distribution principle. However if this is so then why were they kept secret?

Another practice often mentioned in Western literature is regarding special/restricted outlets for consumer

goods and services. It is said that these shops sell prized Soviet and Western consumer goods at very cheap rates. At some of the highly restricted stores payment can only be made either in 'special roubles' or in foreign currency and entrance is by 'special cards'. As some of these special outlets are accessible to Westerners and diplomats also, one can believe that they do exist. However the Western reports about extent and scale of their operations may be exaggerated.

It may be argued that, due to general scarcity of consumer goods, it is imperative that these special arrangements be made so that those who are well-paid according to socialist distribution principle have adequate spending outlets. Otherwise wage differentiation may be meaningless.

As against this we must consider that such special outlets, special holiday resorts, exclusive housing and other such facilities result in different life styles, different 'interaction circles' (we shall come to it later on) etc. i.e. they result in 'social differentiation' and 'exclusive group' formation⁷⁷. Besides, if provision of such special facilities enters into 'planning calculations' in a crucial way then it would be all the more difficult to justify these privileges. For example, if these special facilities require import of consumer durables, as they perhaps do, then, in view of Soviet Union's well-known

'dislike' for trade with capitalist countries, provision of such facilities is difficult to justify.

However our main objection against special provisions is their secretive nature. In a classless society with harmonious social relations one would not expect such secrecy.

4.5.82 However, how reliable is the Western information in this regard? Following passage from a Hungarian journal tends to confirm the existence of extremely rich category.

"There exists, however, a stratum drawing amounts for higher than could be reasonably spent at least legitimately - on personal consumption or on individual or family investments serving consumption. The consequences are spendthrift consumption and investments, evasion of the provisions of law, and the spreading of such forms of use which cause damage to the whole of national economy".
(K. Szikra (1980), p. 81).

As if this was not enough of a surprise, author goes on to suggest that consumption opportunities be further extended e.g. "... a wider choice of products related to home culture and of services helping the intelligent spending of leisure time ...", be provided and 'private insurance' be introduced (ibid, p. 85). Besides these it is suggested that those with high earnings should be encouraged to invest these earnings in productive assets i.e. 'joint sector' be introduced (ibid, p. 85-93).

In view of this, one can say that perhaps western accounts of existence of extreme riches are not too exaggerated.

4.5.83 There is yet another aspect of distributive mechanism of Soviet system which becomes all the more important in view of the above 'Hungarian problem'.

Main function of income differentiation is to stimulate and provide incentive for 'acting in socially desirable manner' (whatever that be). Some people may point out that because, at the present level of development of productive forces, it is not possible to give each according to his needs, the principle has to be, 'to each according to his work'. However, logically it is wrong to consider that this is the only distributive system that can be adopted if 'to each according to his needs' is not possible. As a 'rationing' principle socialist distribution principle cannot claim to be the only one possible. For example, all social produce meant for current consumption could be distributed 'equally' without regard to work done. So the main function of income differentiation is to provide incentive and reward for "acting in socially desirable manner".

Use of material incentives and increasing reliance on them in STEs has come under fire quite often. We here

concentrate on only one aspect of it. Does the most conscious element-vanguard of Soviet people, members of the Communist Party or at least high level party functionaries - also need material stimulants so that they may act in 'socially desirable manner'? Should it not be that the higher one goes lower should be the need for material stimulants?

Soviet literature often underlines the need to avoid such "voluntaristic" behaviour (Yannowitch, p.25) Why avoid such 'voluntaristic' behaviour? If even in jobs that mainly require political and ideological maturity and sincere commitment to the cause of communism (e.g. party work, trade unions, Komsomols, general administration etc.) material privileges have to be given for acting in "socially desirable manner", then it would perhaps be wishful thinking to expect persons doing such jobs to steer the nation to communism wherein they would loose these special privileges. After all,

"Nobody can be paid enough to be better off without taking a bribe than he would be if he were to take bribe" (K. Szikra (1980), p.84).

Moreover if such a 'voluntaristic' behaviour is not 'proper' then why did 'communist' specialists receive less salary than bourgeois specialist (in the USSR and for the same work) in immediate post-revolutionary period? (Cliff, pp. 55-6). Further, why did the highest party

functionaries, but for some 'functional extras', live the same life as everyone else in pre-revolutionary period? (For example, see Lenin's biography by Shub).

4.5.9 In this section, we have provided some evidence to show that (a) inequality in the distribution of earnings has not consistently declined, even in post-world-war-II period, (b) distribution of social welfare expenditure is such that Group I benefits more than Group II, (c) share of 'top' of Soviet hierarchy in social produce is excessive. We have argued that all this does not go well with 'classlessness' viewpoint.

4.61 Next, as pointed out in Section 4.43 some scholars assert that differences in the position of different social categories in Soviet system of social production do not lead to other social distinctions; hence they argue that Group I and Group II are not classes.

In Section 4.5 we have shown that different position in the system of social production does lead to differences in share of social produce. Presently we shall see if differential position of Group I and II in economic sphere leads to other significant social distinctions or not.

In Chapter II we showed that differences in 'mode of life' (i.e. dress, value pattern, cultural pursuits, etc.)

are an important manifestation of class division. Further, class division also results in separation of 'interaction circles' i.e. outside the work-place capitalist and workers not only 'live differently' but they also 'live with different persons'.

4.62.1 Hence, firstly we shall see whether in the USSR choice of friends and spouse is dictated by social origin and occupational status? This question is not as ridiculous and trivial as it appears. It is understandable that a poet is likely to have another poet as a friend: a sportsman would like another sportsman (or sportswoman). It should be equally obvious that Group I and Group II cannot live mutually exclusive and segregated lives and still share the same vision of life, and same interests. Marriage and friendship are two main aspects of social interaction outside the workplace. Hence the importance of aforesaid question.

4.62.2 Table 4.24 gives the distribution of wives across different occupational categories for husbands in given occupation. While for Czechoslovakia and Hungary data is from national surveys, it is from smaller samples for the USSR and Poland (see Connor p. 270 for details). Table 4.24 shows that male workers and peasants tend to marry women from their own category. Very small percentage of male workers marry women from 'elite' category. Percentage of elite men marrying women workers is very small in the case of Hungary and Poland. However, percentage of 'elite'

Table 4.24*

(Figures: In per cent)

Occupation of Husband/ Country	Occupation of wife			
	Elite	Routine non- manual	Worker	Peasant
<u>Elite</u>				
Czechoslovakia	38.2	28.6	30.5	2.7
Hungary	16.0	56.9	16.0	11.0
Poland	48.2	48.2	3.6	-
USSR	38.2	30.9	26.6	4.3
<u>Routine Non-manual</u>				
Czechoslovakia	21.7	37.6	37.6	3.1
Hungary	3.6	52.9	32.9	10.6
Poland	11.1	71.2	17.7	-
USSR	7.7	53.3	27.7	11.3
<u>Worker</u>				
Czechoslovakia	9.7	14.6	67.8	7.9
Hungary	0.8	10.5	50.3	38.5
Poland	1.0	23.0	76.0	-
USSR	4.9	17.5	65.8	11.8
<u>Peasant</u>				
Czechoslovakia	5.6	6.2	38.8	49.4
Hungary	0.0	0.0	3.0	97.0
USSR	1.4	4.3	7.3	87.0

Source: Cited in Connor, p. 271. Data pertains to different years, varying between 1962-1966.

* It is not clear whether husbands married to non-working woman have been excluded from the sample or all men were married to working women.

men from Czechoslovakia and the USSR marrying women workers is more than 25%.

However Table 4.24 does not take out the influence of structural factors. Due to different sex composition of different occupational categories, men from an occupational category may not be able to marry women from the same occupational category and have to resort to 'heterogamous' marriage. If influence of such structural factors is excluded then it was found that 82.79% of Hungarians who could have had heterogamous marriage (i.e. could marry outside their own occupational category) in fact had homogamous marriage. Corresponding figures for the USSR was 71.20% for, Poland 77.43% and for Czechoslovakia 56.55% (See Connor, p. 275 for details).

4.62.3 Is choice of friends also influenced by their occupational status? A Soviet study reported that 79% of specialists had other specialists as friends while only 10% had workers as friends. Further 73% of workers had other workers as their friends and 21% workers listed specialists as their friends⁷⁸.

Similarly, a Polish study observed that 72.4% of intelligentsia mentioned other intelligentsia as their closest friends but only 3.9% had friends among skilled workers. While 80.3% of semiskilled workers mentioned other manual workers as their friends, only 9.1% named

nonmanual workers as their friends and only 1.5% named intelligentsia as their closest friends⁷⁹.

4.62.4 So our discussion on choice of spouse and friends suggests that there is segregation of interaction circles of Group I and Group II.

6.63 Differences in Life Styles : 'Life Style' is a very wide term. It includes eating and dressing habits, leisure activity, value system and so on. Here we shall refer to differences between Group I and Group II in some of these aspects.⁸⁰

6.63.1 Yanowitch basing his judgement on Soviet studies which excluded extremely rich and extremely poor respondents had the following to say about position of consumer durables:

"Evidence from a variety of such studies suggests that certain types of consumer durables were more or less uniformly distributed among these broad occupational groups in the late 1960's and early 1970's, at least within given urban communities. This common core of goods included items like sewing machines, radios and television sets. Substantial inequalities appeared, however in the possession of other items particularly equipment designed to aid housework: Washing machines, vaccum cleaners, refrigerators" (Yanowitch p. 43. Emphasis added. Also see Table 4.25).

Table 4.25 : Ownership of some consumer durables in the USSR
(Sub-population Survey)

	% of manual workers having	% of technical specialists having
Refrigerators	20	56
Washing machines	57	82
Vaccum cleaners	11	37

Source : Soviet study in Yanowitch, p.43.

Moreover, this kind of inequality was not merely due to differences in income. In the view of Yanowitch "The fact is that manual and non-manual strata - particularly when the latter category is confined to employees with higher education - are often distinct cultural groups whose differing value systems are reflected in differential patterns of consumption of goods other than "necessities" even when the income levels are essentially similar". (Emphasis added. Yanowitch p. 43). Similarly in the case of Czechoslovakia, when ownership of a particular durable good was correlated with various variables like occupational status of household, income or education, correlation coefficient was highest for occupational status. This was true in the case of refrigerators, telephone and vacuum cleaners (Connor p. 289-90).

4.63.2 Next let us see how people in different occupational categories use their time. In this regard we have just one study to go by. Hungarian Central Statistical Office conducted Time Budget Survey in 1976-77 covering 7000 adults. We shall be listing some of its salient results published in the preliminary report on this study.

(a) Table 4.26 gives for some social categories of persons duration of work on main employment and total contracted and committed time. Total contracted and committed time includes time spent on the main occupation, other income supplementing activities, household activities and transportation time.

Table 4.26 : Part of the results of Hungarian Time Budget Survey 1976-77

Social category (male only)	Time spent per day in main employment hour and minutes	Contracted and committed time per day. hour and minutes
Professionals	7.45	8.17
Managers	8.03	8.44
Simple non-manuals	8.05	9.02
Skilled workers	8.26	9.20
Semi-skilled workers	8.25	9.28
Unskilled workers	8.42	9.40

Source: Andorka & Falussy, p. 248,263.

On the basis of Table 4.26, study concludes that "...social groups having lower earnings work longer hours for their earnings" (Andorka & Falussy p. 248.)

(b) "Reading of books proved to be clearly the socially most differentiated home-centered cultural activity". However time spent on viewing television and listening to radio does not show strata-specific variations. As against this a "rather considerable social differentiation was found with sports activities, excursions and with open air walking. All these are professional stratum activities and their frequency diminishes as we go down". Similar is the situation as regards time spent on socializing (op.cit., p. 267-9)

6.63.3 There are many other studies which study some other aspects of 'life style' such as number of friends one has, kind of books one reads, forms of entertainment etc. Some of these are reported in Allardt & Wesolowski Chapters VIII, XI and XII; Connor, p. 292-297; Heller p, 284-292. We shall only report some of the differences observed in life style of Group I and Group II.

(a) Table 4.27, based on a national sample survey of Soviet Urban adults in 1965 gives percentage of members of various social categories undertaking a specific activity.

Table 4.27 : (USSR, National Sample Survey on use of free time, 1965)

Social Category	Number of those who undertook following activity as % of total number in their social category		
	Political study several times a week	Self-directed study several times a week	Night School & Correspondence study daily
Intelligentsia	67	53	18
Employees	56	37	15
Workers	38	38	30

Source : Soviet study cited in Heller, p. 289.

(b) Similarly it has been pointed out that :

"Five important types of deviance seem to be inversely associated with social level. Crime delinquency, drunkenness petty theft of public property, illegitimacy and religious activity". (Heller, p. 290).

Hungarian Association of Sociology was also told in its 1981 Conference that "deviant behaviour - suicide, alcoholism, and crime - are more frequent in unskilled layers" (Huszar, p. 172). And classification of children who come to institution for children under state tutelage shows that "disproportionately large numbers are from families with unskilled manual occupations and low incomes". (Huszar, p. 170).

(c) It is pointed out that "there is variation by social levels in the modes of feeling and styles of expressing emotion". (Hellar, p. 292).

6.63.4 Perhaps each of these differences between various social categories in itself might be insignificant. Put together they do imply that various social categories in general and Group I and Group II in particular have distinct and different 'life styles'. It may also be noted that Group I constituents have more of socially valued/desirable attributes and constituents of Group II have more of 'socially inferior' attributes.

6.64.1 Are these differences accompanied by differences in perception / evaluation of social system too? Given the nature of the problem, it is not surprising that there is very little information available pertaining to the USSR. We have only one survey pertaining to Hungary dealing with this aspect.

6.64.2 This survey was conducted by Social Science Institute of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party which interviewed a group of 649 persons from a plant. It is pointed out that sample was 'section specific' and not representative of the plant. Here we reproduce some of the findings of this study as reported in Horvath.

This study showed that overall about 68% respondents held 'patent inequalities' in Hungary to be clearly smaller than in developed capitalist societies. Moreover about 72% respondents regarded their situation as 'fair'. Notwithstanding this, more than 70% considered difference in income to be 'unjust' and 'too great'; 73% were of the view that '... it is still an important objective' to create social equality and some 90% were of the view that 'there are some who are too well off'. (Horvath, p. 146).

Respondents were also asked to comment on elimination of various kinds of inequalities. Table 4.28 gives the response of various occupational categories. Respondents were also asked to evaluate relationship of their occupational category with other categories.

Study found that "Managers and professionals try to rate as insignificant inequalities in respect of which they are undeniably ahead. Characteristically no managerial stratum exists in their image of society. They indirectly try to emphasise the leading role of the working class. Managers and even professionals prefer to identify themselves with the working class. At the same time they have to protect their "insignificant" financial basis and for this reason a higher proportion of them consider it impossible to eliminate precisely those inequalities which form the essence of their group...Their optimism about

Table 4.28 : Hungary: Response to possibility of elimination of particular kinds of inequality (% of affirmative answers from the group)

Sr. No.	Type of Social Inequality *	Managers	Professionals	Non-manual workers	Junior Executives	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total
01	Dependence of child's chance on parents	76	72	73	73	68	65	71	70
02	Good/Bad circumstances	63	77	62	67	68	52	59	64
03	Social class	84	78	66	61	52	53	61	62
04	Easy/hard work	47	49	44	41	30	44	49	42
05	Power	35	41	40	39	39	38	43	39
06	Incomes of managers and staff	31	35	19	23	31	24	25	27

Source : Horvath, p.149.

* Some of the rows have been deleted. Report does not elaborate various types of social inequalities.

equality prevails in other areas". (Horwath, p. 148)⁸¹ .

Opinion of non-manuals and junior executives is that "social inequalities have always existed, at most only the form of inequalities might change". "They apparently see injustice only in the fact that some are better-off than they are, but they blame the individuals for being worse off". They believe that : 'The only way for an individual to improve his situation is by adjusting to existing hierarchies". They are also most indecisive regarding their social standing. (op.cit. p.149,151).

Of the skilled workers 36% argued that inequalities have gradually diminished in the past 30 years but 41% assert that social inequalities have only taken different forms. About 50% thought that 'capacity to adjust' is an important determinant of their status. Very few hope that difference in social classes ^{would} be diminished. Some of them said that 'we might be already considerably better off with regard to equality if managers really wanted us to be' (opp. cit. p. 180). Similarly semi-skilled workers are of the view that "'inequalities' have existed, exist and will exist at all times" and "there is nothing (that) an individual can do" about them (opp.cit. p. 151).

"The unskilled workers view of society is the bitterest of all. According to them inequalities ... are no smaller ... than in capitalist societies. They hold

powers inequalities to be 'too great'". They consider themselves to be a 'disadvantaged group'. This is in spite of the fact that their perception of legally attainable maximum income and satisfactory income is much less than the perception of other categories (op. cit. p.152).

Above passages are self-explanatory and quite clearly show differences in perception of different social categories. It may be useful to repeat that this survey was conducted by a Party forum. It would have been instructive to compare the results of this survey with some similar study from a capitalist economy. Though we have not been able to do this, yet one may hazard to say that differences probably would not have been significant.⁸²

4.65 Discussion of material inequality, 'differences in life style' 'interaction circles' and perception of social system shows that position in the Soviet system of social production does 'determine other attributes of social position and forms of social consciousness.' In short we have shown that respective position of Group I and II in the Soviet system of production does manifest itself in various other socially meaningful distinctions. Hence Wesolowski's assertion about 'decomposition of social attributes' is open to question. (See Wesolowski (1979), p.113).

However, before we conclude it would be useful to critically look at the evidence offered by Wesolowski and

others to back their assertion about 'decomposition of social attributes'. Before we do that, there is some more evidence to back 'class division' viewpoint.

4.7.1 Revolutionary changes in the system of social production, according to Marx, would be accompanied by changes in 'superstructure' too. According to Soviet scholars, movement from classdivided society to classless society has resulted in emergence of a 'new socialist man'. 'New socialist man' is said to differ from his counterpart under capitalist economies, in numerous ways. We shall comment on only few of these. Something akin to following is commonly found in soviet literature dealing with work attitudes.⁸³

For Soviet worker, work is not a drudgery that it is for a worker in capitalist system. It is a part of his being, fulfilment of his personality. And this is evident from the fact that material rewards associated with the job are not a main consideration. It is creativity associated with the job, importance to socialist economy of the job that counts.

This kind of attitude wherein importance to socialist economy is what counts, it is pointed out, cannot exist unless workers are their own masters. Hence, it is argued that class division viewpoint is simply wrong.

Aforesaid assertion is sought to be confirmed by concrete sociological research. Shubkin reports that in a survey it was found that high wages were a consideration for only 2.0% of respondents. (Shubkin, p. 90).

If this is so and if material incentives have such a minor role then why have wage differentiation at all? It is difficult to accept this finding as true. In fact another study in the same book reports that for 61% of the workers pay was an important consideration. In fact, it was the second most important consideration, next only to 'content of work' (i.e. whether it requires ingenuity or not). (Osipov, p. 114)

A Polish study also corroborates this. Table 4.29 reports the results of a Polish national sample survey and it shows that even for those who, on the basis of their political views could be called 'Communist', good pay was the most important consideration in choice of job.

4.7.2 Secondly, unless social, national and community interest come before personal and 'narrower' interests there cannot be real socialisation of means of production. In fact soviet scholars assert that for Soviet citizens society, nation and community does come before self. However a Polish survey, in which adults employed in socialist sector were asked to comment on various types of dishonesty, found that contrary was true. Table 4.30 gives the results of this survey. It clearly shows that dishonesty of

Table 4.29 : (Based on Polish national sample survey;
no date)

Political inclination	Reasons for choosing a job (in%)			
	Good pay	Interest-ing job	Social usefulness	Self disting-uishment
Communist	34	25	20	13
Socialist	41	27	18	7
Democractic	44	29	10	11
Capitalistic	51	30	9	6
None	35	35	13	9
No opinion	42	27	9	9

Source: Farrel, p.268, It does not explain how political inclination was determined.

Table 4.30 : Polish Survey

Type of dishonesty	Condemn %	Depends on circumstances %
1. Doing personal tasks on company time	16	61
2. Riding public transport without paying	39	53
3. Moonlighting on company time (i.e.working for private profit)	41	39
4. Minor thefts at work	56	24
5. Failure to pay rent	61	33
6. Failure to return private loan	85	12
7. Damaging borrowed items from neighbours	92	5

Source: Farrel, p.266.

'private nature' i.e. affecting individuals, is condemned much more than dishonesty of 'public nature' i.e. one affecting society as a whole.

It is perilous to generalize on the basis of just one study. However frequent criticism of second economy (a part of which is illegal) in STEs does lend credibility to the results of Table 4.30.

4.8.1 Let us now return to Section 4.6. In Section 4.6 we showed that differences in position of a group in the Soviet system of social production does manifest itself in various other spheres and on lines similar to any other class-divided society.

In this section we propose to review the evidence offered by Wesolowski and others to show that 'status decomposition' (i.e. 'economic position' is not significantly related to other social attributes) has taken place in STEs. Finally, we provide some examples from Soviet and Hungarian literature wherein existence of a 'disadvantaged class' is tacitly accepted.

4.8.2 Let us take Wesolowski's evidence first. Table 4.31 gives the position of various occupational categories on two hierarchies - material benefit and prestige. This forms the main basis of his 'decomposition thesis'. According to him, Table 4.31 shows that "Occupations belonging

Table 4.31 : Sample survey of Warsaw inhabitants

Hierarchy according to material benefit		Hierarchy according to social prestige	
Occupational category	Average * points	Occupational category	Average* points
1. Private sector	1.81	Intelligentsia	1.74
2. Intelligentsia	2.35	Skilled workers	2.33
3. Skilled worker	2.40	Private Sector	2.81
4. Non-manual employees	4.3	Non-manual employees	3.17
5. Unskilled workers	4.12	Unskilled workers	4.06

Source: Wesolowski (1979) p. 118.

* Calculation of Average Points has not been explained. Perhaps, it is average of respondents ranking.

to the same group were differently located on income and prestige scale" (Wesolowski (1979) p. 117). However if private sector which in STEs is a kind of 'outcast' is excluded, Table 4.31, rather than showing 'status decomposition', shows that various occupational categories have same ranks in the two hierarchies.

4.8.3 Another study pertaining to social stratification in Czechoslovakia found that 'complexity' of work' was better explanatory variable for social stratification than

'class position'. (See Manchonin.) This study was conducted in 1967 and nation-wide sample was used. In this study various occupations were classified as follows in decreasing order of complexity of work.

1. Physician-specialist, director of an industrial enterprise, minister, University professor.
2. Engineer, physician, secondary school teacher.
3. Foreman, planning worker in an enterprise, primary school teacher, repair serviceman.
4. Skilled worker, policeman, secretary.
5. Semi-skilled worker, co-operative farm worker, shop assistant, taxi driver.
6. Unskilled worker, porter, street-sweeper.

This classification is said to have given 'better fit' than division based on following 'four class positions'.

1. Non-manual
2. Worker
3. Co-operative farmer
4. Private.

Doesn't six fold classification based on 'complexity of work' look like a sophisticated extension of four-fold class division? If non-manuals were to be divided into routine non-manual and specialists, class division scheme would perhaps, give as good 'fit' as six fold division based on 'complexity of work'.

4.8.4 Hence we can say that 'decomposition thesis' is hardly proved (and perhaps the converse is proved) by the evidence provided by its protagonists. Perhaps following conclusion of a Hungarian study is in better accord with facts.

"The differences in living standards globally form a hierarchy determined by occupational groups but a more detailed analysis shows that certain dimensions of this hierarchy are not entirely parallel" (Horvath pp. 146)

4.8.5 Finally we quote passages from Soviet and Hungarian scholars wherein our contention that decomposition of status has not taken place is corroborated. In the words of a Soviet scholar:

"The social positions occupied by different strata and classes in the socialist society can be, in principle, represented in the form of a certain hierarchy in which some positions are regarded as higher than others. The foundation for the vertical hierarchy of social positions... is the complexity...and responsibility of the work performed, an increase in which is normally accompanied by a rise in required education, increased material rewards and corresponding changes in the mode of life" (Emphasis added. cited in Yanowitch, p.5)

In the words of another Soviet scholar, social

structure consists of 'groups of people unequal in social and economic terms'. Moreover this inequality is seen by him "not only as heritage of capitalism but as being reproduced by socialism". (Emphasis added. cited in Yanowitch p.6).

These excerpts clearly demonstrate that occupational position of a person determined his 'living standard, education, material rewards and mode of life'. In fact if we interpret 'complexity and responsibility of work' as another measure of 'class position' (see 4.8.3 for justification of this interpretation) passages from Soviet scholars cited above amount to tacit acceptance of 'class division' viewpoint.

4.8.6 Such indirect affirmation of existence of classes is also available from another, this time a Hungarian source. Acta Oeconomica Vol. 27 (cf. Huszar (1981)) carries reports and reviews of proceedings of a conference on the investigation of social groups in "multiple-disadvantageous situation". This conference was organised by Hungarian Association of Sociology in 1981. Following discussion is based on this.

A cumulative (or multiple) disadvantageous situation was said to exist "if the linkage of social disadvantages is not compensated by advantages of another type, and cumulation of disadvantages generally impedes the individuals

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A cumulative (or multiple) disadvantageous situation was said to exist "if the linkage of social disadvantages is not compensated by advantages of another type, and cumulation of disadvantages generally impedes the individuals

(and) social groups in satisfying accepted average needs" (Huszar (1981) p. 173. This situation "becomes specially grave if the family cannot surmount it permanently i.e. if after their parents, children also remain in layers in disadvantageous situation". (Huszar (1981) p. 163)

It is pointed out that this situation should not be dealt with separately because "it is the development of society as a whole that has to be considered". This situation should be treated as 'a structural contradiction necessarily concomitant with development of the society' (*ibid*, p.177).

While it is pointed out that the situation 'is to be interpreted in the complex framework of social structure, since cumulative disadvantages may objectively come to form a special layer', (Emphasis added; *ibid.*, p. 173) it is also emphasised that Hungary has no classes (*ibid.* p.178)

This appears to be contradictory. If a group is multiply disadvantaged, and disadvantage is transitive across generations and leads to formation of a special layer in the social structure, should it not be called a class?

As to the solution it is pointed out that it 'depends on the character of the fundamental socio-economic formation (mode of production?)' (p.176). Further "by the development of production relations alone we (will not be)

able to prevent the emergence of disadvantageous (handicapped) situations with significant inhomogeneous layers" (p.178).

Does not it amount to saying that 'solution' requires 'revolutionary' changes in the "character of fundamental socio economic formation"?⁸⁴

As if to emphasise that development of present system would not solve the problems, it is noted that, "Future development of multiple handicapped situations is very difficult to forecast" (op.cit., p. 174). Moreover, solution 'requires from those concerned (i.e. affected) that they raise an active claim to emerging from disadvantageous situation...' (Emphasis added; op.cit., p. 176)

4.8.7 Excerpts cannot convey full flavour of the original articles. However, we hope that in this case they do convey that issue being discussed is existence of a 'multipally disadvantaged (exploited?)' class. And that existence of such a class is sought to be organically linked to functioning of the present Hungarian system (i.e. to Soviet Type Economic System).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 This study has focussed on only one question: Is the USSR (or an STE) a 'classless' society? * Our standard of evaluation of class character of Soviet Union has been Marx's concept of class.

In Chapter II "beginning with most conventional/ 'textbook' definition of class which is rooted in 19th century Capitalism/Europe, we have tried to make explicit, what is mostly implicit in this definition and tried to get rid off what was specific to 19th century Capitalism/ Europe. In this, we were guided by certain well-known, and hopefully non-controversial Marxian propositions regarding modes of production other than Capitalism" (see page 23).

5.1.2 We have pointed out that "many different ownership patterns may arise if the seemingly natural unity between the legal title and the substantive functions is destroyed or if several agents divide up substantive functions (i.e. component rights of ownership) among themselves in different combinations and degrees" (p. 12). In other words, private

* We are considering a society with 'nonantagonistic classdivision' as a classless society. See p.19.

ownership need not always take a particular form.

It has been observed that 'under feudalism, peasant possessed certain instruments of production, yet he did not belong to the class of landlords" (page 15). Hence we defined a class to be "a large group of persons who stand in the same relationship to factors of production i.e. they exercise the same degree of control over factors of production that are equally crucial and important" (page 22).

5.1.3 Some other points relating to Marx's conception of class were also clarified. A person's/group's class position manifests itself in a number of other socially meaningful distinctions (see page 16). While class-consciousness is one such manifestation, it is not essential to objective existence of classes.

Finally we pointed out that number of other (even though implicit) features of classes. Most important of these is the fact that class-affiliation of a person, by and large, remains the same throughout his life and is most likely to be transmitted to his children (page 23).

5.2.1 Having thus grasped, Marx's concept of class, in Chapter III we 'highlight the main issues raised in the discussion of the class character of the USSR'. Soviet viewpoint ignores the possibility of a society retaining 'private' ownership and hence classes (though in different

form) even after abolition of individual ownership. Similarly some critics of Soviet Union, who assert that bureaucracy is the 'sole privileged and commanding stratum which does not engage directly in productive labour but administers, orders, commands, pardons, and punishes,' are of the view that bureaucracy is not a class. Basing our arguments on the understanding that 'private ownership' can take different forms, we found both viewpoints to be untenable.

At this point we may repeat that the only question we try to answer in this study is whether the USSR is a 'class-divided' society or not. Hence in Chapter III we have not gone into the issue of appropriate nomenclature of Soviet system or literature pertaining to 'causes' and 'factors' leading to present 'class character' of the USSR.

5.2.2 Concentrating on our main theme we found that following were the central issues involved (a) "Whether bureaucracy has a different and dominant position (vis-a-vis rest of the society) in the Soviet system of production? Whether mass of peasants and workers normally participate, directly or through other representatives who are under their ultimate control, in the management of the economy or not?"

(b) "Whether dominant position of bureaucrats is, in practice, transferable to their children?"

(c) "Where bureaucracy's dominant position, in the system of social production, is reflected in its different interests mode of life and culture etc?" (see Section 3.6).

5.3.1 While protagonists of different viewpoints regarding class character of the USSR have answered these questions differently, they have not given systematic evidence to support their assertions (see Section 3.6.2). Though non-correspondence between Soviet society and Marx's vision of such society is, by and large, an established fact yet for reasons given earlier (see Section 3.2.3) it cannot be used to reject Soviet viewpoint.

So in Chapter IV we have tried to answer the aforementioned three questions on the basis of information available in English language, both from Western scholars and East European ones.

Extent of paucity of information about Soviet Union would be a revelation for a person not already familiar with this. So we have drawn generously from studies pertaining to other STEs. We found that

(a) Bureaucrats (or Group I in our terminology) mainly managed and regulated the economy and Group II (i.e. workers, peasants and routine non-manual) had very little participation even at the enterprise level. Moreover, in the Party and Soviets also Group I occupied the predominant position (To establish predominance of Group I in the Party and Soviets, we have mainly relied on composition of these at various level.)

(b) Analysis of intergenerational and intragenerational mobility and relative access to education (specially higher education) shows that most of the children of bureaucrats are able to join the ranks of 'bureaucracy' i.e. privileged position of bureaucrats is by and large, transferred to their children.

These two 'facts' suffice to enable us to designate bureaucracy (Group I) a dominant class. (We shall come to reliability and 'basis' of these 'facts' shortly). However, we also found that differential position of two groups has resulted in differences in their life style, consumption patterns, views of Soviet system and segregation of 'interaction circles' (outside work-place).

However most surprisingly and interestingly we found some serious discussion in Soviet and Hungarian literature pertaining to 'multipally disadvantaged' social groups. These articles, in our view, affirm the existence of a 'disadvantaged' class, albeit in different words. (See excerpts in Chapter IV).

5.4.1 But, how reliable is the evidence presented? Is information presented in this study sufficient to conclude that the USSR is a class-divided society and bureaucracy (or Group I) is the exploiting/dominant class that appropriates (at least a part of) surplus produced by Group II?

Information used in this study comes from a number of different books and articles in English language - both by Western and East European Scholars. Most of these books and articles in turn refer to original Soviet/East European sources. While some of the aspects are corroborated by a number of these secondary sources (i.e. English language sources), for others we have relied rather heavily on one or two of them. Further, on a number of points, at times rather crucial, data base is restricted to single or few 'plant' or city level surveys and more after than not, methodological details of the underlying field studies were not available.

Given all these limitations, we have tried to 'hunt' for as much information as possible. Our research or 'search' was restricted to the books and journals available in S.I.S. Library, Pune. Most of our material was collected by June, 1984.

5.4.2 Moreover, our focus has been to show the kind of analysis that needs to be undertaken to determine class character of the STEs and to arrive at conclusions that would have a fairly wide acceptance.

'Weak spots' of our knowledge (and areas requiring further research) are many and become evident as one goes through Chapter IV.

All the same, we may say that 'available' evidence tends to favour "class division" viewpoint of the USSR with Group I (or bureaucracy) as dominant class.

5.5 Lastly it may be pointed out that in this short study we had to sidetrack a number of related, interesting, important but secondary (to our main theme) issues.

For example, we have not answered questions like : Whether Marxian framework is the most appropriate framework for studying Soviet society? Whether failure of classless society to materialize is attributable to specific historic circumstances or individual failures or is it an 'unrealizable' dream? Which is a better model to follow for countries like India - Capitalist or Soviet one? What are the lessons that we may learn from Soviet experience?

In fact at a number of places in this study we pointed out 'trails' which we did not follow up and asked questions which we did not answer. However, we hope that we have provided at least a tentative answer to our main question.

NOTES

- 1 See Beteille. His books/articles deal with various aspects of inequality. See Bibliography for complete details of books/articles.
- 2 International Encyclopedia, Vol. 15, p. 296.
- 3 Concept of class division is elaborated in Chapter II.
- 4 Unless otherwise stated, we use various terms and categories in their most conventional/'text book' meanings and hence we do not elaborate them. Some of these terms are Soviet type economics (STEs), mobility, factors of production, 'inequality'.
- 5 A society with non antagonistic classes would be treated as synonymous with classless society. See Chapters II and III for elaboration.
- 6 Specially see Marx (1978, 1977d, 1977c, 1977b, 1977f, 1975, 1977a, and Engels (1977g)). It may be pointed out that while first two are more theoretical in nature, next two are 'case studies' using the apparatus of Historical Materialism and similarly, rest also vary in nature, scope and year of writing.
- 7 See Cohen, McMurtry, Croix, Shaw, etc. Shaw, for example, writes 'I do not claim to be able to prove my definition'. (p.9).
- 8 Ollman, p. 576. Also see Ossowski, p. 69-89.
- 9 Paranthesis in the original. Lenin, V.I. (1965), Vol. 29, p. 421.
- 10 Emphasis added. Eighteenth Brumaire (Marx (1977c)), p. 479.
- 11 Capital (Marx (1978)), Vol. II, p. 36-37. The context makes it clear that Marx is referring to the 'social' aspect of union of factors of production and not to the material aspect.
- 11a Cohen, p. 63. For a different break up see Holesovsky, p. 41.
- 12 Though we are not going into the question of determinants of cruciality/importance yet we may point out that cruciality may arise out of both, material and social factors.

- 13 See Cohen, p. 72-73. Further, the viewpoint that we are advocating makes it possible to treat 'owners' of 'specialised labour power' as a class apart from workers.
- 14 We have already explained our preference for using 'factors of production' to 'means of production'.
- 15 Last four words" ... and to other classes " have been dropped. Croix, p. 100.
- 16 Also see Ossowski, p. 69-89.
- 17 Hence we treat Soviet model of non-antagonistic classes as equivalent of classless model.
- 18 Fundamentals, p.370. Also see Marx (1977,b,c) for various examples provided by Marx.
- 19 While Cohen (p.73-77), Croix (p.100); Shaw (50-52) hold similar views, there are others e.g. Bendix & Lipset (p.8) McClellan/(p.155) who are of opposite viewpoint. (1972)
- 20 We have not discussed other concepts of class. Those interested may see Ossowski.
- 21 In Chapter IV, we point out that persistence of class affiliation across generations is essential for 'inequalities' to be perceived in terms of class division.
- 22 In fact in Marx's view petty bourgeois politicians, writers etc. belong to bourgeois class because they share the same interests and the same view of life. See Marx (1977c) p. 424.
- 23 As pointed out in Chapter I we will be using terms like STEs/USSR/Soviet Society interchangeably.
- 24 Bellis; Lane, D. (1982), Lane, D. (1970) provide a fairly extensive review of literature pertaining to class character of the USSR.
- 25 See Lane, D. (1970) p. 175-178 for some of the differences
- 26 See Chapter II as well as 3.3 in this chapter.
- 27 Engels (1977 g), p. 151 Emphasis added.
- 28 This non-correspondence has been used to prove that October revolution could not be socialist revolution. We shall revert to it later on.

- 29 Lenin (1968), p. 343.
- 30 Marx (1977e) p. 189.
- 31 Based on Civil War in France, Marx (1977e), pp.167-189, 200.
- 32 For example on each one being "a fisherman, painter literary critic and factory worker" see Macellan, D. (1972). p. 140,217,224.
- 33 Engels (1977g), p. 147. Cliff (p.104) cites Marx to same effect.
- 34 Fundamentals (p.385-9) provides a representative summary of Soviet view on these question.
- 35 See Lane, D. (1982), p.09.
- 36 The underlined part of the argument is vital to classlessness viewpoint. However number of times it is overlooked.
- 37 Number of studies pertaining to various forms of inequality and stratification have been undertaken in a number of East European countries. These studies have shown a good deal of inequality in various spheres. However, it is argued that unlike capitalism, in STEs ranking of an individual in one hierarchy is not correlated with his ranking in other hierarchies. Hence existence of inequality does not lead to class divisions. We shall deal with this aspect later. However it must be noted that if this assertion is verified by empirical evidence then "classlessness"/becomes plausible.
viewpoint
- 38 According to Trotsky, "Socialization of the means of production established by the proletarian revolution means that USSR is a proletarian state". (Trotsky 248; emphasis added). Important point to note is that for Trotsky, it is not merely socialisation of the means of production that ensures proletarian character of the USSR. Manner in which socialisation has taken place is also important (Bellis points out this aspect on p.102). However most often even Trotsky seems to ignore this rider (see Bellis, p.61).
- 39 Kuron, J. & Medzelewski in Lane, D. (1982), p.130.
- 40 Bukharin cited in Cliff p.114. Also see Lenin, (1967) p. 46.

- 41 Besides low level of productive forces and other objective factors he attributed degeneration to subjective factors also. He considered abolition of faction formation (which was accepted in pre-revolutionary days) in post-revolutionary period as one of the indicators of degeneration. See Trotsky, p. 96.
- 42 Lenin and Bukharin also accepted that in immediate post-revolutionary period the USSR was being administered with the help of people belonging to the class which revolution had over-thrown and who operated against proletarian interests. Further it was observed that even proletarian origins of bureaucracy are no guarantee against its turning into a new class. It is unfortunate that for want of space, we are unable to review Lenin & Bukharin's criticism of the USSR in immediate post-revolutionary period and their apprehensions about its future course. Bellis Ch. 2 & 3 deals with this aspect.
- 43 Mandel, E. cited in Bellis p. 229.
- 44 Though we have not been able to go through, due to non-availability, number of original and recent works, yet we think we are not far off the mark in this generalization because some of the prominent scholars e.g. Sweezy, Nove, Brus, Rakowski, Djilas etc. in their major works dealing with class character of the USSR have not undertaken necessary empirical analysis. Perhaps Bettelheim is attempting such concrete analysis but first volume of his "Class Struggles in the USSR 1917-1923" does not contain this information.
- 45 Soviet source cited by Hough (1976a), p.6. Oblast and raion are Russian terms for certain territorial units.
- 46 See Lane (1970), Ch. 10.
- 47 Yanowitch (p.150-2) & Farrel (p.267) cite number of other such studies that show similar results.
- 48 See Yanowitch, Chapter 5 for illustrations.
- 49 Yanowitch also reports that a new and democratic organisational set-up on a grain farm was discontinued in spite of the fact that its performance exceeded the norms. Yanowitch, p. 157-60.

- 50 See Rigby, Schapiro, Hill & Frank, Farell, Nogee, Kerblay etc.
51. However, it may be pointed out that Hill & Frank (1981), p. 72, quote Soviet sources to the effect that criticism and control tend to 'go from above, directed towards lower organs' rather than in the opposite direction. In view of this it may not be correct to say that ultimate control of Party and the USSR lies with masses.
- 52 'Aktive' category consists of Party members exercising managerial responsibilities inside the Party machinery or in enterprises or institutions and occupying positions reserved for nomenklatura in mass organisations to which they have been elected on Party's nomination" (Kerblay, p.249). And apparatus refers to full-time salaried employees of the Party who are also party members (Kerblay p. 249). Nomenklatura refers to the practice whereby certain specified positions in various institutions are filled by/approved by relevant Party Committee. (See Hill & Frank (1981) p. 86).
- 53 Age profile of 1980 Politbureau members corroborates it (Hill & Frank (1981), p. 150.)
- 54 Data for 1952 to 1961 from Farrel, p. 113; for 1966 from Nogee, p. 118; for 1971 and 1981 from Kerblay p. 263. In fact, for some of the years KGB had more members in C.C. than Trade Unions.
- 55 See Schwartz (1967), p.31 and Lane (1982), p. 119.
- 56 Constitution of the USSR cited in Lane (1970) p. 143. For details of structure, elections etc. of Soviets see Lane (1970) Ch. 5. While at the highest level, Supreme Soviet, is akin to parliamentary body, at lower levels, Soviets are (more or less) executive in nature.
For want of space, we have been unable to review Lenin's views on Soviets. See Bellis for a summary view.
- 57 Reference is to institution of nomenklatura. See F.N. 52.
- 58 Cliff p. 74-75 cites instances of election results being declared before counting began and other such practices.

- 59 Jacobs p. 70. In 1969, 2070539 candidates were elected.
- 60 Jacobs p. 70,76. Mean number of registered electors per constituency for 'Poselok' and 'Selo' was 69 and 47 respectively.
- 61 Yanowitch p. 58, Sweezy (1980) p. 27 also emphasise it.
- 62 In words of S.M. Lipset "The term social mobility refers to the process by which individuals move from one position to another in society - position which by general consent have been given specific hierarchical values" cited in Yanowitch p. 102.
- 63 Soviet Sociologist VN Shubkin cited in Yanowitch p. 108.
- 64 Boudon. (specially Ch. I); Goodman, Leo A.; Yasuda may be seen for concept, measurement and segregation of two types of mobility etc.
- 65 Yanowitch p. 111. Difference in proportion of specialists originating from specialist categories in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 is due to the fact that former refers to all specialists and later only to elite section of specialists.
- 66 All the information provided in 4.41.5 and 4.41.6 refers to gross mobility i.e. includes structural as well as circulation mobility. Apparently no attempt has been made to separate the two. However keeping in mind changes that have taken place in structure of labour force (see Table 4.14) it is but natural that structural mobility would form a significant part of this mobility. In any case even gross figures show great deal of continuity across generations for Group I. And our main interest is in this aspect of mobility.
- 67 See Yanowitch p. 60 for reference to Soviet literature.
- 68 Providing better kindergarten facilities to children from workers families could be one such step. Table 4.22 gives the distribution of kindergarten facilities among various categories.
- 69 See Yanowitch Chap. 3 for references.
- 70 McAuley (1979) p. 10,20-22, etc; discusses these aspects in detail.

- 71 See McAuley (1979) pp. 50-55 for this part.
- 72 See Wiles (1974); Wiles and Markowski, and McAuley (1979) for details.
- 73 Decile ratio is the ratio of earnings of bottom of top 10% to the earnings of top of bottom 10%, i.e. it is the ratio of earnings of 90th person to that of 10th person's earnings, ranked in increasing order.
- 74 Debroy, B. forthcoming book on Income Inequality in East Europe.
- 75 In passing we may note that Wiles and Markowski, and Connor p. 217 find STEs to be more egalitarian than Capitalist economies.
- 76 See Matthews (1975) footnote on p.1 for sources and reliability of information used by the author.
- 77 Sweezy (p.22-26) paints a vivid picture of 'social differentiation' that emerges following the introduction of private cars as a mode of transport.
- 78 Connor p. 294-5. Connor comments that high figure of 21% may be due to inclusion of patron-client relations among friendship ties.
- 79 Connor p. 295. Allardt & Wesolowski p. 343 also give similar results for Poland.
- 80 We have not been able to make use of Horvath, Zsuzsa. This article provides similar evidence for Hungary.
- 81 A Soviet study also concluded that response to democratisation of functioning at enterprise level varied similarly, See Section 4.32.4.
- 82 A Polish Study regarding perception of causes of conflict and social division found that division between rich and poor and managers and managed were most important causes of social division. Apparently in contradiction to it, division based on 'social origins' was considered to be the least important cause. However it appears that, due to historical reasons, term 'social origin' in Poland refers to 'nobility and rest' division. This is the interpretation

given to social origins in Kazimierz Slomezynski
et al. p. 132. See Allardt & Wesolowski p. 349.

- 83 For example see Zdravomyslov & Yadov.
- 84 It is clarified that "... (these) social problems should not be attributed to the reformes (of 60's) of the system of economic control and management, without it they would be greater, in all probability than at present" Huszar (1981), p. 180.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

N o t e s

- a) Underlined items have been 'referred to' in the text.
- b) * marked items are useful but have not been cited in the text.
- c) ✕ marked items were not available for use, but seem to be very important.
- d) ** marked items are 'related' to present problem but are not very useful.
- e) ✕✕ marked items are important.

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