

FACTORS IN POLITICAL CHANGE IN USSR DURING
1917 TO 1940 - A CASE STUDY OF INTELLIGENTSIA

FACTORS IN POLITICAL CHANGE IN USSR DURING 1917 TO 1940
- A CASE STUDY OF INTELLIGENTSIA

By

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PREFACE

P_R_E_F_A_C_E

Intelligentsia in any modern society constitutes a significant factor of socio-political transformation and plays a vital role in the grafting of social consciousness among the people. In Russia, after the October Revolution of 1917, the intelligentsia's contribution in restructuring the old feudal society and laying the foundation of socialism on a purely new parameters was a unique phenomenon of the twentieth century. Immediately after the revolution the crucial problem concerning intelligentsia was two-fold in its nature. First, it required to change the world outlook of the old bourgeois intelligentsia along the Bolshevik ideology and secondly to use the intelligentsia's co-operation in transforming the socio-economic structure of the Soviet society.

The chief reason of selecting the period from October 1917 to 1940 in the proposed study is that along with the building of foundation of socialism, the transformation of the old bourgeois intelligentsia to the side of the Soviet State was almost completed during this period. The new Soviet intelligentsia had been significantly instrumental in supplementing the process of socio-political, economic and cultural transformation of the society. It played an important role in transplating the seeds of socialism in a most backward country of the Europe. Within the limited scope

of an M.Phil Dissertation the present study has been divided into four chapters.

In the First Chapter, an attempt has been made to clarify the meaning, concepts and theories of intelligentsia - particularly those of Liberals and Marxists.

Chapter Second deals with a very brief sketch of the historical origin and evolution of intelligentsia that formulated various schools of thought. It also traces the contribution made by the intelligentsia and its composition on the eve of the October Revolution.

The Third Chapter is sought to cover the period from October 1917 to 1929. The beginning of the transition period had to lay its emphasis on the ideological orientation of socio-economic basis of the Soviet society and also to win over the reactionary bourgeois intelligentsia. It explains the most controversial period of War Communism and NEP period.

The Fourth Chapter describes the period from 1930 to 1940 dealing with the conceptual framework of the Soviet society and socio-economic transformation of the Soviet system. It also traces the factors responsible for the emergence of socialist intelligentsia and its involvement in the socio-economic developmental change during the transitional period.

In completing this work, I am extremely thankful to Dr R.R. Sharma, my Supervisor, for his sincere help and friendly guidance.

I have a special word of thanks to my friend Mr Shashi Kant Jha, a Lecturer in Delhi University and a Ph.D. student in the Centre, for his constant encouragement. His patience to go through the entire manuscript and valuable comments are duly acknowledged.

My thanks are also due to the library staff of the JNU who have helped me in finding the books and journals for my work.

Finally, it is needless to say that the views expressed in the dissertation are entirely of my own.

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Sardul Singh

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT AND THEORIES OF INTELLIGENTSIA

The emergence of a new "social stratum" popularly known as "Intelligentsia" in the 19th century Russian society, divided into two different classes - nobility and peasantry - can be traced back to the period of Peter the Great (1682-1725). It was his awareness of the backwardness of the then Russian society and farsightedness about the importance of the Western education that laid the foundation stone of intelligentsia. Szamuely has written:

The history of the Russian revolutionary movement is the history of the Russian intelligentsia. The two are inseparable. The Russian revolution was the product of the intelligentsia, and revolution was the intelligentsia's *raison d'être*.... The revolutionary movement was staffed, supported and trained by the intelligentsia, it received its ideas, its ethos, its system of values, its world outlook and its way of thinking from the intelligentsia. ¹

Vekhy, a famous Russian critique, observed that

...the intelligentsia supplied the revolution with all its ideological resources, all its spiritual equipment, together with its active fighters, its leaders, its agitators and propagandists. It was the intelligentsia which spiritually shaped the instinctive aspiration of masses, which fired them with enthusiasm, which was, in a word, the

¹ T. Szamuely, The Russian Tradition (London, 1974), p. 143.

nerves and the brains of the gigantic body of the revolution. In this sense the revolution is the spiritual offspring of the intelligentsia, and its history is therefore a historical judgement on this intelligentsia. 2

The word "Intelligentsia" is basically of Russian origin, coined by the now all but forgotten novelist Boborykin, that rapidly acquired wide currency through the novels of Turgenev.³ The word itself first appeared in 1850 and since then has become a common household word in Russian language. "It is assumed to be of Latin origin rather than French, because Latin was at that time the foreign language most used by Russian seminarians."⁴ It is not altogether an easy task to find an acceptable meaning and definition of the term intelligentsia since no such word of its real meaning is available in the languages of the Western world and to express with precision in a foreign language the idea denoted by it can be done only by a mere transcription.⁵

It is significant to clarify the misconception generally held by the Westerners that the word 'intelligentsia'

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 144.

4 C.D. Kernig, ed., Marxism, Communism and Western Society: A Comparative Encyclopedia (New York, 1972), vol. 4, p. 301.

5 Theodore Dan, The Origins of Bolshevism (London, 1964), p. 24.

is more or less equivalent to 'the intellectual community' or the 'educated class', or in other words, that the Russian 'intelligent' corresponded to the European 'intellectual'. This is not an altogether correct. A significant proportion of the intelligentsia consisted of people who were, at best, semi-educated, by their European or Russian standards: failed students, lapsed seminarians, auto-didacts etc. At the same time a large part, probably the greater and most highly civilized part, of the educated class - higher civil servants, university professors, scientists, engineers and many professional people - were never regarded as belonging to the intelligentsia. They had forfeited this right by entering into the service of the state and serving the interest of the regime.⁶

Whereas the English word 'Intellectuals', the French 'Intellectuels', and the German 'Intellektuelle', designate educated people whose principal occupation or the source of whose income is intellectual labour, the Russian word 'intelligentsia' does not mean a professional group of the population but a "special social group united by a certain political solidarity. Within its boundaries this group encompasses a rather broad gamut of world outlooks, philosophies, views and parties. But what is common to all the educated people included in it is their political and social radicalism. Even the most learned and educated people, wholly preoccupied

⁶ Szamuely, n. 1, p. 145.

by intellectual work, stand outside this group, if they are temperamentally conservative or reactionary.⁷ Theodore Geiger distinguishes, in his sociological definition, between the "intellectual", as a certain type of human being or a habit of mind, and the "intelligentsia", as a collective whole charged with a specific social function.⁸ Intelligentsia expressed the faith that reason was unfolding ineluctably in history, leading men to more just social forms, and that the bearers of intellect would be the ones to perceive and promote the more rational and humane noumenal reality.⁹

Russian intelligentsia was undoubtedly a social category differentiated from the other classes of the Russian society. It was a class that could not be defined by any of the traditional criteria of rank, status, property, birth or privilege: it consisted of men and women of different social origins, who held no ranks, possessed hardly any property, and enjoyed no privileges. Neither it can be compared with such concepts as bureaucracy or meritocracy - for the simple reason that intelligentsia rejected to serve the state in any form.¹⁰ Serving the state in any form or in any capacity was considered to be a disqualifying factor among the intelligentsia.

"Strange as it may seem, the Russian intelligentsia can only

7 Theodore Dan, n. 5, p. 24.

8 Quoted in Kernig, n. 4, p. 302.

9 W. Richard, The Crisis of Russian Populism (Cambridge, 1967), p. 3.

10 Szamuely, n. 1, p. 144.

be defined as a social category based upon criteria not of class, but of consciousness, upon a certain set of moral, ethical, philosophical, social and political values, upon a particular attitude towards the political and social system of their country."¹¹ Its members thought of themselves as united by something more than mere interest in ideas; they conceived themselves as being dedicated to an order, almost a secular priesthood, devoted to the spreading of a specific attitude to life, something like a global phenomenon.¹²

Right from its emergence the Russian intelligentsia had an hostile attitude towards the Tsarist autocracy and its socio-political system. This hostility was depicted through different forms, but it had been there as a basic characteristic of the intelligentsia apart from the other strata of the Russian society. It could be said that the intelligentsia was not so much a class as a state of mind.¹³ Ivan Aksakov, the famous "Slavophile", described the intelligentsia as 'the self-aware people', and explained that it 'is neither an estate, nor a guild, nor a corporation, nor an association....It is not even gathering, but rather the aggregate of the vital forces issuing from the people'.¹⁴ Miliukov, a liberal historian political thinker was another great champion of the 19th century Russian intelligentsia.

11 Ibid., p. 145.

12 Isaiah Berlin, Russian Thinkers (London, 1978), p. 117.

13 Szamuely, n. 1, p. 145.

14 Ibid.

The two basic characteristics of the Russian intelligentsia, that put them apart from the rest of the social classes were - common education and hostility towards the Tsarist regime. "The intelligentsia, having need of a reformed regime became an enemy of the state".¹⁵ Miliukov also observed the same view about the attitude of the intelligentsia towards the autocratic regime: 'Almost from its inception the Russian intelligentsia has been hostile to the governmental system'.¹⁶

In the beginning the Russian intelligentsia, though aggressive and hostile to the regime, had no well-defined constructive purpose, nor was it equipped to fulfil any such tasks. After the revolution the old regime died and along with it died the old intelligentsia. It was only after the revolution that a broader assessment of the character of the Russian intelligentsia could be made. Berdyaew, a Russian writer made a comprehensive definition:

The intelligentsia bore a strong resemblance to a monastic order or a religious sect, with its own customs and traditions, even with its own peculiar physical appearance...an ideological, and not a professional or economic grouping, made up from different social classes...united solely by ideas, namely ideas of a social character. 17

It is an established fact that every member of the

15 L. Trotsky, ed., The Young Lenin (Penguin, 1972), p. 39.

16 Quoted in Szamuely, n. 1, p. 145.

17 Ibid.

intelligentsia or every thinker or philosopher is the product of his time and environment. Thus Szamuely observed that -

The Russian intelligentsia was a social stratum composed of those politically aroused, vociferous and radical members of the educated classes who felt totally estranged from society, who rejected the social and political system of Tsarist autocracy, and who single-mindedly nurtured the idea of the imperative downfall of that system. 18

The intelligentsia, a product of the decay of the old classes, found neither an adequate demand for its skills nor a sphere for its political influence. It broke with the nobility, the bureaucracy, the clergy, with their stale culture and serf-owning traditions. 19

In the pre-revolutionary Russia the intelligentsia was considered as a "declassé" significantly isolated and alienated from the rest of the society. The alienation of the intelligentsia was in fact inherent in the country's rudimentary social structure. Between the two main classes - nobility and peasantry - there existed no middle class similar to that of European bourgeoisie of which the Western intellectual community formed an integral, well-protected and vital offshoot. Unlike the West, Russian society did not have interest groups which could give strength, support and substance to the intellectuals'

18 Ibid.

19 Trotsky, n. 15, p. 39.

protest and failed to act as a channel between them and the body politic.

The Russian intelligentsia was at once more democratic and more rootless than its European counterparts. It had neither stake nor any place in the existing society. It was a 'declassé', a genuine intellectual proletariat, harmless and unprotected, isolated from the ruling class by its radicalism and from the peasantry by its education.²⁰

Having got isolated and alienated from the rest of the society does not mean that it had lost its concern for the society. They lived in the realm of their own ideas which was their chief motivating power to influence the autocracy, nobility and peasantry. Thus, after the fall of serfdom, the intelligentsia formed almost the sole nutritive medium for revolutionary ideas.²¹

The Russian intelligentsia's attitude to ideas was of a very different nature - ideas were for them the magic force which would change the world, the medium which contained the secrets of the future. The Russian intelligentsia was from the beginning to end, remarkably conventional in its radicalism and revolutionary faith. Faith, in revolution, progress, reform and 'the people' became the hallmark of new confirmism and any one who disagreed was self-evidently an enemy of the society - to be branded and hunted down by the progressive

20 Szamuely, n. 1, p. 146.

21 Trotsky, n. 15, p. 39.

intellectual establishment - just as they were persecuted by the Tsarist regime.²²

As a social stratum the intelligentsia was also shaped by the evolution of secular movements, the latitude of which was often indicative of how well integrated into society their originators and followers were.²³ The Russian intelligentsia was even less "integrated" than its West European counterpart. The Russian intelligentsia, whether of noble, petty noble or humble origin, did not strive to achieve a stance of critical opposition - of alienation - from society. Alienation was thrust upon him by an oppressive state and by a peasant mass which inhabited a different spiritual world.

The first generation of the intelligentsia that appeared on the Russian scene in the 1840s, came to be known as the 'men of forties' or, after the publication of Turgenev's novel "Fathers and Sons", as the generation of the forties. They laid the foundation of a new generation of intelligentsia which later on changed the whole course of history into the revolutionary path of change, progress and development.

It is not an easy task to define the term intelligentsia into one single definition acceptable by all the shades of people - liberals, populists or Marxists. There are as many definitions as the historians and the scholars who have

22 T. Szamuely, n. 1, p. 159.

23 Kernig, n. 4, p. 302.

attempted to define it. A unique category of people originated out of the old orthodox tradition-bound conservative Russian society, did not have its parallel in the Western society. Hence the word 'intelligentsia' originated and popularised in Russia by its people got different meaning and connotation which was peculiar to its socio-political conditions. Official bureaucrats, liberals and populists, before the coming of Marxists on the scene, gave it a meaning suitable to their own interests.

However, it were the Marxists who gave the word "Intelligentsia" an ideological orientation and the members of this Marxist intelligentsia sought the opportunities of the prevailing conditions to take an advantage of moulding the historical movement that culminated in the events of October Revolution of 1917. The main schools of thought that dominated the Russian society before the Revolution were Liberal and Marxist. In between these two schools of thought there were many categories of people - Slavophiles, Populists, raznochintny or official conservatives - who also contributed their own ideas and ideals. It would be conducive to discuss the concept of intelligentsia on the basis of their general propositions made by the Liberals and the Marxists.

Liberals

The Liberals and the Populists can be bracketed together since their views regarding the phenomenon remain

the same in spite of their differences of opinions, aims and approaches to the various problems of the Russian society and at the same time both could be distinguished specifically from the Marxist school of thought. Like liberalism, populism in Russia was not a homogeneous movement. It proceeded from different social groups. Populism is the name not of a single party, nor of a coherent body of ideas, but of a widespread radical movement in Russia in the middle of the 19th century.

The liberals and the populists agreed on the proposition that Russian intelligentsia was the product of Western education, and perhaps the 'index of Westernization'. These were the people of common education and superior consciousness and morality who could not adjust themselves with the grim reality of the Russian society and therefore became radicalized as intelligentsia.²⁴ They were not the members of any particular class - nobility or peasantry - rather they came from all the social estates of the then Russian society.²⁵

The intelligentsia were all 'people of diverse rank' (raznochintsy): sons and daughters of clergymen, peasants, petty officials, army officers, artisans, tradesmen - who had become divorced, by virtue of their education (or inclination),

24 M.K. Palat, The Solicitude of Russian Intelligentsia (unpublished), Seminar Paper presented at the All India Seminar organised by ICHR, January 1976, p. 4.

25 Szamuely, n. 1, pp. 144-5.

from their fathers' social station, and could no longer fit into the official estate system.²⁶ Their radicalism and common educational experience along with the international inheritance made them isolated and alienated from the rest of the society and categorised them as 'declassé'.

Many objections have been raised to the liberal and populist conception of the term intelligentsia. First, if the process was started by Peter the Great (1682-1725), why did the first member of intelligentsia appear only in the latter half of the Catherine II's reign, more than eighty years later. It cannot be justified that the impact of education was felt only then since the "learned brotherhood" of Prokopovich, Tatishchev, and Kantemir were all extremely well travelled and widely read in European political literature. Second, if it is not only a matter of intellectual awareness but also of psychological sensitivity, why did not sensitive persons like Lomonosov react against an equally appalling reality before the sensitive minds of Radishchev and Herzen or Stankovich did. Third, why did only certain Western ideas and not others appeal to these sensitive educated minds. Fourth, what was the function of such an intelligentsia in pre-revolutionary Russia apart from what they themselves conceived it to be and what their opponents accused them of being.²⁷

26 Ibid., p. 149.

27 Palat, n. 24, p. 5.

The whole liberal intelligentsia could also not be qualified as radicalised and revolutionary. Lenin argued that from the nature of their position in society, the Russian liberal bourgeoisie as a class, together with the liberal intelligentsia could never be more than half-hearted revolutionaries, that they would sell out to Tsarism as soon as they had admitted their minimum objective.²⁸ Liberal intellectuals and the early Narodniks also lacked 'unity of purpose' and 'co-ordination of action'.²⁹

Both liberal and the populist intelligentsia did not have any coherent ideological basis as the Marxist intelligentsia did have. "All Russian revolutionary movements in the nineteenth century had been dominated by intellectuals. But as the century advanced the intelligentsia, drawn mostly from the propertied classes, yet rejecting the social system which maintained them, lost their own roots and stability. Russian novels of the period have made proverbial the general fecklessness, indecision and 'dress-gown mentality' of the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia".³⁰

The radical editors and critics of nineteenth-century Russia - Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Pisarev,

28 C. Hill, Lenin and Russian Revolution (Penguin, 1971), p. 51.

29 Ibid., p. 55.

30 Ibid., p. 60.

Lavrov, Mikhailovsky - are known to be the ideologists and the natural leaders of the liberal intelligentsia. Alexander Herzen the "gentry-revolutionary", the proto-populist semi-liberal tinged with Slavophilism was among the first who distinguished and analysed this phenomenon. He observed that the intelligentsia was the product of the Western education, persons who, on emerging from universities were so horrified by the contrast between what they had been taught and what they saw, that they formed distinct, isolated, alienated groups of their own.³¹

Belinsky popularly known as the father of the Russian intelligentsia recognized that education was at once the solvent of classes the creator of a new estate of educated people. Chevnyshvsky also followed his mentor. Bakunin called the intelligentsia as "thinking proletariat" who were made revolutionaries by the desperate and impossible situation. But he could not explain their existence historically. Pisarev called the thinking proletariat the new type of person, an intelligentsia whose theoretical development determined the course of history; but he did not explain how and when they began their development. Lavrov and Mikhailovsky simply observed that the intelligentsia were above class, but no more.³²

The ex-Marxist liberals of 20th century, some of them the authoritative spokesmen of the intelligentsia found

31 Palat, n. 24, p. 6.

32 Ibid., pp. 6-7.

then the delayed products of reform introduced by Peter the Great. They had a Russian monopoly of European education and enlightenment; but they did not account for the delay or the monopoly of a heritage that ought to have been shared by the other products of these reforms, the bureaucracy. Miliukov a leading liberal politician and historian held that in the course of westernization during the eighteenth century, the dillottanteish pursuit of literature and aesthetics gave way to more serious involvement in politics and philosophy, culminating in the career of Radishchev. Then after a gap of a generation, there emerged serious persons who read no pornography but political newspapers, discussed not women but history and played not cards but chess. Almost similar views were held by other liberal intellectuals like Kizewetter and Miakotin. But no body explained reasons of such changes in the intelligentsia's interests.³³

Western liberal political thinkers did not contribute anything more to the views held by their Russian counterparts. Sir Isaiah Berlin, Alain Besancon, Richard Pipes and Daniel R. Brower agreed to the proposition that the Russian intelligentsia was simply the product of Westernization. Professor Martin Malia has sought the origins of the intelligentsia not merely chronologically but historically, in the reign of Catherine II. Intelligentsia were not merely the product

33 Ibid., pp. 7-8.

of Western education but the results of gentry becoming the estate of the empire with Catherine's reforms between 1775 and 1785. Because Catherine granted them these privileges, so they began asserting their rights, therefore became liberals, hence critical and "intelligent".³⁴

But it is criticised that the gentry as a whole class did not transform themselves into intelligentsia. In fact the transformation was that of the individual and not of the class, even if all the members belonged to the same class. Martin Malia, also could not give an authentic definition of the term intelligentsia. It can be concluded that the liberal explanation of the concept of intelligentsia is not clear and is subject to various objections.

MARXISTS

One of the characteristics of capitalism in the true Marxian sense is that it robbed the intellectual profession of their prestige and placed them in almost similar position to that of the proletariat. "The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labour."³⁵

34 Ibid., pp. 8-9.

35 K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of Communist Party", in Selected Works (Moscow, 1951), vol. 1, p. 36.

Marxists have always regarded the intelligentsia as a social stratum and never as a class in its own right; thus neither Lenin nor Stalin would concede it an independent role in political life.³⁶ "The intelligentsia has never been a class, and never can be a class - it was and it remains a stratum, which recruits its members from among all classes of society."³⁷

Russian Marxists seek to find the origin of intelligentsia in the wake of the development of capitalism. The historical events of the 19th century Russia sowed the seeds of capitalism the features of which were very much discernible due to the industrialization in Russia. "In pre-revolutionary and revolutionary times a considerable number of educated people who, by virtue of their intellectual development, were especially sensitive to the 'signs of time', were able to break away from their class, whose dominance was nearing its historical end, but only in order to become the spokesmen for the ideas and ideals of the class whose ascension had prepared by historical conditions, and to join it in advance intellectually and socially."³⁸

° Theodore Dan, himself a Marxist, observed that the educated people maintained a close, and often even

36 V.I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow, 1963), vol. 4, p. 320.

37 J.V. Stalin, "On the Draft Constitution of the USSR", Problems of Leninism (Peking, 1976), p. 823.

38 Theodore Dan, n. 5, pp. 24-25.

exclusive tie with the upper classes, for which, during the period of Russian culture that may be called aristocratic, the majority of them emerged. When during second half/the 19th century the crisis in feudal society cropped up the aristocratic culture also started crumbling. 'Feudal society was succeeded by capitalist economy.' The aristocratic youths who emerged as the pioneers of democracy laid the foundations of the formation of educated Russians as a special social group. The oppressive feeling of social isolation of democratically-minded educated people began fusing with a proud consciousness of their great historical 'mission' when they began being infiltrated and soon dominated more and more by the so-called raznochintsy, i.e. plebeians - peasants, petty bourgeois, merchants, members of the liberal professions, and a very strong admixture of the clergy. The 'intelligentsia' then began forming rapidly.³⁹ Plekhanov agreeing with Dan held the views that the emergence of Russian intelligentsia was the result of the disintegration of the Estates during second quarter of the nineteenth century, a process which started, specifically, after the abolition of serfdom and development of capitalism, though western education and westernization became only an aspect of the whole process of revolutionary upheavals. Plekhanov observed, with qualified commentary on Marx, that "as a dominant class declines, its

39 Ibid., pp. 25-26.

most conscious and far sighted members break the narrow boundaries of their own class and willingly espouse the cause of the new, rising and progressive class....His point was driven to conclusion with the emergence of the *raznochintsy* in the eighteen sixty.⁴⁰ They, according to Flekhanov and Dan, were the fragments thrown out by the centrifugal whirl of feudal estates, gathered subsequently in a milky cluster of diverse origin yet consistent class ideology.⁴¹ This was therefore the social base of *intelligentsia*. Flekhanov also agreed with the liberals that the *intelligentsia* were a social stratum conflated by a common education.⁴²

These propositions are, however, subject to various objections. First, it does not explain the timing of the appearance of Herzen and his circle, or, to proceed one step further back of Radishchev. The decline of the gentry can be traced back during the eighteenth century and not only in the period of 1820s or 1830s. It is also argued that the decline of the gentry began properly only during the second half of the nineteenth century and till then the *intelligentsia* had already matured by more than one generation. Second, the proposition does not explain why most of the *intelligentsia*, until the coming of Marxism, became the stalwarts on behalf of

40 Palat, n. 24, p. 11.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

peasantry (and why not of the rising bourgeoisie?) which was neither the consequence of the decay of a particular mode of production nor the instrument of the rise of a new one. Third, Plekhanov observes that the raznochintsy were the rootless dropouts of a disintegrating estates system. This in fact is a legal abstraction. In Russian society, in fact, the estates system never existed in its legalistic term. Raznochintsy were not the product of disintegration of estates system. They were simply persons who were of origin neither noble nor of the civil service, nor peasant rather they were plebian or common.⁴³

According to Merle Fainsod, "Infusion of new blood from the raznochintsy (the men of different classes) gave the intelligentsia an increasingly plebian character."⁴⁴

Belinsky was the son of a country doctor, Dobrolyubov came from a clerical family, Chernyshevsky also a priest's son, was originally destined for a clerical career. There was an increasingly large number of professional men - physicians, lawyers, teachers, and journalists - who "belonged to the people by birth and...to the intellectual group by higher education".⁴⁵

Lenin, a brilliant revolutionary thinker defines intelligentsia "...and the intelligentsia are so-called because

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 12-14.

⁴⁴ M. Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled (Bombay, 1969), p. 7.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

they most consciously, most resolutely, and most accurately reflect and express the development of class interests and political groupings in society as a whole".⁴⁶ Lenin rejected the view held by other Russian Marxists like Plekhanov and Dan that intelligentsia existed as a separate identifiable social group, some in the sense being mental worker. He held that the intelligentsia were merely the ideologues of each class interest. However, Lenin is not consistent in his views about the meaning and concept of intelligentsia. In his early days he refuted the Narodnik's claim of classlessness of the intelligentsia and branded them as bourgeois or petty-bourgeois. "The Russian 'non-estate intelligentsia', therefore, represents a 'real social force' in as much as it defends general bourgeois interests", he declared.⁴⁷

Lenin himself was very much aware of his being a member of intelligentsia and his views, about the intelligentsia went very much against his own ideological thinking. He himself, though intelligent, was not the saviour of bourgeois or petty bourgeois interest. Later in the years of 'What Is To Be Done' during the revolutionary upheavals he hastened to endow the proletariat with its own intelligentsia which alone could breathe consciousness among the masses, he declared: "Like any other class in modern society, the proletariat is not

46 V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 7, p. 45.

47 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 422.

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only advancing an intelligentsia from its own midst, but also accepts into its ranks, supporters from the midst of all and sundry educated people".⁴⁸

Though Lenin had a definite view of intelligentsia as an "ideologue of each class interest" he had changed his views when the need arose. Thus in 1905 he changed the earlier definition of the bourgeois intelligentsia when assailing the pretensions of the left liberals, soon to become kadets: "It would be a mistake to forget that this intelligentsia is more capable of expressing in the broadest sense the essential interests of the bourgeois class as a whole as distinct from the temporary and narrow interests of the bourgeois upper crust."⁴⁹ Neither wholesale condemnation of intelligentsia for being a "privileged stratum", nor its glorification as a primary "progressive" intermediate stratum unencumbered by class ties, were to become dominant precepts in Marxism. Lenin had insisted: "We must compare the ideas, and still more the programmes of our 'non-estate intelligentsia' with the position and the interests of given classes of Russian society".⁵⁰ Like other strata which are hard to fit into the two-class pattern (e.g. the petite bourgeoisie), the intelligentsia

48 Ibid., vol. 6, p. 198.

49 Ibid., vol. 9, p. 215.

50 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 421.

was divided into a "bourgeois" and a "proletarian" section.⁵¹

Lenin however could not explain why the gentry in the pre-revolutionary Russia did not manage to advance any intelligentsia of their own in the Leninist sense. "Karamzin was the last and properly belongs intellectually to the eighteenth century."⁵² Secondly, the industrial bourgeoisie, could never claim of an intelligentsia of their own though small in numbers the bourgeois class did exist in the Tsarist Russia without any intelligentsia of their own. Lenin however could not solve the problem of defining intelligentsia in any acceptable proposition. He had rather 'dissolved the problem'. To Lenin, 'if it does exist, it is bourgeois; otherwise it does not exist at all'. It is in no case an acceptable proposition. It is significant to note that the Soviet explanation of the term intelligentsia proposes the class-interests of the intelligentsia but at the same time they consider it as a 'social stratum' or a distinct social group, that emerges at a particular time under given historical conditions viz the development of capitalism and Lenin had fully agreed to this proposition.⁵³

The Soviet intelligentsia differs from the intelligentsia of pre-revolutionary Russia not only in its social

51 Kernig, n. 4, p. 307.

52 Palat, n. 24, p. 17.

53 Ibid., pp. 17-19.

composition but also in its world outlook. Soviet scholars generally follow the Marxist approach to the problem of the intelligentsia. They regard them as a social stratum rather than a class. While some writers as Mannheim and Bukharin⁵⁴ have argued that the intelligentsia is a kind of 'intermediate class', independent of the basic social classes. This view is not acceptable to most of the Soviet writers. Thus official publication of Fundamentals of Marxism Leninism explains:

The development of industry, technology and culture in capitalist society results in the formation of a broad stratum, the intelligentsia, consisting of persons engaged in mental work (technical personnel, teachers, doctors, office employees, scientists, writers etc.). The intelligentsia is not an independent class, but a special social group which exists by selling its mental labour. It is recruited from various strata of society, chiefly from the well-to-do classes and only partly from the ranks of the working people. As regards its material position and way of life the intelligentsia is not homogeneous. Its upper strata, the high officials, prominent lawyers and others, are closer to the capitalists, while the lower strata are closer to the working masses. 55

A similar definition is also found in the 1958 Soviet Political Dictionary - "A Social Stratum (prosloika) consisting of persons professionally employed in mental labour. Indeed in it are scientists and artists, engineers, technicians, agronomists, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and the great majority

54 L.G. Churchward, The Soviet Intelligentsia (London, 1973), p. 3.

55 Quoted in *ibid.*

of office workers. The intelligentsia is not a separate class because it does not occupy a particular place in the system of social production."⁵⁶

The two official definitions given above are corroborated by many Soviet political, scientists and scholars as well as by Stalin and others but "they represent an older tradition which goes back at least to the writings of Lenin and other Russian Marxists before the first Russian Revolution of 1905."⁵⁷ However, these definitions are also subject to criticism. First, the social role of the intelligentsia has been negatively defined. The intellectuals recruited from various classes, who receive their salary for their mental labour similar to the manual labour, some of them are closer to the capitalist class. This is negative or one-dimensional approach which does not examine the social role of the intelligentsia. "Such mental workers differ however from manual workers in that their ideological positions reflect the class hierarchy faithfully. Therefore, the gentry-cum-autocracy, bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, both urban and rural and finally the proletariat are each equally entitled to but variously endowed with an intelligentsia^{ic} of their own. Such a definition is very remote from the intelligentsia's consciousness of themselves, of the public's perception of them, or of the historians regard for them. Most of all

⁵⁶ Churchward, n. 54, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

it is not a definition, it is a synonym for "mental worker", a mere lexical trick, the final reduction of Lenin to absurdity."⁵⁸

The official definitions of intelligentsia includes in it even the enemies of the intelligentsia - the army officers, the gendarme, the "pewtery-eyed bureaucrat", and all their despised servitors, the business executives. We would find Metropolitans and Archimandrites, "idiots Romanov" and "blessed fools", Pobedonostsev and Alexander Ulianov, Lenin and Riabushinskii, Miliukov and Zubatov, all in one bizarre confraternity. (Somewhat illogically, the orthodox priesthood is not assigned to the intelligentsia despite their superlative qualifications by such a definition). In fact, in one such work, we find amongst them station masters, telephonists, telegraphists, veterinary doctors, surveyors, and sundry other professional groups inconceivable as an intelligentsia of any description.⁵⁹

A Gramsci finds the problem of intelligentsia a complex one -

Are intellectuals an autonomous and independent social class or does every social class have its own specialised category of intellectuals? The problem is complex because of the various forms taken by the real historical process of the formation of different categories of intellectuals. 60

58 Palat, n. 24, p. 19.

59 Ibid., p. 20.

60 A. Gramsci, "The Formation of Intellectuals", in The Modern Prince and Other Writings (New York, 1968), p. 118.

He further observes that -

every social class coming into existence on the original basis of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates with itself, organically, one or more groups of intellectuals who give it homogeneity and consciousness of its function not only in the economic field but also in the social and political field as well. 61

On the problem of social role of intelligentsia, Gramsci argued that while intellectuals were a series of social strata rather than a class, their relationship to the world of production was 'mediated' by the social fabric of the social structure and by the complex of the superstructure of which they were the 'officials'. As 'officials' of the superstructure intellectuals served directly (in 'political society') or indirectly (in 'civil society'). As officials of the ruling class they exercised the subordinate functions of social hegemony and political government. The proletariat, in the process of its emergence as a class and challenging the capitalist social structure, created its own intelligentsia, partly by means of penetrating and absorbing elements of the existing intelligentsia. But Soviet writers have drawn small inspiration from Gramsci and nothing at all from his approach to the problem of intelligentsia.⁶²

61 Ibid.

62 Churchward, n. 54, p. 4.

A second difficulty in the Soviet definition of intelligentsia is its failure to adopt a clear standard for inclusion within the intelligentsia. Should all 'white-collar workers' be included in the intelligentsia? Marxist writers before the revolution sometimes made distinction between the intelligentsia proper and the semi-intelligentsia. The former were those with a tertiary education, the latter, those with only a secondary specialist education. Soviet sociologists in recent years have regarded the official category of 'persons employed primarily in mental labour' as too wide and make various adjustments to official figures to exclude 'white-collar workers'. Others distinguish between intellectuals with a tertiary education and professionals with a secondary specialist education only. But it is difficult to maintain a distinction.⁶³

The third problem with the Soviet official definition is that it does not include in it some who are obviously 'intellectuals', like professionals employed in the army, retired professionals and students.⁶⁴

L.G. Churchward does not make any distinction between the terms 'intellectuals' and 'intelligentsia' and uses the term intelligentsia in a Marxian sense which he claims provide him an 'objective definition'.⁶⁵ He gives the objective

63 Ibid., p. 5.

64 Ibid., p. 4.

65 Ibid., pp. 1-2.

definition of intelligentsia as consisting of 'persons with a tertiary education (whether employed or not), tertiary students, and persons lacking formal tertiary qualification but who are professionally employed in jobs which normally require a tertiary qualification.⁶⁶ But he agrees that this also presents certain difficulties.

P.P. Amelin, a Soviet sociologist had sought to present a Marxist explanation which combines a functional with a historical analysis and sought to overcome the limitations of orthodox Marxist theory of intelligentsia. He says that the intelligentsia is -

a particular internally differentiated social group consisting of people who are highly qualified and trained in mental labour in any sphere of social-historical activity, with a profession as the only, or at least the main, source of their existence. People of this group, serving the varied demands and interests of a particular class (or classes) of the given social system seek their livelihood primarily by means of their intellectual ability, general and special knowledge, skill, know-how and experience. Professional mental labour is not necessary for intellectuals (intelligentov) but it is the main sphere of their life activity. Above all their inclinations and talents are shown in this sphere, making their creative energies and social ideals, crystalizing their political and moral norms and orientations and producing their formation and self affirmation as individuals. 67

66 Ibid., p. 6.

67 P.P. Amelin, quoted in Churchward, n. 54, p. 6.

The contemporary Soviet doctrine holds the Soviet intelligentsia as a "people's intelligentsia". It is no longer the result of "egalitarian distribution, but of the creation of a surplus of goods based on the development of modern productive forces".⁶⁸

An analytical and highly appreciable proposition has been provided by another Soviet scholar V.R. Leikina Svirskaja. To her -

the intelligentsia were those persons of higher education and various social origin and ideologies who stood for progress. In conditions of a developing industrial and capitalist society, they were all those who made the intellectual contribution to reform, progress, and enlightenment, to the emergence of bourgeois society, to the creativity of capitalism, to the 'bacchawalian whirl of creative destruction'. Intellectuals and ideologues are not unique to bourgeois society; they issued from the first division of labour with the dissolution of tribal society; but the intelligentsia is unique to a society in the throes of bourgeois transformation and thereafter. In this context the entire range from reforming statesmen like the Miliutins and Witte, through enlightened professors, doctors, chemists, and engineers, humble zemstvo agronomists, statisticians, school-teachers, and inspectors, to uncompromising revolutionaries like Lenin and Trotsky, were all making their peculiar contribution to this process, and belonged to the fraternity known as intelligentsia. ⁶⁹

The proposition surmounts the problem of class origins which has confused many writers with the "gentry revolutionary" of

68 Kernig, n. 4, p. 307.

69 Palat, n. 24, pp. 21-22.

the forties developing into "raznochintsy" of the sixties. It is also bereft of the Leninist view of ideological hegemony over the conscious development of each class or interest; yet it has preserved the Marxian concept of its emergence to a particular phase of development and modernization, which Plekhanov did not do. The only criteria of its justification to the historical conditions of a particular developing society is "progress, reform and enlightenment". Leikina Svirskaja through its proposition has put the liberals, Populists-revolutionary or conservative, Marxists and official bureaucrats into one category since all stood for reform and progress. Thus Speransky, Dmitrii, Miliutin, Witte and Stolypin were as much important as Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Lavrov, Tkachev, Fikhailovsky, Plekhanov Martov and Lenin. But by all standards of judgement only the latter are known as intelligentsia, since the former though stood for reform or progress but were supporters of Tsarist autocracy and conservative as well.⁷⁰

The conclusion about the meaning and concept of intelligentsia is difficult to be made. The intelligentsia as a social stratum is under the process of a continuous change and development of Soviet socio-political system. The old conservative, orthodox intelligentsia had died with the

70 Ibid., p. 24.

revolution and a new intelligentsia has been created which has given it a new concept and a new meaning. Under the historical development of socialism in the USSR the new Soviet intelligentsia basically differs from the old intelligentsia. The old definitions do not apply to the contemporary intelligentsia of the USSR. Though the contemporary Soviet writers have attempted to define this new intelligentsia but a single comprehensively acceptable definition is still very much sought after.

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CHAPTER II

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THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF INTELLIGENTSIA AND ITS COMPOSITION ON THE EVE OF OCTOBER REVOLUTION

The October Revolution of 1917 was the single ever great revolution of the twentieth century that shook the world and laid the foundation of the first Socialist Country the basis of which were the ideological precepts of Marxism-Leninism. This eventually broke away the old traditional conservative tenets of the Russian system. Fainsod rightly observed that "every revolution bears the stamp of its own distinctive genius. It is a product of historical forces that go before, of the leaders who shape its course, and of the problems with which they are confronted."¹ But the traditional trends in the Russian Revolutionary movement of the 19th and early twentieth century can be traced even earlier in the seventeenth century Russia in the famous Stenka Razin's Cossack rebellion and the Streletsi revolt and Pugachev uprising in the late eighteenth century. The last quarter of the eighteenth century marks a growing popular and intellectual movement which contributed to the formation of social ideas

¹ M. Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled (London, 1964), p. 3.

and better organised opposition to the autocratic Tsarist regime.²

From Decembrists revolt of 1825 to the revolution of 1917, the whole history of nineteenth century Russia is full of revolutionary activities and revolts. But "if the revolutionary tradition of Russia was particularly strong and entrenched in 1917 it was certainly not due to some special facet of the Russian social character. It is not in the Russian soul but in the social and political structure of Tsarist Russia that the key to this revolutionary tradition is to be found."³

The Russian state of the nineteenth century was known of its backwardness, poverty, misery, autocratic regime and bureaucratic highhandedness. The whole society was divided into two main classes - gentry and peasantry. It lacked the bourgeois middle class akin to that of Western Europe, though the roots of industrialisation had already been implanted on the Russian soil. The liberal traditions were well established in the beginning of the nineteenth century. But there was no well organised movement similar to those in Western Europe, though, of course, it was very much present in its embryonic form that needed only time and opportunity to

2 A.G. Mazour, The First Russian Revolution, 1825 (California, 1965), p. 46.

3 L.G. Churchward, Contemporary Soviet Government (London, 1975), p. 22.

evolve into an effective opposition against the absolutist government. The Napoleonic wars, Russian participation in European affairs, and increasing contact with the West stimulated the growth of awareness of the facts of Russia's backwardness that led to discontentment against the regime and a minority was created to display a certain degree of open resistance to the government. Direct contacts with the Western Europe came through the travels of individuals and through European writings.

As already explained, it was Peter the Great who led the country on to the path of westernization. He began to send young men to the West to be trained. They returned with something more than mere technical skill of shipbuilding and knowledge of military sciences. They brought along with them the political and social ideas that dominated the Western Europe. The works of such writers as Grotius, Hobbes, Locke, Pufendorf, Mably and Rousseau, Diderot, Montesquieu and Voltaire were well known to many educated Russians. Most of the Decembrists were pupils of Encyclopedists - and were deeply influenced by the revolutionary movement in France and other countries. They cherished the ideas of their predecessors like Krechetov, Radishchev or Pnin. The Decembrists had acquired their liberal ideas of political institutions through their acquaintance with foreign literature and with the revolutionary movement in Western Europe.

The increasing intercourse, in the early nineteenth century, with Western Europe deprived Russia of her political isolation. Many young Russian students studied abroad, particularly in German universities and acquired more and more liberal ideas of social and political institutions. Developments during the years of 1812-1814 hastened the disintegration of old Russia, brought the Russian Empire into the family of Western nations and revealed amply the striking contrasts of social, political and economic institutions of Western Europe and backward Russia.⁴ The autocracy was bent upon to increase its power and tightening the bureaucratic hold over the masses. "Blindly, fumblingly, it sought to extract from the West the manifest sources of strength, while attempting at the same time to preserve the foundations of its traditional authority in the Russian land and even to elaborate upon them."⁵

The growing hold of the autocratic regime and its suppressive policies propelled the discontentment among the young Russian student revolutionaries, who sparked the flame of revolt against the autocracy that culminated in the year of 1825 popularly known as the "Decembrist Revolt". But their revolt succeeded only in exposing the dismal inadequacy of their strength and their isolation from society.⁶ The

4 Hazour, n. 2, p. 54.

5 L.H. Hainson, The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism (Boston, 1955), p. 4.

6 Ibid., p. 5.

revolt was suppressed quickly and ruthlessly.

The successive events of the first quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of the Russian intelligentsia. Marked as they were by this rapid succession of events - the 'betrayal' of Alexander, the failure of the Decembrist revolt, the succession to the throne of that symbol of reaction, Nicolas I - the 1820s may be considered as the birth date of Russian intelligentsia. These years saw the events that crystalized the feeling of total alienation from existing society which gave the Russian intelligentsia its peculiar and unique identity.⁷

The intelligentsia had risen in Russia out of the old society of 'estates', as the very sign that this society was disintegrated and inclined to its decadence. Its emergence had been precipitated by the growing attempt of the absolutist power to super impose with the aid of techniques and crafts imported from the West - a modern bureaucratic state upon the old society of medieval estates.

The birth of Russian intelligentsia in the years of 1820-1840 coincided with the literary work of some of the important writers of the Russian literature of the century and "it was through the medium of literature that the men who became the forerunners of the radical intelligentsia -

7 Ibid.

Radishchev and Novikov - acquired their fame.⁸ The literature of this age is the barometer of their discontents.⁹ And it was in the pages of literature that this new stratum of intelligentsia made his first appearance - as that distinctive Russian character, the 'superfluous man'. The favourite heroes of the great writers - Pushkin's Onegin, Griboyedov's Chatsky, Lermontov's Pechorin, Turgenev's Rudin, Goncharov's Oblomov, and Herzen's Beltoz specifically register their utter disillusionment and discontentment of the Russian society. These superfluous men, the prototype of young men in real life were men of education, consciousness and sensitivity who were willing to accept the harsh realities of the Russian life and were unable to find a place within it.¹⁰

The Russian intelligentsia, to its utter dismay, found itself isolated and alienated from the autocracy and gentry above because of its radicalism and antagonism with the government, and from the ignorant brutish peasantry below because of its education and sensitivity.

The activist heroes depicted in the novels of Turgenev and Chernyshevsky reflected the aspirations and emotions of the new intelligentsia who were beginning to assert their claims to shape the destiny of Russia.¹¹ In the beginning most

8 T. Szamuely, The Russian Traditions (London, 1974), p. 148.

9 Fainsod, n. 1, p. 6.

10 Szamuely, n. 8, p. 148.

11 Fainsod, n. 1, p. 7.

of the members of this new stratum belonged to the higher classes of Russian society namely nobility and gentry who, by the grace of providence, had all the resources at their disposal to acquire and accumulate a new sense of awakening. "The 'superfluous' men of Russian literature all came from the ranks of nobility. So too did the first generation of the intelligentsia".¹² Writing was found to be a gainful profession, "and within the intelligentsia - as indeed, within the revolutionary movement - the non-noblemen were few and far between".¹³ The fact was that most of its 'members' identified their interest with the regime.¹⁴

However, during the middle of the nineteenth century the Russian intelligentsia went through a rapid change in its composition as well as its outlook. Their social roots were no longer overwhelmingly confined to the nobility and the landed gentry.¹⁵ Amongst the first generation of the Russian intelligentsia the only first plebian who occupied a considerable leading position in the 'nascent Russian intelligentsia was the well known literary critic V. Belinsky (1811-1848), son of a doctor.¹⁶ Why Belinsky got the nickname of 'furious

12 Szamuely, n. 8, p. 148.

13 Ibid.

14 Fainsod, n. 1, p. 6.

15 Ibid., p. 7.

16 Theodore Dan, The Origin of Bolshevism (London, 1964), p. 26.

vissarian', Theodore Dan says that -

Flekanov is probably right in thinking that Belinsky received the somewhat mocking nickname of 'furious vissarian' from his noble friend because while 'practically the sole plebian in his group' he behaved with respect to the 'accused question' of the time with far little restraint than the enlightened representative of the nobility. And he is unquestionably right when he says that Belinsky's 'fury' was like a sort of prototype of the 'fury' in social and political questions that towards the end of the 1850s brought about a profound cleavage between the plebeian core of the intelligentsia and the aristocratic pioneers of the Russian democracy, including Herzen himself. 17

Belinsky was practically the first and the sole plebian in an almost exclusive aristocratic milieu. He struggled for the spiritual emancipation of the peasantry from the specifically aristocratic influences. It prepared the victory in Russian democratic thinking of those politically and socially far more radical 'plebian' tendencies whose heralds were two of Belinsky's successors - Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, both of them sons of clergymen.¹⁸ And it was this plebian victory that at the same time marked the consolidation of the Russian intelligentsia as a special social grouping.¹⁸

The first aristocratic generation of the Russian intelligentsia that appeared on the Russian scene in 1840s

17 Ibid., p. 27.

18 Ibid.

popularly became known as the 'men of forties', or after the publication of Turgenev's "Fathers and Sons", as the generation of the fathers. It was basically a unique group of newly talented creative generation of Russian society. The whole group of intelligentsia which began emerging in this period consisted of brilliant constellation of novelists, playwrights, poets, scholars, critics and philosophers. Most of them had acquired the world wide acclaim through their works and had become the vehement critiques of Tsar Nicholas autocratic state.

A significant characteristic of the first generation of the intelligentsia was that there was nothing dogmatic or uniform about them and having a wide diversity of political and social views, they were at one only in their hostility towards the existing order and particularly its hatred of serfdom. Isaiah Berlin considering the period of 1833-1843 as the period of 'The birth of the Russian intelligentsia' calls it "A Remarkable Decade". The 'original founders' of the Russian intelligentsia, 'created something which was destined ultimately to have world wide social and political consequences' - was the Russian revolution itself.¹⁹ "These revolte's early Russian intellectuals set the moral tone for the kind of talk and action which continued throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, until the final climax in 1917."²⁰

19 Isaiah Berlin, Russian Thinkers (London, 1978), p. 115.

20 Ibid.

They were a high minded, romantic set of people.

Divorced from social reality and driven by the pressure of their unorganised and unsatisfied emotional needs, most of the young members of the intelligentsia expanded their energy during the 1830s, 1840s and early 1950s, in the futile search for a philosophical panacea; they shifted repeatedly from one philosophy to another, from one intellectual god to another - from Schelling and Fichte to Hegel, from Hegel to French utopian socialists, from the utopian socialists to J.S. Mill and to Comte. 21

These intelligent group of people talked about art for arts sake and devoted their 'awakening' in the discussion about humanity, beauty and reasoning. In Russia "the German philosophy provided both an escape from the depressing reality of Nicholas' times and a guide to action."²²

Alexander Herzen, a member of the intelligentsia, having full faith in the inevitability of revolution was convinced that "the philosophy of Hegel is the algebra of revolution."²³ But "the rapid and superficial shifts in ideology, the shallow changes in the organization of consciousness that marked the evolution of the intelligentsia during the 1830s and 1840s could not provide any substantial relief for the deep frustrations that lay under them".²⁴ They played a

21 Haimson, n. 5, p. 8.

22 A.B. Ullam, Lenin and Bolshevism (Great Britain, 1975), p. 42.

23 Ibid.

24 Haimson, n. 5, p. 9.

secondary role in the development of the intelligentsia proper. Their spiritual ascendancy was short lived and a bare decade later it faded away with the evolution and emergence of a new type of intelligentsia which was basically different from its first generation.

By the late fifties and early sixties a change in the orientation and composition of intelligentsia was discernible under the spiritual leadership of Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov and Pisarev. There was a marked shift in the composition of student body in the universities. Earlier the students were selected predominantly from the youth of aristocratic extraction, now they came from the different social strata of the Russian society. They belonged to the so-called 'raznochintsy' people of diverse rank: sons (and later daughters) of clergymen, peasants, petty officials, army officers, artisans and tradesmen.²⁵ This was a generation of "young realist, who earlier in the decade had been content to 'recognize their consciousness' in accordance with the tenets of positive science, now felt impelled to transform the world in the light of these scientific principles".²⁶

In fact the universities became the hot beds of sedition, rebellion and disaffection. The new generation of

25 Szamuely, n. 8, p. 149.

26 Haimson, n. 5, p. 9.

intelligentsia retained this character in the form of terrorism for the next half of the century out of which sprang the revolution.

The generation of 1860s, being composed of 'people of diverse rank', belonged to all classes and to none, it originated within the people and yet stood outside it; it was very much a part of society and yet remained an extraneous element within the body politic. It was the first social group in Russian history that could claim itself free of the state, solidify its determination to oppose the autocratic state and follow the path of revolution. It held the aspirations of representing the Russian society and assumed the task of curing the evils of the society. In most respects the 'men of sixties' or the 'generation of sons' was different from the fathers', upon whom they transferred much of their animosity towards society: jeering at their cult of art for arts sake, disparaging the lofty ideas, upbraiding them for half-hearted liberalism and taunting them for their comfortable life. Chernyshevsky depicted them, through his writings, 'men of the new age', expressed unlimited trust in their intelligentsia and held confidence in the capability of these men to remake the world in the light of rational principles.²⁷

In the line of succession the men of sixties were followed by the men of seventies and then by those of eighties.

27 Ibid., p. 10.

With the passage of time new revolutionary forces appeared on the Russian soil that hastened the pace of revolutionary movement. The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of many new political groups of intelligent people, having divergent views, ideologies, programmes and approaches to the basic problems of Russian society. All the movements of Slavophiles, westerners', Narodniks', liberals' and Marxists' were the movements of the Russian intelligentsia and "despite the ferocious feuds, certain fundamental premises were held in common by every generation of the intelligentsia".²⁸

Slavophil vs Westerner-Intelligentsia

There was an intensification of the Westerner versus Slavophil discussion that indicated a growing concern among the intelligentsia, about whether Russia should follow the path of industrial and liberal society of the West, or should build a unique society on their own, on the basis of her traditional institutions and concepts. Both the groups of intelligentsia had much in common. They drew their inspiration from European philosophers such as Hume, Voltaire, Kant, Schelling, Hegel and from socialist thinkers such as Saint Simon, Proudhon, and later Karl Marx. Both were influenced by the romantic writers such as Goethe, Schiller

28 Szamuely, n. 8, pp. 150-51.

and Chateaubriand and tended to idealize the Russian peasant. Both shared a love of Russia with criticism of the incompetence, corruption and suppression of the government; both were against serfdom, against the division of exploiters and exploited, and both appealed to what they thought was the true spirit of Russian history.

The Slavophiles held that the true spirit of Russian culture found its expression in the orthodox church and in the traditional Russian social and political institutions. They held firm belief that Russian civilization was inherently much superior to that of Western Europe, for it was based upon true Christianity and the communal organisation of the mir. They maintained that the reforms of Peter the Great had introduced an alien element into the natural development of Russian society, and they wanted a spiritual reform of Russian society that would enable it to carry out the missionary work of spreading Russian civilization.

The Slavophil intelligentsia although claimed to be non-political, they were in fact, ultra-conservative. They supported the autocracy against revolutionary movements and fostered Great Russian nationalism. "Slavophil political thought, more reactionary than conservative, was psychologically appealing to the nationalistic, to the introspective to the defensive, and to the religious."²⁹

Slavophil intelligentsia were not a united group of coherent ideas. They were generally from the rural

29 T. Anderson, Russian Political Thought (New York, 1967), p.230.

background and polarized themselves against the westerners. The founder of the school, Alexis Khomiakov and Ivan Kireevsky, attracted a close group of disciples including Peter Kireevsky, Iuri Samarin, Konstantin, Ivan Aksakov, and Alexander Koshelev. N. Karamzin, a prominent member of the Slavophil intelligentsia was opposed to the introduction of any kind of constitution.

Kireevsky was convinced that the orthodox faith was the basis of Russian society and that its historical evolution would only be perverted by the introduction of non-Russian ideas and customs. Khomyakov extended the claims of the Slavophiles to include all the Slav people, whereas Aksakov was opposed to the bad influence of western ideas on the purity of the Slavophil ideals and gave support to the repression at home and the Pan Slav movement abroad. Their views were distorted into political Pan Slavism by Nikolai Danilevsky that led to unrest in eastern Europe. Fedor Dostoevsky, Konstantin Leontev and Pobedonostev also developed aspects of the Slavophil movement.³⁰

With the extinction of the Slavophil intelligentsia from the Russian scene in the nineties the movement died down, "yet the vigour of the movement was far from exhausted. On the one hand, it contributed arguments to those Westerners who, like Herzen and Chernyshevsky, wished to avoid

30 Ibid., p. 215.

capitalism, and its admiration for the peasant and his mir became an important part of the doctrine of Narodniki. On the other hand, Kireevsky's vigorous denial of the West and his confidence in the mission of Russia were strains of thought leading in Juan Aksakov, Nikolai Denilevsky, and others to cultural and political Pan Slavism. His idealization of the unity of the Eastern Church became in Konstantin Leontev a driving, authoritarian imperialism hoping to recreate the Byzantine Empire.³¹

The Westerners on the other hand, believed in the unity of European civilization. They saw that Russia was backward before the reforms were introduced by Peter the Great and found salvation of this backwardness in the introduction of Western European methods of social, economic and political organization. They were radical in politics and often atheistic in religion. They believed in the rights of the individual, and held that the state existed for the material welfare of the individual. They did not share the views of the Slavophiles that the state was something like a 'mystical and moral structure'. They held a strong passion for bringing Russian life into harmony with Western models.

Chaadayev, Belinsky, Herzen and Bakunin were the prominent figures amongst the westerner intelligentsia.

31 Ibid., pp. 226-7.

Chaadayev questioned the greatness of Russia's past, attacked orthodoxy and demonstrated Russia's isolation from the rest of Europe. He was very much aware of the differences between Russian and Western development, but unlike the Slavophiles he did not find the major advantages on the side of Russia and unlike the later Westerners he did see Europe as a source from which to borrow, but rather as a school from which to learn.³²

Belinsky, a literary critic, upheld the superiority of reason and knowledge over the autocracy of church and the state. "The literary reminiscences of the young radicals of the 30s and 40s - Pamev and wife, Turgenev, Herzen, Annenkov, Ogareva, Dostoevsky - agree in stressing this aspect of Belinsky as the 'conscience' of the Russian intelligentsia, the inspired and fearless publicist, the ideal of the young revolets, the writer who almost alone in Russia had the character and the eloquence to proclaim clearly and harshly what many felt, but either could not or would not openly declare."³³

Supremely endowed with social consciousness, and unencumbered with the mysticism of Chaadev, Belinsky shook his generation of intellectuals persistently, orienting many of them toward Western ideas of progress and human dignity.

³² Ibid., p. 197.

³³ Berlin, n. 19, p. 150.

Influenced by Herzen and by Feuerbach, he turned to socialism and materialism and attacked all those who defended in literature the existing conditions. Among the more theoretical Westerners who admired and followed him and shaped the nineteenth century thought were Herzen and Chernyshevsky.³⁴

Herzen, who spent most of his life in exile was one of the most noted of the liberals and later socialist publicists. As compared to the young men like Belinsky and Bakunin, who were buried in German metaphysics and in the study of Schelling and Hegel, placing the pursuit of truth and beauty before the problems of Russian society, Herzen was an outstanding representative of the intelligentsia who gave more thought to the social problems of the Russian society. He held the view that instead of the political revolution, which had proved so disappointing in France and Poland (1848), Russia needed a social revolution and argued that "if the economic advantages held by the property-owning class were eliminated, political privilege would automatically disappear".³⁵ In his celebrated periodical, "The Bell" (Kolokol) he dealt with anything that seemed to be related with topical interest. He had developed hatred for despotism and in particular of the Russian autocratic regime. He was also convinced that equally fatal dangers would come from his own socialist and revolutionary allies.³⁶

34 Anderson, n. 29, p. 199.

35 J.N. Westwood, Endurance and Endeavour - Russian History, 1812-1917 (Oxford, 1973), p. 110.

36 Berlin, n. 19, p. 193.

Herzen accepted that the Russian peasant commune might well be the factor enabling Russia to by-pass the capitalist phase of development. The commune, with its implication that the land belongs to those who cultivate it, had prepared the people for the principle of socialism. He stated that this type of socialism would be more easily accepted in Russia than that of Western Europe. He also accepted the possibility of Tsar himself introducing the needed reform. He also appealed to the conscience and intelligence of the gentry to whom Herzen himself belonged.

Herzen was the representative of the intellectual and moral side of the revolutionary appeal. "Though to the Russian 'angrymen' of 1860s Herzen was something of a phony, advocating revolution from the safety and luxury of his foreign residence, denouncing materialism...the later radical thought reclaimed and acknowledged his services. Lenin himself was to enroll Herzen among the great precursors of Bolshevism."³⁷

Herzen was sure that Russia would not accept a solution to the problem of political liberty which did not also attack the problem of economic distribution more effectively than had western capitalism. He was one of the most individualistic and most western of the Russians, he nonetheless emphatically rejected the individualistic economics of the West. He pinned

37 Ullam, n. 22, p. 57.

his faith in the typical Russian type of 'agrarian socialism' based on the 'village commune' and idealized the democratic Russian peasant. His "main contribution to the revolutionary tradition lies not wholly in his agrarian socialism...His contribution lies in his role as teacher and inspirer. It was he who through the example of his personality and his skill as a writer and journalist created the classical ethos of the Russian intelligentsia: the attitude of intellectual opposition to the authority, of solicitude for "the people" and of consecration to politics as the duty of every thinking and honest man."³⁸

Bakunin carried the practical application of the Westerner's ideals to the extremes of anarchism. He was Russia's first major exponent of anarchism as a political philosophy. He called for ruthless and violent smashing of old institutions, to be followed, not by individual autocracy but by spontaneous community of co-operation and the federation of communities in which a man would obey only his own convictions. He moved in intellectual circles, both Slavophil and Westerner, debating German philosophy with other members of the contemporary intelligentsia - Stankovich, Belinsky, Chaadayev, the Aksekovs, and Herzen, though he was considered to be an 'indisciplined personality',³⁹ it is

³⁸ Ibid., p. 63.

³⁹ Anderson, n. 29, p. 233.

"almost superfluous to say that Bakunin never worked out a systematic philosophy of revolution or of socialism. His socialism was mostly of visceral type: the revolt against any kind of oppression and injustice, rejection of any palliatives or halfway measures."⁴⁰

The young intelligentsia of 1870s took much interest in his teachings of radicalism. He was an anti-Marxist and considered it "another way of arriving at the centralized oppressive state".⁴¹ Bakunin contributed much to the Russian Populism of the nineteenth century through the legend of his own personality and his revolutionary skirmishes. "In the long line of the revolutionary figures that begins with the Decembrists and ends with Lenin, Bakunin stands somewhat to the side, ready to take on any and all proponents of oppression and coercive institutions, and strongly attractive despite his huge faults."⁴²

Chernyshevsky was the most important literary personality among the westerners in the 1860s and 70s who left long-lasting impact of his revolutionary ideas upon the radical intelligentsia of the future generation. The younger generation increasingly gave its adherence to Chernyshevsky

40 Ullam, n. 22, p. 53.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., p. 56.

and his like-minded colleagues on the editorial board of 'The Contemporary', who were advocating the imposition of socialism by revolution if necessary. Chernyshevsky was well aware of the price of the revolution but many of those whom he inspired were not; the futile violence advocated by some of his followers led to the public alienation and his own imprisonment. He never took, again, an active part in the revolutionary movement, though his novel, 'What is to be Done' inspired many subsequent generation of revolutionaries including Lenin, who even borrowed this title of his famous political treatise: "What Is To Be Done".

Lenin himself a great admirer of Chernyshevsky admitted that "I became a revolutionary at the age after reading Chernyshevsky." The novel painted an optimistic picture of what could be achieved in Russia, not by terror, but by co-operation, by education, and by enlightened self-interest. It became a bible for the two generations of narodniki. It is sometimes said that Marx learned Russian language so that he could read Chernyshevsky. Marx's opinion regarding Russia were influenced by Chernyshevsky's theory of the peasant commune. Marx called him a great Russian scholar and critic. Though, not a Marxist, he was admired because of his materialism, his stress upon economic matters, and his militant assurance that the lower classes must work out their own salvation.

In the 1860s Chernyshevsky's confidence that the capitalistic stage could be avoided was the basis of his popularity and influence. Chernyshevsky's influence on the revolutionary intelligentsia including Lenin and on subsequent development of the Russian revolutionary movement is not a debatable issue. He is considered as a 'Great Predecessor' by the Soviet historian. The historians stress - "that for all his lack of the final grace of Marxism, no figure looms as great in the history of revolution prior to Lenin. The father of Russian Marxism, Plekhanov, is by comparison a dry raisonneur. The revolutionaries of the People's Will who offered their lives in fighting the autocracy are the romantic precursors of the men of 1905 and 1917. But Chernyshevsky represents not only the idea and the resolve of revolution. He mirrors the mentality of the revolutionary: his cunning and naivete, the ability to withstand and to inflict suffering, both the crudity and the elation of his vision of better world."⁴³

It was the failure of 1848 revolution in Western Europe that gave an opportunity to the progressive intelligentsia such as Herzen, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, to abandon their faith in liberalism and parliamentary reform and sought to find the solution in the theories of peasant revolution. The intelligentsia started an active participation in the campaign

43 Ibid., p. 91.

for the emancipation of the serfs—resulted in the Emancipation Act of 1861 — and for the development of Russian society towards agrarian socialism rather than capitalism.

The younger generation of the intelligentsia that came out of the universities of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev and Kazan formed various underground activities and organizations having direct clashes with the governmental authorities. They "were actively involved in all revolutionary movements from the early Zemlya-Volya (Land and Liberty) groups of early sixties through the various populist organizations to the Social Revolutionary and socialist groups at the end of the century."⁴⁴ Maxim Gorky considered them "a phenomenon which is unequalled in spiritual beauty and love of mankind".⁴⁵

The Russian intelligentsia were not, as in the rest of Europe, essentially bourgeois. They came chiefly from the professional classes and the nobility. They were divided into groups and 'circles' where socialist and revolutionary political ideas were discussed in the abstract. There was a frequent ideological shifts that marked the evolution of the intelligentsia during the second half of the nineteenth century. There were two contrasting modes of orientation —

⁴⁴ Churchward, n. 3, p. 28.

⁴⁵ S. Vladimir, The Young in the Revolution (Moscow), p. 23.

first the "left" position that was expressed in Chernyshevsky's slogan of 'self-affirmation', in his insistence on the ability of a small elite to remake the world in the image of its consciousness and the second was the "right" position.⁴⁶ To say that the evolution of the intelligentsia moved in this fashion during much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is not to deny that many members of the intelligentsia were predominantly inclined to one or the other position. But [It] does mean that the history of the revolutionary intelligentsia may be regarded as the product of the changing equilibrium between the self-affirmation of the intelligentsia left and the more adaptive position of the right."⁴⁷

The most important contribution of the Russian intelligentsia had been the cult of "revolutionism", their idealization of revolutionary acts, and their enshrinement of the 'revolutionary fighter' as the supreme folk hero of the age. A Western scholar wrote:

radical convention still demands that we should study the history of the Russian intelligentsia as an epic struggle of brave and enterprising reforms against an abtuse tyranny which went on crushing them until successful revolution crowned their efforts to crush it. 48

46 Haimson, n. 5, p. 11.

47 Ibid.

48 R. Hare, Pioneers of Russian Socialist Thought (Oxford, 1951), p. 34.

The acceptance of revolutionary upheaval as the only solution to their country's problems sprang from the intelligentsia's rejection of the existing order on the one hand, and their messianism, on the other. This 'revolutionism' of the intelligentsia during the second half was manifested in a variety of forms. From Herzen on, the radical intelligentsia maintained that the people were indifferent to politics and incapable of independent political action.

POPULIST-INTELLIGENTISIA

In the 1960s, certain members of the radical intelligentsia took up the ideas of Herzen and Chernyshevsky, that socialism must be taken 'to the people' in the belief that it could be established through the traditional communal organization of mir without passing through the capitalist stage of economic development. On Herzen's call 'to the people', a Populist (Narodniki) movement sprang that dominated the historical development between 1861 and 1881. "It is a period of intense revolutionary activity; the ideas of socialism and revolution pervaded every segment of the educated classes. Not only the student body and young intelligentsia, but a part of the officialdom and of the army officer corps catch the fever."⁴⁹

With the new enthusiasm of gaining the practical experience of the suffering masses thousands of the university

49 Ullam, n. 22, pp. 91-92.

students and members of the intelligentsia went to the countryside during the 90s to live with the peasants and to preach them socialism. "In the history of the Russian revolutionary movement 1874 was the height of the belief in "the people".⁵⁰

The movement of the "Populist (Narodniki) held that Russia could and should skip the capitalist path of development by pursuing a path of her own...that the traditional village peasant commune would provide a nucleus and a model for the future social order, which would be superior to the capitalist order."⁵¹ They also had a distrust for liberalism and parliamentary democracy. Though the populist declared themselves as "friends of the people" yet the movement was not a movement of the people, but almost purely of the urban intelligentsia on behalf of the people, primarily the peasant."⁵² They, for all their mystic faith in the people, were themselves mostly 'penitent aristocrats', landowners, ashamed of living on the backs of peasantry. In background, education and sympathies they were quite out of touch with the real peasants.⁵³

The revolutionary populist movement included in it many diverse elements of propagandists, conspirators and

50 Ibid., p. 98.

51 L. Schapiro, The Government and Politics of the Soviet Union (London, 1977), p. 15.

52 Anderson, n. 29, p. 248.

53 C. Hill, Lenin and the Russian Revolution (London, 1971), p. 19.

terrorist. Its most typical concern was that of activating the Russian population against Tsarism. "It was a literary influence and a general cultural trend as well as a specifically political movement and few Russian intellectuals who reached maturity between the years 1861 and 1905 escaped its influence."⁵⁴

The Populists were men of dissimilar origins, outlooks and capacities. It was not 'more than loose congeries of small independent groups of conspirators or their sympathisers', who were united sometimes for common action and sometimes operated in isolation. They held diverse views about the ends and means, yet held certain common beliefs and possessed 'sufficient moral and political solidarity' to make them held together in the form of a movement.⁵⁵ "Like their predecessors, the Decembrist conspirators in the 20s and the circles that gathered around Alexander Herzen and Belinsky in the 30s and 40s, they looked on government and the social structure of their country as a moral and political monstrosity - obsolete, barbarious, stupid and odious - and dedicated their lives to its total destruction".⁵⁶

They also held the views propounded by Froudhon, Herzen, Saint Simon, Fourier and other French socialists-

54 Churchward, n. 3, p. 28.

55 Berlin, n. 19, p. 210.

56 Ibid.

that the determining factor in politics and social change was 'the struggle between social and economic classes'. They held praise for social justice and social equality and had full faith of its realization in the already existing Russian system of peasant commune. They were convinced that "the death of the peasant commune would mean death, or at any rate, a vast setback to freedom and equality in Russia".⁵⁷

The prominent amongst the Populist intelligentsia were Peter Lavrov, Peter Tkachev, N.K. Mikhailovsky and Plekhanov. The writings of Herzen and Chernyshevsky also had considerable influence on the Populist movement. The prominent ideologist of the movement were Mikhailovsky and Lavrov, both of noble birth.

Lavrov's approach to the populism was also based on the 'Go to the People' - a call given by Herzen a decade before. But he "warned the Russian intelligentsia that apolitical work for the people was both fruitless and treasonous....Lavrov taunts, coaxes, and threatens those persons who want to go among the peasants and just work for them as doctors, teachers, midwives, and the like."⁵⁸ He did not appreciate the idea of the intelligentsia that was not engaged in the revolutionary activity. In an article "The Force that is Lost to Revolution", Lavrov suggests that the intelligentsia has one task "to bring the propaganda of socialism and of radical revolution to the

57 Ibid., p. 237.

58 Ullian, n. 22, p. 95.

masses."⁵⁹ For Lavrov it was the only path left for achieving the desired end. He argued that only the 'intellectual elite', united in a party would be able to assure the welfare of the masses and can bring revolution.

Populism, like other earlier movements was based essentially on the intellectuals and the 'study group' form of organization. The students, teachers, scientists, writers and literary critiques formed various organizations. In 1860 a group of young intelligentsia named Zemlya-i-Volya was formed. Its members had to face the wrath of the autocratic regime. Another group of new young leaders was formed in 1876 consisting of more disciplined leaders. It had a strong centralized organization and had established many centres in various provinces. Its members increased their activities of educating the peasantry. The organization also launched its journal Zemlya-i-Volya in October 1878, which was published abroad but widely distributed in Russia.

In the 90s the government followed the suppressive policies to curb the activities of the Populists. Many young missionaries were arrested and put behind the bars. The highhandedness of the government and the failure of the Populists in arousing the peasant from slumbering attitude and the dissension among the members of the Zemlya-i-Volya, its members were divided into two sections. A section of the

59 Ibid., p. 96.

intelligentsia who started believing in 'terrorism' and violent form of revolutionary movement formed a separate organization called 'Narodnaya Volya' (Peoples Will).

The 'Peoples Will' was sparked by its radical leader Andrei Zhelyabov with whom Mikhailovski also collaborated. Even Tkachev's ideas also influenced in People's Will organization though he was always unenthusiastic about terrorism. Anderson explains that "Plekhanov, who needed to distinguish and defend his own moderate wing of land and liberty against the People's Will, and who tried to identify Tkachev as the intellectual father of that group even though he, Tkachev, was always unenthusiastic about terrorism."⁶⁰

Tkachev "urged the need for a conspiracy by an elite to seize power at the top....Thought of social revolution by the peasants was an illusion, it was essential to seize power first, and then to effect social reform from above."⁶¹

The non-terrorist section formed another group called 'Cherny Peredal' (Black Redistribution). It was a small group having faith in educating the peasantry and demanded immediate reforms. Plekhanov was the leader of this moderate group. The terrorist group concentrated their activities of assassination of Tsar and other officials. With the

60 Anderson, n. 29, p. 259.

61 Schapiro, n. 51, p. 17.

assassination of Alexander II on March 1881, the Populist movement was almost suppressed and liquidated.

Though the movement did not recover but most of its members joined later the Socialist Revolutionary Party. And, although in 1917, the views of the Populists, the Socialist Revolutionaries, failed to exploit their potential strength, it is wrong to belittle the movement simply because it never gained power. It was the Populist who made a start in developing the political consciousness of ordinary people. Moreover their action, inspired and their ideological discussions informed, later generation of revolutionaries, including the Marxist.

Many of the early Russian Marxist intelligentsia including Plekhanov and Lenin were influenced by Populism. "It never lost its character as a movement of the intelligentsia but it came to enjoy quite unusual support among the ordinary people. Nor did it lose its quality as a spectrum of opinions ranging from the most violent revolutionaries to gradualists who neither desired nor trusted revolution."⁶²

It is also argued that most Populists were against violence on principle. But the supposed need for an early revolution did persuade many to accept violence as a temporary necessity. The terrorism of the revolutionary also proved to be counterproductive in the sense it alienated that part of

62 Anderson, n. 29, pp. 271-2.

the public which accepted the criticism made by the Populist but could not tolerate their methods. The reason for this is generally given that Alexander was on the point of introducing the beginning of a constitution at the time he was assassinated.

There was a rapid decline of the Populist movement after the assassination due to its exhaustion, repression and a feeling among the intelligentsia that nothing had been gained. Sensing the need of time the government on the other hand, along with the repressive policy towards revolutionary forces of the intelligentsia, had introduced certain reforms particularly in the economic field. The government helped in stabilizing the Russian currency, introduced protective tariffs and gave 'generous land and monetary grants' to the business houses and thus won the loyal support of the industrial bourgeoisie as well as it was able to consolidate its control over the course of industrial development. This led to an alliance between the government and bourgeoisie that increased the power of the government and weakened the opposition of the revolutionary forces..⁶³

The alliance between the autocracy and the most energetic forces of bourgeois society was a factor of decisive importance in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. It helped maintain the psychological isolation of most members of the revolutionary intelligentsia. Already walled off from the decaying society of

63 Haimson, n. 5, p. 20.

estates, these men now felt compelled to oppose the growing forces of capitalism, for the alliance of the big bourgeoisie with absolutism hastened their long standing prejudices against the capitalist order and blinded them to the revolutionary potential of that offspring of capitalism, the industrial proletariat. 64

MARXIST-INTELLIGENTSIA

The last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence and evolution of a new type of intelligentsia which was basically different from the rest of the intelligentsia of the nineteenth century, for its class-concept of the historical development of the society, having been significantly influenced by the greatest of all the philosophies of the century including Karl Marx. Marx's theories had been known and appreciated since the forties by the Russian radicals, but "the Populists were the first to introduce Marx to Russia and they were the first to base political groups on the working class".⁶⁵ The failure of Populism had given the impetus to the Marxist revolutionary movement. In the eighties and nineties various underground groups and circles had been formed from amongst the working class, the leadership to which was provided by the Marxist intelligentsia. For example Workers' Groups were organised by the Chaikovskists,

64 Ibid., pp. 20-21.

65 Churchward, n. 3, p. 30.

in St. Petersburg in 1872-73. Similarly, the Workers' Union of South Russia (Kiev) 1879, and the Northern Union of Russian Workers, 1879, were organized by the Populist.⁶⁶ Out of these underground groups and circles sprang up the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, the first programme of which was drafted at Geneva in 1884.

Lenin, Krupskaya and many other Marxist intellectuals were actively involved to co-ordinate all these groups into a composite party. 'The Emancipation of Labour Group' was formed in 1883 by Plekhanov, Paul Aksairod, Lev Deich and Vera Zasulich. It was a theoretical Marxist group which has practical aim to publish Marxist literature for dissemination inside Russia. Plekhanov, the father of the Russian Marxist had argued that the village commune on which the Populists had pinned their faith had started disintegrating and Russia had already entered on the path of capitalist development, which in Marxian historical process of social development would lead to bourgeois democratic revolution and then to the proletarian socialist revolution.⁶⁷

The Russian Marxists were orthodox in the beginning and were 'mainly intellectuals', although the groups operating in Russia had already started recruiting the working class who strengthened the activities of these groups in organizing strikes and holding protests. The Russian Marxist

66 See footnote in Churchward, n. 3, p. 38.

67 Schapiro, n. 51, p. 16.

intelligentsia had clearly a distinguished approach to the problems of Russian society than their predecessors the 'Populists' did follow. There were three main points of differences. First the Populist found the possibility of Russia avoiding capitalism and sought to justify the foundation of socialism in the village commune. "Marx himself was somewhat undecided on the possibility of Russia avoiding capitalism although he clearly believed that it had developed rapidly in that direction since 1861."⁶⁸ The early Russian Marxist had full faith of Russia following the path of economic and social development as in Western Europe. Lenin justified this stand in his work 'The Development of Capitalism in Russia' published in 1899. Corroborating with the official statistics, Lenin justified that the Russian industry had already geared to the large scale Market and Capitalism in Russia was an established fact.

Secondly, while the Populist stressed the faith in the peasantry the Russian Marxist pinned their faith in the significantly increasing industrial proletariat which was historically destined to establish socialism. And finally whereas the Populists followed the path of 'terrorism' the Russian Marxist believed in Marxian theory of social development in which the class character of the Russian society was to provide the inevitable path of the development of

68 Churchward, n. 3, p. 31.

capitalism and its inherent destruction by the proletarian forces.

Plekhanov's writings "On the Development of the Monist Views of History (1895)" and "On the Role of the Individual in History (1898)" provided the theoretical justification to this view. Dan writes, "after the paralysing illusions of abolescent Populism had been shaken off, it was primarily a question of accurately feeling out the real direction of Russian socio-economic and political evolution, and thus giving the Russian revolutionary movement, which had dried up as a movement of the isolated intelligentsia, a powerful ideological weapon to convert it into a mass movement and thus into a mighty political force. It was this weapon that was given to it by Plekhanov's theoretical work."⁶⁹

Marxist intelligentsia had been considering it right that a mass working class movement would be an inevitable result of the socio-economic development of Russia, and that only this movement would take a political character. Peter Struve, one of the prominent liberal intelligentsia also argued against the Populism and welcomed the advent of capitalism, since it would, along with its miseries, bring the material and spiritual culture of Western Europe, including political liberty to Russia.⁷⁰

69 Dan, n. 16, p. 184.

70 Schapiro, n. 51, p. 19.

Liberal - Intelligentsia

At the turn of the century Peter Struve and Miliukov were the outstanding liberal theorists who wrested the intellectual leadership of the liberal movement from the hands of the landlords. The liberals were an articulate and potentially influential stratum of society that included many of the provincial gentry and many members of the civilian professions. They were united by a desire for a reign of law and some sort of public representation in the government. The important centres of the liberalism were the zemstvos, the organs of regional self-government created in 1864.

Liberalism had been considered hardly respectable by many of the intelligentsia because its connection with the landlords and because its objectives were political and offered no solution to the pressing economic and social problems. It had been antagonistic to socialism and yet unable to defend capitalism or to meet the theoretical arguments of the socialist. Peter Struve who started his political career as a Marxist-agitator, was regarded as a leading Marxist in Russia, when Marxism itself was at the height of its prestige. However, later on, having developed polemics with Plekhanov and Lenin on some basic principles of Marxism, had lost his faith in Marxism and converted to liberalism. "Struve proved unfit to become the authentic

political leader and ideological champion of the movement of the urban intelligentsia in preparing and realizing the revolution."⁷¹

Like Struve, Miliukov, another leading liberal intellectual believed that government in Russia, as in the West must eventually rest not upon the intelligentsia and landowners but upon the suffrage of the masses. The liberal intelligentsia had realized the need for popular support as early as 1870s, but liberalism never reached the masses. Within landowning and professional circles the liberal intelligentsia represented and kept alive a reasonable alternative between autocracy and revolution, the alternative of limited government attained by peaceful means. Liberalism thus provided a path by which wealthy and conservative but dissatisfied men could oppose the government and thereby it reduced drastically the governments' already very narrow basis of support.

The prominent Marxist had been keeping the view "that a mass working class movement would be the inevitable result of the socio-economic development of Russia and that this movement would take a 'political character'...that, in the form of the industrial proletariat, a mass force would, for the first time, appear in Russia that was capable of becoming a bulwark in the struggle against the autocratic regime."⁷²

71 Dan, n. 16, p. 285.

72 Ibid., p. 206.

This view received the sympathy for Marxism from amongst the growing strength of the Russian intelligentsia. "Since peasant worship still exercised a powerful hold on the minds of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia, the task of Plekhanov and later of Lenin, was to determine this faith and to turn the attention of the intellectuals from the village to the city, where capitalism was taking root and a new industrial proletariat was in the process of creation."⁷³ With the emergence of the Marxist intelligentsia, the social democratic movement was shifted from countryside to the city, undermining the potential capabilities of revolutionary force of the peasantry. Even "a revolutionary engineer as Lenin did not really sense the revolutionary potential of the peasantry until the peasant risings of the 1905 revolution forced him to re-examine the tenets of his faith."⁷⁴

The Marxist philosophy of class-conflict of the social forces and its historical evolution had its influence differently on the Russian intelligentsia and thus emerged different Marxist group of intelligentsia having different approaches as well as their aims to the basic problem of developing capitalism in Russia. They were mainly three - the legal Marxist, Economist and the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (Bolshevik-Menshevik).

73 Fainsod, n. 1, p. 33.

74 Ibid., p. 34.

The legal Marxist intelligentsia - a small group of intellectuals - was very active in the middle of the 1890s. The outstanding spokesmen of the legal Marxist were Peter Struve, Bulgakov, Berdyaev and Tugan Baranovsky. They accepted without qualification the Marxist view of the development of bourgeois capitalism as a necessary first stage in the eventual achievement of socialism, and believed in that in this respect Russia must learn from the West and tread the Western path.⁷⁵ They had more of theoretical foundation of Marxism instead of visualizing the practicability of the theory under the peculiar conditions of Russia and realities of the developing revolutionary forces. Though the legal Marxists helped laying the theoretical foundation of Marxism in Russia, almost all the outstanding figures including Peter Struve, having lost their faith in Marxism migrated to liberalism.

There was a rapid spread of Marxism among Russian intellectuals at this time because of the rapid industrialisation and due to the absence of any bourgeois tradition or bourgeois political philosophy which could play in Russia the role of Western liberalism.⁷⁶ "But, in accepting Marxism, the Russian middle-class intellectual emptied it of any immediate revolutionary content, so that the authorities, who still feared the Narodniks as the main revolutionary party, were not unwilling

75 E.H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution (London, 1973), vol. 1, pp. 21-22.

76 Ibid., p. 21.

to tolerate these sworn enemies of Narodniks whose own programme seemed to carry no imminent threat."⁷⁷

For another Marxist group of intellectuals, the so-called 'Economists' of late nineties, Marxism meant little more than 'bread and butter', believed in 'Trade Unionism' and 'bargaining' with the employers for more pay and other facilities for which Lenin had fierce contempt. "Trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers to the bourgeoisie."⁷⁸ Not like the 'legal Marxist', "who were in essence a bourgeois group advocating bourgeois policies through a Marxist idiom, the "Economist" had a policy of economic agitation and social reform for the workers and were to that extent a genuine workers' party. But they reached the same practical conclusion as the legal Marxist that it was necessary to postpone to an indefinite future the revolutionary socialist struggle of the proletariat and to concentrate meanwhile on a reformist democratic programme in alliance with bourgeoisie."⁷⁹

In the face of these divergent trends, Plekhanov and Lenin had to provide the true revolutionary content of the Marxist ideology, "for both Plekhanov and Lenin, Marxism was a revolutionary creed not to be diluted by opportunistic waverings."⁸⁰ The Russian-Social Democratic Workers' Party

77 Ibid.

78 V.I. Lenin, What is to be Done (Moscow, 1947), pp. 53-62.

79 Carr, n. 75, pp. 23-24.

80 Fainsod, n. 1, p. 35.

(Bolshevik) headed by Lenin represented the true character of the Marxist ideology. "As against the Narodniks, the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party regarded the proletariat and not the peasant as the driving force of the coming revolution; as against the 'legal Marxists', it preached revolutionary and socialist action, as against the so-called 'Economists', it put forward in the name of the proletariat political as well as economic demands."⁸¹

The beginning of the twentieth century further hastened the evolution of the Russian intelligentsia moving along the tenets of Marxism. The political upheavals of the first two decades - the peasant uprising in the form of Revolution of 1905, Russo-Japanese war and the involvement of Russia in the First World War, along with its deeprooted evils of agrarian economic backwardness, poverty, misery and autocratic absolutism of Tsarist government enhanced the revolutionary potentialities of the 'working class, peasantry and the intelligentsia'. It was a period of Marxist hegemony over all other shades of opinion amongst the Russian intelligentsia. This Marxist hegemony was created by the intellectuals of outstanding calibre like Plekhanov, Lenin, Martov, Trotsky and others. The Russian Social Democratic Party, which was the main organised representative party of the urban intelligentsia, took its birth alongwith polemics among the

⁸¹ Carr, n. 75, p. 19.

Marxist intelligentsia and was divided into two factions - Bolshevik (Majority) and Menshevik (Minority) - right in the beginning when its second Congress was held in Brussels in 1903.⁸² While both the factions had already stated recruiting the industrial worker, better to be called 'working intelligentsia', the party as such was dominated by the intellectuals. Lenin was the predominantly outstanding spokesman of the Bolsheviks while Martov remained the recognised leader of the Mensheviks. "Lenin and his early associates were intellectuals of the purest water....Zinoviev described the few workers in the early party organisations as 'isolated phenomena'".⁸³

The 'revolutionary consciousness' among the working masses was, in fact, infused by the intelligentsia that had been the guiding force of the party. It was Lenin alone who had visualised the true role of the party in his famous work 'What Is To Be Done'. It is considered to be an original contribution to the theory of Marxism.⁸⁴ Lenin emphasised that "the ideas of 'scientific socialism', which postulate the need for the social revolution, can only be brought to the workers by intellectuals 'from the outside', and the workers must be led by professional full time revolutionaries."⁸⁵

82 Schapiro, n. 51, p. 22.

83 Carr, n. 75, p. 29.

84 Schapiro, n. 51, p. 28.

85 Ibid., p. 29.

Along with tactical and strategical divergences between the two main factions of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks various polemics remained at individual level among Lenin, Plekhanov, Martov, Trotsky and other prominent leaders of the Marxist intelligentsia. Though Lenin himself, until 1917, held the orthodox view that 'bourgeois revolution must precede a socialist revolution',⁸⁶ strongly disagreed with the Mensheviks' theoretical conception of a long gap between the 'bourgeois' and 'proletarian' revolution, and with Trotsky's theory of 'permanent revolution'.⁸⁷

On the countryside the guiding force among the peasantry was the dominating socialist Revolutionary Party which was stronger than the Mensheviks or Bolsheviks in March 1917 and even in November 1917. The main support to their party was provided by the peasants, although like all other parties its leadership remained in the hands of the intelligentsia. Like its urban counterpart, Russian Social Democratic Party, it was also split into two wings, a moderate wing known as Popular Socialists and a radical extremist wing, the "Marxists". The later completely separated from the Popular Socialists during the October 1917 Revolution and finally joined hands with the Bolshevik Party.⁸⁸

86 Ibid., p. 30.

87 Carr, n. 75, pp. 57-80.

88 Churchward, n. 3, pp. 36-37.

Lenin was a strong admirer of the role of the intelligentsia in the construction of socialist revolutionary forces. However Lenin has been portrayed by at least one recent author - Adam B. Ullam - as "strongly anti-intellectual, an intelligent whose dislike of fellow intellectual was legendary".⁸⁹ Lenin, though himself was an intelligent of 'purest water' and belonging to the upper crust of the elite had strong reservations for this stratum. Ullam observes that we find in him "a manifestation of his paradoxical hatred of the intelligentsia and its whole world of ideas, of philanthropy, of the unctuous concern for the poor and underprivileged."⁹⁰ But at the same time we do not fail to find the practical side of Lenin's personality. Lenin held:

the bourgeois intelligentsia were hateful, cowardly, and otherwise condemned; the worker was pure, courageous, and otherwise praiseworthy. But when it came to the concrete problems of revolutionary organisation...it was ridiculous to think that one could dispense with the intellectuals. 91

Lenin went to the extent that the factory worker, in his increasing misery, needed the help of the intelligentsia to understand the necessity for the destruction of capitalism. The role of the intelligentsia was not simply auxiliary, it

89 Kendall E. Bailes, Technology and Society under Lenin and Stalin (New Jersey, 1978), p. 47.

90 Ullam, n. 22, p. 193.

91 Ibid.

was fundamental and indispensable. Lenin never forgot throughout his life that the "hated intelligentsia were still the key to the success of revolution or of any political movement in Russia".⁹² Lenin's relationship with the intelligentsia was very much complicated. "He depised the dilettantism and lethargy that were the traits of many pre-revolutionary intellectuals among whom he had grown up. But Lenin remained a traditional Russian intellectual in other respects, and in the years after 1917 he defended many interests of the intelligentsia against attacks from anti-intellectual workers and radicals."⁹³

The historical events since the beginning of the century testify the significant role played by the intelligentsia. It was the intelligentsia that guided, educated and nurtured the revolutionary potentialities among the masses. Although the final phase - the downfall of Tsardom in the February Revolution and then in the October Revolution - was the result of the combined efforts made by the trinity - the workers, the peasantry and the intelligentsia - but the guiding force remained throughout in the hands of the intelligentsia.

The Russian history since the middle of the 19th century, thus, witnessed the formation and evolution of intelligentsia in its true character. Beginning with the

92 Ibid., p. 278.

93 Bailes, n. 89, p. 47.

'men of forties' - the intelligentsia a significant social stratum ran through different shades of opinion formalised by Slavophiles, Westerners, Populists, Liberals and Marxists. The intelligentsia, ridden out of the old society of landlords had gone through rapid change in its formation and world outlook. The socio-economic conditions and the historical events of the era had been the important variables responsible for the changing formation, composition and world outlook of the intelligentsia. It had never been a homogeneous body.

All the movements of different shades of opinion of the intelligentsia had contributed, in their own way, much in achieving the ultimate goal of overthrowing the Tsarist regime. On the eve of the October Revolution the whole Russian intelligentsia cannot be said, was composed of Marxist ideology. One can trace in it the remnants of Narodniki, Official Conservative and Liberal intelligentsia. But the fact remains that the whole credit of escalating the revolutionary movement culminating into a victory and laying the foundation of socialist society - a unique phenomenon of the century - goes to the Marxist intelligentsia.

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CHAPTER III

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THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENTSIA DURING 1917-1929

The historic Revolution that took place on 25 October (November 17 - New Calendar), 1917 did not signify merely an overthrow of the old Tsarist state. It involved the rebuilding of the Russian society. The revolutionary leadership was primarily faced with the 'problem of reconstruction'¹ of the society. It was a problem of continuity and change and remoulding the Russian society towards socialism and its eventual transformation into communism. The problem of continuity and change is 'highly troublesome in the analysis of revolutionary epoch',² "Revolution automatically raises the familiar issue of continuity and change in history. It is a commonplace that no continuous situation, however static, is exempt from change, and that no change, however revolutionary, wholly breaks the continuity".³ The Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Lenin wanted to construct "a new form of society previously unknown to history".⁴

1 David Lane, Politics and Society in the USSR (London, 1970), p. 57.

2 Boris Meissner, ed., Social Change in the Soviet Union (London, 1972), p. 1.

3 E.H. Carr, 1917: Before and After (London, 1969), p. 1.

4 David Lane, n. 1, p. 57.

The society that was visualised by the leadership was to be based upon the democratic principles in which the economy was to be governed by the principle of production for use, not for profit, and the social relations were to be equalitarian.⁵ In the conceptual framework of Marxist-Leninist ideology the whole economy was to be governed by the principles of 'socialist economy'. However, "an immediate transition to a socialist economy was not on the agenda in the early months of the Soviet regime. Immediate preoccupation was with the seizure of certain economic key positions to consolidate the political power that had already been won."⁶ The period from October 1917 to the summer of 1918 did not see the 'introduction of socialism' in Russia.⁷

The reconstruction of the new society out of the ruins of traditional Tsarist-bourgeois system was a crucial task for the intelligentsia, which is considered to be the guiding force of 'change' in all the societies. The Soviet intelligentsia had to build a new order, Lenin observed, "Out of the bricks of the old order"⁸ inherited from the Tsarist regime.

5 Ibid.

6 Maurice Dobb, Soviet Economic Development since 1917 (London, 1948), pp. 82-83.

7 David Lane, n. 1, p. 59.

8 Quoted by R.R. Sharma, "Social Structure and Social Change in Soviet Society", in Zafar Imam, ed., The USSR : Sixty Years (New Delhi, 1981), p. 26.

The party that was founded by Lenin consisted of highly educated members of the intelligentsia of the period.

is "It/certainly not an exaggeration to assert that in fact the whole of the Bolshevik Party was an elite organization. This has to be understood in the context of strategic social role which they played as organizers of a formidable socio-political change."⁹ The rank-and-file of the Bolshevik Party was filled up by the highly educated and enlightened members of the Soviet intelligentsia.

The intelligentsia in any society perform a variety of social functions - criticism, education, planning and administration, health protection, social engineering, legal services and research development etc.¹⁰ But the nature of task for the Soviet intelligentsia, immediately after the overthrow of Tsarist regime was of a crucial nature. It had to lay the foundation of a 'new society' out of the ruins left by the old system. Before and during the revolution the Bolshevik Party 'conducted widespread political agitation amongst the workers, directed the workers' movement on the revolutionary path. It helped the proletariat to master the Marxist theory and to arm itself with proletarian class ideology.'¹¹ After the achievement of revolution the intelligentsia had a considerable

9 R.R. Sharma, "Intelligentsia and the Politics of Under-development and Development - A Case Study of Soviet Central Asia", International Studies, vol. 15, no. 2, 1976, p. 213.

10 L.G. Churchward, The Soviet Intelligentsia (London, 1973), p. 89.

11 S. Fedukin, The Great October Revolution and the Intelligentsia (Moscow, 1975), p. 7.

contribution to make in the founding of a cultural, material and technological basis of socialism. In fact, in the specific historical circumstances the whole socio-economic, political and cultural transformation of the society was to be guided, supported and led by the intelligentsia. This gigantic task of transformation of the society along the socialist principles based on the Marxist-Leninist ideology put a challenge to the Soviet intelligentsia in the world of capitalistic order.

Talking about the significance of the revolution and main task of the Soviet intelligentsia, Lenin observed in the Reports on the Tasks of the Soviet Power, delivered at the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on 7 November 1917:

Its significance is, first of all, that we shall have a Soviet government, our organ of power, in which the bourgeoisie will have no share whatsoever. The oppressed masses will themselves create a power. The old state apparatus will be shattered to its foundations and a new administrative apparatus set up in the form of the Soviet organizations. From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this the third Russian Revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of Socialism. 12

Amongst the various problems along with the main task of remoulding the Soviet society the Soviet Government and the Bolshevik Party had to create its own cadre of intelligentsia fully conversant with the Marxist-Leninist

12 V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 26, p. 239.

ideology. The dire need of the time also demanded the enlistment of services of the old bourgeois intelligentsia to the side of the Soviet government.

Lenin believed that the enlistment of the services of the bourgeois intelligentsia to build a new society was an indispensable condition for the victory of socialism. "The bourgeois intellectuals", Lenin observed, "cannot be expelled and destroyed, but must be won over, remoulded, assimilated and reeducated."¹³

But the problem was that a wider section of the intelligentsia inherited by the newly born Soviet state had for a long time remained under the influence of the old world outlook and had confirmed faith in the old bourgeois land-owner system. Thus the problem was to bring a change in the outlook of the old intelligentsia along the lines of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The new government did not have at its command a sufficient number of specialists to help manage the state, to build a new economy, to ensure the defence of the country and to further development in science, art and culture. The enemies of the Bolshevism criticized that the proletariat should not have ventured to seize power as it did not have enough intelligentsia cadre. However, the proletariat did not wait for a new socialist intelligentsia to be formed and took the reins of the state into its own hands.

¹³ Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, p. 115.

Socialism required a system of planned management of social life. For the successful working of planned management of social life the Bolshevik Party needed the creation of a new intelligentsia which was not possible in the beginning since the training of a new intelligentsia is a highly complicated process demanding a lot of time and expenditure of resources. Since the Soviet state did not have such resources at that time, the problem of the enlistment of the old bourgeois intelligentsia to co-operate with Soviet government became of prime importance. Lenin pointed out that: "We cannot build it [our State] if we do not utilise such a heritage of capitalist culture as the intellectuals."¹⁴

For the proper functioning of the new governmental apparatus and defence of the country, the services of the old specialists were required to be used with utmost care to avert the counter-revolution, the fear of which was still very much there among the masses. Moreover, the services of the old intelligentsia were also required to maintain on an organised basis the expert-management of the economy. Though the greater part of the old intelligentsia neither understood nor accepted the November Revolution, and later distrustfully met the Bolshevik Party's plan for the radical reform of the country, it was, however, impossible to achieve the desired imperatives of the transition period without the help of the intelligentsia. Lenin devoted much time and effort

¹⁴ Ibid., vol. 28, p. 215.

to convince the party cadre to accept the reality that the successful transformation of the society was impossible without the utilization of services of the old intelligentsia in the period of transition to socialism.

It is to be noted that Lenin, a political activist who was drawn from the ranks of intelligentsia himself, put an immense influence upon the old bourgeois intelligentsia. "His vast knowledge and found erudition, his political tact in solving 'awkward' questions, his thorough knowledge of the Russian intelligentsia, all played not an insignificant role in winning over the sympathy of the educated members of the old society."¹⁵

Intelligentsia's Attitude Towards the Revolution

Marxists argue that under a capitalist system the intelligentsia remains a heterogeneous body both in its class-interest and its political outlook. It fills its ranks from the people - both the exploiting and exploited classes. Such an intelligentsia serves the interest of the class of its origin at the expense of the interests of the other classes. Socialism requires an intelligentsia that serves the interests of the 'society as a whole'.

At the time of Revolution the intelligentsia - an interclass sub-stratum was connected with various classes

¹⁵ Fedyukin, n. 11, p. 10.

in terms of its origins, composition, business and other relations; the intelligentsia's political make-up made it, as Bukharin put it, a "motely" and heterogeneous group. Its attitude towards the revolution was of mixed nature.

Firstly, a significant section of the intelligentsia having progressive and liberal outlook had realised the importance of the revolution and visualizing the emergence of a new social system recognised the Revolution and placed its knowledge and experience at the disposal of the Soviet government. Quite a few famous scientists, engineers, writers, doctors and others gave full support to the new revolutionary Soviet government. K.A. Timiryazev, a famous Russian scientist was one of the first members of the old intelligentsia who took to the side of the new Soviet government. He played a notable part in attracting the old scientific, cultural and artistic workers to the side of the Soviet government through his writings published in papers.¹⁶

Similarly, Alexander Blok and Vladimir Mayakovsky were two great Russian poets of the twentieth century who enthusiastically greeted the revolution. In an article published on 19 January 1918, Blok addressed the intelligentsia: "With all your body, all your heart, with your whole consciousness - listen to the Revolution."¹⁷

16 Ibid., p. 20.

17 Ibid., p. 21.

Amongst those who willingly accepted the revolution and placed their services for the reconstruction of the society were writers, directors, engineers, scientists and agronomists.¹⁸ However, mention should be made that the section of intelligentsia which supported the new government was very small and insufficient to take the lead without the support of the old bourgeois intelligentsia and without having its own intelligentsia cadre.

Secondly, there was a section of intelligentsia, comparatively large, that made a neutral position, awaiting the final outcome of the revolutionary upheavals. This section of intelligentsia mostly belonged to the petty bourgeois strata. They did not go against the interest of the new regime and continued to offer their services and cooperation to the Bolshevik government, though they did not appreciate the ideology and tactics of the Bolshevik Party. These members of intelligentsia declared that they were "outside politics" and did not like to be involved in the political events of the period. It was decided to make a serious endeavour, tactically, to win over this section, and accordingly, Lunacharsky's enlightened policy made a significant contribution in the successful realisation of the desired objective.

Thirdly, a significant section of the old bourgeois intelligentsia, however, followed an active and hostile attitude

¹⁸ For details see S. Fedyukin, n. 11, pp. 22-23.

and took the path of sabotaging the Soviet government and its programmes. Many civil servants, teachers, medical personnel, specialists and technicians in various enterprises indulged in reactionary activities, frustrated government measures and tried to discredit the new government.¹⁹ Sabotage took varied forms, like desertion of the services, strikes, ignoring the instructions of the organs of the Soviet government and instigating the specialists who were helping and supporting the government.

As a result of this, the sabotage brought a great harm at a crucial juncture to the nation. Public transport was disrupted, electric power stations were stopped and hospitals were closed. On 2 December 1917 a strike call was given by All-Russian Union of Teachers which was supported by the majority of its members. A similar attitude was followed by the medical specialists and the result was that in the month of January and February 1918, because of dislocation, hunger and cold, typhus began to spread in Moscow.²⁰ From 1918 through 1923, about three million people died from typhus, typhoid, dysentery and cholera, and about nine million more disappeared due to famine.²¹

19 For details see Kendall E. Bailes, Technology and Society under Lenin and Stalin (New Jersey), 1978, parts II and III. Also see S. Fedyukin, n. 11,

20 Fedyukin, n. 11, pp. 26-27.

21 C.W. Cassinelli, Total Revolution (California, 1976).

Lenin made a sharp reaction to the subvertive activities of the reactionary intelligentsia. He cautioned:

The sabotage was started by the intelligentsia and the government officials, the bulk of whom are bourgeois and petty bourgeois....It was inevitable that the workers and peasants should be enraged by the sabotage of intelligentsia, and if anybody is to 'blame' for this, it can only be the bourgeoisie and their willing and unwilling accomplices. 22

In his speech at the First All-Russia Congress of the Navy, on 22 November 1917, Lenin made the mention of the 'subvertive' activities of the bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectuals. Encouraging the working masses to look to no one but to themselves, he realised them the need for self-assurance.²³

The disruptive activities and the sabotage by the intelligentsia, however, was not a universal phenomenon. Only a certain section of the intelligentsia were involved in it. They were mostly in towns: civil servants, teachers, doctors, engineers etc. These subvertive activities of the saboteurs met with a severe criticism not only from the government and the supporters of the Soviet government but also from the masses. The Marxist intelligentsia bravely and decisively advocated the position - that of full support for the Soviet government and for the fight against the inspirers and organisers of

22 Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow, 1947), vol. 29, p. 230.

23 Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 26, p. 42.

sabotage. The strikes by the medical personnel brought a wave of protests from their own fellows who were loyal to their duty. The young medical students replaced the saboteurs that brought good response from the people. The people in general protested against the hostile position taken by the leaders of the All-Union of Teachers. At the demand of Moscow teachers, a referendum was held at the end of February 1918, about the question of strike that favoured the ending of the strike.²⁴

Realising the immense importance of the services of the bourgeois intelligentsia, the Soviet government and the Bolshevik Party had to tackle the problem with utmost care. "In early 1918, Lenin and others in the Communist Party set out to develop a policy towards the technical intelligentsia that mixed force and persuasion."²⁵ The government had to take steps to suppress the subvertive activities of the working intelligentsia. Alongwith this the government also took numerous positive measures to attract the bourgeois intelligentsia to the side of Soviet government. The first step taken by the Soviet government was to overcome the sabotage. It was necessary to get the intelligentsia away from the influence of the big bourgeoisie and induce it to maintain the required

24 Fedyukin, n. 11, p. 34.

25 Kendall E. Bailes, n. 19, p. 48.

work norms. On 15 November 1917, on the instruction of the Soviet government, the People's Commissar for Education, A.V. Lunacharsky, made a speech in which he called on the intelligentsia to give support to the working people. Lenin also justified that "Far from inciting the people against the intelligentsia, we on the contrary, in the name of the party, and in the name of the government, urged the necessity of creating the best possible working conditions for the intelligentsia".²⁶ Lunacharsky also expressed his views that "One must spare a great scientist or major specialist in whatever sphere, even if he is reactionary to the tenth degree."²⁷

The Government took firm steps to improve the lot of the intelligentsia. The measures taken by the Government for the protection of the cultural values - such as the introduction of new orthography, the separation of the Church from the State and the schools from the church, the firm policies of the government in questions vital to the life of the country also influenced the widest strata of intelligentsia. The intelligentsia began to believe that the new government was acting in the interest of the people, including the interest of the intelligentsia. Thus a section of intelligentsia, as pointed

26 Lenin, Collective Works, vol. 29, p. 230.

27 Quoted in Kendall E. Bailes, n. 19, p. 48.

out earlier, started moving away and was gradually won over to the side of the Soviet regime.

In December 1918 the Soviet Government had issued a decree that forced the compulsory labour service for all the technical specialists. Lenin had strongly objected to it. He explained to the Eighth Party Congress: "It is impermissible to force an entire stratum to work with a club over their heads⁷. This we have learned from the experience. We can compel them not to participate actively in counter revolution, we can frighten them, so that they are afraid to extend a hand to a white guard....But to use an entire stratum to work by such methods is impossible."²⁸

Lenin gave a warning to those activists who took a nihilistic or hostile attitude toward the achievements of bourgeois civilization. He made it clear that it is necessary to grasp all the culture which capitalism has left and build socialism from it.²⁹

Such sentiments and views expressed by Lenin through speeches and writings intended to counter the strongly anti-intellectual mood in the party ranks, were gradually transformed into policies during the civil war period. Though there was a strong reaction against such views expressed by Lenin within and outside the party but ultimately the government followed

28 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 51.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

his views. During the Civil War period, policies were enacted to institutionalize Lenin's views towards the technical and scientific intelligentsia.³⁰ The technical intelligentsia that started working for the government was provided with better facilities of rationing, housing and education. A special relief organisation for scientists and other scholars was also set up in 1919 at the request of Maxim Gorky.³¹ After 1918 the Soviet Government moved rapidly to transform into reality a number of proposals for new research institutes. More than forty such institutes were created during the civil war period. Most of these institutes were in the field of applied sciences and technology. Many old scientists were absorbed in these institutes and were provided comparatively higher salaries and better facilities.

The Soviet Government also took harsh steps to suppress the subversive activities of the saboteurs. In December 1917, on the initiative of Lenin, the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission for the Fight Against Counter-Revolution and Sabotage was set up. The dual policy of suppression and persuasion followed by the Soviet Government proved very successful. By the spring of 1918, sabotage by the intelligentsia had in general been suppressed.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid., p. 53.

Another reason for the change in outlook and attitude of the intelligentsia was the triumphant march of Soviet power across the country and breaking of the old and creation of a new state apparatus. Political situation had taken a sharp turn towards the transfer of the whole governmental apparatus, both in the centre and in the localities, into the hands of the Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.

The transition of the intelligentsia to co-operation with the Soviet state went specially quickly in the autumn of 1918. By this time a considerable number of specialists were already working in Soviet departments and enterprises, in the units of Red Army, in scientific establishments and in the higher educational institutions.³²

The resumption of military activity by Kaiser's Germany against the Soviet Republic in February 1918 also speeded up the process of division in the intelligentsia, and its change of course to co-operation with the Soviet government.

Another factor responsible for the change of attitude of the intelligentsia was a division among the Menshevik and S.R. parties. Fearing that it would finally lose its already shattered authority, the central committee of the Menshevik party passed a resolution calling on the party to refuse to co-operate politically with classes hostile to the

32 Fedjukin, n. 11, p. 38.

democracy. The Mensheviks announced their recognition of the Soviet Government "as a reality, and not as a principle", showing their political reservation against the Bolshevism. A similar resolution was also adopted by the Right S.Rs. The resolution called on the Right S.R. organisations to fight the white guards and the interventionists.

To restore the national economy, preserve cultural values and set up honest co-operation with the intelligentsia, the Soviet Government and Bolshevik party started taking more and more members of the intelligentsia into their institutions.

Civil War and the Role of Intelligentsia

The Socialist Revolution was followed by a complete confusion of foreign and domestic affairs, with civil war between the Russians and foreign intervention from all quarters. The Bolsheviks found themselves opposed by a very mixed group of counter revolutionaries consisting of former officials of the Tsarist regime, army officers, teachers and medical personnel and the artistic intelligentsia.

In addition to internal opposition, the Bolsheviks, because they had withdrawn from the war, renounced the foreign debts of former governments and were preaching and fostering world revolution, aroused the alarm and opposition of their former allies. Hence a period of "War Communism : July 1918-March 1921" was started. The characteristic of the period was

the tightening up of Bolshevik control through the extension of Red Army, Cheka, and the reliance on revolutionary agencies such as Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.³³

The civil war prevented the Bolshevik party from launching on the full scale construction of the socialist basis. Immediately after the revolution during the first three or four years the party had to face conflict both within and outside the party. A number of factors were responsible for this. Firstly, the party lacked clear-cut worked out plan for building socialism. Secondly, the party found itself amidst the exceedingly difficult circumstances to take the lead and thirdly, there was no accord with Lenin's policies among the members of the Bolshevik Party. The party did not have the monopoly of political power until July 1918 and for some years after this date there was a challenge to the Bolshevik party from rival revolutionary parties. The main opposition came from organised factions within the Bolshevik party, from Left Communists, Workers' Groups and many other smaller groups.³⁴

During the period of War Communism the important sectors of the economy were placed under the direct control of the state and the principle of market economy was abandoned.

33 L.G. Churchward, Contemporary Soviet Government (London, 1975), p. 57.

34 Ibid.

In 1918 and 1919 all industrial, financial, trade and transportation enterprises along with all private property in homes and land were nationalised. The estates of landlords and large farmers were divided among the peasants. The legal right to inherit private property was also abolished.³⁵ In November 1920, a decree was announced by which all enterprises - employing more than five workers where mechanical power was used and ten workers in purely handicraft workshops - were nationalised. By the end of the year about 37,000 such enterprises were listed as belonging to the state.³⁶ "The requisitioning policy with regard to agriculture and centrally organised allocation of supplies, alike of industry, the ordinary consumer and the army, can be said to have formed the quintessence of War Communism."³⁷

There was a general interpretation in the West about the War Communism and it was characterized as an attempt by the Soviet power "to realise an ideal communism, which, coming into inevitable conflict with realities, had to be scrapped in favour of a retreat in the direction of capitalism, as represented by the New Economic Policy."³⁸ In fact War

35 Meissner, n. 2, p. 25.

36 Maurice Dobb, n. 6, p. 106.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., p. 120.

Commission was not a clear-cut well planned policy adopted for the realisation of socialism. It was rather an 'empirical creation' and not a 'priori product of theory'. It had to be adopted under the prevailing conditions of exhausting civil war and the economic security.³⁹ It is also sometimes argued that the policies adopted during the period of War Communism "stemmed from revolutionary enthusiasm".⁴⁰

Lenin, however, made it quite clear that "War Communism was thrust upon us by war and ruin. It was not, nor could it be, a policy that corresponded to the economic tasks of the proletariat. It was a temporary measure".⁴¹ It was not an attempt of introducing communism in the newly born Soviet state. It "signified the complete breakdown of market production and exchange; it was an expeditious attempt by the Soviet Government to shore up the economy".⁴²

Smushkov, an author of a textbook of the middle 20s wrote that "the transition to War Communism was a matter of compulsion, imposed on us, first by German Imperialism, and

39 Ibid.

40 Helene Carrere d'Encausse, "Determinants and Parameters of Soviet Nationality Policy", in Jeremy R. Azrael, ed., Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices (London, 1978), p. 45.

41 Quoted in Maurice Dobb, n. 6, p. 123.

42 David Lane, n. 1, p. 61.

after that by internecine counter-revolution. War Communism was not a normal economic policy. But it was historically and economically inevitable in the conditions of that time."⁴³ Later on Lenin referred to it as a "mistake" and a "jump", "in complete contradiction to all we wrote concerning the transition from capitalism to socialism".⁴⁴

Under such conditions the task for the intelligentsia was of great significance. The task of defending the country, of building the Red Army and a leadership for military action became of paramount importance. Qualified cadre with experience, ability and knowledge were needed to get work started in industrial enterprises, to supply the needs at the front and to provide the army with commanders. In January 1918, Lenin issued a decree by which the Red Army was founded. Workers and Peasants volunteered to join its rank.

Lenin also took the initiative of enlisting the "bourgeois" military specialists, which, though aroused a criticism among the party members, was supported by the Central Committee and Local Party organs.⁴⁵ There were strong reservations from the party members over the use of "bourgeois" military specialists. But finally the decision taken by the

43 Quoted in Dobb, n. 6, p. 123.

44 Ibid.

45 Fedyukin, n. 11, p. 70.

Central Committee on the initiative of Lenin prevailed. He took the task of organising the Red Army with great zeal and zest. The result was, by 1921 there were 217,000 commanders of all ranks in the Red Army. Military specialists accounted for 34 per cent of the command staff. There were seventy to seventy-five thousand generals and other officers who had served in the Tsarist army. On 25 October 1917 there were 157,884 officers in the Russian Army. Nearly half of these officers were recruited in the Red Army, on the initiative of Lenin.⁴⁶ After the civil war was over, in February 1923, ex-tsarist army officers made up 82 per cent of the commanders of infantry regiments, 83 per cent of corps and division commanders and 54 per cent of all troop commanders.⁴⁷

The transition of the old military specialists to the side of Soviet Government was, though a painful process, completed during the 20s. Active participation of the military specialists in the Red Army and its involvement in the internal and external counter-revolution was of utmost importance. The country survived the civil war period. The two chief reasons were the division and lack of coordination between the allies and the anti-Bolshevik forces and the creation of Red Army.⁴⁸

46 Ibid., p. 77. Also see Boris Meissner, n. 2, p. 26.

47 Ibid., p. 84.

48 D.H. Sturley, A Short History of Russia (Longmans, 1964), p. 214.

There had also been sweeping social changes in the country since the October Revolution of 1917, dictated both by economic considerations and power politics. During War Communism, however, countervailing tendencies in social system began to emerge. The number of industrial workers dropped by one-half (1.5 million in 1920-21, compared to 3 million in 1917) because of the critical food situation in the cities. The white-collar employees increased by more than 60 per cent (2.4 million in 1920, compared to 1.5 million in 1913). These white-collar employees were largely drawn from the former members of the upper social strata.

During the Civil War period the intelligentsia were largely drawn from those former members of the upper social strata whose civil rights had been curtailed. As early as 28 March 1918, Trotsky had observed that the engineers, technicians, physicians, teachers and former officers constitute, like our idle machine, the national resources of the people and they must be enlisted for the service of the nation.

During the period there was a mass migration of eight million people from city to country side because of the agriculture land being distributed among the individual peasants. During the summer and autumn of 1918, the Soviet Government expropriated 50 million hectares of land owned by the kulaks and distributed it among the peasants. The policies adopted by the government in the field of agriculture were opposed by

the peasants that resulted in the reduction of agricultural output and created food scarcity in 1921. According to official Soviet statistics 5 million men died of starvation.⁴⁹ The result was a decline in the population from 143.5 to 134.2 million between 1917 and 1920 while rural population dropped from 117.7 to 113.4 million. Relatively however, the percentage of the rural population actually increased from 82 to 85 of the country's inhabitants. The agrarian social structure had undergone far reaching and radical change and yet many old familiar features of village and commune life remained in tact.

Only in the industrialized sector of the nation the Soviet Government had taken stern and forceful measures to replace old social structure with a totally new model of social organisation. The policies of 'force' and 'persuasion' adopted by the government started bringing a radical change in the social structure of the urban population in the cities. There was also an indication of new recruitments of the old bourgeois intelligentsia as well as the creation of the new socialist intelligentsia from the workers in the factories and peasants in the agricultural sectors. "As the party began to turn its attention to the countryside, it included within the scope of its interests the rural intelligentsia of 'teachers and agronomists'.⁵⁰

49 See footnote in Boris Meissner, n. 2, p. 145.

50 E.H. Carr, Socialism in One Country (Penguins, 1970), vol. 1, p. 135.

The socio-structural changes that took place during the period of War Communism were conditioned by two main causes. On the one hand the changes were conditioned by the internal causes and on the other hand by the application of an ideology in a completely different cultural milieu. The drab egalitarianism of War Communism had to be abandoned when the economic reconstruction of the society began in the spring of 1921, through the introduction of the New Economic Policy.

NEP and the Intelligentsia

The country devastated by seven years of war and civil war was almost in ruin. The interventionists and the counter-revolutionary forces had caused great loss to the economy. Factories, enterprises, mines and transport had been wrecked by them. Heavy industry production was reduced and agriculture, heavily taxed, could not manage to provide food for the population. There was a grave shortage of essential commodities. Between 1918 and 1920 Red Army alone lost one million men. Near about 8 million people were killed, wounded or died in war, epidemics and famines.⁵¹ NEP was introduced due to the economic exhaustion of the country and because of the opposition to the government from both peasants and workers.⁵²

The revolt of the Naval garrison at Kronstadt which had formerly been among the chief supporters of Bolsheviks,

51 Fedyukin, n. 11, p. 135.

52 Churchward, n. 33, p. 58.

underlined the widespread discontentment and opposition to the policies of the government that had been mounting throughout the period of civil war experiments in the War Communism. In particular, the resistance of the peasants forced Lenin to abandon for the time being the tactics of class warfare in an effort to produce more food and salvage the economy of the country. The New Economic Policy (NEP) was adopted at the 10th Party Congress in March 1921. It replaced the method of appropriation of surplus grain by a tax in kind. The grain produced above the tax was allowed to be freely consumed or marketed by the peasant. The policy was further followed by other concessions to private industry, trade and agriculture, the general purpose of which was to stimulate national economy. During 1922, after the introduction of NEP, the Soviet industry was at its lowest point. The new policy allowed a rapid recovery to be made and by the end of 1926 the production in general was back to its pre-revolutionary level.⁵³

During the period the private commerce was allowed alongside a state monopoly in foreign trade and state co-operative trade. The state retained in its own hands the control of large and medium-sized enterprises.

In foreign circles, NEP was hailed as a 'retreat', a 'failure' of Bolshevik policies towards socialism and re-introduction of capitalism. Even the 'emigre' writers remained

53 Carr, n. 3, p. 118. Also see David Lane, n. 1, p. 62.

sceptical of any improvement. Miliukov wrote in 1922 about NEP as "the beginning of the end"; and Prokopovitch declared that "there is little hope for the reestablishment of the Russian national and state economy". Even in the country among the masses in general and intelligentsia in particular there were apprehensions about the successful working of the NEP. It was considered as a retreat, a concession to the hostile forces and it was thought that 'the scrapping of war communism might be the first chapter in a Russian Thermidor'.⁵⁴

It was an erroneous assessment of the Bolshevik policies and perceptions. The introduction of NEP was primarily concerned to get the economy of the country back on its feet.⁵⁵ It gave way to a moderate and gradual vision of social change⁵⁶ in the Soviet system. It was an intrinsic aspect of the transition period.

The transition to the New Economic policy however, did not cause any major changes in the character of the attitude of the party to the intelligentsia. Under the NEP the problem of rational use of knowledge and experience of the scientific and technical intelligentsia and their re-education in socialist

54 Maurice Dobb, n. 6, p. 144.

55 David Lane, n. 1, p. 61.

56 Helene Carrere d'Encausse, n. 40, p. 45.

ethos became of even greater political and practical importance.⁵⁷

The intelligentsia in general welcomed the policy because it gave them a relief in their material situation. A section of intelligentsia that supported the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government took the NEP as a healthy sign of viability and political flexibility of the New State and visualised the possibilities of economic and cultural regeneration of the society. The policy opened to technical and scientific intelligentsia an unlimited field of action in the creative work using their knowledge and experience. The scientific intelligentsia appraised the NEP and worked honestly in their scientific pursuit.

Lenin himself had described the NEP as a "transitional mixed system" to which he gave the name of "State Capitalism" which was considered to be an "advance on the present state of affairs and as "economically immeasurably superior".⁵⁸ By State Capitalism Lenin meant control by the state over small-commodity production. In this system the working class held political power, and the Soviet state held politically and economically, "the commanding heights" from which it could control the movements in the surrounding plain.⁵⁹

57 Fedjukin, n. 11, p. 137.

58 Quoted in Maurice Dobb, n. 6, p. 145.

59 Ibid. Also see Lenin, Selected Works, vol. IX, p. 165.

Maurice Dobb observed:

...it is clear that the mixed economy which emerged under NEP was no sudden novelty, invented overnight or forced upon intentions quite alien to it by the failure of a 'direct assault' upon the old regime. It fitted completely where War Communism had not, into the conception which Lenin had always held of a definite transition period...for a whole historical era 'lying between capitalism and socialism': a transitional era which 'cannot but combine the features and properties of both these systems of social enterprise'. 60

The NEP also deepened and accelerated the stratification process which was taking place among the intelligentsia. On the one hand, it brought about a quicker separation from it of the elements loyal to the Soviet State and their transition to supporting the state actively. On the other hand the policy made it objectively possible for the "Right Wing" of the "bourgeois intelligentsia" to revive its anti-Soviet activity.⁶¹

The bourgeois intelligentsia visualised that NEP would bring a change in the Soviet State structure and may follow the parliamentarian system. They saw the NEP as proof of a crisis in Bolshevism and its ideals.⁶² They affirmed that the Soviet State has failed in its course of economic process and it

60 Maurice Dobb, n. 6, pp. 146-7.

61 Fedyukin, n. 11, p. 141.

62 Ibid., p. 143.

was therefore better to return to the capitalist methods of running the economy. These views held by the bourgeois intelligentsia were belied when the introduction of the NEP within "approximately six months' time" could be accounted "a great success".⁶³ The policy was nothing more than a temporary 'strategic retreat'.⁶⁴ It was a clearly well-planned policy adopted under the prevailing circumstances, a necessary prelude to the launching of successful working of the socialist economy. It was not a genuine abandonment of Marxist principles, but merely a temporary expedient to restore the economy of the country by any means before proceeding with the task of building socialism.

The Bolshevik Party and the government launched the battle against the reactionary tendencies amongst the intelligentsia and made persistent efforts to draw it into building new life. The policy of force and persuasion launched by the government showed healthy sign of co-operation by the bourgeois intelligentsia. The periodical press also played a great role in the battle against bourgeois ideology and in strengthening the Marxist-Leninist ideology among the masses in general and intelligentsia in particular. Pravda and Izvestia newspapers alongwith Bolshevik journals imparted and contributed

63 Lenin, Selected Works, vol. IX, p. 168.

64 Churchward, n. 33, p. 59.

greatly to the battle against the bourgeois intelligentsia.

The results were very much favourable to the Soviet Government. A section of the emigre intelligentsia sympathised with the plans of the Soviet Government and felt the desire to return to their motherland. A.N. Tolstoi, "the typical Russian emigre" and a member of the Smena Vekh (Change of Landmarks movement)⁶⁵ once having hatred for the Bolshevik ideology, changed his views and declared that the Bolshevik government was the real government. As a result, a deep-going stratification process took place among the Russian White emigre intelligentsia that sided with the Soviet Government and Bolshevik ideology.

The NEP covered all sides of public life except in political activity where the authority of the party was maintained and consolidated. Many practical steps were taken to win the support of the workers, peasants and the intelligentsia for the successful working of the industrialization. The 14th Party Congress in December 1925 passed a resolution which bound the party to 'pursue a policy aimed at the industrialization of the country, the development of the means of production, and the formation of reserves for economic manoeuvre'.⁶⁶ The

⁶⁵ Smena Vekh movement was a literary movement 'launched' abroad by the Russian emigres, who did not agree with the Bolshevik ideology. See Fedyukin, n. 2, p. 143.

⁶⁶ Carr, n. 3, p. 118.

labour code of 1922 provided for collective agreements through the trade unions and regulations were made limiting working hours and the employment of women and children. New laws of health and insurance schemes were also made to better the lot of the masses.

Attempts were also made to remove the illiteracy. In 1917, 75 per cent of the inhabitants of European Russia and 85 per cent in Siberia were illiterate. The Government concentrated on younger generation. As a result literacy increased from 32 per cent of the Russian population in 1920 to about 60 per cent in 1928.⁶⁷

When the NEP was nearing its end with the introduction of economic planning, the social structure of the population did not seem, on the surface at least, to have changed very much from that of the pre-war period. In 1928 urban workers and intelligentsia constituted 17.3 per cent of the population, compared to 16.7 per cent in 1913, the number of peasants and unorganised domestic workers increased from 65.1 per cent in 1913 to 72.9 per cent of the population in 1928.⁶⁸

By the end of the NEP many members of the old intelligentsia and young socialist intelligentsia were recruited by government agencies or by state-managed enterprises. ^t

67 Churchward, n. 3, p. 59. A detailed study of education would be given in Chapter IV.

68 See Boris Meissner, n. 2, p. 30.

leadership of the party (consisting of highly educated members of intelligentsia) not only had commanding positions in industry, banking, finance, transportation and monopoly in foreign trade, but also tightened its control even more by eliminating the "reactionary" intelligentsia and the 'kulaks', the last remnants of the NEP period.

Agriculture was dominated by the individual peasant who tilled his own plot of land. By 1929 these peasants made up 72.9 per cent of the entire population, substantially higher than in 1913. In the village social differentiation was also beginning to occur more sharply as a result of substantial increases in the size of industrial enterprises. A detailed study of social mobility and social stratification would be undertaken in the next chapter.

Suffice here it would be to say that during the NEP period the country was put on the path of socialist reconstruction. The whole economy was controlled by the state. When the First Five Year Plan and the policies of collectivization were launched, the new process of social mobility and social stratification had taken its roots, and the new institutional structures began to emerge as a result of new socio-economic policy. The period also witnessed the historical achievements of the transition of the old intelligentsia to the side of socialism. The process, though very difficult and complicated,

bore positive fruits till the end of the 30s. The year saw not only the co-operation from the old bourgeois intelligentsia, but also witnessed the recruitment of the younger generation of the socialist intelligentsia. There is no exaggeration in saying that it was through the use of the services of the old bourgeois intelligentsia that the country survived the Civil War period and the foundation of socialist society were laid down on a new institutional basis.

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CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER IV

SOVIET POLICY AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE SOCIALIST INTELLIGENTSIA : 1930-40

The Conceptual Framework of Soviet Society

The credit of laying the foundation of socialism in a semi-Feudalist Russia goes to Lenin who had been the inspiring spirit behind the whole revolutionary movement of the epoch, though the contribution of score of other revolutionary figures had also been of considerable significance. Lenin was a philosopher, a theorist and at the same time "one of the greatest revolutionary strategists" of all times. It was he who under the prevailing socio-political conditions in the Tsarist regime, had made certain modifications to the Marxist ideology - a viable alternative for socio-economic, political and cultural transformation.

The Marxist-Leninist ideology had provided a "sophisticated logic of Soviet Weltanschauung, which obviously has been the guiding force in the long process of reconstruction of society".¹ A meaningful socio-political study

1 R.R. Sharma, "Social Structure and Social Change in Soviet Society", in Zafar Imam, ed., The USSR : Sixty Years (New Delhi, 1981), p. 25.

of Soviet social system is eminently conceivable only within the conceptual framework of Marxism-Leninism.² The ideology had proved to be the basis of "the creative social transformation and the emergence of productive structural entities" that became a "strategic formative phenomenon of the century".³

Marx and Engels considered the means of production as the crucial determinant of class position. The owners of the means of material production constitute the ruling class and use the state as an instrument of class exploitation viz., the exploitation of the non-owners. Marx also argued that the class which dominates the means of material production also controls the "means of mental production", thus rules as "producer of ideas". The division of labour in such a society give rise to the economic classes. In capitalist society, the industrial bourgeoisie owns the means of production and employs the labour, its superior financial and organisational resources give them control over the state and the society. This class also retains access to culture and education and mould them to suit their own class-hegemony. In such a society, the concepts like class, power, status and honour are inextricably intertwined. These, in

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 23.

course of time, breed and enhance the contradictions in the hierarchy of classes and help dominate one class over others. Inequality remains rampant in such a society.

In the Communist Manifesto Marx wrote: "When in the course of development class distinctions have disappeared and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, then public power will lose its political character." As social and political inequality was sustained by class inequality, the abolition of private property, and of the capitalist class based on it, would entail the elimination of political and social inequality. Only in the Communist society would "all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly - only then can...society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability to each according to his needs!" In such a society there would be no division of labour and therefore no antithesis between mental and manual labour.⁴

In Marxian framework of analysis it is the working class that provides the main class basis in the struggle to replace capitalism by socialism. Under the prevailing conditions in Russia before the revolution, Lenin had made two modifications. Firstly, he laid greater emphasis on the revolutionary role of the intelligentsia; and secondly, he

4 "Critique of Gotha Program", in Marx and Engels, Selected Works (Moscow, 1950), vol. 2, p. 23.

put emphasis on the peasantry as an indispensable ally of the industrial proletariat. As early as 1902 Lenin wrote:

The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own efforts, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., it may itself realise the necessity for combining in unions, for fighting against the employers and for striving to compel the government to press necessary labour legislation, etc. The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophical, historical and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. According to their social status, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia. Similarly, in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose independently of the spontaneous growth of the labour movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of ideas among the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia. 5

In the conceptual framework of Marxism-Leninism the foundation of socialism required new basis of the society and state, a new economic order and new cultural orientation of the working masses. Far from being an instrument of social oppression, the state under socialism becomes an instrument of service to the society, a means for implementing the vital creativity of the people. Socialism promotes the

5 V.I. Lenin, "What is to be Done", in Selected Works (Moscow, 1944), vol. II, p. 53.

development of the socialist economy - a single economic complex which embraces all levels of social production, distribution, consumption and exchange. The economy under socialism is based on the social ownership of the means of production. The ability of the people to engage in joint, concerted activity and man's feeling of involvement in the common cause rooted in collective organisation of the relations of production.

The ideological foundation of the economic structure provided new basis of development to the productive forces and the relations of production. It destroyed the old economic structure of small commodity production which was deemed to be the "breeding ground" of capitalism.⁶ It also created the imperative conditions for the massive growth of the working class and the proletarianization of the peasantry and the intelligentsia.

The Soviet state followed a 'Non-Capitalist Development' particularly in its more backward republics and regions that signified the important aspect of socio-economic change during the transition period. It provided "the process of a direct transition from feudal or pre-capitalist structures to socialism. The development of productive forces without allowing capitalist relations of production to find roots was

⁶ Sharma, n. 1, p. 29.

central to the idea of non-capitalist path of social and economic change".⁷ This was possible because of the specific nature of the political power, which was in the hands of working class and its political party.

Speaking on the New Economic Policy, Lenin visualized that a minimum of ten to fifteen years' transition period was needed to dismantle the old socio-economic structure, changing the agrarian character of the Russian economy and making the working class the dominating socio-economic factor in the society. The period was also "to be earmarked for the purpose of building the necessary minimum base of new social system, overcoming the resistance of older institutional structures, social classes, and the sanctified traditional values".⁸

The Soviet policy of non-capitalist development until the end of 1920s "sought to integrate the economic, political and socio-cultural aspects of developmental change".⁹ A specific effort was made to realize the bourgeois-democratic tasks of the revolutionary transformation in a socialist perspective, and under the leadership of working class vanguard. In the very first decade after the revolution the Soviet state could not pursue in a sustained manner

7 R.R. Sharma, A Marxist Model of Social Change Soviet Central Asia : 1917-1940 (Delhi, 1979), p. 38.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., p. 49.

specific policy designs for the restructuration of the society. It had been more because of the compulsions of the historical factors witnessed particularly during the period of Civil War, and not because of any lack of guiding force on the part of leadership. It was only after the introduction of NEP, and subsequently the collectivization and formalization of the First Five Year Plan that the Soviet state made itself able to lay the firm roots of socialization on a massive scale in the country. "The Soviet leadership, despite its initial aberrations in its economic policies, pursued a whole gamut of pragmatic, or rather what Professor Hunter calls 'purposive' policies, which were specifically designed to 'challenge' the impact of the socio-cultural environment, and 'reorganise the inherited economic process'. The issues and problems [of total transformation] were adequately identified, and whenever required, practical adjustments and variations were included within the policy-strategy framework of social change."¹⁰

The Soviet state made variable strategic efforts to resolve specific problems that arose from time to time, after considerable political and ideological discussions. In the decade of 1920s one can see the various phases of 'erratic emergence' of Soviet policy followed by specific

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 62.

policy designs leading to the consolidation of the basis of socialism. However, it is fascinating to find "the emergence and growth of new productive forces out of a maze of ideological distortions, political miscalculations and the economic policy mistakes which accompanied the social dynamics of the revolution....One may discover precisely in this the roots of social change."¹¹

Social Stratification and Social Mobility

During the early period of cataclysmic changes in the Soviet system the process of social stratification and social mobility also took on a new character which was a necessary corollary to the Soviet policies of industrialization and collectivization adopted during the late 1920s. The decrees issued for the "socialization" of land and "nationalization" of industry, commerce etc. were the first crucial steps towards the realization of the goal, viz. laying the foundation of socialism. "These decrees marked the initiation of first serious political assault on the given mode of rural institutionalized class or property structure....The feudal-ethos was made to give way to more productive principle of social organization."¹²

¹¹ Ibid., p. 64.

¹² Sharma, n. 1, p. 30.

Social stratification, says David Lane, "means the division of society into a hierarchy of strata, each having an unequal share of society's power, wealth, property or income and each enjoying an unequal evaluation in terms of prestige, or honour or social esteem".¹³ Studies of social stratification attempt to delineate the 'socially important' groups to determine the relationship between political privilege, economic inequality and social rank and status.¹⁴

From the point of view of social stratification the October Revolution was to create conditions for the establishment of socio-economic equality and a classless society. In place of a system of stratification being determined by the class-relations and by the forces of market, it was deemed necessary that social relations would be determined by the ideology and the goals of the Communist party.¹⁵

Lenin, after the announcement of the NEP, distinguished three classes in the Soviet society: (a) the proletariat;

¹³ David Lane, Politics and Society in the USSR (London, 1970), p. 382.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 383.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 384.

(b) the petty bourgeoisie, which he identified with the peasantry; and (c) the landowners and capitalists. After two years' experience of the NEP, he published an article in which he eliminated the 'landowners and capitalists' and introduced a new category of 'nepmen' alongwith two other classes of workers and peasants.¹⁶

The Soviet society in the first decade after the revolution, in fact, did not witness much radical transformation in its structural class composition. Till 1928, the Soviet society was composed of four-fold division of social classes, namely (a) the working peasantry, (b) the kulaks, (c) the bourgeoisie, and (d) the proletariat.¹⁷ As against the conceptual framework of the socialist society, it still retained the remnants of the capitalist class structure as is shown in Table 1. The introduction of NEP had recreated a small class of private traders and land-owning kulaks.

Table 1

CLASS COMPOSITION (1913-1928)

Class	(in percentage)	
	1913	1928
Manual Workers	14.0	12.0
White Collar Workers	3.0	5.0
Small Independent Peasants etc.	66.7	74.9
Bourgeoisie & Kulaks	16.3	8.5

Source: R.R. Sharma, "Social Structure and Social Change in Soviet Society", in Zafar Imam, ed., The USSR : Sixty Years (New Delhi, 1981), p. 29.

16 See E.H. Carr, Socialism in One Country : 1924-1926 (Penguin, 1970), p. 102.

17 Sharma, n. 1, p. 29; also see Carr, *ibid.*, p. 103.

It was only after 1928 that the process of social stratification in the Soviet society took a particular intended direction through a 'conscious socio-political design'. The adoption of the First Five Year Plan marked the end of NEP period. The guided economy of the NEP period which had preserved some elements of the old Russian social structure, particularly in the countryside, was replaced by a totally planned economy which was required to effect all areas of social life. The old social structure of class contradiction inherited from the Tsarist Russia was rooted out towards the end of 1920s. "The socialization of land and land relations, nationalization of banking, industry and then commerce, the reorganization of education system were only the first major steps in the process of reconstruction of socio-economic relation."¹⁸

The period 1928-29 to 1938-39 thus comparatively marked a decisive deep-rooted structural changes in the Soviet social order. "During the period up to 1936, the official definition of Soviet society was that of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat'. From the Soviet viewpoint the proletariat consisted of three strata - workers, landless peasants and employees."¹⁹

18 Sharma, n. 1, p. 32.

19 David Lane, n. 8, p. 384.

The main classes that emerged in the Soviet social structure by the end of 1930s were the working class and peasantry. "The transformation of the socio-economic configuration of society in the later half of 1930's was in fact explicitly noted down in the 1936 Soviet Constitution which proclaimed that the Soviet society had evolved into 'a socialist state of workers and peasants'."²⁰ In the Soviet terminology it implied that no contradictory class relationship existed. The private ownership of the means of production had finally been uprooted. The whole economy was socialised. By the end of 1936, when the new Soviet Constitution was proclaimed, two specific forms of socialised property had emerged, namely, the State property, and the Collective-Cooperative property.

In the capitalist society the inequality is related to the existence of private property whereas in the Soviet society the inequality was based on the wage differentials among the individuals that further gave rise to privilege in consumption and status differences, with differential access to power position and political stratification. "To understand adequately the process of social stratification, much more than a crude mechanical relationship between ownership relations, on the one hand, and honour and political power,

20 Sharma, n. 1, p. 34.

on the other, is required."²¹ It is to be made clear that in the USSR 'socialism' is defined in terms of Marxist property relations whereas in socialist democratic theory socialism is defined in terms of egalitarianism.²² During the period of industrialization the inequality of income has proved to be necessary, or at least useful lever of labour requirement. Stalin once wrote that the consequence of wage equalization is that a unskilled worker lacks the incentive to become a skilled worker and is thus deprived of the prospects of achievements.

The Soviet sociologists considered the Soviet society of 1930s as composed of three main groups namely workers, peasantry and intelligentsia. This class structure was said to be free from class conflict. This, however, does not mean that there was complete harmony.

The social stratification in the Soviet society raises another important question of social mobility among the three groups of the society. It is said that "drastic social changes in the scope of significant economic growth or social revolution, must, in and of itself, result, in a sizable increase in the amount of social mobility in a society."²³ It is also sometimes argued that "the high

21 Lane, n. 8, p. 387.

22 Ibid.

23 Lipset and Smelser, ed., Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development (London, 1969), p. 18.

rate of social mobility, and the absence of important barriers against mobility have often been adduced...[to] the gradual disappearance of social classes in the USSR."²⁴ The high rate of social mobility during the reconstruction of the Soviet society had further accelerated the process of re-structuration of the Soviet society into various sub-groups and units, although the three main groups or strata remained the same. Inkeles has kept the three main groups in an hierarchical parameters and had used a combination of measures that determined the stratum membership - occupation, income, power and authority being the main elements.²⁵ A careful analysis of the socio-economic factors of the period shows that there had been further sub-divisions among the three classes that had emerged "because of the radical shifts in the relative positions of the new economic and occupational groups...The economic model of rapid and forced industrialisation had generated within the society such social conditions which account for radical internal structural discontinuities and shifts, and which have a greater possibility of continuous social mobility and re-distribution of the given supply of labour force."²⁶

24 T.B. Bottomore, Classes in Modern Society (London, 1970), p. 49.

25 See David Lane, n. 8, pp. 404-5; also see A. Inkeles, "Social Stratification and Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1940-1950", American Sociological Review (1950), vol. 15.

26 Sharma, n. 1, p. 35.

In the conceptualized framework of the Soviet society, the Soviet-Marxist model of total change also implied a complete replacement of social system and the total destruction of its institutional structures. This had emerged clearly from the political programme of the Bolshevik Party, which had been propounded in the course of their historical struggle for political change much before the October Revolution.²⁷ The transformation of the institutional structure is a long and painful process that needs a 'determined' revolutionary 'organization and ideology', to mobilize people to carry out the cumbersome task.²⁸

During the crucial transition period the Soviet society went through a dynamic structural transformation. Some of these structural transformations were the obvious outcome of the radical economic innovation introduced by the Soviet state under the guiding hand of socio-political policy to which the new regime was ideologically committed.²⁹ "This, however, does not imply that the changes brought about in the social structure were exclusively the result of economic innovations...the radical restructuring of the social structure made available a number of strategic inputs, which were imperative to the institutional requirements of the economic innovations, industrialisation, and modernisation."³⁰

27 Sharma, n. 7, p. 65.

28 Ibid., p. 66.

29 Ibid., p. 181.

30 Ibid.

In fact the reorganisation of the socio-institutional structure was significantly essential for the successful realization of the economic development and cultural modernization.

The economic development through planned policies of industrialization and collectivization was not merely a matter of evolution of modern economic structure. It also required for a total socio-economic mobilization that would bring up its own cultural values, ethos, norms and its own cultural institutions. "Culturally sanctioned values and symbols were, as it were, a necessary fertilizer-though not a sufficient cause - for the seed of economic growth and to fully mature into the industrial revolution."³¹ Discussing the problem of industrialization of backward areas concerning non-European countries, Gerschnkron has aptly assessed "the effects of their specific pre-industrial cultural development upon their industrial potentialities".³² Cultural revolution is considered to be an "important complement of modern economic development regardless of the particular institutional frameworks adopted for the transition."³³ Economic and cultural changes take place simultaneously.

31 P.C. Joshi, "The Cultural Dimension of Economic Development", in Satish Sabarwal, ed., Towards A Cultural Policy (Delhi, 1975), p. 42.

32 Quoted in Sharma, n. 7, p. 182.

33 Joshi, n. 31, p. 41.

"Cultural movements have not only prepared the ground for modern economic growth, indeed, the two have been so intertwined as to give the new economic stirrings the feel of great cultural awakening."³⁴

The classical model of socio-economic developmental change and structural transformation was geared up through the infusion of new cultural values among the masses in general and intelligentsia in particular. The whole infrastructure of new culture suitable to the ideological framework of the Soviet society needed to uproot the traditionally accepted cultural values and to bring forth its own norms, ethos, values and faith in the new system. "It was Bolshevism that served as the cultural fountainhead for the energy, stamina, ruthlessness, and dedication displayed in carrying the industrial revolution"³⁵ in the most backward country of Europe.

It is an historical recognition that changes in any modern society are innovated and accelerated by the elite or intelligentsia. It is this intelligentsia, "an innovating minority", says Kuznets, that plays the "positive and strategic" role in the process of socio-economic

34 Ibid., p. 42.

35 Ibid., p. 58.

development.³⁶ In this case it was the Bolshevnik leadership which appeared on the social arena "not just as the leaders of an economic revolution. They projected themselves as the bearers of a new message, the heralds of a new era, and the architects of the nations destiny".³⁷ Kuznets highlights the emergence of 'an innovating minority' as the essential element in the transition, for "the changes are directed towards the future and cannot represent the immediate interests of the majority, which are lodged in the pre-modern order."³⁸ The innovating minority, thus, not merely seeks to challenge the hegemony of the given cultural elite, but also, and more profoundly, the entrenched socio-economic position of the vested class interests. Hence the resistance to the innovating minority.

The Transformation of the Intelligentsia

The decade of 1930s is marked to be the important period from the standpoint of socio-economic transformation in which the consolidation of the ideological basis of socialism has been historically achieved. The fact remains that it would not have been achieved without the maximum

36 Quoted by Sharma, n. 7, p. 34.

37 Joshi, n. 31, p. 42.

38 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 43.

utilization of the intelligentsia - a vital source of socio-economic change. Intelligentsia constituted, says Trotsky, "the national resources"³⁹ of the people, that has to be fully operationalized in the economic development and structural transformation of the society. The fundamental problem was to seek the productive co-operation of the intelligentsia in the implementation of the programme and policies of the Soviet government. The productive co-operation was sought to be achieved through the well imaginative policies of attracting the old bourgeois intelligentsia to the side of Soviet government. A process of political socialization of intelligentsia was, thus, launched to further strengthen the participation of intelligentsia in the process of transformation. An attempt, here, is made to survey in brief the factors responsible for the socialization of intelligentsia alongwith its role and involvement in socio-economic development of the Soviet system.

The successful launching of massive industrialization and collectivization required a gigantic force of technically equipped personal. Realising the productive potentialities of the role of intelligentsia, Stalin had expressed his views that the working class should create its own industrial and

39 Cited in Boris Meissner, Social Change in the Soviet Union (London, 1972), p. 26.

technical intelligentsia.⁴⁰ He also directed the people "to change [their] attitude towards the engineers and technicians of the old school, to show them greater attention and solicitude, to enlist their co-operation more boldly."⁴¹ As a result the recruitment policy of the party was changed in favour of the intelligentsia. Lenin had appreciated the importance of the revolutionary role of intelligentsia in the construction of socialism and had given his consent of recruiting intelligentsia in the party cadres. He at the same time stressed on the peasants as indispensable allies of industrial proletariat. In the beginning of 1920s the party leadership emphasized the need of making maximum recruitment of workers. Hence a mass membership drive was conducted in 1924, 1927 and 1930 which brought in tens of thousands of new workers. By 1930 workers comprised 68.2 per cent of the party membership. This percentage remained high during the early 1930s. It dropped off rapidly from 1937 onwards with the emergence of new intelligentsia and their recruitment consequently in the party.

The structure of the party went through therefore substantial modifications during the late 1930s. Intellectuals were encouraged and favoured in the party cadre during 1937 and 1941.⁴² The successful implementation of the socio-

40 J.V. Stalin, Problems of Leninism (Peking, 1976), p. 548.

41 Ibid., p. 552.

42 L.G. Churchward, Contemporary Soviet Government (London, 1975), p. 194.

economic policies required sincere co-operation of the intelligentsia that was sought to be achieved by 'facilitating its absorption into the party'. The party was re-invigorated by admission of young elements consisting of bureaucrats, engineers, technicians, scientists and plant breeders etc.⁴³ During the year 1940-41 more than 70 per cent of the new candidates could be broadly classified as belonging to the new intelligentsia.⁴⁴

As the First Five Year Plan gathered its momentum, an acute shortage of trained personnel was felt. Even at the beginning of the plan, nearly half of the posts at the higher managerial level were managed by the persons who did not have any special technical training.⁴⁵ The important task before the Soviet government was, thus, not only to get the productive help of the old intelligentsia but to create a new cadre of intelligentsia, ideologically committed to the new social system. The young emerging intelligentsia was expected to be highly qualified, technically capable of manning the machinery as well as the tasks of the technical revolution. It necessitated a new educational system and

43 M. Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled (Bombay, 1969), p. 264.

44 Ibid.

45 Maurice Dobb, Soviet Economic Development Since 1917 (London, 1948), p. 258.

new curricula for the younger generation. It in fact demanded a complete reorientation of the educational policy, which was accordingly enforced by the end of 1920s.

Education had served "an important tool in the hands of the traditional intelligentsia "to manipulate culturally the minds of the masses".⁴⁶ In any social system "the ideological apparatus of education reflects the structure of specific demands made on the behaviour pattern of the citizen."⁴⁷ The functional aspect of the education has a direct bearing on the behaviour patterns which become legitimised to meet the needs of the obsolete productive system.

In the traditional Russian society, the educational apparatus was controlled by the traditional religious elite. "Till the outbreaks of the Soviet revolution, the traditional elite...exercised a complete monopoly over cultural, religious and educational institutions."⁴⁸ The old traditional educational system served the interest of the Tsarist regime and the upper strata of the society. After the revolution one of the important steps taken by the Soviet state was to change the educational system in such a way as to serve the interests of the society as a whole. The concept of social planning in relation to

46 Sharma, n. 7, p. 186.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid., p. 184.

economic planning, ultimately involving and serving the society was the main guiding force of the Soviet education policy.

The fundamental question involved in the education policy was not merely overhauling the traditional educational system but the "restructuration of traditional system in accordance with the imperative requirements of socio-economic and political change".⁴⁹

The Soviet planners of the educational policy derived their basic concepts of education from the writings of Marx and Engels and the Paris Commune of 1871. Though Marx and Engels never worked out a blueprint of what education should be in a socialist society, they definitely expressed some general opinions on education.⁵⁰ Marx emphasized the all round development of human personality through education. But he put particular emphasis on poly-technical education, where people received the education in technology and practical handling of various implements of labour.⁵¹ Education for Marx had three aspects: Firstly, mental development through mental education; secondly bodily education provided by gymnastics and military

49 Ibid., pp. 49-50.

50 See Alex Inkelos, ed., Soviet Society - A Book of Reading (London, 1971), p. 428.

51 Karl Marx, Capital (Moscow, 1971), vol. 1, p. 459.

exercises and thirdly, technical training which would impart the general principles of handling all process of production in the socialist society.⁵² Lenin had also expressed his views that the purpose of education in a socialist state ought to reflect its class aim by which he meant the working masses.⁵³ Lenin was against 'apolitical' education. Education he felt must be able to make the man politically and socially a conscious human being.

The Bolshevik Party had, in fact chalked out a programme of revolutionary reorganisation of educational system much before the revolution. It was put into practice with required variations in the country. The enlightened Bolshevik leaders, in the earlier period, like Lenin, Krupskaya, Lunacharsky, Shooling and others had given more emphasis on the scope of culture, i.e., general human education. In support of the ethos of the transition period, the education policy endeavoured to emphasise free compulsory education and on the creation of appropriate links of education with the economic development. It was sought to achieve politicization of the younger generation, and the creation of a vast pool of scientific and technical intelligentsia. It was combined with labour - an innovation introduced in

52 K. Marx and F. Engels, Selected Works (Moscow, 1950), vol. II, p. 81.

53 Lenin, On Socialist Ideology and Culture (Moscow, 1975), pp. 142-3.

the Marxian concept of education. The labour theory of Pavel Blonsky emphasized that productive work and useful labour were to form the basis of education.⁵⁴ Lenin being greatly influenced by Blonsky's labour theory made an assessment that it would enable the people to master the technical culture.⁵⁵ As education was significantly linked with politics and economics, the word education was in fact substituted by the term 'Enlightenment'.⁵⁶ It was an all inclusive term aiming at producing a new culture and a revolutionary value system and ethos for the socialist society.

A 'universal education' policy was in the general plan of the Soviet government recognized through the constitutions of 1918 and 1924 that also announced that though education facilities would be open to all in principle, a preferential treatment would be given to the children of the toilers, who for centuries had remained particularly disadvantaged in this regard.

In the first decade after the Revolution, the Bolsheviks, however, could not follow a consistent policy

54 J.J. Tomiak, The Soviet Union (London, 1972), p. 14.

55 See Political Education in USSR (UNESCO, Netherland, 1963), p. 37.

56 Beatrice King, Changing Man : The Education System in the USSR (London, 1936), pp. 28-29.

design of education in accordance with their ideological commitments. They had made several changes in the school system and in the curricula, drawn mainly from the Western education system. It was only after the introduction of First Five Year Plan, that the Western method of education was abandoned. From 1928 onwards the emphasis was laid on the training of the specialists in various fields of economic construction: industrialization and collectivization. The educational policy in this period supplemented the paramount imperatives of Soviet economic development. It created a necessary infrastructure which complimented the radical process of socio-economic transformation.

The main purpose of the education was not only to eradicate illiteracy which was both a political and economic necessity, but also to create a 'new man' fully conscious and politically socialized to become the productive force of the society. It did articulate the ideological understanding of socialism. Education, in the hands of Soviet government, was an important tool to infuse new cultural values suitable to the imperatives of the socio-economic transformation.

Guided by the massive programme of industrialization and collectivization alongwith the implementation of Plan policies, the Central Committee of the CPSU, at its plenary meeting in November 1929 emphasized the need for scientific and better teachers, particularly those having

practical training alongwith adequate theoretical background.⁵⁷ Accordingly, the speedy formation of the new intelligentsia was to be realized through opening of new schools and institutions for technical and scientific education. A number of higher technical schools of a university and secondary school standing and also of factory schools for the training of skilled workers were opened. As a result by the closing year of the Plan there were about 200,000 students in higher technical colleges of university standing and near about 900,000 students were receiving education in secondary technical schools. Table 2 shows a substantial increase in

Table 2

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

	1927	1940
Enrolment in general schools of all types (in thousand)	7,578	20,633
Higher Educational Establishments	90	481
Their enrolment (thousands)	114.2	478.1
Technical and other special secondary schools	672	2,188
Their enrolment (thousands)	123.2	594.0

Source: Forty Years of Soviet Power : In Facts and Figures (Moscow, 1958), p. 269.

57. Tomiak, n. 54, pp. 16-17.

the higher educational establishment and technical secondary schools and the enrolment of younger students in those establishments. The Soviet system of compulsory secular education, eradication of mass illiteracy, particularly adult illiteracy was significantly facilitated by the destruction of the functional ethos of traditional social structure and a systematic policy of educational and cultural organisation. As a result a high rate of illiteracy was removed as is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

GROWTH RATE OF LITERACY

	Percentage of literate people 9 to 49 years of age		
	Men	Women	Both sexes
<u>Total Population</u>			
1926	71.5	42.7	56.6
1939	91.5	83.4	89.1
<u>Urban Population</u>			
1926	88.0	73.9	80.0
1939	97.6	91.0	94.2
<u>Rural Population</u>			
1926	67.3	35.4	50.6
1939	93.7	79.2	86.3

Sources: Harish Vjra, Development of Soviet Educational Policy, 1920-1936 (unpublished), M.Phil Dissertation submitted to the SIS, JNU, New Delhi, 1978, Table 1.

Industrialization and Intelligentsia

The industrialization put forth its own discipline and demanded a significant role for the intelligentsia. The Soviet government had perforce been driven to adopt its structure of authority to absorb the new intelligentsia created in response to the industrial and technical revolution. "The pre-occupation of the top leadership with problem of production has made the technical and managerial intelligentsia an indispensable adjunct of power and given its members an increasing significant role in the directive apparatus of Soviet state,"⁵⁸

To get the maximum involvement of scientific and techno-managerial intelligentsia, various policies were adopted to give maximum incentives to the scientific and technical intelligentsia. The policies were made to improve both quantity and quality of the higher technical intelligentsia to meet the needs of industrial and technological transformation in the first place. In the period of early 1930s thus steps were taken to improve their terms of employment. Their grades were revised and they were provided with better housing facilities. A Government Order of 25 March 1932 instructed the Planning Commission

58 Fainsod, n. 42, p. 503.

(GOSPLAN) to take necessary steps in this regard. Enterprises were asked to provide special dining rooms and living quarters to the highly qualified engineers and technicians.⁵⁹ They were also provided with their own ration - the 'academic ration' which was not provided to the other workers.

The Soviet government also followed a policy which involved increasing wage and salary differentials. It offered substantial financial incentives to highly skilled workers, scientists, technicians, industrial managers and intellectuals.⁶⁰ The policy of wage differentials raised the income of the upper strata of the intelligentsia as well as leading groups within the working class itself. The policy of incentives-cum-wage differentials also helped the process of social mobility, both horizontally and vertically.

In 1928, at the beginning of the First Five Year Plan, the highest paid workers were making nearly three times (1 : 2.8) as much as the lowest paid workers. In 1940 the highest salary of an employee was 10,000 old rubles, whereas the average monthly wage of the official was only 339 rubles. It shows that there was a wage

59 Maurice Dobb, Soviet Economic Development Since 1917 (London, 1948), p. 259. Also see, Heryn Matthews, Privilege in the Soviet Union (London, 1978), pp. 69-70.

60 Bottomore, n. 24, p. 47.

differential between lowest and highest paid workers at the ratio of 1:31.3. The widening of the wage-differentials was the deliberate policy in response to Stalin's famous 'Six Point' speech of 23 June 1931, in which he called for a new attitude towards the technical staff.⁶¹ The engineers and technicians whose services were in great demand were offered the most generous treatment in the establishments.

The intelligentsia as compared to the other working population became comparatively well off. It is said that prior to the World War II families of intelligentsia, consisting of 12 to 14 per cent of the employed population, received 30 to 35 per cent of the national income. In addition to the high incomes, the upper strata of the Soviet intelligentsia also received numerous other facilities: free official quarters; staff assistance paid by the state; rent-free country bonus; free medical care by doctors in first rate hospitals; luxury villas on the Black Sea and buying privileges in special shops.⁶²

As a result of new technical and scientific education provided to the younger generation, and other numerous facilities given to the highly qualified scientific and technical intelligentsia, thousands of specialists were involved in various sectors of industrial development.

61 Maurice Dobb, n. 59, p. 259.

62 Boris Meissner, n. 39, pp. 48-49.

Table 4 shows the number of specialists with higher and secondary professional education involved in various occupations in the Soviet national economy.

Table 4

SPECIALIST WITH HIGHER OR SECONDARY PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ENGAGED IN NATIONAL ECONOMY (Excl. Servicemen)

(in thousands)

	1928	January 1, 1941
Total number of specialists with a higher or secondary professional education	521	2,400
Total specialists with a higher education	233	908
Total specialists with a secondary professional education	288	1,492

Source: Forty Years of Soviet Power: In Facts and Figures (Moscow, 1958), pp. 234, 235.

There was also a numerical growth of working class alongwith the growth of intelligentsia that proved to be a decisive factor in the technical reconstruction of industry and the introduction of new and advanced techniques.

The total number of industrial workers involved in various industries, in 1928, was 31,24,000 that rose to 82,90,000 in 1940. The period also witnessed a substantial increase of Soviet technical intelligentsia consisting of engineers and technicians in various industries. In 1928 the total number of technical intelligentsia was 9,32,000. It was 16,37,000 in 1940.⁶³ Women specialists were also involved in the various fields of national economy. In 1928 the number of women specialists with a higher and secondary professional education employed in the national economy was 1,51,000. On 1 January 1941 it was 8,64,000. The statistical datas show that till the end of 1940s thousands of women specialists were also involved in various occupation having specialisation with higher education.⁶⁴ The Soviet system provided thus equal opportunities to the women in all the aspects of social-economic development.

Agrarian Reform and Intelligentsia

Development of agriculture through collectivisation was another important priority in the framework of Soviet policy from the standpoint of socio-economic transformation.

63 Forty Years of Soviet Power : In Facts and Figures (Moscow, 1958), pp. 56, 57.

64 Ibid., p. 243.

It was only on the basis of the all round development of industry that the problem of collectivization of agriculture could be solved. Lenin had once pointed out that "as long as we live in a small peasant country there is a surer economic basis in Russia for capitalism than socialism."

The First Five Year Plan had set a modest target of 20 per cent collectivization. By the end of January 1920, only 21.6 per cent of peasant households consisted of collective farms.⁶⁵ But by the middle of 1931, 52.7 per cent of peasant households had been collectivised. The proportion had increased steadily over the next years, amounting to more than 90 per cent in 1936 and 99.9 per cent in 1940.⁶⁶

Alongwith the liquidation of kulaks, the collectivisation was achieved nearly hundred per cent till the end of 1930s. Of course the desired result was achieved through the involvement of thousands of scientific and technical intelligentsia. The agricultural-technical intelligentsia consisted of agronomists, veterinarians and middle-level agricultural personnel. The total number of agricultural technical personnel involved in the field of agricultural development was 31.3 thousands in 1926. In 1937 it was 176.0 thousands and in 1939 it was 249.9 thousands.⁶⁷

65 Churchward, n. 41, p. 61.

66 Fainsod, n. 42, p. 531.

67 See Boris Meissner, n. 39, p. 109.

The role played by the agricultural-technical intelligentsia was significantly crucial. In 1937 semi-socialist and socialist agriculture (collective and state farms) accounted for 98.5 per cent of the value of agricultural produce sold to the state, whereas it was only 1.5 per cent in 1924.⁶⁸ In a historically short-period the Soviet state had accomplished the most difficult task of the proletarian revolution - the collectivisation of agriculture.

The reforms brought about in the field of agriculture were revolutionary to the extent that they sought to enforce the foremost institutional break, thereby radically altering the power structure, previously based on the feudal ethos of land relations.⁶⁹ In enforcing the agrarian reforms the Soviet intelligentsia took historical task of collectivisation on a war footing. The party had also turned its attention to involve the 'rural intelligentsia' of teachers and agronomists in the consolidation of Communist Party.⁷⁰ The party intelligentsia provided not only the ideological basis to the theoretical framework of socialism in the Soviet-state, but also took the lead in implementing the party programme of economic development during the transitional period.

68 Churchward, n. 41, p. 63.

69 Sharma, n. 7, p. 125.

70 Carr, n. 16, p. 135.

The socio-economic development had created profound changes in its social structure and increased the rate of social mobility. It created an array of social hierarchy. While the employed population became double between 1926 and 1937 the intelligentsia (official, professional and scientific workers, managers, and clerical workers) were increased nearly four times. In some occupations the number of engineers and architects increased nearly eight times, and of scientific workers nearly six times.⁷¹

Education had proved to be the main road to social mobility and cultural transformation of the whole society. It has proved to be a lever to the social stratification of the society and elimination of the bourgeois elements, though some elements did survive till the end of 1930s. The forced elimination of bourgeois intelligentsia had opened the door for high rate of social mobility among the working masses.

The new social stratification pattern permit us to describe the social structure of the Soviet society only in rough outlines. The three main groups - workers, peasantry and intelligentsia - do not give us the clear picture of real inter-class social changes into various sub-units and groups. That needs a deep and thorough study of inter-structural class composition of the three main classes. Table 5 gives us only a sketchy picture of composition of

71 Bottomore, n. 24, p. 50.

the Soviet intelligentsia and workers engaged in their intellectual pursuits during the historically significant transitional period.

Table 5

COMPOSITION OF THE SOVIET INTELLIGENTSIA AND WORKERS
ENGAGED IN INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITY (WHITE-COLLAR EMPLOYEES)
(In thousands)

	1926 (CSO)	1937	1939
1	2	3	4
1. Political and economic leaders:	365	1751.0	(1813.4)
A. Leaders of state administration, social organizations and their administrative units:			445.2
B. Managers of production plants and their work departments			757.0
C. Directors of trade organizations:			244.9
D. Directors of supply organizations:			366.3
2. Engineering and technical personnel	225	(1060.0)	1656.5
A. Engineers, architects, etc. (those not plant directors)		250.0	247.3
B. Middle-level technical personnel		810.0	1409.2
3. Agricultural-technical personnel	45	(176.0)	294.9
A. Agronomists, veterinarians etc.		80.0	196.8
B. Middle-level agricultural personnel		96.0	98.1
4. Medical personnel:			679.6
A. Physicians (including directors of medical institutions):	57	132.0	152.8
B. Middle-level medical personnel:	128	382.0	(527.6)
			-/-

Table 5 (contd.)

	1	2	3	4
5. Teachers and scientists:				1553.1
A. Scientists (including directors of scientific institutes):	14		80.0	111.6
B. Teachers (including directors of schools), sport functionaries:	381		969.0	1441.5
6. Men of letters and cultural leaders:	90		(456.0)	(486.3)
A. Writers and journalists:			297.0	58
B. Political and adult-education instructors				285
C. Artists			159.0	143.3
7. Planners and bookkeepers:	650		(2439.0)	3102.0
A. Economists, comptrollers, etc.:			822.0	1037.3
B. Accountants, etc.			1617.0	2064.7
8. Juridical personnel:	27		46.0	62.4
9. University students	168.0		550.0	
10. Other groups among the intelligentsia (including the military):	575		1550.0	
Total "intelligentsia"	2725		9591.0	9648.2
Communications (postal service, etc.):				265.4
Trade and supply (less directors):				1014.9
Municipal industries and services:				202.5
Office personnel (including bureau heads):				489.4
Agents and dispatchers:				176.4
Other:				2024.6
Total white-collar employees:				13821.4

Sources: Boris Meissner, Social Change in the Soviet Union (London, 1972), p. 109.

Cultural Transformation

There was a general decline in the standard of living that resulted from the people swelling the cities and industrial centres, together with the critical shortage of living quarters, food, consumer goods and public welfare facilities. However, various steps were taken to improve socio-cultural well-being of the people. The efforts were also made to help improve the general standard of health of the people. Table 6 indicates the steps taken by the government to provide general facilities for the masses provided through libraries, hospitals and recreational centres.

Table 6

PRINCIPAL CULTURAL AND HEALTH INDICES

	1927	1940
Public Libraries	16,940	56,119
Library books (thousands)	48,576	124,480
Overall newspapers circulations (thousands)	6,474	25,156
Film projectors	4,688	17,646
Hospital beds, exc. military hospitals (thousands)	179.7	482.0

Source: Forty Years of Soviet Powers: In Facts and Figures
(Moscow, 1958), p. 269.

During the transitional period a significant change was also discernible in the world outlook of creative and artistic intelligentsia. The artistic intelligentsia developed an understanding of indissoluble link between culture and interests of the Soviet people. The intelligentsia constituted a direct source of initiative and cultural innovation. The Soviet intelligentsia exerted major cultural influence upon the masses that shaped the type of character suited to the formative phase of reconstruction of the Soviet society. The intelligentsia - "a minority in the 'heroic' mould was needed to provide the cutting edge"⁷² for the socio-economic transformation. They were required to combat vigorously all manifestations of bourgeois ideology, remnants of a private property psychology and religious prejudices of the land-owning system of the past. The Soviet policy was thus required to have a "wholesome catalytic influence" upon the Soviet social structure and its institutions. "The hard core of the policy was to initiate, develop or force through a structural change in the vast agrarian sector of society, because it was here that all the major contradictions, social chasms and growth retarding cultural values were housed."⁷³ For the propagation of new culture the party had passed a resolution, in June 1925, regarding the party policy in the field of literature and art.

72 Joshi, n. 31, p. 45.

73 Sharma, n. 7, p. 217.

In 1927 the academic theatres of Moscow and Leningrad staged number of plays representing a new wave of ideological culture. Soviet drama could not just bypass the process that were taking place among the intelligentsia. In a number of significant works, it represented both the formation of the new intelligentsia and the re-orientation of the world outlook of the old intelligentsia.⁷⁴ Alexi Tolstoi, speaking at the conference concerning dramatology in October 1930 said: "We are writers of the epoch of the great plan."⁷⁵ The literary figures like Gorky, immensely influenced the creative-artistic intelligentsia, through their writings and speeches delivered at various conferences. The "Proletarian Cultural Movement" followed during 1930s was an innovation of the artistic intelligentsia. "The Proletarian Culture movement sought to promote culture among the workers and encouraged them [intelligentsia] to express themselves in art, drama, poetry, literature etc. The Proletcult theatre was a very significant propaganda promoting the new order on [its] wheels."⁷⁶

Cultural movement uprooted the age-old inhibitions and constraints of free enquiry. It affected the old attitudes

74 S. Fedyukin, The Great October Revolution and the Intelligentsia (Moscow, 1975), p. 219.

75 ^{Cited in} Ibid., p. 223.

76 Martin McCauley, ed., The Russian Revolution and the Soviet State, 1917-1921: Documents (London, 1977), p. 258.

towards productive activity as a result the intelligent and energetic people were gradually drawn to participate in the productive activities of the economic development. The infusion of new ideological cultural values helped to boost the economic development in a very short period of time. At the same time "it is important" to be noted the impact of technological, economic and political factors that facilitated this "cultural reorientation"⁷⁷ of the Soviet society.

The cultural transformation was decidedly and comparatively slower than economic and industrial change. The economic development alongwith industrialization was accompanied by extensive urbanization which had created its own impact on the social structure. It was the peasantry which was forced to move out of the "settled cultural rythem of socio-economic life" and provide a viable workforce to the industry. The number of cities and towns with over 100,000 population had increased considerably. The population in these cities and towns rose from 9.5 million in 1926 to 27 million in 1939. It is significant to note that from 1926 to 1939, some 24.4 million peasants moved into the cities.⁷⁸ This meant generally the prolotization of the peasantry not only in the city but also in the country.

77 Joshi, n. 31, p. 55.

78 Boris Meissner, n. 39, p. 37.

The foregoing explanation reveals that the formidable transition period was historically significant from the standpoint of socio-economic changes alongwith the achievement of socialisation of the intelligentsia which in turn proved to be a viable guiding force for a total change. The total change could be achieved through the imaginatively drawn educational and cultural policies, besides accelerating economic development by introducing structural reforms and institutional transformation in the society.

Stalin in his speech "On the Draft Constitution of the USSR", delivered to the Extraordinary 8th Congress of Soviets on 25 November 1936 observed that "Our intelligentsia is an entirely new intelligentsia...side by side with the workers and peasants...it is engaged in building the new classless socialist society."⁷⁹

Obviously the Marxist-Leninist ideology of socialism was the innovative force in destroying the old model of backward, a semi-feudal society inherited from the Tsarist regime. The ideology had proved to be significantly instrumental in the socio-economic transformation and cultural reorientation. The old institutional barriers to socio-economic transformation were rooted out from the social soil. The social mobility and dynamism were allowed to operate along the ideological transformation during the transition

79 Stalin, n. 40, p. 263.

period. The ideology also remained significantly instrumental in attracting and re-educating the bourgeois intelligentsia alongwith the creation of cadres of socialist intelligentsia during the transition period. The emergence of new Soviet intelligentsia provided a multitude of specialist cadres in all areas of economy, science, technology and cultural affairs. It provided a work-force, to create a new set of governmental apparatus, to restore and further develop the new productive apparatus, and to give a value structure to the Soviet society. The whole force of Soviet intelligentsia was made to operationalize the restruration of the society. In fact the restructuration of new Soviet society would not have been accomplished without the operationalization of the potentialities of the intelligentsia who signified, as Trotsky put it, "nation's national resources".

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