

The New Economic Policy

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Everywhere we were told that the N.E.P. was an unmitigated success. This deviation from the Socialist doctrine has been represented abroad as an abandonment of Socialism. It is, no doubt, a concession but, as Lenin once said, "Every concession we make we make within the limits of what will support and strengthen the power of the proletariat which undeviatingly is making for the annihilation of classes and the realisation of Communism."

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With the growth of Cooperative capital however, the proportion of trade in private hands has been steadily diminishing. In 1923-24, it was 15% ~~ax~~ of the internal trade of the country, in 1924-25, it was 10% and in 1925-26 only 8%. This lost trade has gone entirely to the Cooperatives which now controls 21% of the market. State trading, has remained constant at about 70%. These figures show that the State and Cooperatives so dominate the market as to regulate prices and that all talk of a return to capitalism and "private enterprise" is so much meaningless.

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We may be permitted to close on a political note - and the politics of the Soviet Union are those of the Communist Party, the only organised party in the State. It has about 1,200,000 members. The Soviet State, at the moment, is admittedly, the Directorship of the industrial proletariat, and the Communist Party is essentially the workers' party, though it has peasants in increasing numbers among its members. As there are just ~~ax~~ over ten million workers, it means that more than one in every ten is a member of the party. Add to this the two million members of the Young Communists League, which has members between the ages of 14 and 18.

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The Russian Government is the only Government of a great power which has ruled without a fall since the end of the Great War. And the Russians know the dangers which the War holds in store for them. If there was one, they were asked to convey to the British workers, it was their appeal to the British comrades not to allow the First Workers Republic to be destroyed. For, a war means the end of their hopes of building up a Socialist State. They probably have an exaggerated idea of the possibilities of their State being attacked by the Western Powers. But, their fear and destination of war is wise and sincere.

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