



Source 6

British summary of Soviet labour discipline, December 1931
(Catalogue ref: FO 371/15592)

Questions

1. What steps were taken to tighten up discipline at work?
2. Can you think of any causes for discipline problems (such as making shoddy goods or changing jobs without giving notice) in Soviet industry? (There is a clue in source 3.)
3. How was not being allowed to work in a state factory for six months a punishment? How would punished workers have supported themselves?
4. Did the punishments fit the crimes?



Source 6

Labour Discipline.

An incentive of a different kind is provided by the tightening up of labour discipline, and the extension of the principle of personal responsibility of the worker for the completion of his task (reflected in the new wage system described above) and for the care of the tools and machinery entrusted to him (decree of 3rd June, 1931): "We have abolished the lack of personal responsibility on the railways," said Stalin in his speech, "and their work has improved. We must do the same in industry and we shall then obtain the improvement." Two decrees of January 1931 make the following drastic provision for the enforcement of labour discipline: A decree of the 19th January, 1931, provides that criminal disorganisers of production and deserters from employment are not to be given employment in State industry and transport for six months after their dismissal; among those who fall within this category are workers who leave their jobs without notice or before the expiry of their contract, who change their jobs more than once in twelve months, or who are discharged for breaches of labour discipline such as, *e.g.*, wilful damage to machinery, systematic production of waste goods, misconduct, &c. A decree of the 23rd January, 1931, strengthens the Criminal Code by providing penalties of ten years' imprisonment or, in the event of malice being proved, death, for violations of labour discipline by transport workers if such violation causes destruction of property, accident or the non-fulfilment of plan. By a decree of the 20th February, 1931, courts are set up, under the name of disciplinary production tribunals, to try minor offences against labour discipline affecting the productivity of labour.