

## FOSTERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SOCIALISTS: PATRONIROVANIE IN THE FLEDGLING SOVIET STATE

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*This essay traces foster care policies in the Soviet Union, concentrating on the first half of Soviet rule when, due to chaos in the wake of wars, revolutions, and famine, Bolshevik leaders retreated from their original commitment to rearing orphans in public institutions. Although the Bolsheviks considered Russian peasants unsuited for raising socialist citizens, they wound up farming out parentless children to the countryside, if only to relieve pressure on Soviet orphanages. The government made a virtue of this retreat in the 1920s but ceased its propaganda campaign on behalf of foster care when reports of child abuse became impossible to ignore. Foster care as a practice persisted, at first because Soviet authorities still needed to find places for orphans, but ultimately because they recognized that, as a rule, families provided better homes than institutions. This concession paralleled Western attitudes to foster care.*

When the Bolsheviks came to power in October 1917, the more radical party members envisaged collectivizing child raising in order to shape dedicated socialists free from the influence of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parents. Utopian theorists in Soviet Russia believed that in the bright communist future, the state would take charge of the upbringing of *all* children.<sup>1</sup> They acknowledged, however, that a revolution of that nature would have to wait. In the meantime, at least orphans and abandoned children could reap the “benefits” of socialized care. In accord with this vision, the Bolshevik Family Code of 1918 went so far as to outlaw adoption<sup>2</sup> and made no provisions for placing children with foster families. Soviet power would assume full responsibility for dependent children, raising them in social institutions designed to transform them into steadfast communists.<sup>3</sup>

The Bolsheviks had their work cut out for them. As a result of wars and revolutions from 1914 through 1921, as well as a devastating famine at the end of the Russian Civil War, millions upon millions of orphaned and abandoned children required public assistance during the 1920s.<sup>4</sup> Not only was the fledgling Soviet government unable to

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take responsibility for *all* children, but it lacked the wherewithal even to feed and house orphans and children whose own families could not provide care. With state-run orphanages (known as *detskie doma* or *detdoma*—literally, children’s homes) operating way beyond their capacity, institutions could not begin to play their originally conceived “cultural role.”<sup>5</sup>

Desperate to save lives, local authorities in several regions in the early 1920s “spontaneously”<sup>6</sup> resurrected the tsarist policy of placing orphaned infants and dependent children with families that would in turn receive various forms of compensation. Over the next few years, more and more pedagogues and officials resorted to foster care for needy children, acknowledging that this practice served a useful function. By 1926, an official policy known as *patronirovanie* was in place, calling for fostering out orphans from children’s institutions to peasant and urban households.<sup>7</sup>

This spelled an enormous retreat for the Communist Party. For one thing, the turn to foster care signaled an admission that communist dreams about eliminating the family were unlikely to materialize in the foreseeable future. For another, it served as irrefutable evidence of the regime’s financial poverty and desperation. Finally, acceptance of foster care spotlighted the Bolsheviks’ willingness to entrust the upbringing of the coming generation to members of social classes considered unsuitable for bringing up young socialists.<sup>8</sup>

Foster care would wind up playing a small but significant role in the USSR, a constant reminder of the collision between Soviet utopianism and Russian reality. At no time during its seventy-four-year history did the communist state wholeheartedly embrace programs that subsidized caregivers for housing and feeding dependent children. Yet foster care nevertheless existed throughout the Soviet period, occasioned both by the state’s inability to provide for all children in need and by the willingness of thousands of families to fill the breach. This essay traces the steps of that accommodation and the vicissitudes of foster care from its stopgap origins at the end of the Russian Civil War to its institutionalization as part and parcel of Soviet policy and law.

In tsarist Russia, foster care often amounted to the abuse of children by adults—usually peasants—who accepted government subsidies for fostering and then enhanced their incomes further by subjecting foster children to harsh labor exploitation.<sup>9</sup> Peasants, who were both the overwhelming majority of the population as well as the citizens most likely to take in dependent children, also served as the bulk of Soviet caregivers in the 1920s. To understand the implications of the retreat to foster care both for the Bolsheviks committed to raising a new generation of socialists and for the educators and health officials all too familiar with living conditions among the peasantry, we must keep in mind what it meant to farm out young children and adolescents to the countryside.

At the time of the Bolshevik Revolution, the cultural practices and daily life of peasants in the Russian Empire in many ways resembled what they had been centuries earlier. Though their status had changed from that of serfs to free peasants in 1861, the peasantry’s social and economic position was no better. In fact, in many respects, the hardships they faced actually *increased* in the coming decades. To be a peasant in Russia in the first part of the twentieth century essentially meant to live in squalor. Even peasants who were relatively well off tended to work unceasingly and to live, eat, and sleep in one-room huts, with very young children sharing a cot and older children and parents sleeping on the floor in the warm weather and on the stove in the cold.<sup>10</sup> What

may have seemed quaint and picturesque to folklorists and populists was interpreted as nothing less than backward by Bolsheviks.

Awaiting foster children in the countryside were poverty, hunger, filth, and disease. As David Ransel has shown, babies in particular suffered and died in rural Russia. Peasant mothers put agricultural duties first, often working until the moment of labor's onset and returning to the fields within a few days, either carrying their newborns with them or leaving them in the charge of an elderly woman or young child. To ease infants' hunger when mother's milk was not available, peasants gave babies bacteria-laden pacifiers (*soski*) made from rags and chewed-up food. They also fed them solid food and cow's milk. All of these practices put babies in danger of infection, diarrhea, dehydration, and death. Ransel estimates that in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, around half of all children under the age of five perished as a result of "infant-care cultures" among the peasantry.<sup>11</sup> Adding to the high rates of infant mortality were deaths by (supposedly inadvertent) smothering and outright infanticide.<sup>12</sup> There is no reason to believe that customs were significantly different in the early 1920s.

Toddlers were less likely to succumb to the perils of solid food, but they faced frequent infectious diseases that could prove fatal, as well as harsh treatment from parents and older siblings. Very young children, who were often left unsupervised, would be beaten for crying, for soiling their clothes, for stealing household food, for climbing, in short, for being left to their own devices. Surrounding them were numerous hazards, including ponds and rivers for drowning in, disease-bearing lice and rats, and human and animal waste that promoted the spread of fecal-borne infections and polluted the drinking water. Children who survived these threats found demanding and exhausting responsibilities awaiting them in the fields, huts, and pastures as early as the ages of five and six. As they grew older, their workload increased, often making attendance in school out of the question.<sup>13</sup>

What was to be done? If the countryside was so dangerous to peasant children, why would it prove any less dangerous to foster children? If peasants routinely abused and exploited their biological children, didn't equal, if not worse, treatment lie in store for foster children? Not only would cruelty and daily labors wear children down, but children would be exposed to other aspects of peasant culture that Soviet leaders wanted to eradicate: religion, drunkenness, illiteracy, wife-beating, superstition, and indifference to the common good. To the Bolshevik way of thinking, there was simply no way that the new Soviet man and woman could spring from this environment. More likely, peasants steeped in the mentality of patriarchal, rural Russia would beget nothing other than peasants of a similar mind. All the qualities that the Bolsheviks hoped to expunge from the peasantry would not only persist among peasant children but would now be inculcated among the foster children sent to the countryside for care.

Something else disturbed the Bolsheviks about placing foster children in peasant households: during the Russian Civil War of 1918 to 1921, commissars and Red Army soldiers had forcibly "requisitioned" grain in the name of "War Communism."<sup>14</sup> Although some peasants had initially endorsed the Bolsheviks, whose 1917 promises of expropriating the landlords were welcome words, even they quickly soured on the new regime when its representatives confiscated their stores of food, often at gunpoint. Consequently, foster children could imbibe, along with peasant habits, outright hostility to the Soviet state.

The reliance on peasants for foster care thus seemed like a huge step in the wrong direction. Bolsheviks may have assuaged their consciences with words about how foster children in rural Russia would at least receive agricultural labor training, but deep down, they had to know better. All that foster care really did was take some children out of the fire and put them into the frying pan; dependent children left overburdened institutions behind for nothing less than what Marx dismissed in *The Communist Manifesto* as “the idiocy of rural life.”<sup>15</sup>

### A CHILD OF NECESSITY

First to be acknowledged was the need to find families for children in famine-wracked areas of Soviet Russia. In 1921, authorities in Irkutsk approved private placements for some 400 starving children from the Volga region.<sup>16</sup> The city of Petrograd also launched a program of *patronirovanie* in response to the young refugees who poured in during 1921 and 1922.<sup>17</sup> In Samara province, peasant families fostered some 3,500 children in 1922. Host families received an additional plot of land, a cash subsidy, and tax breaks. Despite many “negative moments,” the Samara program earned one chronicler’s “favorable” report. A subsequent study of thirty-eight districts in the province found the children looking much better and, according to an increasingly significant Soviet measure, apparently more prepared for the labor force than their orphanage counterparts.<sup>18</sup> According to several estimates, approximately 100,000 children could be found under foster care between 1921 and 1922.<sup>19</sup> Instructions from the government confirmed the desperate need for *patronirovanie*; in February 1922, the People’s Commissariats of Enlightenment and Welfare published a joint appeal, imploring the peasantry’s assistance in caring for starving children.<sup>20</sup>

Foster care was thus a child of necessity, the lesser of two evils. Reports on its progress, however, continually reminded Soviet officials of the drawbacks. Fostering may have saved children from starvation, but it frequently went hand in hand with cruel treatment, neglect, and exploitation.<sup>21</sup> In the words of one report, the foster care of children during the famine “yielded, in general, complicated, very insignificant results and involved a host of negative aspects,” including abusive child labor. It recommended “liquidating” this practice entirely.<sup>22</sup> Another source referred to *patronirovanie* in this period as a veritable “bacchanalia” of children either escaping or being thrown out by their caregivers.<sup>23</sup>

What went wrong? To begin with, placements were not always voluntary. Authorities were not above dumping needy children in households that had no desire or ability to care for them. Invariably, this situation condemned children to such a “half-wretched existence” that they ran away, rejoining the ranks of the homeless.<sup>24</sup> The annual report for the 1923-1924 academic year by the Commissariat of Enlightenment roundly condemned the coercive nature of a practice known as the “ten-householder” (*desiatidvorka*), which meant that one child would be assigned to the care of ten households. Children, essentially, had to beg “door-to-door to receive food and a bed.”<sup>25</sup> Moreover, authorities did not always honor the entitlements that were supposed to be accorded a foster household. In some areas, for example, officials improperly charged peasants fees for the foster children in their care.<sup>26</sup> Supervision over foster households was also difficult to maintain, especially given the hasty nature of famine-driven placements and administrative chaos in the fledgling Soviet state. Reports repeatedly stressed the need for more stringent government controls.<sup>27</sup>

The jurist Grigorii Ryndziunskii described yet another shortcoming: some families would grow so attached to their foster children that they would refuse to relinquish them at the parents' request. Despite the unavailability of legal adoption at the time he wrote (1922), Ryndziunskii anticipated custody battles between foster parents who viewed themselves as the lawful guardians and children's biological parents. In the spirit of early Soviet law, he stressed children's rights as primary, repeating an expression that named as a child's mother the one who did the actual child raising.<sup>28</sup> In a related vein, after the crisis had ended, authorities often could not locate the children of parents who wanted them back!

*Patronirovanie* lessened by 1924, due to the famine's abatement and the admitted difficulty of maintaining controls over foster families.<sup>29</sup> But local officials soon revived it, acknowledging the need for individual care and wet-nursing of orphaned and abandoned infants. Despite fears about the peasants' child-rearing practices and their antipathy to Soviet power, local authorities recognized that unless they wanted to perpetuate the impression that foundling homes were little more than the deadly "angel factories" of tsarist Russia, they had no choice but to install babies in individual households. Mortality rates in institutions were extremely high—between 25 and 50 percent—thanks to overcrowding, a shortage of wet nurses, and the rapid spread of infectious diseases from cradle to cradle.<sup>30</sup> Foster parenting for infants also cost much less than institutional care, something that proponents were quick to point out. In Moscow, for example, the department of health spent sixty-five rubles per month to maintain a baby in a public institution, but only twenty-five rubles for one in a foster household.<sup>31</sup>

As of 1924, Moscow's department of health had an official policy of infant foster care, monitoring caregivers on a weekly basis and subsidizing families for taking in children of nursing age.<sup>32</sup> "In a word," wrote one advocate, "the state creates a second family for the unfortunate, abandoned infant."<sup>33</sup> When the practice began, it involved 120 children. As of 1925, the number had nearly quadrupled to 425,<sup>34</sup> and by 1927, some 800 infants had been distributed to foster homes in Moscow, 150 to families in the countryside.<sup>35</sup>

A Commissariat of Enlightenment (Narkompros) circular of 1924 supported such local initiative, extolling the merits of infant foster care. In light of a general acknowledgment that adoption would soon regain legal status, it speculated that early-age placements would frequently lead to permanent custody in the future.<sup>36</sup> Formal instructions issued by the Commissariat of Health (Narkomzdrav) on August 25, 1925, were less enthusiastic. They simply explained that infant homes were overloaded. For want of funds to open new ones and maintain those already in existence, fostering would serve as a "temporary measure" only. Wary of mercenary caregivers and foster parents who would fail to carry out their obligations, the commissariat articulated provisions to make sure that babies were genuinely being cared for and fed. Households were to be investigated prior to placements, and children were not to be sent out for foster care unless medical clinics existed nearby. Child welfare workers were expected to examine foster children on a biweekly basis and conduct monthly home visits. To guard against neglect and exploitation, agencies were asked to place infants primarily in childless or small families and to look for families not in dire financial straits. Proceeding as though motherless babies could absorb collectivist sensibilities along with breast milk, the commissariat considered households in which party activists could be found the optimum environments. Families that took in infants

received fifteen to thirty rubles a month, depending on local conditions, and a crib or basket and other supplies.<sup>37</sup>

Though the famine had ceased, the state again bestowed its official approval on foster care for older children in 1924. But now other reasons had intruded to weaken enthusiasm for housing children in state institutions. Three years into Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP), though the economy had recovered from near collapse, the USSR<sup>38</sup> seemed to be in the throes of social disintegration, attested to by skyrocketing numbers of crimes, divorces, abortions, and child abandonment. Millions of homeless children, known as *besprizorniki*, seemed to be flooding the streets of urban Russia, visible reminders of the Soviet regime's inability both to keep order and to care for its youth.<sup>39</sup> Perceptions of social collapse helped spur a reassessment of the need for family stability, just as fears of chaos and juvenile crime contributed to the Communist Party's readiness to translate ad hoc foster care policies into institutionalized ones.

To make matters worse, cost-cutting by the Commissariat of Enlightenment precipitated a drive to close as many orphanages as possible, thereby necessitating the development of noninstitutional forms of care for older dependent children.<sup>40</sup> As the number of children's homes decreased, the ranks of homeless children multiplied even further. Soviet authorities viewed them as a future generation not only of petty-bourgeois peasants and indifferent citizens, but of potential outlaws and counterrevolutionaries. Commissar of Enlightenment Anatolii Lunacharskii warned that "we risk acquiring from among these children anti-community, anti-social, totally corrupted enemies of both a healthy and revolutionary life, unprincipled individuals who will move with ease into the camp of our enemies and replenish the army of criminals."<sup>41</sup> As he told the Communist Party's Central Committee in October 1924, the struggle against child homelessness (*besprizornost'*) was tantamount to a "preliminary struggle against a coming mass of anti-social elements within society."<sup>42</sup>

### A CHILD OF THE PEOPLE

The Council of People's Commissariats (Sovnarkom) launched its program of official support for *patronirovanie* in 1924. The first step involved convening a commission of representatives from several commissariats and party organizations. Among its responsibilities was the development of a plan for supplying land to peasants who took in and trained homeless children in agriculture and awarding privileges to artisans who accepted them as apprentices. When its work was complete, another commission was formed to articulate a new law.<sup>43</sup> The original fear of peasant parenting had apparently grown dim, overshadowed by concerns about juvenile delinquency and by the prospect of emptying the overcrowded orphanages and at least teaching their former residents to work.<sup>44</sup> Though some lip service was paid to the necessity of "political development" in the children's new families, the main focus was indeed labor preparation.

Participants at two conferences in 1924 underlined the state's decision. At a March conference in Moscow on child homelessness, attendees declared themselves in support of foster care. They diverged slightly from the government's position, however, when they associated foster care only with "progressive workers' families" and communist organizations. Not a word was uttered about sending children to the peasantry.<sup>45</sup> But later in the year, participants at a conference sponsored by the Department for the Social and Legal Protection of Minors (*Otdel sotsial'no-pravovoi okhrany*

*nesovershennoletnikh*, usually referred to as SPON) called for finding homes for dependent children not only with workers, but with peasant families.<sup>46</sup>

In 1925, 15,000 children were under foster care in thirty-two provinces of Russia.<sup>47</sup> Bowing to reality, Sovnarkom committed more than 800,000 of the 2 million rubles earmarked for fighting child homelessness to *patronirovanie* and to programs that involved older dependent children in “productive” labor. Children’s homes were to be pressured to discharge as many older children as they could to peasant families for labor preparation in order to free up beds for the millions of young waifs still out on the streets.<sup>48</sup>

On March 8, 1926, just one week after it reintroduced adoption into law for similar reasons,<sup>49</sup> the government issued a statement that numbered foster care among the weapons with which to combat child homelessness.<sup>50</sup> Instructions the following month enumerated the procedures for transferring children from *detskie doma* to peasant families. They acknowledged the crucial, but voluntary role of “Soviet society” in the struggle, mentioning how *besprizorniki* could be lodged only in households that had given their consent. In exchange for taking in former children’s home residents, providing them with training in agricultural labor, and giving them the opportunity to receive an education and “political development,” households would receive extra land free from taxes for three years. At the close of the relationship, the land would belong to the former foster children so long as they remained in the peasant households. The instructions reminded peasants who took part in the program that they were expected to treat their wards as they would their own children and that children’s social inspectorates under local departments of education (*organy narodnogo obrazovaniia*) would monitor the foster children in their care.<sup>51</sup> A year later, the central government continued to promote this policy, urging more placements of both school-age and pre-school children.<sup>52</sup>

*Patronirovanie* thus became the focus of a (short-lived) propaganda campaign to encourage the participation of private households. A three-year plan issued in 1927 called for discharging 68,000 juveniles from children’s homes, 22,000 of whom would be placed in foster care.<sup>53</sup> According to Asya Kalinina, who had been appointed head of the Moscow department of social welfare in 1918 and who herself served as foster mother of two children during the famine,<sup>54</sup> foster care was “the continuation of care for residents from children’s homes outside the homes’ walls.”<sup>55</sup> Two other advocates of foster care insisted that “by strength of necessity,” peasants would “watch over” their foster children’s labor.<sup>56</sup> In 1927, an article in *Pravda* by the Commissariat of Enlightenment’s chief school administrator hailed the foster placements of children’s home wards as one of the “new methods” for dealing with child homelessness.<sup>57</sup>

In 1927, to encourage foster care in the countryside, the government circulated 35,000 pamphlets titled *Benefits to the Peasantry for the Upbringing of Homeless Children (L'goty krest'ianam za vospitanie besprizornykh)*. Written in simple language for a popular audience, the thirty-five-page pamphlet was designed to inform the peasantry of the numerous perks that would come their way if they took in *besprizorniki*.<sup>58</sup> The text of the pamphlet began by reprinting the rules governing foster care and then went on to state (somewhat disingenuously) that because 55 of every 100 homeless children were from the peasant class, the Soviet government saw the “necessity of transferring these children back to the countryside.”<sup>59</sup> But it was more likely that peasants, most of whom were still illiterate, would respond to the drawing on the cover (see Figure 1). It portrayed a smiling, barefoot boy of nine or ten holding a basket that



Figure 1. 1927 Government Pamphlet Cover.

was just about ready to be filled with a large stack of potatoes. At his side was a smiling man wearing traditional peasant dress. He held a patched burlap sack, filled to the brim with potatoes. Behind them, bending over a basket, stood a peasant woman, presumably the foster mother. The boy's bare feet and the patch on the sack suggested that this family was not rich. At the same time, however, their potato harvest appeared plentiful (as was implied by the portrayal of bulging sacks already loaded onto a cart). Judging by the well-built huts in the background, the family seemed to be relatively prosperous. The message was clear: foster children could bring joy, but more important, valuable labor to a peasant household.

Ostensibly, foster care in the countryside served a useful purpose: it provided children with training in agricultural labor. But policy makers were clearly in a bind that made them more amenable to making a deal with the devil. Despite their fears about peasant exploiters, they felt compelled to dangle the prospect of young subsidized laborers before prospective foster households. They knew all too well that calls for altruism on behalf of needy children would largely go unheeded. Although they realized that many peasants would indeed take advantage of children sent their way, they still needed to empty out the orphanages. And the only way to get peasants to accept new members into their households was by showing them what was in it for them. By doing so, they left foster children vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

To try to prevent the inevitable, local agencies attempted to monitor individual families and households, with different regions devising their own measures, some more effective than others. Leningrad created a 600-member volunteer Children's Social Inspectorate, whose duties included investigating the families who applied to care for children as well as the treatment of children in foster families.<sup>60</sup> The city council in Moscow drew up detailed rules on foster care even prior to the central government's instructions, limiting families to no more than two wards, both of whom had to be

under the age of seventeen. After a preliminary investigation of the host's living circumstances and a medical examination, households became eligible for extra land, an initial payment of ten rubles, and five to ten rubles per month for two years.<sup>61</sup> Foster children came equipped with outer garments, shoes, two changes of underwear, and a cap. If they were over the age of ten, their consent was required for foster placements. The agreement remained in existence until the ward became eighteen or the terms of the contract were breached by one of the parties. For example, a contract could become invalid if the child refused to carry out the labor duties assigned, if the local department of education failed to hold up its end of the bargain, or if the child committed a crime. The contract also became void if the family was found to have exploited or treated the child cruelly. To promote some kind of ideological development, peasant households had to grant their wards time off from agricultural labor to "take part in the pioneer and communist youth movement."<sup>62</sup> As of autumn 1926, 400 children had been assigned to households throughout Moscow province, with another thousand scheduled for placement the following year.<sup>63</sup> Reports from rural party committees asserted that Moscow's *patronirovanie* program yielded generally positive results.<sup>64</sup>

Optimistic observers conjectured that children and their new peasant families would establish permanent ties so that when the wards reached majority age, they would remain in the foster household.<sup>65</sup> According to Kalinina, peasants "constantly" expressed the desire to turn their foster ties into permanent bonds.<sup>66</sup> Another author stressed the advantages of serving as foster parents, arguing that the peasants appreciated the extra hands and repeating the words of one who referred to a foster child as "golden." Similarly, he quoted a peasant in Moscow province who expressed gratitude that a son had ended up in his family: "We're childless, and it's boring to be alone. But Volodia—he's affectionate, quiet, and hard-working. We're going to adopt him soon." He also cited a fifteen-year-old girl who remembered how lonely she had felt in her *detskii dom*. Yet in the Pavlov peasant household, she discovered something that children in orphanages could only dream about—her own family. "I remember how once upon a time I used to dream that I had a mother," she wrote. "Now I don't need her; I found her in the person of someone else."<sup>67</sup> Dusia Martynova, sent into foster care by Moscow's department of education, also felt like she had found "her own [*rodnaia*] family." Yes, she had to work, but she recognized how essential work was to peasant life. Several reports estimated that between 30 and 40 percent of the children placed in the countryside grew "completely accustomed" to their foster families, with girls especially adaptable to their new circumstances.<sup>68</sup>

In 1926, there was an understandable push to send children to a more ideologically appealing foster home, that of the worker. The state thus expanded its effort to find homes for dependent children by appealing specifically to families in Soviet cities and industrial regions. An August 1926 decree lowered a tariff for artisans who accepted *besprizorniki* as apprentices.<sup>69</sup> The government issued instructions for an urban-oriented program on May 28, 1928, explicitly excluding from participation men and women whom they considered dangerous ideological bets: artisans who had more than one employee and individuals who had been deprived of electoral rights. There were some distinct advantages to urban foster care, with suitable families receiving a monthly stipend, tax breaks, and a 10 percent rent discount. Moreover, not only the ward, but all other minor children in the family were entitled to free schooling and the privileges that accompanied the official social category of "workers' children" (*deti*

*rabochikh*). Foster households could take in as many as three children under these conditions, even more, if siblings were involved.<sup>70</sup>

Such perquisites put urban foster children in the same situation as their country cousins. State policy essentially made it clear that foster parenting spelled money and privilege, thereby inviting urban households to treat their wards as badly as young apprentices had been treated before the revolution. But it is hard to imagine that many workers and artisans took the state up on its offer: during NEP, Russia's cities suffered from severe unemployment and a housing shortage. Consequently, urban residents were unlikely to be in a position to make room for new family members. By excluding better-heeled, more successful artisans—those with more than one employee—the regime almost guaranteed that urban foster care would languish.

As for the sunny assessments of foster care in the countryside, they were quickly overshadowed by more and more negative reports. To be sure, families able to smile as they stooped over their potato harvests existed, but observers increasingly realized that many foster children had been put into unpleasant, cruel, and abusive situations.

### A CHILD OF DISASTER

At best, foster care in the 1920s proved disappointing. At its most benign, it failed to generate much enthusiasm from Soviet society. *Patronirovanie*, both urban and rural, never became as widespread as it might have, and, indeed, advocates complained that the program was not progressing as it should.<sup>71</sup> Alan Ball estimates that between 15,000 and 20,000 children—less than 10 percent of orphanage residents—were placed, attributing this “lukewarm response” to local officials’ ignorance and laziness, their failure to compensate foster families accordingly, and their unwillingness to grant peasants the promised supplemental plots of land.<sup>72</sup> Also slowing down matters were the usual Russian stumbling blocks: lack of funding, corruption, apathy on behalf of provincial personnel, and administrative disorder. In the spirit of Civil War policies, some placements were by fiat, rather than voluntary.<sup>73</sup> Families commandeered for fostering duties were often too poor to feed another mouth, even a subsidized one.<sup>74</sup>

Reluctance on the part not only of hard-pressed urban workers, but most peasants was also responsible for the sluggish pace of foster care. Peasants knew quite well that former orphanage residents had often lived on the streets and could make for difficult wards, just as they not unreasonably conflated such children and other *besprizorniki* with juvenile delinquents.<sup>75</sup> Why would they risk bringing such “undisciplined”<sup>76</sup> individuals into their households? Confusion about the program itself also played a role. One peasant somehow got it into his head that a foster child would be considered a worker, “and that means salary, insurance—for a thirteen-year-old!” Probably more to the point, he feared having his “already big” household divided into yet another share.<sup>77</sup>

Pedagogues bemoaned the fact that among the households that had accepted foster children, many were not providing the requisite schooling or labor training.<sup>78</sup> At a December 1928 conference in Moscow, it was estimated that a full 70 percent of the foster children placed by the local department of education did not attend school and were not even learning how to farm.<sup>79</sup> “It turns out,” griped one disgruntled observer, “that not only are we not preparing foster children for socialist construction, we are not even going to be able to provide them with agricultural labor skills.”<sup>80</sup> Equally vexing was the revelation that very few foster children were joining communist youth organi-

zations;<sup>81</sup> that is, like most Russian peasants in the 1920s, they were receiving little or no exposure to socialist ideas.

Personnel from local departments of education familiar with the actual operations of foster care had their own reasons for moving slowly, as stories increasingly surfaced of unhonored contracts, runaway children, labor exploitation, fraud, and child abuse.<sup>82</sup> Earlier misgivings about the kind of treatment children would receive in foster households were more than being confirmed. Forty percent of foster parents in Ufa, according to an investigation by SPON, had been found to be “unsatisfactory guardians.”<sup>83</sup> Though the Moscow city council praised the capital’s program, it too acknowledged the existence of “serious defects,” especially in regard to the monitoring of placements.<sup>84</sup> A 1927 letter to a Moscow journal underlined one of what must have been frequent slippages between the bureaucratic cracks. It complained of a neighbor who was mistreating the five-year-old orphan she had taken in. Local authorities, despite having been informed of the situation, had done nothing to help the child.<sup>85</sup>

Indeed, agency supervision of foster children was spotty at best. To rectify the problem, pedagogues and officials repeatedly cautioned that Party activists needed to assume a larger monitoring role.<sup>86</sup> Yet, as more and more cases of blatant mistreatment came to light, the notion that communist oversight was enough to stave off child abuse gave way to a more pessimistic approach. Not long after foster care’s official inception, the Commissariat of Enlightenment had to heed warnings from several provincial departments of education that *patronirovanie* “is not seldom a source of children’s exploitation.”<sup>87</sup>

Children, according to several reports, were being forced by foster parents to work all day and then sleep in unheated sheds and workshops. For food, some children would be given nothing but scraps.<sup>88</sup> Reminiscent of famine-era placements, local officials would attach a child to several households, leaving the child to beg for food.<sup>89</sup> Peasant households were also known to welcome foster children during the summer months but turn them out in the winter, when their labor was no longer required.<sup>90</sup>

Soviet courts also witnessed the aftershocks of abusive foster care. In one region, foster children wound up suing their former caregivers who used their labor “in the most unscrupulous manner” and then expelled them from the peasant households.<sup>91</sup> Another case involved Anna and Ian Restas, a peasant couple in the district of Omsk who took in a three-year-old girl named Erna in 1924. When Erna turned seven, the Restases expected her to do the laundry, wash the floor, and shop for food. Evidence revealed that the Restases were well-off enough to own three cows but that they used the money they earned from the sale of milk to build a new house rather than to feed their foster daughter. The child was so hungry that she used to go begging for food in neighboring households. When someone reported her foster parents to the authorities, the court searched their residence and found a whip (*remennyi knut*) and rod that Anna Restas admitted to using on the girl. A doctor who examined Erna found bruises on her side, thighs, and buttocks. The court removed the girl to an orphanage and sentenced Anna to three months in jail and Ian to a year’s probation.<sup>92</sup>

In 1928, the Commissariat of Enlightenment’s official annual publication referred to foster care as “satisfactory,”<sup>93</sup> but no more than that. Negative reports about foster care clearly took their toll and were soon reflected in government policy. As early as mid-1928, just two years after it had been given state sanction, *patronirovanie* ceased to be mentioned among the solutions to child homelessness. When the secretary of the Central Committee issued a directive in May 1928 to all communist organizations con-

taining a seven-point plan to “liquidate” *besprizornost*, not a word was said about foster care.<sup>94</sup> Other official pronouncements referred to shortcomings in coordinating the program and stressed different alternatives for fighting *besprizornost*, like getting children off the street, soliciting the involvement of trade unions, and providing material aid to children at risk in poor families.<sup>95</sup>

Given all the terrible stories filtering in about children in foster care, it is no wonder that by 1929 the Commissariat of Enlightenment started referring to foster care as one of the *causes* of child homelessness.<sup>96</sup> This was, however, begging the point. There is no denying that children sometimes chose to rejoin the *besprizorniki* rather than stay in unpleasant foster households.<sup>97</sup> But what the commissariat prudently refrained from mentioning was that a new catalyst for child homelessness and misery had entered the picture: Stalin’s forced collectivization of agriculture and the companion policy of “liquidating” the relatively prosperous peasants referred to as “kulaks.”

At the end of 1927, Stalin addressed the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, urging the consolidation of “small and dwarf peasant farms gradually but surely, not by pressure but by example and persuasion, into large farms based on common, cooperative collective cultivation of the land.”<sup>98</sup> The following year marked the beginning of the Soviet Union’s “cultural revolution,” an era characterized by the advent of the first Five-Year Plan and deliberate class war.<sup>99</sup> At that time, Stalin became more aggressive about collectivization, confiscating peasant grain harvests and then launching a brutal campaign to herd the peasantry into collective farms (*kolkhozy*) in 1929.

The drive to collectivize agriculture inspired a parallel one to attach homeless children to collective farms as well. In one fell swoop, this apparently resolved the dilemma of dispatching Soviet youths to individual households that were strangers to socialism. Placements for children in Soviet institutions, rather than in dodgy individual households, seemed like a reasonable and revolutionary-minded solution to some local officials even before Stalin set the tone. As early as 1925, the district of Kazakovskaia housed groups of seven *besprizorniki* at a time in local schools, supplying the children with linen, felt boots (*valenki*), and sheepskin coats.<sup>100</sup> At an April 1927 conference on *besprizornost*, participants emphasized the importance of sending children to peasant and artisanal families, but these solutions stood *last* in a list that included schools, factories, production cooperatives, and collective farms.<sup>101</sup> Dutifully echoing Stalin’s words, when attendees at the Fifteenth Party Congress discussed the problem of child homelessness, they added a new destination to those for orphans: collective farms.<sup>102</sup> An official report from 1928 spoke favorably about the program of sending children from orphanages to individual families, but it too affirmed that they would be better off in factories, mills, and rural collectives.<sup>103</sup> Unquestionably, older children in Soviet orphanages seemed perfect for augmenting the ranks of industrial workers, collective farmers, and the military.<sup>104</sup>

As evidence of foster care’s liabilities accumulated, more and more voices came out in favor of collectivized *patronirovanie*. Coinciding with the collectivization of agriculture were increasingly vituperative criticisms of foster care. In early 1929, a contributor to the journal *Drug detei* (*The Children’s Friend*) suggested ending foster parenting as soon as the state could afford to do so. Until such time, he recommended placing children only in collective farms.<sup>105</sup> Similarly, an author in Nizhnii Novgorod who had written several articles in favor of *patronirovanie* withdrew his support in the middle of 1929, conceding that routine investigations of households with foster children discovered exploitation and “wretched” (*tiazhelye*) living conditions.<sup>106</sup> Another

article warned of the “hatred of Soviet power” that a child could absorb from “kulak” foster parents. In the author’s opinion, socialist values would best be imparted in collective farms.<sup>107</sup> An Irkutsk experiment that distributed twenty teenagers among six kolkhozes was deemed “most auspicious,” particularly because not one had run away.<sup>108</sup>

A contributor to the journal *Za kommunisticheskoe vospitanie* (*Toward a Communist Upbringing*) publicized what he dubbed the “seedy side” of the whole business of foster care in 1930. He declared, “*Patronirovanie* does not educate and it does not impart necessary labor skills. It cripples children and destroys any inclination they have for life, work, and the collective.” In the spirit of Stalin’s recent directive to “liquidate the kulaks as a class,” he claimed that foster children were not only being “forced to carry out religious rites” but that they were being raised by “kulaks.” Not much had changed, he wrote, from prerevolutionary days, when foster children could be found in the same condition as children who had been abandoned. In one “relatively prosperous” region of Moscow province with some 280 foster children, “complete chaos” (*sploshnoe bezobrazie*) reigned. Peasants in one village reported that a foster mother named Praskov’ia Bogdanova was meting out daily beatings to the little girl she had taken in. A foster child in another household wrote, “I can’t live in such a nightmare. The mistress uses bad language, is completely oppressive, threatens that she’ll cripple me and drive me out.” She begged to be rescued. Another girl described how her foster mother constantly swore at her, calling her a “whore” (*bul’varka*). The head of the household, Ivan Komarovskii, had recently come home drunk and beaten her for no reason. “There’s no enlightenment here,” she protested. There was not even a place to read.<sup>109</sup>

By 1930, collective farms had become the official foster parents of choice. At the same time that the state was deporting and murdering legions of peasants, it was devising ways for housing a fraction of their orphaned and abandoned children! In January, the Commissariat of Enlightenment in conjunction with the central collective farm administration (Kolkhozsentr) issued specific rules for sending former children’s home wards to rural collectives and highlighted the numerous privileges available—stipends, clothing and bedding, and additional land. They also stressed the cultural role that would be played by collective farms. As “strongholds of socialist reconstruction in the countryside,” they would transform foster children into “future fighters for economic and cultural revolution.”<sup>110</sup>

Lenin’s widow Nadezhda Krupskaiia attempted to draw attention to the desperate situation of children who, prior to collectivization, had been in the employ of individual households as shepherds, laborers, and nannies, as well as to those children and foster children whose parents had been arrested. For fear of being associated with kulaks, other peasants kept their distance and, consequently, these children were in dire straits. She reminded her readers that children who had worked as farmhands were the “poorest of the poor peasants” and therefore deserved assistance. The children of kulaks, she pointed out in 1930, did not choose their parents: “Adults are one thing, children are another.”<sup>111</sup> Sadly, Krupskaiia’s plea for compassion was a voice crying in the wilderness.

Mistreatment of children was, not unexpectedly, by no means limited to individual households. In Stavropol’, collective farms and communes put the children who had been sent their way in separate quarters. At the Lenin Commune, communards derisively branded the room for foster children the “*Besprizorka*.”<sup>112</sup> An author critical of

what awaited children in peasant households also found collective farms wanting as foster parents. He accused them of exploiting foster children and oppressing them in ways reminiscent of medieval Russia.<sup>113</sup> Mania Silant'eva, placed at an agricultural commune called "The Third International," protested the relentless labor: "We have a seven-day work week, and there is never a day of rest." She threatened that she would prefer to rejoin the ranks of the *besprizorniki* than remain.<sup>114</sup>

Support from Soviet activists on behalf of any sort of foster care virtually ceased altogether in 1930. No doubt personnel from provincial departments of education could not ignore the disaster confronting children in the countryside. A total of three official conferences held in 1930 on the protection of children failed to include *patronirovanie* among their proposals for preventing child abandonment and homelessness.<sup>115</sup> One lone defender of the program raised his voice in 1930, reminding readers of the myriad problems confronting children in orphanages. In contrast, foster children found relationships "so warm and attentive that they rival those with real fathers and mothers." He himself had worked in a village for several years before he realized that the sons and daughters of several acquaintances were actually foster children. He warned against shipping children off to collective farms, arguing that foster care could be improved with more careful selection of foster parents.<sup>116</sup> As late as 1932, the editors of a collection of documents on *besprizornost* still referred to foster care in positive terms.<sup>117</sup> But their recommendations were out of date. Foster care had lost its most vocal supporters.

One critic blamed foster care's shortcomings on "our invariable nasty habit of carrying out any new business 'by storm' [*v 'udarnom'poriadke*] and then basically forgetting about it."<sup>118</sup> But that was begging the point. The Stalinist approach both to industrialization and collectivization had already set the tone for moving ahead with policies at the stormy speed for which the foster care program was being denounced. Stalin's revolution was but one of the factors that contributed to *patronirovanie*'s failure. As we have seen, foster care was actually damned from the start. Not only had it been launched with deep ambivalence, but a USSR-wide infrastructure for implementing state policy and supervising individual households had never been put into place. Moreover, officials had turned a deliberately blind eye to the inevitability of foster care's exploitative aspects. Stalinist policies had, in fact, only made a bad situation worse, raising the question of how in the world peasants were supposed to embrace foster children at the same time that they themselves were being herded into collective farms, impoverished, and deported, if not slaughtered, for any resistance. Finally, the economic and social crises that had led to revolution in 1917 had persisted in the 1920s, virtually ensuring that most Soviet citizens were way too poor to think about expanding their households, even for the reward of five or ten rubles a month.

### A CHILD OUT OF TIME

Pedagogues gave up on foster care not long after the program officially began, but because *besprizornost* persisted, officials in Moscow continued to urge the placement of children in both collective farms and individual households within those farms. In early 1934, Nikolai Semashko, in his capacity as chair of the Central Committee's Children's Commission, even chided local officials for "inertia and a lack of initiative" in stopping *besprizornost*, instructing them to proceed more aggressively in housing foster children with willing peasants. "Mass political preparation" would make it clear

that foster parenting was “a matter of honor among collective farmers” (*delo chesti kolkhoznikov*).<sup>119</sup>

Leningrad’s department of education hastened to comply, devising an ambitious program and emptying regional orphanages of nearly 4,500 children in just five months’ time. Foster children from Leningrad came reasonably well equipped with three pairs of underwear, new boots, a winter coat, two changes of clothing, mattress, pillow, blanket, eating utensils, and school supplies. Households received twenty-five rubles each month in exchange for attending to the children’s “upbringing, education, preparation for socially useful activity” and making sure that they had an opportunity to participate in both “cultural” and agricultural work. “Treat the youth like a member of the family,” stipulated the contract, “providing him with the same food and care as family members.”<sup>120</sup>

Results were mixed. Some children evidently had positive experiences, but archival records divulge that others faced the kind of horrors that published sources in the 1920s had neglected to mention. For example, in one household, an alcoholic attempted to rape the ten-year-old girl who had been placed with him. Aleksandra Ninova, a foster child in another household, was also the victim of an attempted rape.<sup>121</sup> An investigation the following year revealed the better-known problems with funding and numerous other “errors.”<sup>122</sup>

In 1936, Leningrad officials looked into the situations of 149 children in foster care. Typically, they found that local foster care existed only in a nominal sense (*formal’no*), with insufficient attention paid to monitoring. Although the regional department of education generally paid subsidies to foster parents on time, no one followed up to see whether the children attended school. A full thirty-nine of the children studied were living in substandard conditions, several so badly that they received little or no clothing, supervision, or food from their foster parents. One girl in the charge of her older sister slept in a nearby shed so that guests could indulge in drinking bouts. In another household, the foster mother of three children supported herself by begging.<sup>123</sup>

That same year, the Soviet government attempted, once again, to standardize procedures. New instructions provided for contractual arrangements for children between the ages of five months and four years old with the Commissariat of Health, and between four and fourteen with the Commissariat of Enlightenment. A foster parent was held to strict rules and was liable to criminal prosecution if the child was left without supervision or support.<sup>124</sup>

But foster care did not come back into favor until the Second World War, a time when the state not only faced a renewed threat of *besprizornost’*, but could credibly blame child homelessness on an external enemy. Half a year into the war, the state mandated a broad-based program of voluntary *patronirovanie*.<sup>125</sup> The mistakes of the past were to be corrected through what was supposed to be a much more thorough system for supervising foster homes and assuring quality of care.<sup>126</sup> Given wartime chaos, that was no doubt a pipe dream.<sup>127</sup>

In the late 1950s, a Ministry of Enlightenment inspector expressed his preference for placing orphans under foster care rather than in institutions, but only when the foster parents were family members or close friends.<sup>128</sup> By the 1960s, though still legal, foster care was “frowned upon by Soviet authorities.”<sup>129</sup> Now, however, official reluctance no longer stemmed from fears over diluting socialism, but rather from concern about the psychological ramifications of foster care for children and their families. Experts believed it to be “trauma-producing, loyalty-dividing, and frustrating for all

concerned” and thus advocated it only for long-term and permanent arrangements—when a child’s parents were completely out of the picture.<sup>130</sup>

Such equivocal acceptance of foster care was not unique to the Soviet Union. During these years, Western experts on dependent children had reached similar conclusions. Foster care was not desirable, but when there were no alternatives, it was still preferable to most forms of institutionalization. Both in the Soviet Union and the West, a permanent custodial relationship—adoption, in other words—was vastly preferred. This was a long way from the antagonism that Bolshevik leaders had felt for individual parenting. Though, initially, they had backed down from their radicalism only for practical reasons, decades of rule, experience, and accumulated wisdom had effected a grudging appreciation of families and familial relationships. Foster care seemed to have no place in a socialist state that aspired to collectivize child rearing, yet it proved to be a necessary and enduring component of Soviet policies toward dependent children.

An examination of foster care in the Soviet Union illustrates one of the fundamental dilemmas confronting Bolshevik leaders. As much as they wanted to revolutionize all facets of Soviet society, they were stuck with Russian reality. The Bolsheviks tried to live up to their claim of having made a revolution in the name of the proletariat, but they had to face the fact that they ruled a peasant country. When homes were needed for the tens of thousands of children overburdening the country’s orphanages and for the countless *besprizorniki* living on the streets, Soviet leaders set aside their plans to proletarianize and socialize dependent children, and turned to the countryside. Inducements dangled the peasants’ way made it clear that, essentially, a deal was being struck. In exchange for having made room in their huts for another household member, peasants and even collective farms would obtain land, funds, and young workers. Government rules spoke of supervision, education, training, and even of communism and collectivity, but foster care often amounted to no more than the delivery of little agricultural laborers to the countryside, ripe for exploitation and abuse.

Attitudes and policies toward foster care in the Soviet Union moved from outright rejection to grudging acceptance. Immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, foster care was rejected as inappropriate for a socialist society. In the 1920s, after the Bolsheviks launched the NEP, they reluctantly acknowledged the need for foster care, counting it among their compromises with petty capitalism and private ownership. During Stalin’s collectivization of agriculture and industrial drive in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the state backed away from private solutions and tried to turn collective farms and factories into foster parents. In the mid-1930s, foster care became “a matter of honor among collective farmers.” When individuals were again called upon to do their share during the Second World War, foster parenting resurfaced as one of the contributions that civilians could make toward the war effort. By the 1950s, there was less official support for *patronirovanie*, but it nevertheless remained one way to care for dependent children. In other words, what began as a desperate measure evolved into a Soviet institution not unlike similar programs in the West.

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## NOTES

1. See, for example, Aleksandra Kollontai, *Semia i kommunisticheskoe gosudarstvo* (Moscow, 1918); N. Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism: A Popular Explanation of the Program of the Communist Party of Russia* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966), 233. On debates over collectivized child rearing, see Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 8-11.

2. Fears that citizens would adopt children in order to circumvent restrictive labor and inheritance laws also influenced the Bolshevik ban on adoption, as did an optimistic belief that a law abolishing the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children would render legal adoption superfluous. See Laurie Bernstein, "The Evolution of Soviet Adoption Law," *Journal of Family History* 22, no. 1 (1997): 206-7.

3. Ironically, this echoed Ivan Betskoi's mid-eighteenth-century plans to create in Russia a free urban third estate "from the raw material of the foundling population." David L. Ransel, *Mothers of Misery: Child Abandonment in Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 34-35.

4. See Alan M. Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened: Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 4, 7-12, 45-46, 198; Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 67-71; Margaret K. Stolee, "Homeless Children in the USSR, 1917-1957," *Soviet Studies* 40, no. 1 (1988): 65; Jennie A. Stevens, "Children of the Revolution: Soviet Russia's Homeless Children (*Besprizorniki*) in the 1920s," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 9, pts. 2-3 (1982): 250-52.

5. On the deplorable conditions in children's homes, see Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened*, 108-26. Quotation from *Itogi bor'by s golodom v 1921-22 g.g. Sbornik statei i otchetov* (Moscow: Izdanie TsK Pomgol VTsIK, 1922), 31.

6. M. Ustvol'skii, "K voprosu o peredache besprizornykh v krest'ianskie sem'i," *Lenin-gradskaia oblast' no. 4* (1928): 112.

7. On foster care in the USSR, see Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened*, 105, 144-49, 154-55; Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 97-100, 306-8; Bernice Q. Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), 37, 156-57.

8. As Alan Ball has argued, the advent of foster care in Soviet Russia "signaled a retreat from the goal of collective, institutional upbringing and promised to expose some children to religion and other influences scarcely compatible with [the Commissariat of Enlightenment's] curriculum." In Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened*, 146.

9. On foster care in tsarist Russia, see Bernice Madison, "Russia's Illegitimate Children before and after the Revolution," *Slavic Review* 22, no. 1 (1963): 82-88; Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union*, 8-12; Ransel, *Mothers of Misery*, 176-292. According to Ransel, in Late Imperial Russia, infants sent to foster care served as "a perishable commodity in a system of exchange between the city and the village" (198).

10. For descriptions of Russian peasants, see, for example, Esther Kingston-Mann and Timothy Mixer, eds., *Peasant Economy, Culture, and Politics of European Russia, 1800-1921* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Beatrice Farnsworth and Lynne Viola, eds., *Russian Peasant Women* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

11. See David L. Ransel, "Infant-Care Cultures in the Russian Empire," in *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation*, ed. Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alpern Engel, and Christine D. Worobec (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 113-32.

12. Olga Semyonova Tian-Shanskaia, *Village Life in Late Tsarist Russia*, ed. David L. Ransel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 6-8.
13. *Ibid.*, 27-31.
14. War Communism is the name of the radical policy launched by the party in May 1918 to mobilize for fighting the war against anti-Bolshevik forces. It involved nationalizing the means of production and seizing grain in the countryside.
15. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: Penguin, 1967), 84.
16. It is not clear whether homes were actually found for these children, but in 1922 Irkutsk declared itself ready to receive another 3,000 young refugees. *Spasennye revoliutsiei. Bor'ba s besprizornost'iu v Irkutskoi gubernii i okruge* (Irkutsk: Vostochno-sibirskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1977), 39-40, 43.
17. Ustvol'skii, "K voprosu o peredache besprizornykh," 112.
18. G. Cherkeзов, "Vospitanie sirot i besprizornykh v krest'ianskikh sem'iakh (k postanovleniiam Mossoveta)," *Vestnik prosveshcheniia* no. 1 (January 1926): 3-4.
19. I. I. Daniushevskii and V. M. Vasil'eva, "Sostoianie detskoj besprizornosti i detchrezhdenii SPON i ocherednye zadachi v etoi oblasti," in *Detskaia besprizornost' i detskii dom*, ed. S. S. Tizanov, V. L. Shveitser, and V. M. Vasil'eva (Moscow: Otdel SPON, 1926), 176. See also Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened*, 144; Pavel I. Liublinskii, "Ob usynovlenii," *Drug detei* [Kharkov version] no. 1 (January 1925): 9.
20. Cited in Liublinskii, "Ob usynovlenii," 9.
21. Daniushevskii and Vasil'eva, "Sostoianie detskoj besprizornosti," 176.
22. *Itogi bor'by s golodom*, 33.
23. Daniushevskii and Vasil'eva, "Sostoianie detskoj besprizornosti," 181.
24. Ustvol'skii, "K voprosu o peredache besprizornykh," 112.
25. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1924/25 uchebnomu godu* (Moscow, 1925), 91. Prior to the revolution, a similar practice existed, with some villages caring for orphans on a rotating basis and leaving them no choice but to beg for food. From Christine D. Worobec, *Peasant Russia: Family and Community in the Post-Emancipation Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 73-74.
26. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1924/25*, 91.
27. See, for example, Daniushevskii and Vasil'eva, "Sostoianie detskoj besprizornosti," 176-77.
28. In Russian, the saying is "Ne ta mat', kotoraiia rodila, a ta kotoraiia vospitala." From Grigorii Ryndziunskii, "Voprosy deistvuiushchego semeinogo prava," *Ezhenedel'nik sovetskoi iustitsii* nos. 29-30 (August 10-17, 1922): 7-8.
29. For example, while there were 1,495 foster children in Orlov province as of January 1, 1924, only 336 remained a year and a half later. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1924/25*, 91. Bernice Madison claimed that the number of children in foster care dropped from nearly 100,000 in 1921 to less than 7,500 in 1927. Unfortunately, she did not provide a reference for this statistic. Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union*, 42.
30. Ol'ga Nogina put the mortality rate in Moscow institutions at between 20 and 25 percent in her article "Kak my boremsia s podkidyvaniiem," *Drug detei* no. 1 (January 1927): 12. Another author estimated that between 30 and 50 percent of infants in Soviet institutions perished. See E. Rozenblium, "O podkidyshakh," *Drug detei* no. 2 (1926): 4-5.
31. *Drug detei* [Kharkov version] no. 2 (1926): 10. Nogina admitted that it was in order "to reduce [udeshevit'] expenditures" that Moscow organized its infant foster care program: "Kak my boremsia," 12. For another statement on how *patronirovanie* cost much less than institutionalization, see M. Popov, *Detskaia besprizornost' i patronirovanie* (Ivanovo-Voznesensk: Izdanie oblastnoi Detkomissii, 1929), 17.
32. It is possible that infants sent into foster care had a greater chance of survival than the peasants' own offspring because of threats of inspections by the authorities and promises of pay-

ments for survivors. I am indebted to Janet Golden, author of *A Social History of Wet Nursing in America: From Breast to Bottle* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), for this insight.

33. S. Zarechnaia, "Vtoraia sem'ia," *Drug detei* no. 4 (April 1928): 14-15.

34. *Drug detei* [Kharkov version] no. 2 (1926): 10.

35. Nogina, "Kak my boremsia," 12. For more on foster care for Moscow infants, see V. A. Pavlovskii, "Opyt otдачи detei v patronat v gor. Moskve," *Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva* no. 2 (1925): 118-24. For a sanitized description, see O. P. Nogina, *Mother and Child Care in the USSR* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1950), 30.

36. Circular of May 22, 1924, cited in Liublinskii, "Ob usynovlenii," 10. See also Rozenblium, "O podkidyshakh," 5. When Commissar of Justice Dmitrii Kurskii was arguing in favor of overturning the ban on adoption, he asserted that many more peasants would take in homeless children if they knew they had the opportunity to adopt them legally. From "Stenograficheskii otchet zasedanii 2 sessii Vserossiiskogo Tsentral'nogo Iсполnitel'nogo Komiteta XII sozyva 17 i 19 oktiabria 1925 goda po proektu kodeksa o brake, sem'e i opeka," in *Sbornik statei i materialov po brachnomu i semeinomu pravu*, ed. D. I. Kurskii (Moscow: Iuridicheskoe izdatel'stvo Narkomiusta RSFSR, 1926), 121.

37. "Ob otدache pokinutykh detei na vospitanie iz uchrezhdenii okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva," August 25, 1925, in *Bor'ba s detskoj besprizornost'iu* IV, ed. Ia. A. Perel' and A. A. Liubimova (Moscow and Leningrad: Narkompros RSFSR, Gosudarstvennoe uchebno-pedagogicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1932), 94. A three-year plan drawn up for the Department for the Protection of Maternity and Childhood in 1927 stipulated that 5,000 abandoned infants be distributed to families. See *Obzor raboty po bor'be s detskoj besprizornost'iu v RSFSR za 1927/28 g.* (Moscow: Izdanie Detkomissii pri VTsIK, 1928), 19. For 1929 Commissariat of Health rules, see *Bor'ba s detskoj besprizornost'iu*, 104-7. There is some confusion between this program and adoption in Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 97-98.

38. In 1922, in order to include the republics of Ukraine, Byelorussia, and the Transcaucasus, the party changed the name of what had been the Russian Soviet Federation Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

39. Goldman identifies 1924 as the year that attitudes toward street children shifted, with the term "chronic *besprizornost'*" signaling the perception that a "subculture" had been created, "stubbornly entrenched and inimical to the ideals of the state." Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 89.

40. Between June 1, 1925, and October 1, 1925, the number of children's homes in the USSR was reduced by 541, with 11,649 less children. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1925/26 uchebnomu godu* (Moscow, 1926), 68.

41. Quoted in *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1924/25*, 78.

42. Quoted in *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1925/26*, 63.

43. *Ibid.*, 64.

44. For an article weighing the advantages and disadvantages of foster care, see Iu. Orestova, "O chastnom patronate," *Ural'skii uchitel'* nos. 5-6 (1925): 41-42.

45. *Bor'ba s besprizornost'iu. Materialy 1-oi Moskovskoi konferentsii po bor'be s besprizornost'iu 16-17 marta 1924 g.* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Rabotnik prosveshcheniia," 1924), 38-45.

46. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1925/26*, 64-65.

47. *Ibid.*, 71.

48. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1926/27 uchebnomu godu* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1927), 59, 62.

49. Also contributing to adoption's reintroduction into law was pressure from caregivers who wished to formalize relationships with children they had taken in and the abrogation of restrictive inheritance laws and laws forbidding hired labor. Bernstein, "The Evolution of Soviet Adoption Law," 207-8.

50. "Polozhenie o meropriiatiakh po bor'be s detskoï besprizornost'iu v RSFSR," March 8, 1926, in *Bor'ba s detskoï besprizornost'iu*, 18.
51. "O poriadke i usloviakh peredachi vospitannikov detskikh domov v krest'ianskie sem'i dlia podgotovki k sel'skokhoziaistvennomu trudu," April 5, 1926, in *ibid.*, 101-2.
52. "O plane bor'by s detskoï besprizornost'iu," June 20, 1927, in *ibid.*, 23-27.
53. *Trekhletnii plan bor'by s detskoï besprizornost'iu* (Moscow: Rabochii Leninet, 1927), 11-12.
54. A. D. Kalinina, *Desiat' let raboty po bor'be s detskoï besprizornost'iu* (Moscow and Leningrad: Moskovskii rabochii, 1928), 24; Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened*, 144.
55. A. Kalinina, "Patronirovanie," *Drug detei* no. 5 (August-September 1926): 12.
56. B. Orlovskii and A. Okun'kov, "O patronirovanii (peredacha vospitannikov detdov na vospitanie v trudovye sem'i)," *Shkola i zhizn'* nos. 6-7 (1926): 29.
57. M. Epshtein, "O detskom dome," *Pravda* no. 78 (April 7, 1927): 3.
58. M. Serebrianyi, *L'goty krest'ianam za vospitanie besprizornykh* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1927).
59. *Ibid.*, 3.
60. Zlata I. Lilina, "Detskaia besprizornost' i detskii dom," in *Detskie doma. Praktika raboty po materialam LGONO. Sbornik* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1927), 4-7.
61. Kalinina asserted that peasants preferred the cash subsidy to the "insignificant" additional land. Kalinina, "Patronirovanie," 12-13. Not all regions were able to compensate households with land; for example, Leningrad province could proffer cash only, and this apparently discouraged peasants from participating. As an alternative, the Commissariat of Finance provided a tax break. Ustvol'skii, "K voprosu o peredache besprizornykh," 113-14; "O l'gotakh po sel'skokhoziaistvennomu nalogu khoziaistvam, priniavshim k sebe vospitannikov detskikh domov," *Vestnik prosveshchentsa* no. 4 (1927): 69-70.
62. Cherkeзов, "Vospitanie sirot i besprizornykh," 7-10.
63. Kalinina, "Patronirovanie," 13.
64. G. Cherkeзов, "V krest'ianskoi sem'e," *Drug detei* no. 4 (April 1928): 8.
65. L. Azov, "Kak brat' detei na vospitanie," *Krest'ianskii iurist* no. 11 (1928): 6. When adoption was reintroduced into law in 1926, foster families who wanted to change their status could adopt their wards without any further investigation or red tape. They could also keep any land and privileges conferred on them through the foster situation. "Instruktivnoe pis'mo 'ob usynovlenii,'" in *Ob usynovlenii detei i podrostkov* (Moscow: Izdanie Detkomissii VTSIK, 1926), 77-78.
66. Kalinina, "Patronirovanie," 12.
67. Cherkeзов, "V krest'ianskoi sem'e," 8.
68. "Na vospitanii u zemli," *Drug detei* nos. 5-6 (1927): 32-33.
69. *Narodnoe obrazovanie v SSSR. Obshcheobrazovatel'naia shkola. Sbornik dokumentov, 1917-1973 g.g.* (Moscow: Pedagogika, 1974), 348-49.
70. "O poriadke i usloviakh peredachi vospitannikov detskikh domov i drugikh nesovershennoletnikh trudiashchimsia v gorodakh i rabochikh poselkakh," May 28, 1928, in *Bor'ba s detskoï besprizornost'iu*, 102-4.
71. See, for example, *Kak peredavat' besprizornykh i vospitannikov detdov v trudovye khoziaistva* (Viatka: Izdanie Viatskoi GubDetkomissii i GubONO, 1928), 4; A. Kondrat'ev, "Nachalo dlitel'noi i upornoï raboty (k dvukhnedel'niku po bor'be s besprizornost'iu)," *Prosveshchenie Sibiri* no. 12 (December 1929): 9-11.
72. Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened*, 147. For criticisms of this nature, see *Obzor raboty po bor'be s detskoï besprizornost'iu*, 16; F. Iakovenko, "Na bor'bu s detskoï besprizornost'iu!" *Izvestiia Severo-kavkazskogo kraevogo ispolnitel'nogo komiteta* no. 3 (May 25, 1926): 8-9; Iakovenko, "Detskaia besprizornost' i sostoianie detdov v sev.-kavk. krae," *Severo-kavkazskii krai* no. 5 (May 1926): 23-27; *Drug detei* nos. 6-7 (June-July 1927): 36; V. Pokrovskii,

“O peredache detei detskikh domov v krest’ianskie sem’i,” *Leningradskaia oblast* no. 2 (1928): 103; Kondrat’ev, “Nachalo dlitel’noi i upornoj raboty,” 10.

73. Azov, “Kak brat’ detei na vospitanie,” 5-6; Uvarov, “O patronate,” *Vestnik prosveshchentsa* nos. 7-8 (July-August 1926): 29.

74. See, for example, Cherkezov, “V krest’ianskoi sem’e,” 8.

75. On the association between *besprizornost’* and crime, see Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 76-84.

76. An author identified by the initials G. S. used this word in “O patronirovanii (v poriadke obsuzhdeniia),” *Shkola i zhizn’* no. 12 (December 1928): 18-19.

77. Quoted in Uvarov, “O patronate,” 30.

78. One obstacle to education was the fact that some households lacked the clothes and shoes necessary for sending a child to school. Even an advocate of Moscow’s program admitted that children placed with peasants essentially ceased to attend school. See “Na vospitanii u zemli,” 32-33.

79. Numbers cited by A. Novikov, “Shpityaty,” *Za kommunisticheskoe vospitanie* no. 7 (1930): 97.

80. E. Solovov, “Usil’te obshchestvennyi kontrol’ nad det’mi, otdannymi v derevniu,” *Drug detei* no. 1 (1929): 9.

81. Novikov, “Shpityaty,” 97.

82. For example, see *Drug detei* nos. 6-7 (June-July 1927): 36; Cherkezov, “Chto daet patronirovanie,” *Drug detei* no. 2 (February 1928): 14-15; A. Poliakov, “Bor’ba s besprizornost’iu i sovetskaia obshchestvennost’,” *Prosveshchenie Sibiri* no. 9 (September 1928): 68.

83. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 76-77.

84. Cherkezov, “Chto daet patronirovanie,” 14-15.

85. Letter from Sofiia M-va to “Nasha iuridicheskaiia konsul’tatsiia,” in *Drug detei* no. 10 (October 1927).

86. One article with this warning appeared in 1924: E. S. Livshits, *Detskaia besprizornost’ i novye formy bor’by s nei* (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Rabotnik prosveshcheniia,” 1924), 19. Others appeared with increasing frequency after 1926: Cherkezov, “Vospitanie sirot i besprizornykh,” 18; Kalinina, “Patronirovanie,” 13; “Ob uchastii VLKSM v bor’be s besprizornost’iu,” *Shkola i zhizn’* no. 12 (December 1927): 81-85; I. El’kin, “O peredache besprizornykh detei v krest’ianskie khoziaistva dlia obuchenii sel’skokhoziaistvennomu trudu,” *Komi prosveshchenets* no. 3 (March-April 1928): 3-6; Cherkezov, “V krest’ianskoi sem’e,” 8; K. Vil’tsin, *Drug detei* no. 5 (May 1928): 21; P. S. Gilev, *Detskaia besprizornost’ i bor’ba s nei v Buriatii za poslednie piat’ let* (Verkhneudinsk: Izdanie Detskoi komissii pri BurTsIK’e, 1928), 13; Solovov, “Usil’te obshchestvennyi kontrol’ nad det’mi,” 9; Kondrat’ev, “Nachalo dlitel’noi i upornoj raboty,” 10-11.

87. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1925/26*, 71.

88. E. M. Vurgaft, “K voprosu o patronirovanii,” in *Gosudarstvo i obshchestvennost’ v bor’be s detskoj besprizornost’iu. Sbornik statei i pravitel’stvennykh rasporyazhenii*, eds. S. S. Tizanov and M. S. Epshtein (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo, 1927), 17-18.

89. *Komsomol’skaia pravda* no. 109 (May 14, 1926): 4.

90. Azov, “Kak brat’ detei na vospitanie,” 5.

91. Statsenko, “Peredacha vospitannikov detskikh domov v krest’ianskie sem’i,” *Ezhenedel’nik sovetskoi iustitsii* no. 31 (August 13, 1929): 731-32. A fourteen-year-old girl who sued her foster parents is mentioned in Uvarov, “O patronate,” 29.

92. Anna Restas’s jail sentence was commuted to forced labor after she presented proof from a doctor that she was ill. A higher court excused her from the labor in exchange for community service. *Sudebnaia praktika RSFSR* no. 21 (November 15, 1928): 13-14.

93. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v RSFSR k 1927/28 uchebnomu godu* (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1928), 60.

94. *Bor'ba s detskoï besprizornost'iu*, 15-16.

95. Decrees of July 11, 1928, July 17, 1929, May 30, 1930, and November 20, 1930 in *ibid.*, 28-35.

96. *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v SSSR k 1928/29 uchebnomu godu* (Moscow/Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1929), 92.

97. Of 1,100 besprizorniki surveyed by Narkompros in 1928 and 1929, 9.3 percent were back on the streets after having fled foster households. *Ibid.*, 90-91.

98. Joseph Stalin, *Works*, vol. 10 (Moscow, 1953-55), 196, quoted in David MacKenzie and Michael W. Curran, *A History of the Soviet Union* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1986), 200.

99. On the cultural revolution, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1931* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978).

100. The local "Society of Worker-Peasant Aid to the Homeless Child" (*Obshchestvo raboche-krest'ianskoi pomoshchi besprizornomu rebenku*) requested monthly three-ruble contributions from its members to pay for this plan. "Bor'ba s besprizornost'iu v derevne: Shkoly na fronte bor'by s besprizornost'iu," *Put' prosveshchentsa* nos. 6-7 (March-May 1925): 145-46. A contributor to the same journal affirmed later in 1925 the need for collective forms of *patronirovanie*. See Naryshkin, "Organizatsiia bor'by s besprizornost'iu v volosti," *Put' prosveshchentsa* nos. 8-9 (December 1925): 44. On another homeless child housed in a school, see V. Naumov, "Kak nasha shkola vziala besprizornika," *Voprosy prosveshcheniia na severnom kavkaze* no. 10 (May 1928): 21-23.

101. *Bor'ba s detskoï besprizornost'iu*, 38-41.

102. Resolution in *ibid.*, 41.

103. *Obzor raboty po bor'be s detskoï besprizornost'iu*, 16-17.

104. As of the beginning of 1928, the Moscow department of education sent more than 500 children to peasant families, but 500 or so to artels and individual artisans, some 150 to a consumers' cooperative, and 250 to military musical squads. Cherkezov, "Chto daet patronirovanie," 14-15. On other institutional placements, see Gilev, *Detskaia besprizornost' i bor'ba s nei*, 4; T. Ivlev, "O detdomakh Stavropol'skogo okruga," *Detskii dom* nos. 8-9 (1929): 92-94. The government of Boris Yeltsin's successor, Vladimir Putin, recently revived this practice, urging military detachments "to adopt" orphaned boys and the sons of single mothers over the age of fourteen. Reported by Masha Gessen, "Lockstep to Putin's New Military Order," *New York Times*, February 29, 2000, A-21.

105. Solovov, "Usil'te obshchestvennyi kontrol' nad det'mi," 9. For other articles favoring kolkhozes as foster parents, see also E. Solovov, "Bol'she vnimaniia detiam, otdavayemyam na vospitanie krest'ianam," *Vestnik prosveshcheniia* no. 1 (1929): 165; S. Shupov, "O vypuske detei iz detdomov," *Prosveshchenie Sibiri* no. 9 (September 1928): 73-75; Stasenko, "Peredacha vospitannikov detskikh domov," 732.

106. B. Orlovskii, "Nizhegorodskoe kraevoe soveshchanie po okhrane detstva 3-7 iulia 1929 g.," *Detskii dom* nos. 8-9 (1929): 88. See also B. Orlovskii, "Besprizornost' neobkhodimo izzhit'," *Nizhegorodskii prosveshchenets* nos. 1-2 (October-November 1929): 45-49. Earlier articles by this author advocating foster care include Orlovskii and Okun'kov, "O patronirovanii," 28-31; B. Orlovskii, "Bor'ba s detskoï besprizornost'iu v Nizhegorodskoi gubernii," *Shkola i zhizn'* no. 11 (November 1926): 30-40; B. Orlovskii, "Desiat' let bor'by s detskoï besprizornost'iu," *Shkola i zhizn'* no. 10 (October 1927): 54-63; B. Orlovskii, "Patronirovanie besprizornykh," *Shkola i zhizn'* no. 7 (July 1929): 76-78. By the end of 1929, he recommended placing orphans only with legal guardians (*opekuny*) and in institutions. See B. Orlovskii, "V pokhod na besprizornost'," *Nizhegorodskii prosveshchenets* no. 3 (December 1929): 9-12.

107. Lukinskii, "Kolkhozy i kommuny dolzhno byt' patronatami dlia besprizornykh," *Drug detei* no. 11 (1929): 8.

108. Gl. Protasov, "Detdomovtsy v kolkhozakh," *Prosveshchenie Sibiri* no. 11 (November 1929): 51. See also his similar, albeit shorter article in *Detskii dom* nos. 8-9 (1929): 108-109. When Nizhnii Novgorod allocated additional funding for *patronirovanie* in 1929, it exhorted local collective farms to accept foster children. "O merakh bor'by s besprizornost'iu," *Shkola i zhizn'* no. 4 (April 1929): 103. In 1930, only 120 children in the region of Nizhnii Novgorod were placed in private households. By contrast, 900 were placed in kolkhozes, 100 in sovkhozes, and 120 in artels. From B. Orlovskii, "Opyt vovlecheniia sovetskoi obshchestvennosti v rabotu po bor'be s besprizornost'iu," *Detskii dom* no. 6 (1930): 24.

109. Novikov, "Shpitaty," 96-98.

110. "Ob usloviakh peredachi vospitannikov detuchrezhenii v kolkhozy na patronirovanie," January 16, 1930, in *Bor'ba s detskoii besprizornost'iu*, 108-9. See also Temkin and Epshtein, "O razmeshchenii podrostkov s.-kh kolonii v kolkhozy," *Detskii dom* no. 1 (1930): 52-53.

111. N. Krupskaiia, "Eshche ob odnom peregibe," *Na putiakh o novoi shkole* nos. 4-5 (1930): 15-16. On the desperation of orphans in a recently collectivized village, see *Rapports Secrets Soviétiques: La société russe dans les documents confidentiels, 1921-1991* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1994), 148-49. A 1936 law made kolkhoz officials responsible for orphans within the collective farm. See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village After Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 220.

112. Ivlev, "O detdomakh Stavropol'skogo okruga," 92-94.

113. In his words, foster children encountered "a peculiar 'collective farm Domostroevshchina.'" Novikov, "Shpitaty," 98.

114. *Ibid.*, 98.

115. Resolutions in *Narodnoe prosveshchenie v SSSR k 1928/29*, 41-45, 65-73.

116. P. L., "Rano konchat' s patronirovaniiem (v poriadke obsuzhdeniia)" *Za kommunisticheskoe vospitanie* nos. 12-13 (1930): 63.

117. *Bor'ba s detskoii besprizornost'iu*, 100.

118. Ustvol'skii, "K voprosu o peredache besprizornykh," 115.

119. March 17, 1934, directive from Semashko preserved in Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Sankt-Peterburga (hereafter TsGAS-P), fond 7412, Gorodskaiia komissiiia po uluchsheniui zhizni detei, opis' 1, delo 157, "Materialy obsledovaniia raboty po patronirovaniui v oblasti, 14.II-31.XII.34," listy 4-5.

120. *Ibid.*, l. 14.

121. *Ibid.*, l. 31.

122. That year, investigators discovered that a household that received forty rubles for foster care and another thirty-seven rubles from the pension of the eleven-year-old foster daughter's parents had her sleeping on the floor and was failing to feed her breakfast. TsGAS-P, f. 7412, op. 1, d. 228, "Materialy obsledovaniia sostoianii patronirovaniia i sotspomoshchi, 16.II-4. XI.35," ll. 1-12.

123. TsGAS-P, f. 7412, op. 1, d. 17, "Ankety pervichnogo i kontrol'nogo obsledovaniia, peredano na patronirovanii vospitannika detdoma ili sirota, 1936," ll. 1-3.

124. See John N. Hazard, "The Child under Soviet Law," in *University of Chicago Law Review* 5 (1937-38): 432; Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union*, 43. For a Soviet article praising foster care in the 1930s, see B. R. Rodman, "O patronate," *Voprosy materinstva i mladenchestva* no. 1 (1939): 58. Children under five months could be given to foster families if the foster mother could breast-feed the baby. In Sof'ia E. Kopelianskaia, *Prava materi i rebenka v SSSR* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo meditsinskoi literatury Medgiz, 1960), 81. These instructions were issued not long after Soviet law started trying as adults children over the age of twelve who committed serious crimes and around the same time that it cracked down on parents who left their children without adult supervision. See Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 322-36.

125. In November 1941, authorities in Uzbekistan placed thousands of orphans evacuated from children's homes in the occupied and besieged regions with private families. In Vladimir I.

Boshko, *Ocherki sovetskogo semeinogo prava* (Kiev: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury USSR, 1952), 322. See also Nathan Berman, "The Place of the Child in Present-Day Russia," *Social Forces* 21, no. 4 (May 1943): 451; Anna I. Dovgalevskaia, *Semeinoe vospitanie priemnykh detei* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe uchebno-pedagogicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1948), 45-63; V. Bulgakov, "Obshchestvennyi inspektor," *Sem'ia i shkola* no. 9 (September 1948): 19-21.

126. See "Ob ustroistve detei, ostavshikhhsia bez roditelei," *Uchebno-vospitatel'naia rabota v detskikh domakh* nos. 1-2 (1942): 107-109; *ibid.*, nos. 1-2 (1943): 76-78; *Narodnoe obrazovanie v SSSR*, 353-54; Boshko, *Ocherki sovetskogo semeinogo prava*, 321; Em. Iaroslavskii, "Chto ty sdelal dlia detei vo vremia voiny?" *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, February 18, 1943, 3; "Siroty vospityvaiutsia v sem'iakh trudiashchikhhsia," *Pravda* no. 256 (October 26, 1945): 1. Specific statistics for foster care in Leningrad are in TsGAS-P, f. 5039, Leningradskii gorodskii otdel narodnogo obrazovaniia Lengorispolkoma, op. 3, d. 663, "Statisticheskie otchety o detskikh domakh na pervogo ianvaria 1945 goda," ll. 1-2; d. 993, "Otchet gorodskogo otdela narodnogo obrazovaniia goroda Leningrada po okhrane detstva s 1-go ianvaria po 1-e iuliia 1947 goda," l. 5.

127. Bernice Madison, quoting Grigorii Sverdlov, alleged that little was done to investigate the fates of children fostered out during wartime. Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union*, 45. A campaign to promote foster care continued in the immediate postwar years. TsGAS-P, f. 5039, op. 3, d. 993, ll. 2-3.

128. F. Farberova, "Sel'skie sovery i okhrana prav nesovershennoletnikh detei, ostavshikhhsia bez roditelei," *Sovet deputatov trudiashchikhhsia* no. 6 (June 1958): 100-103. Two Americans who investigated child welfare practices in the Soviet Union during the 1950s, a time when Nikita Khrushchev was championing boarding schools for dependent and at-risk children, were denied access to statistics with the numbers of children in foster homes. Yet, despite Khrushchev's renewed emphasis on institutional care, they got the impression that many foster children were being cared for in individual families. Herschel and Edith Alt, *Russia's Children: A First Report on Child Welfare in the Soviet Union* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1959), 126. On Khrushchev's support for boarding schools, see Urie Bronfenbrenner, "The Changing Soviet Family" in *The Role and Status of Women in the Soviet Union*, ed. Donald R. Brown (New York: Teachers' College Press, 1968), 109-18.

129. Madison, "Russia's Illegitimate Children before and after the Revolution," 92.

130. Madison, *Social Welfare in the Soviet Union*, 156-57.