PARTY PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER SOURCES ON CADRES IN THE 1930S

There are a number of different types of Party publications for the 1930s—statistical handbooks on Party membership, reports of the proceedings of Party congresses and conferences, Party journals and newspapers and, finally, later histories of regional Party organizations and other secondary works. Since my own research use of these sources has focussed on Party cadres, that aspect will be most prominent in the description that follows. These are, however, important sources for a variety of types of research in the political and social history of the 1930s. Social historians should not neglect them, for they illuminate not only the bureaucracy, a major social group in itself, but also many crucial questions of the interaction of Party, state, and society.

The following discussion will deal with the major source materials available to Western scholars. Unfortunately, these sources do not include Party archives, which would obviously be of the greatest value to political and social historians. Some limited progress has been made in opening up other archives for the 1930s to Western scholars. The central and regional Party archives, however, remain firmly closed, and for the time being Western scholars must resign themselves to the fact that these materials are not accessible.¹

¹. The exception, of course, is the archive of the Smolensk/Western Oblast' Party organization which is available in the West. This is undoubtedly an invaluable primary source for those interested in Party structure and composition at regional and local level. Even here, however, there are at least two shortcomings which mean that the material has to be handled carefully. First, there are large chronological gaps which make a detailed study of the Party organization at any level of its structure difficult to accomplish. Second, from its formation in 1929, the Western
Statistical handbooks

The 1927 Party census provides a wealth of interesting data on Communist Party members. Its results were published in Sotsial'nyi i natsional'nyi sostav VKP(b). Itogi Vsesoiuznoi partiinoi perepisi 1927 goda (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1928). The census material was used for a study of Party members in administrative positions in 1927, Kommunisty v sostave apparata gosuchrezhdenii i obshchestvennyikh organizatsii (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1929). This study divides all Soviet cadres who were Party members at the time of the census into categories according to administrative branch—Party, Komsomol, trade-union, industrial, and so on—and for each category provides detailed figures for the numbers and geographical distribution of officials, along with data for the number of women and former workers in each sphere. There are also tables which break down the cadres' educational background. As a source for assessing the social characteristics of the Soviet administrative stratum as a whole, the handbook has one obvious shortcoming—it only takes account of Party members, and thus ignores the still sizeable proportion of non-Party administrative cadres. From the point of view of the Party's own apparatus, however, where all but a few technical employees were Party members, it is the best statistical aid available.

The data from the Party census can often be used in conjunction with two large-scale surveys of later date (not Party publications) that deal with the bureaucracy more broadly, but provide information on Communists working within it. The first survey is Ia. M. Bineman's Kadry gosudarstvennogo i kooperativnogo aparata SSSR (Moscow: Gos. Plan.-Khoz. Izd., 1930), which has sections on the composition in 1929 of the personnel in the cen-

Oblast' Party organization (which included Smolensk and a number of smaller towns) was one of the smallest regional organizations in the RSFSR, after the Northern and Far Eastern regions. In any study of the Party at regional level, the weakness of the Party presence at local level in the Western region, and the backwardness of its rural administrative structure, must be contrasted with the mass organizations of the major urban industrial centers of Russia and the Ukraine.