

84449
PRINTING AND KINDRED TRADES FEDERATION

General Secretary: G. G. EASTWOOD

THE PRINTING
AND
BOOKBINDING
INDUSTRY
IN THE
SOVIET UNION

Report of a Federation
Delegation which visited
the U.S.S.R. in July, 1958

60, DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

THE PRINTING AND
BOOKBINDING
INDUSTRY
IN THE
SOVIET UNION

Report of a Federation
Delegation which visited
the U.S.S.R. in July, 1958



*The Federation delegation with officials of the Cultural Workers' Union and interpreters.
This photograph was taken on a high point overlooking the city of Moscow*

THE DELEGATION

The delegation was led by the Federation President and consisted of the following members of the Federation Executive Committee:—

Mr. W. A. MORRISON, O.B.E.,
Federation President.

General Secretary of the National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers.

Mr. M. A. CLAYTON,
Federation Vice-President.

General Secretary of the National Union of Press Telegraphists.

Mr. G. G. EASTWOOD,
Federation General Secretary.

Joint Secretary of the Joint Industrial Council of the Printing and Allied Trades.

Mr. H. J. BRADLEY,
General Secretary of the National Union of Journalists.
President of the National Federation of Professional Workers.

Mr. H. G. BELLINGHAM,
General Secretary of the Society of Lithographic Artists, Designers, Engravers and Process Workers.

Mr. A. J. BUCKLE,
General Secretary of the National Society of Electrotypers and Stereotypers.
Chairman of the Joint Industrial Council of the Printing and Allied Trades.

Mr. L. H. CLINE,
General Secretary of the Monotype Casters and Typefounders Society.

Mr. S. GILMAN,
General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Lithographic Printers.

Mr. H. GIRDWOOD,
General Secretary of the Scottish Typographical Association.

Mr. A. C. TORODE,
General Secretary of the Sign and Display Trades Union.

Mr. C. W. WALLACE,
General Secretary of the Association of Correctors of the Press.

Miss M. G. WALLIS,
Member of the Federation Executive Committee.
Chairman of the London Women's Branch of the National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers.

Miss G. M. HART,
Private Secretary to Mr. Eastwood, who acted as secretary to the delegation.

THE DEER HORN

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Section I</i>	
Background and Purpose of the Visit	6
<i>Section II</i>	
Labour: Recruitment, Training and Staffing	8
<i>Section III</i>	
Working Conditions: Including Wages Policy	12
<i>Section IV</i>	
Books, Periodicals and General Printing	20
<i>Section V</i>	
Newspaper Production	32
<i>Section VI</i>	
Trade Unions and Social Security	36
<i>Section VII</i>	
The Social Side	40
<i>Section VIII</i>	
A Last Look Round	41

Section I

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

DURING the post-war years there has been an understandable anxiety on both sides of the British printing industry to find out what was happening in print in countries overseas. This interest has developed mainly for two reasons. Firstly, a desire to know of the extent of technical and mechanical progress in other countries (with a view to seeing if they are ahead of us and if any of their ideas and practices can be profitably adopted), and, secondly, to find out to what extent printers abroad are likely either to enter the British home market, or break into British printing markets in other countries.

In the years immediately following the war interest was particularly directed towards technical progress and labour conditions in the United States of America, and in 1950 a team of technical experts, drawn from both sides of the letterpress printing industry, visited the States under the auspices of the Anglo-American Productivity Council. This was followed, also in 1950, by a similar team drawn from the lithographic section of the industry, and a year later by another delegation representing all sections of provincial newspaper interests including the editorial and managerial side. We know, too, that individual progressive British printing firms also arranged joint delegations of representatives of workers and management to tour the U.S.A.

It has not, of course, required the same amount of organisation and planning for us to find out, during the last few years, about developments in the printing industry in Western Europe. Trade unions and employers' delegations have, whilst attending international conferences on the Continent, for instance, freely visited printing offices in such countries as Holland, Belgium, France, the Scandinavian countries, Western Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and they have thus been able to assess the extent of technical progress and the possibilities of the effects of the industry in those countries on our own. There have been, too, several international printing trade exhibitions on the Continent, and representatives of both sides of the British printing industry have taken the opportunity to visit them.

Whilst all this has been going on, however, we have had little or no idea as to what was happening in the printing industry in the Soviet Union, with its population of over 200,000,000 (which is considerably more than that of the United States, and about equal to that of all the European countries together that have been visited by printing trade delegations). Apart from a team from our own National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers which visited the U.S.S.R. three years ago, we have had no first-hand knowledge, and that delegation was, of course, only concerned with specialised interests in a limited field.

It is not surprising, therefore, that this lack of knowledge of the Soviet printing industry should give rise to suggestions that we ought to know something of what is happening in a country which is developing industrially and technically at such a remarkable pace. We all know, for instance, of the tremendous progress the Soviet Union has made in fields of science, which have profoundly influenced scientific thought all over the world. We all know, too, of the substantial developments by the Russians in a wide variety of industrial and other fields.

And so it was that in 1956 the Executive Committee of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation decided that a representative trade union delegation should be sent to the U.S.S.R. to study printing trade working conditions and production methods. The proposal came before the Executive in the form of a resolution passed by a conference of our Home Counties Group of Local Federations urging that steps be taken towards this end. Shortly afterwards, as a result of informal contacts between the Federation and representatives of the Cultural Workers' Union of the U.S.S.R. which covers printing trade workers (the officials being in this country at the invitation of the N.U.P.B. & P.W.), the Federation was invited to send a delegation to Russia.

After deciding that a visit should be paid (a decision which was ratified by the Federation Annual Conference), the Executive Committee gave considerable thought to the composition of the delegation, so that it would be representative of the many and varied trade interests, and came to the conclusion that all the sections could not be satisfactorily covered by one delegation, and decided that the Federation Executive (consisting, with one exception, of General Secretaries of the unions) should pay an introductory and exploratory visit. It was recognised that a single delegation, fully representative of all the various trade interests, would be far too unwieldy.

The main purpose behind the decision of the Federation to send a delegation composed of trade union leaders was to give them an opportunity to have a look at their own sections of the industry and to decide whether separate trade union delegations, representing their own interests, could profitably visit the U.S.S.R. In other words, it was only intended to be an exploratory visit that could do no more than obtain a general picture of the industry for the guidance and information of our affiliated unions.

The delegation, which comprised the Federation President, Vice-President, General Secretary and nine members of the Federation Executive Committee, has tried in the following pages to present a report giving a fair and objective picture of what they saw during their two weeks stay in the Soviet Union.

Section II

LABOUR—RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND STAFFING

We knew, of course, that women were very extensively employed in industry in the Soviet Union and that there were considerable numbers in the printing trade, but nevertheless it was something of a surprise when we saw, for instance, young women in charge of two-revolution letterpress machines, operating Linotype and Monotype keyboards, manning three-knife guillotines, acting as assistants on letterpress, litho and photogravure presses, working as re-touchers in process departments, engaged on "make-ready" in letterpress machine rooms, and occupying practically all readers' desks.

When, during the first days of our visit, we expressed particular interest at the high percentage of women in the printing industry (over 70 per cent), we were given graphic details of manpower losses during the war against Germany from 1941 to 1945. Instances were given of something like 50 per cent of a town's male population not returning from the war and there can be no doubt that it has been only by the widespread use of women and girls in industry that economic and industrial recovery has been possible in the U.S.S.R. to such a tremendous extent. Women could be seen everywhere engaged on such strenuous jobs as road-making, building, and heavy agricultural work. There is a different attitude generally in the U.S.S.R. towards the employment of women in industry, but we sensed that the Soviet people are themselves a little uneasy about the extent to which women are employed. We were told of long-term plans that had been made for the gradual reduction of the number of women in certain arduous occupations as the male population increases.

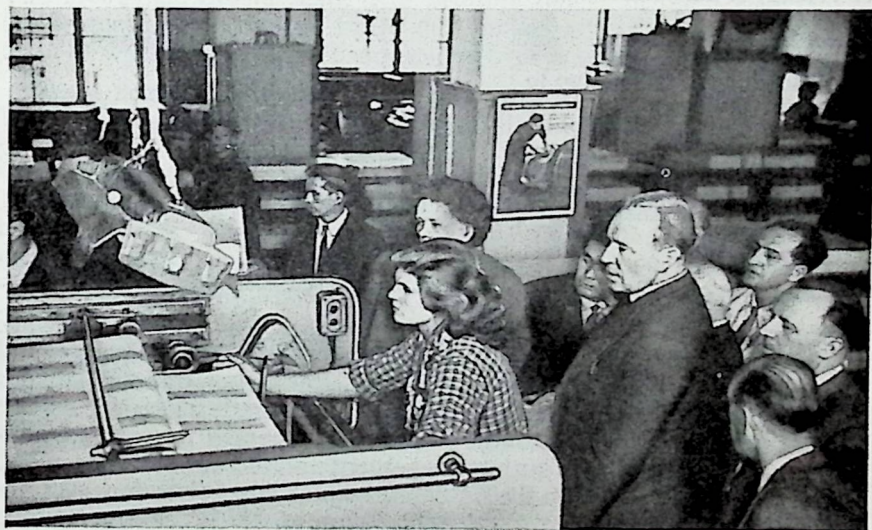
By agreement with the Cultural Workers' Union there are occupations in the printing industry from which women are debarred for health reasons. They are not, for example, allowed to be trained as Monotype caster operatives because of possible dangers to health from close contact with fumes from the metal pots. We were interested to find that comparatively few women are employed as journalists, and were told that it is not considered a suitable occupation for women because of the irregular hours and the arduous travelling which is so often entailed.

We saw women freely employed as compositors, machine room assistants (and sometimes as machine-minders), and in bookbinding and warehouse departments. We soon became accustomed to seeing them employed as Linotype and Monotype keyboard operators, too, and were told that they did their own "running repairs," although there is generally a male mechanic available in the department in case of major breakdowns. In one electrotyping department we noticed

that women were employed in the ratio of one woman to two men, and we saw one woman "slabbing" and another preparing moulds for the baths.

It was not unusual to see men working in a department supervised by a woman. The head of one foundry department we saw was a woman, for instance. We were introduced to a young woman who was in charge of a large letterpress machine room, and the works manager of one general printing enterprise was a middle-aged woman who had obviously worked her way through several departments, following graduation at the Moscow Institute of Printing Technology.

The staffing in machine rooms seemed to vary considerably and as a typical example it may be mentioned that on each of a battery of four-colour offset machines we saw one male machine-minder, two male and one female assistants. Often, particularly in letterpress departments, there would be a machine-minder and a male or female assistant, and we were interested to learn that assistants may (and often do) graduate to become machine-minders, irrespective of their sex. Indeed, most of those in charge of printing machines to whom we talked had entered the industry as assistants. Whilst it is normal practice to obtain promotion, workers may only perform the operations covered by their own grade; they are not interchangeable on a machine and each member of the "crew" must keep to his, or her, own job.



In the machine room of the Moscow Printing Combine. The girl seen in the picture is in charge of the machine

**COMPOSITION OF WORKING TEAMS ("Brigades")
ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF MACHINE**

<i>Type of Machine</i>	<i>Printers</i>	<i>Printer's Assistants</i>	<i>Loaders</i>	<i>Delivery Hands</i>
Letterpress Printing—				
1. Two-revolution and Stop-cylinder, 72 × 108 and 84 × 108 format :				
(a) without automatic loading	1	1	—	—
(b) with automatic loading ...	1	1	—	—
(c) 3/4-colour work and Duplex without automatic loading	1	1	—	1
(d) Ditto with automatic loading	1	1	—	—
2. Two-revolution and Stop-cylinder machines with two loadings, format 60 × 92 × 2 and 72 × 108 × 2 :				
(a) without automatic loading	1	2	—	1
(b) with automatic loading ...	1	1	—	1
3. Small machines, format 60 × 92 and smaller :				
(a) with automatic loading ...	1	—	—	1
(b) without automatic loading	1	—	1	—
4. Automatic Machines	1	—	—	—
5. Platens, of all systems	1	—	—	—
Offset Printing—				
6. One-colour Machines :				
(a) Small and Medium, up to 90 × 108 format	1	1	—	1
(b) Large, 100 × 123 plus ...	1	1	—	1
7. Two-colour Machines :				
(a) Small and Medium, up to 90 × 113 format	1	1	—	1
(b) Large, format 100 × 126 plus	1	1	—	1

Young people generally enter the printing industry at the age of 17 years (or 18 in some cases), and whilst practice seems to vary, the normal period of training is four years, often divided between factory and full-time attendance at a printing trade technical college which they call a trade secondary school. It seemed to us that everything possible is done by both management and the union to encourage young workers to develop their skill and equip themselves for positions of responsibility. Spare time study seemed fairly common. We learned that young workers who cannot take advantage of technical college tuition, because of distances, are encouraged to take correspondence courses. Those studying in technical institutions outside

the factory do not lose financially; they are given time off to study and to sit for examinations and full wages are paid and, in the case of piece workers, they are given an average wage. The cost of the courses is met by the management. As in our own country, there is a two years period of compulsory military service for young men.

A new apprentice receives the pay of workers in Grade I of the pay-scale (reproduced in Section III of this report), and after gaining a measure of experience and knowledge of the work is transferred to the next higher grade. On completing his training and passing the prescribed examinations he is allotted a pay-grade corresponding to his qualifications. "Qualifications Commissions" are established in every enterprise for the purpose of checking the progress of the apprentices' work, deciding on their transfer to higher grades, examining their record, enrolling them in a given craft, and assessing their skills for qualification under the particular grade of the pay-scale. These Qualifications Commissions are appointed by the general director of the works and comprise: the chief engineer, head of the shop, the training officer and a personnel officer, together with representatives of the union. They also decide on all questions of promotion to higher grades of qualified workers upon their reaching the necessary technical and production level.

Readers are generally recruited from the ranks of compositors, although copy-holders may be promoted. Workers wishing to become readers are called upon to undertake a course of training which is provided by each factory, and they are only transferred to the reading department when their efficiency has been proved by examination. The great majority of readers in printing offices in the Soviet Union are women. Only in one office did we see a man employed on this class of work, and he was head reader over a staff of 40 women.

There is a Faculty of Journalism at the Moscow State University which is responsible for the training of many who enter newspaper offices and it seems to us that this is increasing as a source of labour for the industry. The majority of those who study at the Institute of International Relations in Moscow do so with a view to a journalistic career, but we found, too, that considerable numbers of those at present engaged in journalism have had no such specialised training.

The Faculty of Journalism was founded in 1952 and when we were in Moscow 750 students were attending the courses which extend over five years. Training is given in such general subjects as social and economic problems, the history of Russian and foreign literature, the history of journalism, and foreign languages. We were told that special subjects include the theory and practice of the Soviet press, the principles and methods of editing, production and layout of journals and books, and the organisation and economics of book publishing. Students are also taught shorthand, typewriting and photography.

It was explained to us that about a quarter of the students' time is devoted to practical training, including work on the students'

magazine "The Journalist" issued by the University. In connection with this publication the University runs a small printing office. The Faculty requires students at the end of their studies to write a thesis and pass the State examinations. Evening classes are provided for students who work during the day. Other Universities have journalistic sections of their philological faculties.

The Moscow Polygraphical Institute is, we were informed, "one of the three highest educational institutions in the U.S.S.R." It was founded about 30 years ago and graduates from the Institute are now to be found all over the Soviet Union working as directors, works managers, chief engineers and technical experts and advisers. There are three Faculties within the Institute: (1) Polygraphical Technology; (2) Construction of Polygraphical Machines; and (3) Planning and Economics. There is also a Department "for the artistic finish of printed products."

There are at present 1,430 full-time students taking the five-year course. Following study of such general subjects as higher mathematics, chemistry, physics and languages, the students spend the last three years of their course studying the subject on which they wish to specialise and at the end are required to write a thesis for the Diploma, and we were told "to defend it before a board of examiners." There are also over 600 students attending evening courses.

The Institute also has post-graduate studentships where post-graduates are engaged in scientific research and in studying scientific methods of work. The Institute has a director who is assisted by three deputy directors, one for scientific work, one for tuition and one for administration. Each Faculty is controlled by a "Faculty Dean" and the Institute is financed by grants provided from the State budget of the U.S.S.R. for Higher Education.

Section III

WORKING CONDITIONS—INCLUDING WAGES POLICY

Since 1917 the length of the normal working day in industry in the Soviet Union has been eight hours, but as a result of recent legislation, a seven-hour day is gradually being introduced. The working day in the printing industry is eight hours, with six hours on a Saturday (making a 46-hour week), but it is intended that these hours should gradually be reduced. Whilst, as we have explained in Section II in this report, the general school-leaving age is 17 (and in some cases 18), young people of 15 or 16 years of age may be employed in

the printing industry in exceptional cases by agreement between the management of a factory and the trade union factory committee. The working day for these young employees of 15 years of age is four hours, and for those between the ages of 16 and 18, six hours. We were told, however, that in every case full wages must be paid. Overtime for all workers is banned except "in very exceptional circumstances", and in any case is limited to two hours a day and 120 hours a year. The permission of the trade union representatives has to be obtained before overtime is worked. Printing trade workers normally have 24 days annual holiday, and those under 18 must have a calendar month taken during the summer.

Seventy per cent of the workers in the printing industry in the U.S.S.R. are paid on a piece-work basis. The principle of equal pay for equal work has long been established, and the sex of the worker is not in any way taken into consideration in computing wages rates.

The wages system operating in the printing industry is basically similar to that adopted throughout Soviet industry generally. It is entirely different from our own and, at least at first sight, appears rather complicated. The Cultural Workers' Union, knowing our particular interest in this matter, prepared for us the following statement which is supplemented by some explanatory remarks of our own:—

"Every worker in the printing industry is graded according to his qualifications and the class of work which he performs, and is paid at the rate appropriate to his grade in the wages scale.

BASIS FOR COMPUTATION OF EARNINGS BASED ON EIGHT-HOUR WORKING DAY

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Pay for Basic Norm for Piece-workers</i>		<i>Minimum Basic Wage for Time-workers</i>	
	<i>Per day (Roubles)</i>	<i>Per month (Roubles)</i>	<i>Per day (Roubles)</i>	<i>Per month (Roubles)</i>
1.	11.52	300.00	10.32	300.00
2.	13.04	333.82	11.68	300.00
3.	14.72	376.83	13.20	337.92
4.	16.80	430.08	15.04	385.02
5.	19.20	491.52	17.20	440.32
6.	22.48	575.49	20.16	516.10
7.	26.48	677.89	23.76	608.26
8.	32.24	825.34	28.88	739.33

"In practice the rates fixed for Grades 1, 2 and 3 are made use of only for the convenience of calculating the rates for higher grades.

"In cases where piece-work rates are applied the wages are related to the output produced. The rates for piece-workers are used for the determination of the rate for a unit of production.

“The rate per unit is arrived at by dividing the rate per hour by the number of units of work produced, treated as a norm.

“Identical tariffs are in operation in all printing works. The norms have been worked out by the industry itself with the participation of local trade-union organisations.

“In practice the average percentage of output based on the accepted norms amounts to 130-140 per cent, which results in the average earnings of piece-workers being 30 to 40 per cent higher than their nominal wage according to the grade-scale.

“There is no limitation of the excess of production over and above the norm, and therefore no limitation of the worker's earnings.

WORK-GRADE, PAY-GRADE AND AVERAGE EARNINGS OF BASIC WORKERS IN THE PRINTING TRADE

<i>Number</i>	<i>Trade</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Average Monthly Earnings (Rbls.)</i>
1.....	Hand Compositor	8-7	1,100-1,200
	Pager-up	8	1,300-1,400
2.....	Typesetter, Machine—		
	On Linotype Machines	8	1,100-1,200
	On Monotype Machines	7	1,100-1,200
3.....	Proofreader	8-7	1,000-1,300
4.....	Photographer	8-6	1,200-1,500
5.....	Retoucher.....	8-6	1,200-1,300
6.....	Copyist	7-6	1,100-1,200
7.....	Etcher	8-7	1,300-1,500
8.....	Engraver-Diesinker	8-6	1,500-1,700
9.....	Stereotyper—Caster and Finisher .	6	1,100-1,300
10.....	Electrotyper	8	1,200-1,400
11.....	Letterpress Printing—		
	(a) Printer	8-5	1,200-1,500
	(b) Printer's Assistant	6-5	900-1,100
	(c) Loader	4	700-800
	(d) Delivery Hand	4	600-800
12.....	Offset Printing—		
	(a) Printer	8-6	1,400-1,600
	(b) Printer's Assistant	6-5	1,100-1,200
	(c) Delivery Hand	4	700-800
13.....	Stitcher, Bookbinder (Hand).....	8-4	600-1,000
14.....	Stitching and Bookbinding Machine		
	Operators	7-5	900-1,200
15.....	Cutter, on Single-Knife Machine .	7-5	1,100-1,200
	Cutter, on Three-Knife Machine ...	6	1,000-1,100

“Highly qualified workers engaged in multi-colour printing work are paid fixed wages which amount up to 2,000 roubles per month.

“APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS BY GRADES IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY

<i>Grades</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Per cent Workers...</i>	0.7	1.4	18.4	15.4	18.2	18.5	20.3	7.1”

The delegation would like to add a few words of explanation regarding the first table, "Basis for Computation of Earnings Based on an Eight-hour Working Day." The daily and monthly figures given in this table for piece-workers are the basis by which the earnings per unit of output is measured. We can perhaps best illustrate how this system works by giving a very simple example. A first class bookbinder of considerable experience and ability is placed in Grade 8 because of his qualifications, the basic wage for which is 32.24 roubles per day. The management, in consultation with the trade union committee, decide that his norm of production is that he should bind 12 books per day. It is known when this is fixed that if he works hard he can do more than this and, in fact, he produces 16 books a day, an increase of one-third. His daily earnings are, therefore, 32.24 roubles, plus one-third of this amount, making a total of 42.99 roubles per day. To show how the earnings of two workers in different crafts placed in the same grade may vary, let us take the example of an electrotyper, also placed in Grade 8 because of his skill. To earn his basic tariff of 32.24 roubles he is required to produce 10 plates a day, but by application, he produces, in fact, 15. His daily earnings, therefore, are 32.24 roubles plus 50 per cent of that amount which makes a total of 48.36 roubles.

We would like to add the comment that those workers who are shown in the distribution table as being in Grades 1, 2 and 3 are invariably young apprentices and learners.

The basic pay of a journalist is about 1,500 roubles a month. Some receive as much as 2,500 to 3,000 roubles, and 4,000 was given as a maximum figure. In addition to their basic salaries, journalists receive fees (on a lineage basis) for articles published by their paper.

We were told that the Ministry of Culture, the Central Committee of the Cultural Workers' Union and the State Committee on Labour and Wages are working together on a new system of wages rates for the printing industry. This system will (as previously) be based on an eight-grade schedule and will provide for higher monthly wage-rates. The enhanced time-rates which are expected to be introduced for workers will, it is hoped, result in a better quality of work. In addition to making it worthwhile to produce better quality work, we understand that it will result in an all-round increase of wages of 15 per cent. So far as increases in basic rates are concerned, it does not seem to be possible for one section of the industry to move ahead by itself. To put it another way, the Cultural Workers' Union jealously guards the principle that any increase in wages rates should have general application and not result in one occupational section being placed in an advantageous financial position.

The payment of piece-work rates is not the only method employed in the Soviet Union in order to obtain high productivity. In all the factories we visited we saw slogans prominently displayed in every workroom exhorting the workers to increase productivity. These slogans are particularly directed towards the young people and often

refer to the link between greater productivity, a prosperous U.S.S.R. and "world peace and security." One such slogan which comes to mind as we write is "Young workers of the Soviet Union, do not waste a single minute of your working time." In almost every workroom, too, we saw large photographs or busts of Lenin, the former suitably framed and adorned. There were occasionally photographs of other political leaders (Khrushchev, for instance), but we saw only one of Stalin, and then he was shown in a painting in the company of Lenin.

All sorts of devices are employed to encourage workers towards greater productivity. Each workroom has its own "Board of Honour" on which are displayed photographs of up to a dozen employees in that department who have given particularly good service during, say, the previous three months. In addition to the highly-prized honour of having their photographs thus displayed, cash bonuses are awarded to these workers from the "Director's Fund" in consultation with the factory committee. Those whose photographs appear on these Boards of Honour are not always skilled workers; sometimes they belong to the maintenance staff, and we saw photographs of two cleaners whose services had been adjudged worthy of special recognition.

In addition to the Board of Honour which encourages competitive effort amongst the individual workers in each department, most enterprises have a "Red Banner" (the familiar national flag of the U.S.S.R.) which is awarded quarterly to the department in a factory which has made the greatest productive effort and has, as it was explained to us, "fulfilled the State plan to the full." The department which gains the banner proudly displays it in a prominent position so that the workers themselves and visitors to the factory may easily see it. In some towns there are also competitions amongst printing enterprises themselves, and cash bonuses are given to the factory which is adjudged to have made, over a period, the greatest productive effort. About 75 per cent of the cash bonuses awarded is used directly for the benefit of the workers themselves, a portion being devoted to "cultural needs."

Everywhere, too, we saw measures taken by factory managers to remove "bottle-necks" and improve the quality of the work. As an example, in one enterprise we saw announcements on a notice-board setting out in detail a number of technical and staffing problems which were causing the management some anxiety. Workers were invited to think about these difficulties and make suggestions which they thought might help towards a solution. We were shown examples of working systems which had been thought out and developed by the members of the staff themselves as a result of this kind of publicity, and which in practice had proved highly successful. In one binding department a girl had suggested a new method of handling "tipped in" insets which had been adopted and which was saving a considerable amount of time and, therefore, money. Accordingly a large photograph of the girl and a detailed description of the method she had suggested were prominently displayed in the room and the management very proudly introduced her to us as "one of our inventors."

Wall newspapers are frequently used by both the management and the factory trade union committee to keep workers informed of activities.

There is close co-operation between the management and the trade union factory committee in the provision of holiday facilities, and trade union members of an enterprise are given what are called "accommodation tickets" which enable them and their families to have holidays in union rest-homes or sanatoria with little or no payment, the cost being borne by the trade union administered social insurance scheme and sometimes by the management. Many of the workers are only called upon to pay about 30 per cent of the cost of the accommodation. A special interest is taken in the provision of holidays for the children of employees, and many enterprises run what are called "Pioneer Camps" which cater for children of school age, that is between the ages of seven and 17 years. These camps are open during the whole of the summer, and the children generally attend for a period of about 26 days, but this can be extended in special circumstances. Whilst the larger enterprises run their own Pioneer Camps (Young Pioneers is the name given to the junior branch of the Young Communist League) we understand that numbers of small establishments join together to provide a camp, the average size of which caters for between 200 and 300 children.

We spent an interesting afternoon in the camp organised for the children of "Pravda" employees which is situated in open country about 35 miles from Moscow. The permanent wood buildings include dormitories, dining halls, kitchens and games rooms. In addition to their recreational activities, the children are allocated tasks, such as helping in the kitchen, and examples of embroidery and handicrafts were proudly shown to us. Exercises to the accompaniment of music have a prominent place in the camp's programme, and we watched a display of rhythmic drill. After our visit to the camp we were in no doubt as to the importance that is attached to the welfare of the children.

We invariably found in each enterprise a small meeting room for trade unionists which, we were told, is called "The Red Corner," and it is here that the workers meet for discussions and consultations. In the larger establishments, such a "corner" is provided for in each department.

One of the most consistent features of every enterprise we visited was the spaciousness and cleanliness of the workrooms. Invariably the upper part of the walls and the ceilings were painted white; there was good ventilation and plenty of natural light. Everywhere there was a complete absence of waste-paper on the floor or of any form of litter; whilst smoking was not permitted in the workrooms themselves, there were special receptacles for cigarette ends, etc., in most corridors and rest-rooms. Broad alleys between the machines made for the easy transport of paper and materials, and there was everywhere a general air of quiet efficiency and careful planning. Each individual department had obviously been the subject of thought when the factory was being laid out. For instance, we found the readers' rooms were

particularly spacious with plenty of natural light and were well screened from the noise of machinery. Each reader was provided with a large table, with adjustable slope, and really adequate strip lighting. Only on periodical work did we find readers who had assistants; in all offices readers were responsible for all revising which included returned proofs from the censor's office.

We understand that rules are drawn up between the factory trade union committee and the management of each establishment dealing with the health, safety and general factory welfare of the workers. These rules, which are reviewed annually, deal with such subjects as ventilation, sanitation and the provision of rest-rooms and canteens, etc. Each management is required to set aside annually a sum to maintain and improve working conditions and factory amenities for its employees.

We often saw machines which, by comparison with British standards, were inadequately guarded, and we naturally made inquiries as to the frequency of accidents. We were repeatedly assured that the accident rate is extremely low and that special efforts are made to educate workers, particularly young and inexperienced workers, in the prevention of accidents. Each worker entering the industry is given a brief course of instruction in accident prevention; the instructions are repeated annually and all this seems to have its effect in preventing the workers from taking those risks which we know from our own experience so often result in injury and occasionally death. As the majority of printing trade workers are on piece-work, we asked if there was any tendency to disregard safety precautions, the observance of which might restrict their output and, consequently, their earnings. We were assured, however, that in assessing the "norm" on which the piece-rates are based, the precautions necessary to avoid accidents are taken into account, and this factor is fully allowed for.

We were told that considerable thought is given to the question of safety when new machines are introduced. No new machine is introduced without discussions between the management and workers' representatives, and trade union factory inspectors make periodic examinations of all machinery and any recommendations they make regarding safety measures are compulsory upon the management.

The periodic medical examination of printing trade workers was stressed during our factory visits, and we were told of rules providing for the frequent examination (every few months) of workers handling, for example, acids and lead. By agreement between the management and the union some of these workers receive a free supply of milk. Dermatitis does not cause any particular anxiety, although it is encountered; barrier creams and gloves are freely provided and seem to be effective. When visiting photogravure departments, we made particular inquiries as to precautions against ill-health (remembering the experiences of workers in our own country), and we found that special care is taken to study the health of those working in these

departments. In one factory these employees are medically examined every two weeks, and the air in the department changed 35 times each shift.

We refer in Section II of this report to the high percentage of women workers in the printing industry, and we saw the facilities provided to make it possible for them, especially those with home responsibilities, to continue their work in industry. Every factory had its own creche where babies can be cared for each day; kindergartens are provided for the children below school age and canteens not only provide meals during the day, but frequently include facilities for meals to be purchased cheaply to take home. In some cases laundry facilities are also available. During our discussions with representatives of the Cultural Workers' Union we asked if the absence of the mother from the home had resulted in a juvenile delinquency problem in the U.S.S.R. Whilst they admitted that it was, of course, not unknown, it does not present any sort of national problem, and it was mentioned that they considered a contributory factor to be the prohibition of sadistic films, horror comics and some kinds of strip-cartoons.

During our brief stay in the Soviet Union we saw something of the efforts being made, with Government support, to encourage the workers, especially the young people, to make profitable use of their leisure time. A Ministry of Culture is a department of the Government and trade unions are called upon to play an important part in the provision and maintenance of facilities to meet the "cultural needs" of the workers. In every factory we visited we were shown what is called a "House of Culture" or, in the case of the larger establishments, a "Palace of Culture." Most of those seen are indeed impressive, and the facilities which they offer include concert halls, reading and rest-rooms; radio and television; music-rooms, and well equipped libraries. The library of one of these Houses of Culture has over 47,000 volumes and something like 4,000 registered readers. Activities generally include amateur dramatic societies; instrumental and choral groups; film shows and evening classes on a variety of subjects. One such class (of which we saw details on a noticeboard) was for "young wives who wish to learn more about cooking." We were interested to learn that their fine concert halls are not used exclusively by amateur groups, but also by leading Soviet artists who are invited to entertain the workers. We noted with interest that the works of many British classical authors appeared in these Houses of Culture libraries in representative international collections. We were surprised from time to time at the knowledge which printing trade workers had of the works of such authors as our own Shakespeare, Milton, Dickens, Wells and Shaw. A great deal of care and thought has obviously gone into the provision of these facilities for the leisure hours of the workers, and into making the rooms as attractive as possible. There were many murals and pictures, and we were told that the rooms were tastefully decorated so that the workers could, even if they took no part in the activities, relax in "cultural surroundings."

Section IV

BOOKS, PERIODICALS AND GENERAL PRINTING

All industrial and commercial establishments in the U.S.S.R. are, of course, owned by the State (or by "the people" as the Russians would say), and because of this printing offices are not referred to as firms or companies as is customary in this country, but are colloquially called "enterprises." We have, therefore, used this term throughout the report.

The enterprises we visited in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and Kalinin had been selected by the Cultural Workers' Union to meet requests which we had previously made in order that we might be able to study the processes with which we are particularly concerned. We have no reason to think that they were selected because conditions were ideal, and indeed one was well over 100 years old and had been housed in its present building for many years.

They were generally large in comparison with many British printing firms, but we soon realised that for some years now an effort has been made in the Soviet Union to concentrate industry, including printing, into fewer and more substantially-sized units. We found, too, a steadily progressive trend towards specialisation along the lines of each enterprise equipping itself to undertake one or two particular types of work. Indeed, we saw this specialisation and "break-down" of the job carried to such an extent that the first enterprise we visited did not have its own composing department; all the management's efforts were concentrated on printing and binding, the plates being sent direct from another enterprise which specialised in composing. This tendency towards specialisation has the support of the Cultural Workers' Union. We were given, however, one instance where this effort towards specialisation had not been a success and had been abandoned. A central department had been set up in an area for the repair of printing-trade machinery, but this had led to delays and production losses, and to obviate these a decision had been taken that the various enterprises concerned should revert to previous practice and have their own repair shops.

When we visited an enterprise we were invariably received by the director in his office for a cordial welcome and a preliminary explanation of the "set-up" of the factory. Generally, one or two other members of the management were also present, along with trade union representatives, including, frequently, the chairman of the factory committee. We then toured the works with these representatives of the management and the workers in attendance. So that the various processes might be studied closely, we frequently divided ourselves into two or three groups (with interpreters) for our tours of the factories. Afterwards we all reassembled in the director's office when there was generally a session devoted to discussion and the asking of detailed questions arising from our inspection of the various departments. Whilst understandably we posed most of the questions, there

were occasions when technical questions were put to us, and in this way a useful exchange of information took place. One of the many interesting features of our visits to the enterprises was that the management and the workers' representatives invariably asked for our candid comments on the work we had seen produced and on the methods employed. We soon learned that Soviet printers consider the standard of British printing to be very high, and there was a genuine appreciation of the constructive criticism and suggestions we were sometimes able to offer.

The Soviet printing industry makes good use of an organisation which seemed to us to be the equivalent of our British Printing, Packaging and Allied Trades Research Association, popularly known of course, as PATRA. The Moscow organisation is called The Polygraphical Industry's All-Union Scientific Research Institute of the Ministry of Culture of the U.S.S.R. Founded in 1932, it has 14 laboratories and is always engaged on problems covering a wide range of subjects. Many of the difficulties engaging the attention of the Institute when we were in Moscow were of a type very similar to those referred to PATRA by British employers. Foreign technical and research journals are studied keenly and in its journal "Polygraphic Industry" the Institute makes available to Soviet printers both the results of its own investigations and of research in other countries.

The illustrative processes preparatory to printing, photo-engraving, photo-lithography, and photogravure, are, of course, self-contained crafts each involving sub-divisional operations, requiring specialist knowledge and inherent skill. Only a qualified craftsman could present a detailed and authoritative appraisal of the techniques and practices employed in the production of a line- or half-tone block, lithographic plate or a photogravure cylinder and the time factor in addition to these technical considerations leaves no alternative but to concentrate on general impressions.

One of the many ways in which the Russian printing industry differs fundamentally from our own is that it would be true to say that a very substantial section of British print (the periodical and newspaper trade in particular, not to mention catalogue, poster and showcard work), is dependent upon advertising revenue for its very existence. Could one visualise our industry operating under the present economic system without it? The space given over to advertisements in our newspapers and periodicals is a basic and traditional feature reflecting, of course, our own competitive system with its social and economic structure. One dare not think what would happen to many of our publications if revenue from advertising ceased completely.

The commercial advertising trade as we understand it in this country does not exist in Russia. Under our competitive conditions of private enterprise, with production following in the wake of demand, affected by advertising technique amongst other things, long-distance planning of consumer goods and the co-ordination of the industry itself is well-nigh impossible. Under the type of planned economy operating in

the Soviet Union this, however, is not the case. The productive potential is estimated and the "sights" are set for the period decided upon accordingly. Planning, as we have said, is facilitated by the set-up of the printing trade in Russia; no small scale printing firm, trade house and the like which are features of the British scene, exist. Production is centralised and concentrated. These two important factors, absence of advertising trade and planning of production, have a close bearing upon the technical standards, working conditions and the tempo of production. The former consideration has affected the role and function of the printing industry, for what is left for the printer, blockmaker, lithographer and photogravure specialist if commercial advertising matter is not wanted in the final product?

Under these conditions the illustrative crafts preparatory to printing are engaged upon educational and scientific and professional publications, magazines, fiction, and fine art reproduction in addition to newspaper work. British craftsmen associated with the photo-mechanical processes will understand the significance of the majority of the items quoted, and will accept assurances that the rush and bustle which is often an outstanding feature of our British workshop was noticeably absent in the departments visited. The tempo of production in process block, litho plate and gravure cylinder making is, according to our impression, leisurely compared with British experience. We certainly sensed no oppressive atmosphere prevailing such as is suggested in certain quarters as a feature of Soviet industrial conditions.



Inspecting modern process engraving equipment at the Red Proletariat Printing Works, Moscow

The working conditions in the processing department of the establishments which we visited were, from the point of view of space, light, ventilation and hygiene, equal to the best standards operating in Britain, and in talking to the craftsmen one found (as in other departments) a spirit of enthusiasm, pride and satisfaction in work. It was, as elsewhere, of course, something of an experience to see so many women "craftsmen" employed alongside their male colleagues in the photo-engraving, photo-litho, and photogravure departments.

Reverting to the second basic difference, the planned programme, this obviously has a stabilising effect upon the tempo of production so far as the preparatory processes are concerned. The "last minute" rush order from the advertising agency, the belated original held to the last by the editorial department, or the "stop press" substitution, which has always been a bane in the life of the process engraver or photogravure periodical house, is not an everyday experience in a Russian process plant.

The Preparatory Processes

It would be true to say that outside the newspaper trade, photogravure and photo-lithographic processes are mainly employed in the field of illustrative periodical printing, colour in particular, with the result that the photo engraving technique suffers by comparison. One might almost say that it remains much of a handicraft comparable to our own 1920/30 period. This uneven development can, of course, be fully appreciated when taking into account the enormous runs involved in the publication of magazines and journals, demanding the employment of the photo-litho and photogravure processes, many of which are printed in from 10 to 15 languages and profusely illustrated in colour.

The process engraving plant compares to British practice so far as ratio of camera operators to printers-on-metal and etchers is concerned, and the apparatus in use looked of fairly modern manufacture. Temperature-controlled dark-room and developing equipment is not up to the standard now being used here, but it must be said that the recently introduced equipment is not in general use in many process houses in our own country.

At the "Pravda" printing works in Moscow, with its large periodical department in addition to newspaper printing, studio equipment of the zincograph (process engraving) department includes one vertical and three gallery type cameras producing a total average of 30 negatives per day, in addition to a Klimsch dark room camera which one concludes is confined to colour work. The wet collodion system is a thing of the past, all work being carried out on film or dry plate. It would be safe to say that colour-masking technique is not applied either to photo engraving, litho or gravure, to the same extent as in this country, an impression which is supported by the fact that reproduction from colour transparencies is very uncommon indeed. We saw no multichrome camera or the like, and deduce that colour separation technique has not advanced beyond contact masking stage.

This system applicable to the three processes quoted conformed to our simple orthodox method of positive masking, using the simple and two masked system from "flat copy," as distinct from area treatment and double overlay technique. The operator aims for a final density range of 1.2 with 40 per cent masks registered in contact with the appropriate negatives. The densitometer quite naturally is employed as an aid, and it would seem to be but a question of time before masking and electronic scanning systems are developed as in this country.

The over-riding consideration and impelling factor for the Russian printing trade at this particular stage in its development is quantity. As elsewhere, supply cannot keep pace with demand, and it can safely be predicted that quality, finesse and refinement will come in due course.

No doubt one of the handicaps holding back the blockmaking trade is the fact that zinc is used exclusively for half-tone and colour work which explains the universal use of P.V.A. (Poly-Vinyl Alcohol) as a coating solution in place of albumen and fish glue. Screens used vary from 65 for newspaper to 140 lines to the inch for high-class colour and art work.

The Mark Smith type of etching machine is employed but whilst managements have a theoretical knowledge of the principle of powderless etching techniques, no similar machine to the Dow or Dirats models has appeared on the scene. A Klischograph Electronic Engraver and a Fairchild Scanagraver were in operation at one establishment visited, whilst at another, the Russian model similar to the Elgrama is in production.

The line-etching room represents a typical example of the stress placed upon the health of the worker, with powder and bitumen boxes incorporating perspex covers as protection against atmosphere pollution, whilst a highly efficient extraction-fan system safeguards against nitric acid fumes. The depth of etch which is clean and sharp, seems quite adequate, with output averaging about three normal batches per man per day.

At a Leningrad establishment we visited, the line-etching department of 32 men and eight women is integrated with the relief engraving section employing 18 craftsmen of which two are women. Here "binders" are either line-etched or if worked on brass produced by normal relief-engraving methods routed straight from a die print by the Russian equivalent to our Houchin machinist and finished by the board hand.

Black and white half-tone work consistently gave one the impression of being under-etched with the highlight dot very weighty indeed, tending to give a very flat result. Time did not permit, nor was the interpreter's knowledge of technical jargon sufficiently adequate to trace the cause of this. Whether it is due to the type of negative or fine etching practices is left in doubt, but explanation could be related

to the piece-work system operating in photo-engraving as well as other sections.

In the preparatory departments of the "Pravda" works, and here we must make allowance for uncertainties arising from interpretation difficulties, half-tone output per etcher averaged 3,000 sq. cm. per day, which would approximate to 500 sq. inches, not excessive by any stretch of imagination.

Paradoxical as it may seem, having regard to what has been stated concerning the quantitative as distinct from the qualitative aspect of Russian printing, we were very intrigued to find in the many specimens of block printing presented to us, a number of art subjects printed in two workings which did not include a black plate to give a sepia effect. A very pleasing result was obtained similar to the pre-war duplex half-tone made in Britain. The results being much preferred to that obtained from the use of due-tone ink, which now seems to be the method used in this country. This indicates that no trouble is spared to obtain the effect which is demanded by the nature of the publication.

Turning to the photogravure and photo lithographic illustrative processes (samples of which can be obtained in Britain in the form of monthly periodicals such as "Soviet Union" and "Soviet Woman") one has to admit that the end product compares favourably with British standards. As previously stated, masking and scanning techniques, dark room equipment, and photographic material, have not developed to the same extent as in Britain, where phenomenal strides have been made during the post-war period.

In a Kalinin enterprise visited by us, 10 gravure cylinders per day are produced by a staff comprising three (male) camera operators, 15 retouchers (four male, 11 female) three (female) planners, four (male) etchers, and an assistant, two (female) carbon tissue printers, and six (male) cylinder grinders and depositors. Orthodox carbon tissue procedure was employed using slightly thicker tissue than is used here. Direct sensitising of the cylinder using photo resist or P.V.A. solution was not in evidence. This department served seven weekly, one fortnightly and six monthly publications in addition to other printing work. Production here as in other photogravure and photo litho establishments will be stepped up when latest technical developments, which are making their impact upon these sections of the British printing industry are more generally applied. All gravure cylinders produced for long runs are of course chromium faced and on the litho side, bi-metal and tri-metal plates are in general use, having a zinc base.

A particularly interesting feature of Russian periodical production was the practice of combining both processes, facilitated by the fact that at the majority of the plants visited the printing machine room is serviced by photo-litho and photogravure process departments.

The cover of a publication is often printed in, say, four colours by the photo-litho process with the contents monochrome and colour

produced in photogravure. We were most impressed with the gravure production of type face which was neat and clean, giving a very pleasing and dignified over-all effect. Similarly, books printed letterpress were often illustrated in colour by photo lithography. As far as we could ascertain the achievement on the gravure side is not brought about by photo composing machines. The practice of producing type face for gravure and litho by photographing direct from letterpress formes, similar to the "Ludlow bright type repro method" seemed well developed and established.

There is a complete absence of drawn litho work and much of the lithographic printing trade is based upon six and seven colours, but the process is developing towards four colour reproduction with all that that implies.

It was soon evident to us that there is a close association in the Soviet Union between the printing industry and the rapidly-expanding educational system. The school population is something like 30,000,000; education is free and compulsory for all children between the ages of seven and 17, and many thousands of young men and women proceed to higher educational institutions, including the universities. A visit to the Moscow State University itself showed us something of the calls which education is making upon the printing industry. These vast modern buildings, impressively situated on the outskirts of Moscow, are almost a town in themselves, the University having its own post office, cinema, theatres, shops, sports arena and assembly halls. It is not difficult to imagine the numbers of books needed by the 24,000 students and their 1,500 professors and lecturers. And whilst the Moscow University has a foremost place in the educational and cultural life of the Soviet Union, we were given impressive figures of student facilities in universities situated throughout the 15 Republics which make up the U.S.S.R.

Whilst on the subject of university facilities, we should like to make another brief reference to the Moscow State University which we visited. About 6,000 of the 18,000 full-time students are provided with hostel accommodation; each has a small private room and there is a bathroom to each pair of rooms. On each floor there is a communal sitting-room and kitchen, and the students pay only 30 roubles a month for this accommodation. Students are not charged tuition fees and receive a substantial State grant which means, as it was put to us, "They are paid to study." We learned that one of the usual conditions is that during the first two years following graduation they must take up employment, befitting their qualifications, as directed. For instance, a teacher of English may be wanted in some far-away town and on application being made to the University, a young graduate is designated to the post. At the end of the two-year period he is free to move if he wishes.

An additional heavy call is now being made upon the Soviet printing industry by the decision that every child must study a foreign language for five years, and we were interested to learn that there are, for instance, about 43,000 full-time teachers of English

in the schools. In pre-war days German was the second language taught in the Russian schools, but this has now generally been replaced by English. The schools themselves use about 60 different languages, and we were not surprised to be told that Russia publishes more books than any other country in the world, and in a 124 different languages, too. One impressive figure we were given is that over 4,000,000 books are printed every day in the Soviet Union.

At one of the enterprises we visited, the Moscow Polygraphic Combine, production is mainly concentrated on the printing and binding of encyclopædias, chiefly the "Soviet Encyclopædia," although we saw medical and historical reference books also being produced. We were told that the 1,500 employees turn out between 10,000 and 12,000 volumes every working day. There is no composing plant, this being one of the factories to which we have previously referred which receive their plates from another enterprise. Over 70 per cent of the employees are women and girls. A feature of this factory, which we did not see elsewhere, is a huge conveyer-belt arrangement by means of which the finished books are raised high above the level of the workshop and conveyed slowly but steadily right round the room to the despatch department, there always being many hundreds of books suspended in this way. It was explained to us that the chief advantage of this conveyer system is the saving of storage space, and up to 50,000 books pass through the room in this way every day.

The Binderies

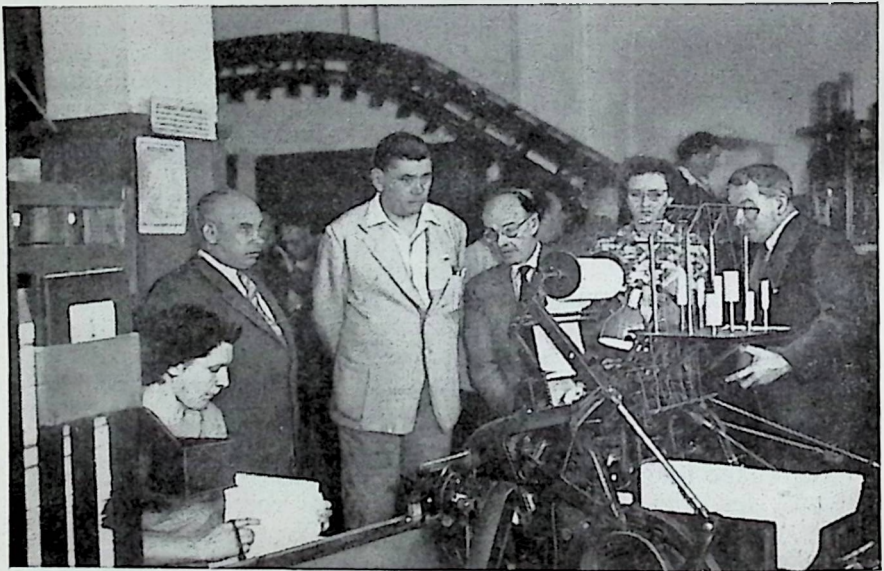
During our visits to binderies we noticed types of guillotines which approximate to our small Johnie trimmer being operated by women, although generally the larger three-knife trimmers and single-knife guillotines are operated by men. The women also operate binding machines, but there is generally a skilled male mechanic in charge of each battery. The general scene is broadly similar to that in our own mechanised binderies. Girls are engaged on the old-style book-sewing and wire-stitching machines. They feed chain-insetting and stitching machines, similar to our own Dexter, Christensen and Brehmer types. Whilst much of the machinery has been made in the Soviet Union, we noticed an English Thermoplastic machine (they were very proud of this) and a number from Eastern and Western Germany. There were the usual types of circular-table wrapping machines; rounding and backing machines; bundling machines, nipping machines and book presses of the normal type, but also some of the new automatic style now being introduced into binderies in our own country. We noticed that the usual operations of placing and plating were done by hand.

Most of the folding is done on machines, many of which are automatically fed, either by the pile feed or the continuous cross-feed system, the latter being the most popular. We saw no examples of the linked-up machines such as are beginning to be developed in our own larger mechanised binderies. Most of the work is either paper back or cloth bound, but we did see good examples of imitation

leather, such as our own rexine or plexide. We noticed various types of gold-blocking and embossing machines similar to our own. In one firm, specialising in the production of glossy postcards, we saw the latest type of Goula Pan varnishing machines which, although producing good work, did not reach the high standard achieved by British workers operating similar machines. The ruling machines we saw were of the smaller type. Whilst, generally speaking, we were of the opinion that production was no better than our own, the board used was, in almost every case, much superior, and similar to the type which was used in our own industry some years ago. The books we examined opened easily (as good books should) and were mainly plain edged, although occasionally the "head" was either coloured or gilt.

With regard to the white paper departments, in one or two cases there was a lack of space, with its consequent effect on efficiency, but in the larger factories ample provision was made for storage and "racking." Transportation was generally by the latest type of mechanical trucks operated by women. In the despatch department most of the packing was done by women but we noticed that men handled many of the larger parcels. Both men and women were engaged on counting "flat" paper.

In another book house we visited, the Red Proletariat Printing Combine, where orders of well over 1,000,000 copies of titles are quite common, something like 75,000 volumes are bound every working day. Printing is by letterpress and litho offset. Whilst the 2,000 employees here are mainly engaged on the mass production



In the bindery of the Moscow Polygraphic Combine

of books, we were proudly shown diplomas which the factory had been awarded for high-quality book production. It appeared to us that the annual award of diplomas by panels of experts stimulated and encouraged the workers, and the certificates were very prominently displayed, along with the books in respect of which they had been awarded. This particular firm was proud, too, of international awards going back many years and we were shown one which had been awarded at a Paris Exhibition in 1937.

Composing Rooms

We were interested to notice that in the composing departments type cases were often double the size of those used in this country (upper and lower cases being together) and, as we have already said, we found composing rooms largely staffed by women and girls. In one office we noticed that the Monotype machines were being converted to take the extended die case (15 x 17 instead of the traditional 15 x 15). Many of the Monotype casting machines are quite old, although some have modern attachments for quadding and centring and several have unit-adding attachments. The machines are invariably clean and in fairly good condition with Russian-made spare parts. The machines themselves had been made in England by the Monotype Corporation. We saw one Elrod lead-casting machine, but generally Monotype machines were used for this purpose. Matrices had generally been made in Moscow, as were some moulds which we saw, but here the steel did not appear to have been specially treated as regards hardening. The type generally is cast with a round "nick," and it will be recalled that for over 30 years now this has been replaced in Britain by a square "nick."

The oldest enterprise we visited was in Leningrad (called the Leningrad Printing Yard). It had been established for well over 130 years and was State-owned even before the 1917 revolution. Incidentally, we were told that the type used by this enterprise in Tsarist days was not of standard height so as to prevent its being "disposed of" by employees for use in other printing offices. Again, it was predominantly a book house, 60 per cent fiction and the remainder text books for schools. We constantly had evidence of the strenuous efforts being made to keep production costs down and were told that, with this in view, books produced at the Leningrad Printing Yard had very little colour work. Eighty per cent of the 2,800 employees are women and the 30 Linotypes and 13 Monotype keyboards are operated almost exclusively by women.

Stereotyping

In the stereotyping departments we noticed that German machines are common and a typical moulding press was the Polygraph. Plastics are used for electro-moulding, and instead of the silver spray which we use in this country, the Russians treat the mould with graphite, saying they preferred this, and showed little interest when we talked about the silver spray process. The solutions in the baths had a

composition which seemed to be the same as our own. The Russians are doing nothing in the way of experimenting with fluorborate or anything else for the purpose of speeding up deposition; in short, as far as electrotyping is concerned, they seem to be content with their present procedure and results. In most cases the solutions are worked hot and agitated, and the moulds are left in the baths for three hours. In one factory we saw a cold bath in which the mould was left for as long as ten hours. It did not appear from our questioning that they had tried backing-up by the plastic method, nor did they appear to have heard of the no-pack flong. For stereotyping, dry flongs made in Russia are used, they are of a good quality from which good results are obtained.

Although we are anxious not to go into too much detail of the circumstances of particular enterprises, we would like to digress and make reference to a factory we visited in the provincial town of Kalinin. As we entered Kalinin by road we saw the very extensive rebuilding which is still going on and were reminded that this was the scene of some of the most bitter street-by-street fighting of the last war when a large part of the town was completely destroyed. Touring this modern, well equipped enterprise it was difficult to imagine that six years previously it had been agricultural land and that production had only commenced in 1955. Practically no skilled printing trade labour had been available in Kalinin at that time, and of the present staff of just over 1,400, only ten had had any previous experience as printing trade workers before taking up employment at the factory. Almost all the workers are very young (the average age is about 23) and they had been recruited locally and sent to the Moscow School of Printing or to printing enterprises in Moscow for training before starting work. Over 50 per cent of the mechanical staff are girls, as are over 70 per cent of the administrative workers.

Machine Rooms

We found that in the printing departments colour-mixing and matching is normally done by a specialised craftsman who mixes the quantities for each machine and supplies a signed "pass" to the printer for reference during the run. Many firms have their own laboratory and, so far as we could ascertain, most, if not all, the colours used are of Russian manufacture. We got the impression that the average printer is not altogether satisfied with the quality of the colours with which he is being supplied; he seems to be encouraged to be critical of his material and to complain where it appears to him to be justified; and we had evidence that every effort was made to meet the craftsman's difficulties.

Proofing is done on offset proofing-presses of the Deffa type, and we did not see any hand-transferring of any kind. The average number of colours per job is six, and zinc trimetal plates are in general use. We saw no graining of any kind for the preparation of albumen or deep-etch plates. This perhaps is not surprising in view of the large

amount of photogravure printing that is done, many printing jobs having runs of from 100,000 to several million copies.

Generally speaking, the litho presses and other equipment we saw are equal to the best of their kind in Britain. No flat bed machines were to be seen and comparatively few single-colour offset machines. The most up-to-date lithographic plant we saw had a press room containing 18 double-colour offset presses and four four-colour presses, two of which were Ultra Roland machines built in 1957 and having fully automatic-feed and delivery attachments. Powder sprayers are in common use, and the average running speed was given as 5,500 impressions per hour. However, Russian printers seem to have the same problem as our own about machine speeds, the speed quoted by the manufacturers being in excess of that at which it is able to run satisfactorily.

The variety of printing papers used seemed to us to be very restricted compared with those with which British printers are expected to cope. We saw chiefly cartridge of varying thicknesses and quality, and calendar papers of the more common kind, although, of course, there are exceptions and we saw many examples of really fine art printing.

The development of education has also made heavy demands on the paper-making industry of the Soviet Union. During 1956 (the last year for which figures are available) 1,990,000 tons of paper were produced as compared with 1,860,000 tons in 1955, 812,000 tons in 1940, and 280,000 tons in 1928.

It is not uncommon, as at the Kiev Magazine and Book Factory, to find enterprises where all three processes, letterpress, litho and photogravure, are in use. Here a staff of 1,100, 85 per cent of which are women, are housed in a building which had been very badly damaged during the last war and which had previously been a newspaper office.

In letterpress machine rooms we found the machines varying considerably in size. They were made chiefly in Russia and Eastern Germany to designs similar to the Miehle, the two-revolution Perfector and two- and four-colour rotaries with many small automatic-fed machines. In most letterpress departments both fluid and powder anti-set-off sprayers were in use.

Readers' marks on corrected proofs were studied with interest. We noticed that they followed a recognised style, but not one of them would be found in the British Standards Institution booklet. It occurred to us that here there might be scope for the International Committee of the B.S.I.

Publishing houses exist in the Soviet Union quite separately from printing enterprises, and at one we visited, the Foreign Languages Publishing House, we were told that they have plans this year to publish 400 different books. Incidentally, we noticed here a Russian translation of Allan Hutt's "History of Trade Unionism"; he is, of course, a member of the N.U.J. and the editor of its journal.

We should like to conclude this section on book production and general printing by saying that we felt the general standard is not very high compared with our own or the U.S.A., although there are exceptions in the field of high class book production and the reproduction of works of art. The great mass of printing has a utility look about it, but this is due, no doubt, to preoccupation with the immediate needs of a vast population which, with the growing literacy of the people, provides an ever-expanding market. No doubt refinements will come later, giving rise to new, increased demands as a more discerning and discriminating public is created. For the present there are very many minds to feed.

Section V

NEWSPAPER PRODUCTION

Our interest in the Press and in newspaper production generally had been anticipated by officials of the Cultural Workers' Union, and facilities were provided for us to study production and publishing methods, and to obtain detailed information. One only needs to know that newspapers in the Soviet Union are printed in 67 different languages to appreciate just one of the problems which faces the industry. There are 9,936 newspapers, and 58,000,000 is given as a rough aggregate daily circulation figure. This means that on average rather more than one Russian citizen in four buys a newspaper; in Britain the figure is six out of every ten. Most newspapers are printed in Russian only, but 2,500 are produced in other languages.

The best-known newspaper in the Soviet Union is, of course, "Pravda," and we had an opportunity to make a close study of its production methods. When the factory was built in 1934 it was on the outskirts of Moscow; it is now in the heart of a large industrial area. "Pravda" is printed every day (including Sundays) and we were told that it has a circulation of 5,650,000. It is printed in Russian in 16 centres of the U.S.S.R. There is only one edition and the moulds from which the newspaper is printed outside Moscow are flown to provincial printing works every day. When the weather is very bad and the planes cannot land, they are dropped by parachute. "Pravda" has only one teletypesetter perforator and one attachment for a composing machine, and this is used solely for local setting. Teletypesetting would appear to be the ideal method for simultaneous publication of a newspaper such as "Pravda" rather than the present system of sending moulds by air, but presumably capital outlay for equipment is a stumbling block.

We were interested and surprised to know that only one edition of "Pravda" is published whatever the news, and we were told that only twice in over 40 years had it been felt necessary to publish a second edition—when Russia entered the war in 1941, and when the Russians reached the Pole. Whilst normal press time is about midnight, we were told that in order to publish foreign news, it is often delayed until 3 or 4 a.m. The difference in time between Moscow and the Western world, and indeed between Moscow and other parts of the Soviet Union, causes many difficulties in this respect.

The mechanical staff of "Pravda," both men and women, work in three shifts. The editorial staff operate a two shift system, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and from 3 p.m. to midnight. On each shift there is a one-hour meal break, and the journalists work a six-day week, and alternate weekly between the early shift and the late shift. Whilst the journalists receive the same salary, irrespective of the shift on which they are working, the lower paid administrative staff on newspapers (such as general office workers) receive extra payment when working on the late shift.

Three times a week "Pravda" is a six-page paper, and on the other days it is down to four pages. When we commented on the comparatively small size of Russian newspapers, we were told that newsprint is not as freely available as the industry would like, and that it is recognised that it is in the national interest that it should be used with care. Journalists told us how very keenly they felt this limitation of space, but they appreciated the reasons that made it necessary.

The "Pravda" works is also responsible for the production of two other newspapers and a large number of journals. Some of these are printed in many languages, such as "The Soviet Union" with a circulation of 500,000 which is printed in 15 languages. Whilst we were touring the works we saw "Soviet Woman" being produced in 10 languages. Books are also printed, but the 4,000 workers in the "Pravda" factory are mainly engaged on the production of newspapers and magazines. The 43 Linotype machines were made in Milan, and the newspaper press is a 1932 Hoe made in London. It is manned by 11 teams of five, with girls acting as assistants.

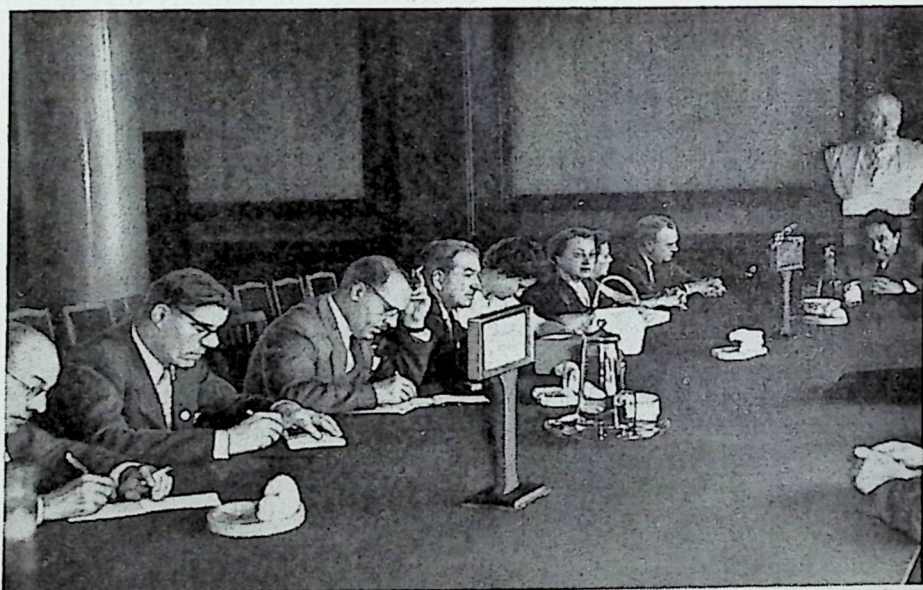
In addition to the mechanical staff of 4,000 already mentioned, "Pravda" has an editorial staff of 300, and of these 120 are journalists. They have 55 full-time correspondents in the Soviet Union, and 25 abroad. One-tenth of the journalists on "Pravda" are women, a proportion very similar to that in our own country where one journalist in 11 or 12 is a woman. As we have said when dealing with working conditions, journalism is not considered a very attractive occupation for a woman; we were told that journalists spend as much as 30 per cent of their time away from home. The sharp distinction between reporters and sub-editors existing on daily newspapers in Britain scarcely exists in the U.S.S.R.; the reason is the character of such papers as "Pravda" which are largely filled with articles of an

opinionative or seriously informative nature about industry, production, and so on. A good deal of the contents of the serious Soviet newspapers are contributed by specialists, and selected journalists are deputed to maintain contact with particular industries and follow various technical developments.

The foundry at the "Pravda" factory is particularly interesting. Two hundred and fifty moulds are made every day on the six moulding presses, and the flongs, which have a heavy moisture content, and are moulded cold, are given one minute under the press. There are five machine dryers with automatic "stop" and "start" when the door is opened or shut. There is a line of six casting-machines similar in principle to the Winkler Casting machine. They cast upwards of a thousand plates every day. In the "Pravda" factory there are really two foundries, one for the newspaper, with a staff of 50, and one for the periodical side which is an electrotyping department with a staff of 35.

It was interesting in the packing room to see that the traditional "paper and string" method of parcelling used in Britain is replaced by the use of stout paper bags (to which address labels had previously been attached). One girl puts the bundle of papers in the appropriate bag, another girl seals it quickly with a few stitches on a wire-stitching machine, and in a matter of seconds it is on its way on the conveyer belt to the waiting vans.

The management of "Pravda" provides creches and kindergartens



The delegation in the Board Room of "Pravda" being given an outline of the staffing of the printing works by the Director before commencing a tour of the factory

for the children of their employees; they run evening classes for their young workers; they have built huge blocks of flats; have a hospital with over a hundred beds, a clinic and dental clinic; they have their own shops and even a private burial ground. "Pravda," as is well known, is the official organ of the Communist Party, whilst the Government paper is "Izvestia," with a circulation of 1,500,000.

The journalists' section of the Cultural Workers' Union was only formed in 1957 and has a membership of 11,000. It is anticipated that by the end of 1958 they will have about 16,000 members, and that this figure will reach something like 36,000 in another two years. Authors, as distinct from working journalists, have an organisation of their own. The figure of 52,000 was given as the approximate number of journalists in the Soviet Union, but we were told that there are very considerable numbers of part-time voluntary correspondents, particularly in the smaller provincial towns, who consider it an honour and part of their service to the community to send news of events in their area to newspapers, and particularly to "Pravda," with its strong political leanings. It would seem that the Russians are often tempted to write to the press, frequently to complain about something. "Pravda" has a staff of 50 to deal with the 1,200 letters from readers which they receive each day. Only a few of the letters can, of course, be published (many of those that are printed are critical of the conduct of affairs) but all are answered and dealt with.

Some time was spent studying the methods by which news is received and transmitted in the U.S.S.R., and in this connection we paid a visit to the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union in Moscow, familiarly known throughout the world as Tass. The agency has a staff of over 3,500, and of these 1,040 are in Moscow and include 600 telecommunications staff. There is no competition between newspapers in the Soviet Union as we know it in this country, and the publication of national news is controlled mainly by Tass.

As the only press telecommunications system in operation is that controlled by Tass, this Agency operates a large network throughout the U.S.S.R. with teleprinter communication in 145 towns. It seemed to us that in the head office of the Agency there was no sense of urgency judged by our standards. All "copy" appeared to be in large "takes" and was perforated in one room, wound on spools and then passed to another room to be run through the appropriate transmitter. The machines used are mainly American teletypes with a few East German models of a similar character. The operating staff is entirely female, but men are employed on maintenance. Tass has, in addition, circuits to the principal news centres of the world, and also broadcasts by means of Hellschreiber and Morse systems. The staff appeared excessive for the number of machines which we saw being operated. The wire-picture circuits use British and American machines, although we were informed that the Soviet technical laboratories are experimenting with a new telephoto transmitter/receiver. One such machine was on view at the Industrial Exhibition we visited

but this could perhaps more correctly be described as a facsimile machine. It had a drum size of 26" x 18", and the time taken to transmit is approximately 15 minutes. No technical details were available, but the received copy was on electro-chemical paper and in quality resembled copy received on the Muirhead Mufax.

On press telecommunications and electronics in the printing industry we have nothing to learn from the Russians, but could teach them much. This would, in fact, be true of newspaper production generally where we saw nothing that was in advance of normal practice in our own country.

Section VI

TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Printing trade workers are, as we have already said in Section I, members of the Cultural Workers' Union of the U.S.S.R., an organisation which was re-formed in 1953 and which brings together occupations and professions which come under the authority of a Government Department, the Ministry of Culture. These include actors, musicians, artists, sculptors, printing and publishing workers (including the Press), film actors, producers and technicians, library workers, museum staffs, park employees, and radio and television staffs.

The trade union movement in Russia had its beginnings immediately following the 1905 Revolution, and printing trade workers organised themselves into a trade union in that year, the first of many industries to do so. By the 1917 Revolution the union was well established and its influence and membership has grown with the years until the Cultural Workers' Union of today (which is a link-up of a number of separate sectional organisations) now has a membership of 1,200,000.

Trade unions in the U.S.S.R. are organised strictly on an industrial basis and workers in an industry are all members of one and the same union, quite irrespective of their job. In the previous section, are given figures of the number of journalists in the Soviet Union, but this can only be approximate as they are not all members of the Cultural Workers' Union which caters in the main for this type of worker. For instance, journalists who work for "Godok," the railwaymen's paper, belong to the railwaymen's union. There were at one time very many unions in the U.S.S.R., but they have recently been grouped together in accordance with the industries with which they are concerned until, following many amalgamations, the number of trade unions is only 23.

Trade union subscriptions are based on earnings, and printing trade

workers pay a sum equal to one per cent of their wages into the Cultural Workers' Union. Eighty-seven per cent of the contributions are returned to the workers by the provision of facilities of various kinds and in fact 70 per cent at least is retained by the factory trade union organisation, the balance being forwarded to union headquarters.

One of the main functions of the Soviet trade union movement is to assist the State in achieving its economic aims, and a large part of factory trade union committee efforts are directed towards assisting the factory managements to maintain and increase production. This includes, on occasions, the disciplining of workers and dealing with such matters as bad time-keeping, for instance, which would obviously affect production. As there is virtually no unemployment in the U.S.S.R., the workers are not frightened of "working themselves out of a job" or of pushing their fellow workers into the ranks of the unemployed if they increase production beyond a particular level. It will be seen from Section IV and elsewhere in this report that there is an insatiable demand for printed matter, and everyone in the industry knows that the "saturation point" is a very long way off.

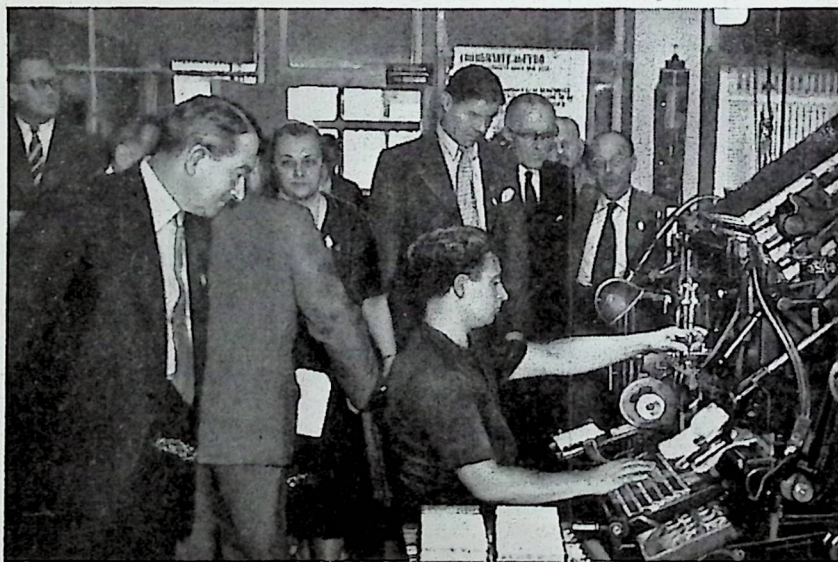
The trade unions administer the social insurance funds, control and staff the "pioneer camps," holiday homes and sanatoria and look after the administrative side of the Houses of Culture to which we have already referred in Section III. It will thus be seen that the trade unions and their officials hold a powerful and indeed a key position within the framework of the social structure of the Soviet Union. Trade unionists are entitled to greater benefits from the State social insurance fund than non-unionists, and are able to obtain accommodation at rest-homes and sanatoria at very reduced terms—up to 70 per cent discount, depending on wages. They have, too, the opportunity to send their children to holiday camps run by the unions. When we inquired as to why, in these circumstances, ten per cent of those employed in the printing industry were non-unionists, it was explained to us that there is a fair amount of labour turnover, and some workers, particularly those in outlying areas or just entering the industry, do not always anticipate that they will need to make use of the social insurance funds and other amenities available to union members, and for this reason do not immediately take up membership. Some social security benefits (such as sickness payments and disability and injury grants) are as much as 50 per cent less for non-unionists, but retirement pensions are not affected. There are State holiday and convalescent homes, not controlled by the trade union movement to which non-unionists can go, but they have to meet the full costs. However, it is possible in some circumstances for a sick worker who is not a trade unionist to be admitted to a trade union administered home.

As the years have gone on, there has been a general relaxation of labour control, and now workers are quite free to change their employment on giving two weeks' notice. Whilst there are no immediate disadvantages, changes of jobs are recorded in the "labour book"

which is a record of each worker's employment, and a bonus of ten per cent is added to the retirement pension for 15 years' uninterrupted service with one enterprise. This bonus is not lost if a worker changes his job with the permission of his employer. Whilst there is no direction of labour, it is obvious that the State, as the sole employer, can make it attractive for labour to move from one industry or area to another by offering advantageous conditions.

As with us, the trade union set-up seems to begin with what we would call the "chapel" or factory organisation. Then there is the branch, which comes under the jurisdiction of a regional committee, and the highest authority of the union is the Congress which meets every two years. What is called a "Central Committee" (comparable to our Executive Committees) functions in between Congresses. The unions themselves are linked together in the Congress of Trade Unions in the U.S.S.R. which meets every four years, and in between these Congresses activities are directed by the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions.

When we enquired about industrial relations and commented that it seemed to us that the workers were not "free" in our sense of the word, because they were not allowed to come out on strike, we were asked "Why should we strike? We, the workers, own the factories; we have machinery for the settlement of disputes, and if we stop work we would hold up production, injure our cause, and lose wages." We were told that the wages of printing trade workers were about to be increased by 15 per cent, and the President of the Cultural Workers' Union



One of the very few male composing-machine operators we saw. He and a colleague were working alongside thirty women operators

himself said "What is the use of going on strike if the Minister of Culture agrees to increase the wages at our request?" That is the position as they see it, but we were left to speculate upon what steps the workers could take if their request was refused.

During recent years the rights of trade unions in the field of industrial relations have been very considerably extended. Labour Disputes Commissions have replaced more cumbersome machinery, and there is considerable facility for disputes between workers and managements to be discussed and settled by authoritative bodies. There is, too, the right of appeal against decisions, and the Labour Minister or his deputy can be approached on appropriate occasions. A worker who feels aggrieved at a decision of the management regarding his working conditions may appeal to the factory trade union committee whose decision is final and binding upon the management. If, however, the factory committee is not able to come to a decision, the matter is referred to the regional trade union committee whose decision must be accepted by both sides. If a management wish to dismiss a worker, the permission of the factory committee has to be obtained. Should this not be forthcoming, the factory director has the right to appeal to the regional trade union committee, but the decision of that body is final.

We have only space for a few notes on social welfare provisions in the U.S.S.R., but it is essential to give an outline of the scheme, particularly as the trade unions play so important a part in its administration. All Soviet workers are covered by the State social insurance scheme which is financed exclusively by contributions from enterprises, establishments and organisations, and there are no deductions whatever from the wages of the workers for this purpose. Grants are made under the scheme for temporary disablement due to sickness or accident, or being required to stay away from work to look after a sick member of the family. There are maternity grants, financial assistance for industrial re-training following periods of sickness, and funeral allowance are payable on the death of a worker or a member of his family. There is a comprehensive scheme of old age pensions, and this has been considerably improved recently, both regarding the conditions on which pensions are granted and the amounts paid. As a general rule, pensions are payable to men on reaching the age of 60 (after not less than 25 years' service) and to women on reaching the age of 55 (after not less than 20 years' service). Workers in particularly hard or unpleasant industries are given pensions on more favourable terms; they are granted at the age of 50 for men and 45 for women. The pensions range from 50 to 100 per cent of earnings, the full amount only being paid to those with extremely low wages. The minimum pension is 300 roubles a month and the maximum 1,200 roubles a month which is the highest figure that can be reached under the scheme including any bonuses. In practice, the average amount received by printing trade workers on retirement is 50 per cent of their earnings. No length of union membership qualification is needed before a worker may benefit under the social security scheme.

Section VII

THE SOCIAL SIDE

In this report we have devoted practically all the space to the results of our visits to printing offices in Moscow, Leningrad, Kalinin and Kiev and to information directly concerning our industry. We feel, however, that this brief review of our visit to the Soviet Union would not be complete without at least a short reference to some of our more general experiences whilst we were there.

To those of us who are familiar with air travel, the journey from London to Prague by "Viscount" was a normal experience, but we had our first introduction to Russian technical achievements when we travelled from Prague to Moscow by the well-known Russian jet, T.U. 104A. On our arrival at each city we visited in the Soviet Union there was the traditional party of printing trade workers to welcome us with bouquets of flowers, whatever the hour, and everything was done for our comfort. In Moscow, we stayed in the city's newest hotel, The Ukraine, a 1,000-room building of sky-scraper proportions and said to be the largest in Europe.

In spite of a very heavy programme, we were able to see something of the social and cultural life of the towns and cities we visited. In museums and art galleries in Moscow and Leningrad we saw some of the priceless art treasures gathered from all over the world. We had an opportunity of visiting the ballet, theatre and cinema and the home



The delegation being welcomed at Kiev airport on arrival from Leningrad by a group of printing trade workers

of Tchaikovsky. We visited such well-known places as the Kremlin, the Moscow State University, and the Lenin Library. In each city we were shown monuments and public buildings, many associated with the revolution and the growth and development of the Communist state. We attended a reception at the British Embassy in Moscow, where we were entertained by the Ambassador, Sir Patrick Reilly, and Lady Reilly. It was gratifying to learn that the Ambassador is very much in favour of British organisations sending delegations to make contact with their counterparts in the U.S.S.R. He told us that it was a good way of conveying the British point of view to the Russian people and would help towards a better understanding between the peoples of our two countries.

Because of altered flight schedules we had to stay overnight in Prague (we left London on 17th July and returned exactly two weeks later) and here again we were accorded the most cordial hospitality. The Printers' Union entertained us to dinner and showed us round their city, and on our way home we had only a few hours in Prague, but again their officials were at the airport to greet us and wish us well.

At informal dinners we had ample opportunity of meeting and talking with representatives of printing trade workers at each Soviet town we visited, and we could not have been made more welcome. They showed, too, that they were anxious that we should have a picture, not only of the printing industry, but of the Soviet people and their way of life.

Our last evening in the Soviet Union was marked by a gathering of several hundred representatives of the Cultural Workers' Union. There were many expressions of goodwill, and presentations to all the members of our delegation. This was followed by entertainment by artist members of the Cultural Workers' Union, and the evening was brought to a close with a farewell dinner at which we had, as on many other occasions, an opportunity of saying how grateful we were to our hosts for their overwhelming kindness and hospitality during what was indeed a most memorable fortnight.

Section VIII

A LAST LOOK ROUND

It will be gathered from this report that we are firmly of the opinion that the British printing industry, so far as technical developments, methods of production and processes are concerned, has little to learn from the Soviet printing industry. However advanced may be their thinking and performance in other fields, the Russians seemed to us

to be content, so far as the printing industry is concerned, to adopt methods already well tried in the Western world, and, as we have attempted to show, they have not yet taken advantage of all developments that are now common practice in British printing firms.

These observations are not intended in any way to be critical of either the managements or workers in the Soviet printing industry. It is difficult for one to realise the tremendous task of reconstruction and rehabilitation with which they have been faced as a result of the devastation of their country during the last war. If the industry is not as well-equipped as some sections of our own, there can be no doubt that magnificent efforts have been made and are being made to gear it to the ever-expanding need for printed matter of all kinds. Connoisseurs of quality could doubtless find much to criticise, but the eyes of those responsible for planning and running the industry are obviously all the time trained on the needs of the almost countless thousands of Soviet citizens who are thirsty for information and knowledge. As we said in Section IV, they are putting first things first, and the refinements will doubtless come later. We can only repeat that we do not want to be critical of the skill and ingenuity of the Russian printing trade workers who are doing a really splendid job with the means at their disposal. However, it is our opinion that there is no likelihood of Russia being a competitor of Britain in the world market for printing products; apart from anything else, they have certainly more than they can do to meet their own needs.

It will be gathered from our Report that much of the machinery being used in the Soviet printing industry is rather old, and a considerable amount is of foreign manufacture. We gained the impression, too, that little is being done as yet in some sections of the Soviet printing industry in the way of experimenting with new processes or developing new machinery. In these circumstances, it occurred to us that there might possibly be an opportunity for British manufacturers of printing machinery and materials to open markets in the U.S.S.R., for not only will replacements be needed for existing older machinery, but there is a very great need for industrial expansion in this field.

We did not get the impression that Soviet printing trade workers, although most of them are paid on a piece-rate system, worked unduly hard. They did not seem to us to be oppressed by the pressure of work, generally seeming to have time for a word with one another, and we saw none of that hurrying about which some people tend to associate with workers who are being paid by results. There are, of course, exceptions to all generalisations, but we got the impression that the workers were reasonably contented. We formed this opinion, which is given with reserve, not only from observations, but from talks with the workers in the factories and outside working hours, too.

It would be easy to venture into comparisons between the standard of life of the Soviet people and our own, but we were not there long

enough to get a really balanced picture, and in any case the Soviet way of life of to-day has developed from totally different beginnings from our own, and compared with pre-revolution days the Soviet people are not only infinitely better off, but they have a planned economy which encourages and urges them to look forward to the future and to an enhanced standard of life.

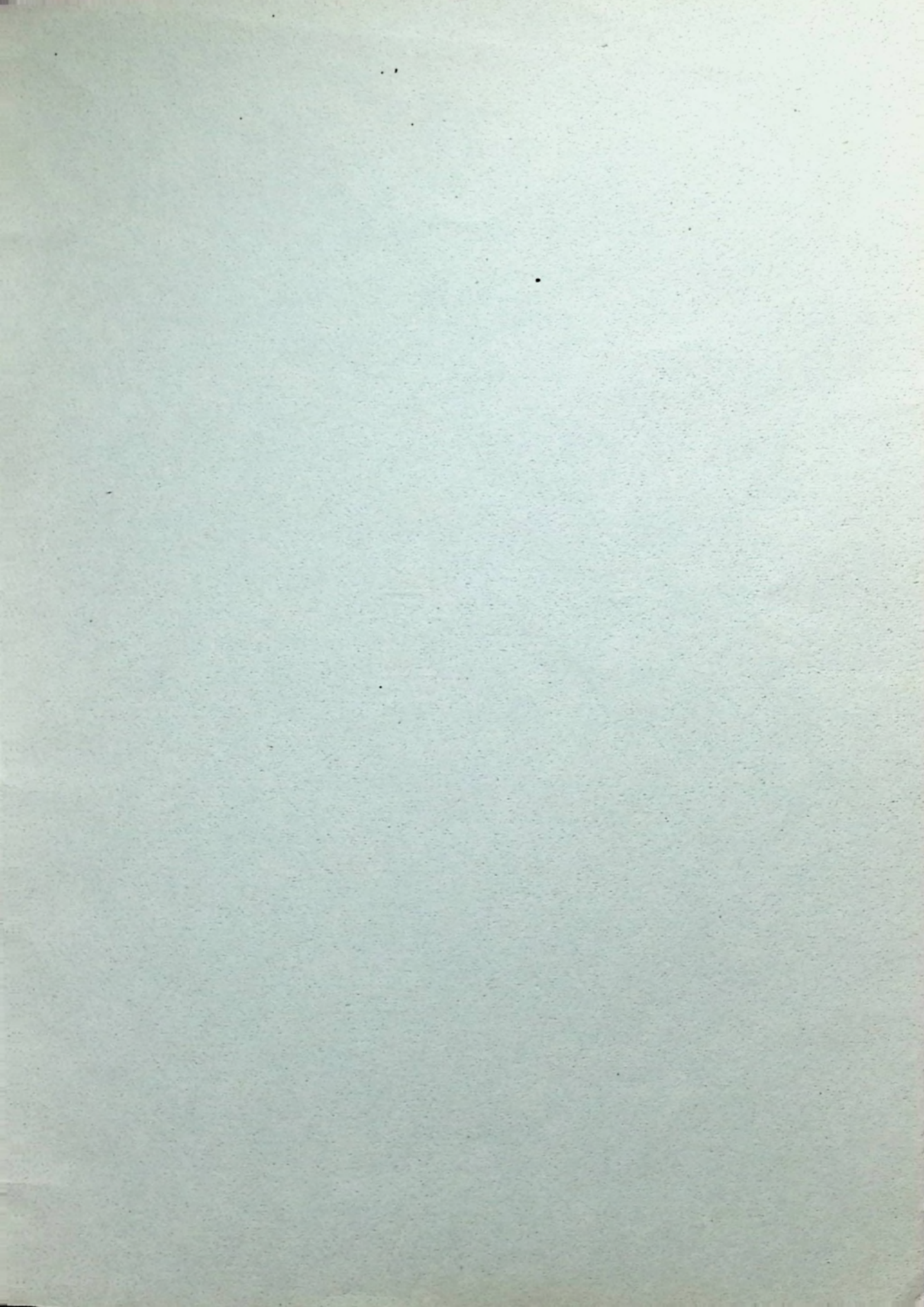
In long-term planning, the leaders of the Soviet Union have found it necessary to give housing development a secondary place in the list of priorities, and this has undoubtedly caused considerable hardship, but everywhere we saw vigorous efforts being made to remedy this situation. In large cities, such as Moscow, they are erecting scores of blocks of flats of the multi-storey type, whilst more modestly, but none the less effectively, they are meeting the problem in provincial towns. There are still a good number of small wooden houses reminiscent of the Tsarist days, and we were interested to notice that even from these traditional Russian dwellings television aerials frequently sported themselves.

Because of language difficulties, we were not always able to have as intimate a conversation with people as we would have liked, and we would have been glad to have got their reactions to the constant reminders which face them at every turn, both in the factory and elsewhere, that they are part of a Communist state, a fact which they never seem to be allowed to forget. It seemed at least to some of us that this point was being made too often and too vigorously, but perhaps the Russians feel differently. In any case, we have to remind ourselves that with the revolution 40 years away, most of those now in Soviet industry have lived under nothing but a Communist system. We do not know the extent to which Communist principles are firmly held by the great masses of the people (there are 7,000,000 Party members out of a population of 200,000,000), but we found that some in influential posts in the trade union movement, for instance, were not members of the Party, and this did not seem in any way to have prevented their advancement.

Just as we have said that the basis of the Soviet economic policy and the "set up" of the printing industry vary fundamentally from ours, it is equally true to say that their trade union movement is built up on a different foundation. As we see it, the trade unions serving our system of society have little to learn from their Soviet counterparts who have, faced with totally different functions, created a machine which in their opinion is best suited to their needs.

To conclude this report, we would like to say that we are firmly of the opinion that our visit to the Soviet Union was well worth-while. Our purpose was to gather information about the Soviet printing industry, and this we have done. We were an industrial delegation and our visit had no political significance whatever. We did not find this limitation of purpose in any way embarrassing.

Although we often had informal discussions, we made it clear that we respected the point of view and outlook of our hosts, and they in turn similarly showed that they respected ours. Whilst they were always anxious to learn about the British printing industry, they showed no interest in our trade union movement and Government generally. All their questions were directed towards technical matters. We feel we succeeded in creating many friendships, and that we left our hosts and the people with whom we made contact, with a better understanding and appreciation of the British way of life. We, for our part, certainly gained much from the visit.





LONDON
73653