

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

On the Liberation of Women in Albania

*Speeches delivered to the 2nd Plenum of the
Central Committee of the Party of Labour of
Albania in June 1967 by COMRADE ENVER
HOXHA and RAMIZ ALIA*



**Three women Partisan fighters in the National
Liberation War against the fascist invaders**

Publisher's Note

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Cover: The Heroine of the People, 17 year-old Shkurte Pal Vata, who sacrificed her life during the construction of the Rogozhina-Fier Railway.

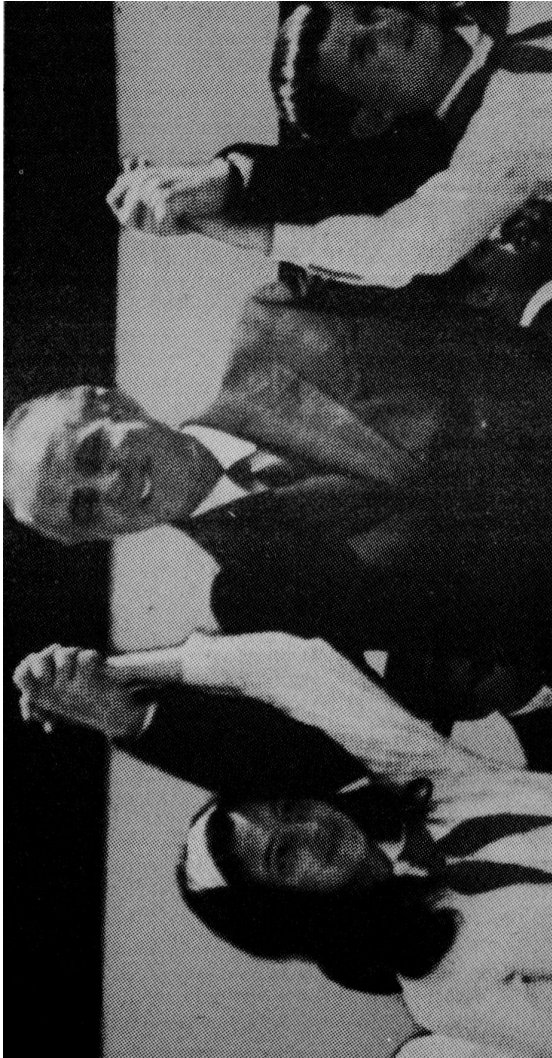
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Comrade Enver Hoxha with a group of young pioneers

ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM OF THE ALBANIAN WOMAN

*Speech by COMRADE ENVER HOXHA, First
Secretary of the Central Committee of the
Party of Labour of Albania*

Comrades,

In winding up the first item on our agenda I wish to express a few ideas on this problem.

The Party has continually attached major importance to the problem of women, this exceptionally great social problem with which the destiny of our people, socialism and communism and the future of our country are linked. The problems of women do not stand all by themselves, isolated from and unrelated to the other problems of society. They are not problems that can be solved easily or, much less, that can be ignored. The problem of women is not merely a problem of sentiments that can therefore be treated in a sentimental and romantic way. It is a great problem of life, of the dialectical materialist development of the history of mankind.

It is for this reason that Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and all their disciples have attached primary importance to the problem of women, to their liberation, emancipation and the formation of their personality in a free society without oppressors, without exploiters.

Far from ever neglecting or underrating

the problem of the Albanian woman, during all the days of its struggle and in every aspect of this struggle, the Party exercised its discretion in stressing, and not in a sentimental way, the decisive role of women, both in the struggle for liberation and in that of building socialism. Our Party did this with fully mature Marxist thought, and being well aware of the obstacles that lay in the way. At the same time, by advancing the unshaken principle that in the struggle to liberate the people from every kind of bondage, the emancipation of the Albanian woman was urgent and a condition of primary importance, it scored the major successes which we are multiplying and deepening with each passing day. That is why this special session of the plenum of the Central Committee devoted to the problems of the Albanian woman in our socialist regime assumes major significance.

Scrutinizing study of the social phenomena in their process of growth, the relations of people in production, the growth and application of the new ideas our Party inspires, the state of classes in our society at different stages, and the changes they undergo during this continuous process are of extraordinary importance to our Party. They confirm the accuracy of principles, enrich the theory of socialism with practice and afford a great opportunity to the Party to sum up and carry this summing up to the masses, thus creating new opportunities, new situations, new values which will ensure uninterrupted development and progress.

Socialism is the work of the Party and of the masses, therefore, Party directives cannot be made known and carried out unless the Party is familiar with and has prepared the ground where these directives are to take root and be transformed into objective reality. Correct application of the directives of the Party depends, first and foremost, on how correctly and thoroughly they are understood by the masses. Therefore, the masses should be able or be enabled, to understand them thoroughly. This depends on the level of the political, ideological and organizational work of the Party and in order that this work be done well, it is absolutely necessary to do as I said before: study social problems and know the terrain well.

I think this is the concern of all, and not of only a certain number of specialists in philosophy, in social problems, or in political economy, or even of only the writers, playwrights or artists. This is, first and foremost, a Party problem, a problem of a line of action. The work of the Party can make no headway if it is not dealt with, and as a consequence, no writers, scholars and artists can be inspired aright, delve deep into studies, or turn out works of socialist realism and of Marxist-Leninist science.

Therefore, we should tackle the social problems of the countryside and urban centres. Therefore, we should also tackle the specific problems of the youth, and in the same way we should deal with the major social problem of women and the family, which

we are taking up today at this plenum of the Central Committee.

Our proletarian revolution guided by our Marxist-Leninist Party had to overthrow, as it did, the old feudal and bourgeois system and had to defeat, as indeed it did beat, the attempts at fascisizing our country during the Italian fascist and German nazi occupation as well as the organs of their rule and their superstructure. Our proletarian revolution was bound to establish, as it did establish, develop and enrich, under the guidance of our Marxist-Leninist Party, the socialist system, the dictatorship of the proletariat and its new proletarian organs and build a genuine socialist superstructure based, inspired, guided and enriched by Marxist-Leninist theory and socialist practice.

It was within the framework of this great revolutionary upheaval, when the old world crumbled and the new, beautiful socialist world was set up on its ruins, that the emancipation of the Albanian women, making up one half of the population of our country and, of incalculable importance to the destiny of our country and of socialism, was effected.

Proletarian revolution accompanied by economic and social revolution, and by the breakup of the economic and political rule of the feudal bourgeoisie, created the true groundwork and necessary conditions for the liberation of the people from exploitation of man by man, and particularly, for the emancipation of Albanian women.

Our socialist society is in the process of

development. Great qualitative transformations are taking place among us through our people's revolution. These qualitative transformations lie in the materialist transformation of our society. They have created and are creating new social ideas and theories which come to grips with the old and replace them. The new ideas are a great force which represents the changes of the material life of the country and leads it forward to progress.

It is essential to explain and to have these new ideas understood, for our society cannot do without them. Our country stands in need of these ideas, for they mobilize and organize the masses against old, idealistic, mystic and bourgeois ideas and prejudices which the old society has left to us as our worst heritage.

The Party is opening up the way to the progressive forces of society, women being one of them. The Marxist-Leninist ideas of our Party reflect the objective need to further develop the material and moral life of our society. It is, therefore, essential to unfetter the Albanian woman from all shackles of the past, from every reactionary idea, opinion or prejudice, which have their roots in the mentality of the feudal and bourgeois society. Emancipation of the Albanian woman should be guided by the Marxist-Leninist theory of the economic development of society, by the laws of development of production. Looking through this prism one can see how urgent it is that women should take part in production and how speedily and correctly the Party should build its new relations of production. The eco-

conomic development of socialism is in battle with the moral and material backwardness of women. The law of materialist dialectics is in force here as in everything else.

The tasks, therefore, which the Party outlines concerning the problem of women, coincide in full with the material conditions of the country set up by the Party.

The establishment of the people's common socialist property in industry and in agriculture in place of that of the feudal-bourgeoisie, and the appropriate revolutionary laws that govern, enrich and consolidate it in the interest of all the labouring masses, brought about a gradual progressive change in the minds of men regarding the concept of property, from that of private to that of common property.

Thus, the old bourgeois idealist concepts of these fundamental problems of our economic and social life began to change as a result of the intensive ideological and political work of enlightenment carried out by the Party, always in an organized fashion, and based on these material changes. It is clear, of course, that this change has not been completed, that it is underway and will always be in the dialectical process. The old which is in the process of dying will always be in battle and at loggerheads with the new which is being born, reborn and consolidated. We have still a great deal to do and a hard battle to fight, against reactionary idealist concepts which lurk in the minds, consciousness and feelings of men, which are manifested in life, and act at times with virulence, at other times less so,

but which always lie in the way of progress. Marx has written that all the prejudices of the dead weigh heavily on those who live. Such is the force of the past.

Herein lies the importance the Party is attaching to the problem of further revolutionizing itself and the people as a whole, for it is in this way that we shall have a deeper insight into the transformations of the material and spiritual life we are bringing about; we shall understand more correctly and more thoroughly the laws that govern these economic and social transformations in socialism; we will be able to understand and master them better and more efficiently, in order to build socialism more quickly and on steel-like foundations, and to pass over to communism.

Excuse me for deviating a little from the topic we are dealing with, but I am doing this exactly to come to the point under discussion. The capitalist system of the sacredness of private property, of the exploitation of man by man, of the economic and spiritual enslavement of man, has weighed heavily on all, but it has weighed in a more barbarous way on women. Women were the first slaves even before slavery in the history of mankind. During the whole of this historic period, not to speak of prehistoric times, whether in the period of the Hellenic civilization or of the Roman epoch, whether in the Middle Ages or the epoch of the Renaissance, whether in modern times or the contemporary bourgeois so-called refined civilization; women have been and are the most downtrodden, exploited and

spurned human beings in all respects. Laws, customs, religion and the masculine sex have kept them oppressed, have kept them underfoot.

“The first antagonism which appears in history,” says Engels, **“coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamian marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male.”**¹

“I found woman more bitter than death” reads *Ecclesiastes*, while St. John Chrysostom holds another opinion about women. He says: “Among wild beasts you can hardly find one that is more harmful than woman.”

St. Thomas Aquinas, a theologian and philosopher who was one of the most prominent philosophers of medieval obscurantism, held the opinion and prophesized that “the destiny of woman is to live under orders of men,” and, finally, to wind up these barbarous quotations “Mother Nature has made women to be our slaves” — Napoleon has said.

Such were the views of the Church and of the bourgeoisie on women. The bourgeoisie have retained these views right to this day. In Europe and throughout the world there are innumerable philosophers and men of letters who have made a myth of the superiority of men over women. For them, man is strong, courageous and a fighter, therefore, he is wiser and predestinated to dominate, to dir-

¹ Frederick Engels, “Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,” *Marx-Engels Selected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970, p. 495.

ect, whereas woman, on her part, is by nature weak, defenceless and timid, therefore she must be ruled and directed. Bourgeois theoreticians like Nietzsche and Freud uphold the theory that the male is active while the female is passive. This reactionary, anti-biological theory leads — as it did — to nazism in politics and sadism in sexology.

Our mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers have languished under this harsh bondage, they have borne these corporeal and spiritual pangs on their own sore shoulders. Now, when the revolution has triumphed, when socialism is being successfully built in our country, the Party sets forth for us the complete and final liberation of women from the fetters of the bitter past as a major task, one of the greatest tasks. It sets forth for us the complete emancipation of women.

Marxism teaches us that participation in production and deliverance from capitalist exploitation are two phases of the emancipation of women. Through war and revolution, our Party, which pursues and carries out faithfully the principles of Marxism-Leninism, liberated the people and particularly the women from capitalist exploitation and led them to production.

We can say, therefore, that by completing these two phases, by getting rid of capitalist exploitation and by intensifying participation in production, we have attained major successes in emancipating the women; an emancipation which should be kept and carried further ahead. In addition to their participation in the

very fruitful work of production, the women, this colossal progressive force, are participating in the great educational and cultural revolution. They are breaking through all barricades, surmounting every obstacle and prejudice, showing in all domains their creative, physical and mental force, their spiritual and moral integrity. They are and will be taking part more and more in running the affairs of the country, in managing industry, agriculture, education and culture. Lenin's directive that **"every housewife should be taught to run the state"** is being successfully carried out every day by our Party.

Therefore, the Party should thoroughly understand that the question of the mass participation of women in production, in running the economy and affairs of the state, in acquiring learning and culture, is not only a progressive economic factor of importance, but because of its being so, it is, at the same time, of major ideological, political and cultural importance, and that nothing can be done right and properly without the enlightenment of women and their active and conscientious participation.

It should be brought home to everyone that the emancipation of women, the support and assistance we should give them to occupy the place they deserve in socialist society should not be considered as a boon, but as an imperative obligation. It should not be considered as a gesture of pity of the so-called strong sex towards the so-called weak sex, or as some kind of concession, as some sort of

leeway to women from men who are allegedly endowed with superior intellectual power and physical strength and predisposed to lead and command. People, therefore, should carry out this teaching of the Party not only because the Party said so, but should delve deep into the ideological, political and economic reasons that prompted the Party to insist on this major problem.

I re-emphasize these things because many Party comrades understand them only superficially, certain others do not understand them at all or take them amiss. Let us take the problem of the admittance of women comrades into the Party. Some progress has been made and is being made in this direction, but there still exists some lack of understanding of its principled importance. The fact is that the overwhelming majority of Party members are men. Why is this so, particularly after liberation? I think that this is due to the imperfect ideological understanding by some Party members of the role of women in revolution, and in socialism; to the backward, feudal and bourgeois views lurking in the minds of communists as to the so-called superiority of the physical and mental capacity of men over women; to the views I pointed out before, which are, of course, attenuated, but which still exist, that men are to run the state affairs and that they should therefore be in the leadership of the Party. We should fight and uproot these erroneous views. We should understand their danger and place the admittance of women into the Party on an absolutely equal

level with that of men. Admittance into the Party for both sexes should be guided by the same conditions and rules of the Constitution of the Party, but first of all by the ideology of the Party which runs through every word of its Constitution and its activity. This is the crux of the problem.

Women should actually feel they are members of their own Party, that they direct their own Party, that they take active part in working out the laws of their own Party, and that they carry out and supervise them by their active revolutionary participation in life, in production and in management.

The great goal of the complete emancipation of women cannot be thought of, and cannot be reached, without the active participation of the women themselves in it, not only in practice in carrying it through, but also in directing this great work. This makes up one of the decisive factors of forming and tempering the new socialist man, one of the most appropriate conditions for the coming generations which will perpetuate socialism and communism.

Let us take advantage of this very fruitful discussion we are taking part in at this session of the Central Committee on this so important a problem, in order to delve deeper into it and make this problem clearer from the philosophical and ideological point of view based on the immortal teachings of our classics and on the objective reality of our own society.

One of the major scientific deductions of Marxism-Leninism is that which says the

“bondage of women is connected with the appearance of private property.” This major theoretic deduction is found in Engels’ famous book: *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. In order to properly understand these problems from the Marxist-Leninist theoretic and philosophical point of view, in order to properly understand the dialectic-materialist development of our Albanian society in the past and at present, in order to grasp and interpret aright the phenomena of life developing at full speed before our own eyes, and to define the line that should be pursued to build the new life in a correct Marxist-Leninist way, every communist should strive to study this book, or its selected parts, which, if not in existence should be prepared in an abridged form so that they may be understood by all.

If we scrutinize Father Shtjefen Gjeçov’s work *The Canon of Lek Dukagjini*¹ and, especially, the chapters on property, on inheritance, on the family, on women and marriage, we will see Engels’ great and ingenious truth at work in our own reality today. We will see how private ownership holds woman under unbearable bondage, how she is in reality turned into a simple commodity that can be

¹ Medieval norms, customs and habits, formerly widespread in the Mirdita and Dukagjin regions of Northern Albania cropping up here and there even today. These were summed up by Father Shtjefen Gjeçov in his treatise *The Canon of Lek Dukagjini*. Religion wielded this canon to safeguard its exploiting order and to keep the inhabitants of these regions in the dark of ignorance.

bought and sold. In it we actually read:

“The husband is entitled to beat his wife, to tie her up in chains when she defies his word and orders... Whereas the father is entitled to beat, tie in chains, imprison and kill his son or daughters... The wife is obliged to kneel in obeisance to her husband... A woman’s blood costs 1,500 grosh... etc.”

We are, of course, centuries apart from the integral application of *The Canon of Lek Dukagjini*. We are, likewise, far from the period in which Father Shtjefen Gjeçov compiled it. But this does not mean that its spirit and the routine in carrying out many of these customs that we meet with, especially in the social life of our mountain regions, do not exist to some extent, although of course not so acutely as before.

The trouble with our Party in the North and with our theoretical and social students in general is that they have not turned their attention as they should to the social reality and its development in these regions, nor have they taken the trouble to study Father Shtjefen Gjeçov’s work which is of historical and social significance. A study of this work should help our scholars to make a good diagnosis of the present situation in social and private relations in the North in order to detect the upheavals and evolutions and to reinforce our ideological, organizational and propaganda work.

Colossal changes have been made in the social life of our country, in the social and private relations of the people, as well as in their

philosophical world outlook, not only in comparison to Gjeçov's Canon, or to Zogu's feudal-bourgeois regime, but also to our own civil code drawn up during our regime. In the light of the great revolutionary transformation that our Party is bringing about, it is incumbent upon us to re-examine our civil code, many chapters and articles of which may have become obsolete.

Let us take, precisely, the question of private property, the source of so many evils. The Party is in the process of upsetting it, uprooting it materially and theoretically; it is no longer the material basis of our socialist regime which is based on collective ownership of the means of production. In line with our materialist philosophy we are now also in the process of overturning, together with private property, its superstructure and philosophy, and replacing them with our own superstructure, with our own materialist philosophy. Herein lies especially the mainspring of our success in the problem which interests us today at this Plenum, in the problem of the complete emancipation of women.

But we should not consider the question of the elimination of private property as totally achieved physically and much less ideologically. Marx says:

“Private property has made us so foolish and so narrowminded that a thing is not ours if we do not possess it, i.e. if it does not exist for us as capital, if we do not possess it in an immediate way, if we do not eat, drink and do not wear it, if we do not live in it, etc., in short,

if we do not consume it!”

And Marx continues:

“Therefore all physical and moral sentiments were replaced, through simple deterioration of all these sentiments, by the sense of ownership.”¹

It is precisely this terrain which is occupied by the sense and sentiments of private, personal ownership which Marx refers to, that we have not yet tidied up, a piece of work which demands big, long, ideological and political efforts on our part in order to achieve the material reforms in the physical transformations of ownership and of many other matters.

Guided by our Party, our proletarian revolution has created all the material and moral conditions to clean up remnants of idealist ideology from the consciousness of the people through a constant dialectical revolutionary conflict of opposites. We are duty bound to always carry the revolution ahead, to inculcate the new world outlook into the heads and hearts of people who should live and think like revolutionaries, who should no longer explain the phenomena of life, develop and settle relations among themselves, and between them and society, according to the idealist, religious, bourgeois world outlook, but according to the materialist, atheist and socialist world outlook. In this field, in addition to the material development of our socialist society, the Party will, for a long time, wage a major struggle to achieve the moral development of

¹ Karl Marx, *Political Economy and Philosophy* (1844 Manuscript).

our society in the Marxist-Leninist way.

Our Party has not left, nor will it ever leave, the Marxist-Leninist education of our people to spontaneity. But this requires a strengthening and intensification of the organization of education of the Party and of the masses.

Everything we construct, transform, create, is done according to Marxist-Leninist laws; nothing is done contrary to the objective laws of nature and of proletarian ethics. But everything is to be explained and understood, for it has the old side which crumbles down, which dies and the newer side which is born and waxes strong. The old dies with much ado and because of this, the new, too, is born through struggle and battle. In order that the new may grow up quickly and be of sound health, we, of course, should have a good grasp of the laws of development and the laws, so to speak, of hindrance, for only then can education be considered complete.

In the case of the problems of women, which the Report of the Political Bureau submitted by Comrade Ramiz Alia and the good discussions of the comrades pointed out very well, we should also take special material steps of an organizational nature along the lines pointed out by the Report which, apart from seeming special, are part and parcel of the development and consolidation of the general socialist economy, since they set up further conditions for a broader participation of women in production, make their burden of household chores lighter and are no less effective in other fields. On the contrary,

they help to fight petty bourgeois ideological remnants which still keep women in a kind of bondage or status of inferiority to men.

If we study carefully the development of our society, and not just our society either, we will find that this idea is deeply rooted, for the women themselves consider their inferiority to men as something right, as something entirely natural. This custom is the result of the social conditions under which our mothers and sisters have lived their physical and mental lives. This custom we should strive to do away with since we are also changing our social conditions. These social changes which our proletarian revolution is bringing about are intended to do away with the antagonisms between the two sexes, that is, the submission of women to men, as well.

The antagonism between the sexes, Engels teaches us, may be considered as the first manifestation of the class struggle in the history of mankind.

Proletarian revolution does away with this antagonism between sexes, just as it does away with capitalism, the bourgeoisie and its ideology, just as it does away with exploitation of man by man and leads mankind to a classless society. It does this by liberating the woman from everything that hinders her freedom and her parity with man.

Marriage, this very important event in the life of man, is connected with many backward rituals which, even if not existent today in so acute a form as formerly, still contain very burdensome traditions which are still preserved.

Engels says that marriage based on love is moral and it is only where love exists that marriage should exist too.

In our socialist society we should be guided by this principle with regard to this major event in the life of man.

It must be acknowledged that there exist erroneous and backward ideas about love among us. Love is considered as something shameful, impermissible and abnormal. Very often, even if not entirely, love is stigmatized as something immoral which leads women to prostitution and men to degeneracy. These are erroneous concepts. If there is something which has nothing to do with prostitution, that thing is genuine love. There is no love in prostitution.

Fortunately enough, our country has not been afflicted with the terrible plague of prostitution which we should fight to the minutest manifestation of the trend, a trend which could come about as a result of a wrong anti-Marxist-Leninist approach to the question of love and marriage, of our failure to fight, in practice and theory, the bourgeois and idealist views on this matter.

Our country has been plagued with marriages by violence, with the enslaving, polygamous and torturing canons of the "Sharia"¹; it has been plagued with the laws of

¹ The "Sharia" is a special collection of religious and judicial norms of the Muslim feudal law, compiled in the Near East during the period from the 7th to the 12th century. "Sharia" sanctions the power of the rich over the poor and encourages

Catholicism, of the Vatican which did not only enslave and degrade women but also spiritually tortured them savagely. The segregation of the state from the Church, the enactment and application of the civil code, the national-liberation War and socialist construction have set down as a law for our country, the non-recognition of any other marriage than that concluded with the consent, freely expressed, of both the bride and groom-to-be before the state registrar, doing away with the social practices of the past for good. But in spite of this reality, and although many prejudices have been removed in practice, we would be erring if we thought that we have set everything right in these problems and that we need not worry any longer and can leave it to time to correct deficiencies. We should strive to make efficient use of time in creating socialist customs and the necessary public opinion for the present and future generations.

Despite socialist construction, despite the great economic, political, ideological, cultural and other advancements made in our country, there still exist among the people and even the communists not only erroneous patriarchal opinions but the barbarous practice of betrothals in the cradle, and the sale of girls in marriage is still in force. It was this that awakened us to the fact that we should no longer neglect such important and, at the same time,

open hostility towards non-Muslims. It imposed barbarous laws on women. The norms of the “Sharia” were carried over and applied in Albania during the five centuries long Ottoman occupation.

harmful questions.

Marriage is an act, a social fact, and should not be considered as a philosophic conception. But this social fact has its own philosophy both in our society as well as in that of the bourgeoisie.

For the bourgeoisie, marriage has become a market where a man and a woman are mutually sold. These marriages are based not on pure sentiments but on the savage sentiments of ownership and private interest, on sentiments of riches, inheritance, prostitution of man and woman. In capitalist bourgeois regimes, appearances of freedom are a fraud, modernizing airs intended to show what actually does not exist at all, namely, the freedom of the individual, the liberation of woman from capitalist enslavement and pure sentiments. In countries where capital rules, these social phenomena are to be found only within the ranks of the proletariat.

Here, where the emancipation of woman is guaranteed, conditions have been achieved to contract marriages based on love. We are crossing over, as Engels has put it, **“from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom.”**

Pure sentiments should be further worked out and tempered by our Marxist-Leninist ideology. We have a lot to do in this direction. What does Engels tell us? Referring to the repercussions of the communist regime on the family, he says that the communist regime **“will transform the relations between sexes into entirely personal relations... This will be achieved when private property is abolished,**

when social education is provided for children, destroying in this way, the two fundamental bases of the present (bourgeois) marriages, that is, the submission of the wife to the husband and that of children to their parents.”¹

This is a major working program for us. We have to give a lot of thought to these teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

Is it not one of the most important tasks for us to keep reviewing with a Marxist-Leninist eye the nature of parent-child relations, to place these relations on the right road and to cleanse them of everything that is outworn, idealistic and petty bourgeois? Of course it is.

Very often in these broad and delicate matters, the pure mutual sentiments of parents’ just advice to the children and vice versa, are confounded with the bourgeois and petty bourgeois concepts of ownership and of idealist views connected with it.

I am not referring here to the pure sentiments of love of parents towards their children, to the care they take to bring them up and educate them, nor to the deep love, respect and gratitude children should cherish towards their parents through all their living days. Far from abolishing them, Marxism-Leninism tempers, consolidates and develops them into a grand harmony not confined to the family alone, but extending throughout society. I refer here to those manifestations and trends in our social relations which are created and

¹ Frederick Engels, “The Principles of Communism,” *Collected Works of K. Marx and F. Engels*, Volume IV, pp. 336-337.

develop seemingly as a “normal process,” but which, under the pressure of custom and faulty opinions, turn gradually into barbarous underage marriages, selling of girls in wedlock, beating and maltreating women and children. All this reflects the laws and philosophic views of bourgeois society in practice and in theory, in production and ideology.

Let us take the manifestation of a custom, of a sentiment which has prevailed and prevails still among husbands. We do not think much of it now, but tens of years ago many husbands and even now some husbands divorce their wives because of this. I refer to the birth of a boy or girl to the family. This is a biological law of nature which neither the will of parents nor science itself can change. However, in this matter there exist striking preferences and, at times, very dangerous and grave consequences. These preferences are for boys. There is great jubilation when a son is born to the family. It is not so when a daughter is born and it often becomes a cause for lamentation. A distinction is thus drawn between the sexes, an antagonism is formed right at the time of birth and this antagonism is nourished by the parents themselves.

There is something in this which works against the natural feelings of parents towards their offspring of whichever sex they may be. But what can this something be which is so deeply rooted in the subconscious of people as to make them have such flagrant preferences among their own offspring? This something is none other than the sense of property which

has also forged the nature of parent-child relations and the bourgeois and petty bourgeois prerogatives of parents towards their children.

The bourgeois world outlook based on private property carries with it also the idea of maintaining the rule of parents over their children, of depriving the latter of their rights and freedom. Thus, there is no freedom beyond the limits of private property interests and of inheritance. Man is the guardian of these interests and, consequently, the son not the daughter. This gives rise to the idea that the son is "the pillar of the household" while the daughter is "somebody else's," therefore, she can also be sold off, liable to betrothal at any age, so long as this "income" contributes to strengthening the private property of parents economically or raising its standing in society.

Economic interest gives birth to the "superiority" of the male over the female, to the patriarchal authority over children, to loveless but intricate marriages authorized by parents and impermissible without their consent. This leads towards placing sentiments at the service of private property instead of abolishing private property, a course which the Party follows with determination.

Establishing, therefore, correct relations in a Marxist-Leninist way between parents and children gives a full and great meaning to the unity of the family based on noble feelings and full liberty. The husband can no longer claim: "My wife must kneel obeisance to me, for I have bought her" or "a woman must work harder than a donkey for the latter feeds on

grass while a woman lives on bread.”

Our Party should engage in intensive ideological work to temper the Albanian family which can only advance when correct, equal relations blended with higher sentiments are established, exempt from any submission and survivals of private property and its ideas, for we must acknowledge that these alien concepts exist in our heads.

Among some intellectuals there exists the idea of not marrying enlightened women even if their origin or status is that of a worker, an idea prompted by petty bourgeois views, to dominate them, to be superior towards them, to keep them within the four walls of the house for household chores. There is no gainsaying the fact that such alien views to our society should be combatted.

At times there is no harmony in the family. I will not analyse all the causes but, if I am not mistaken, the real reasons lie only in the interests of ownership. Their source lies there, regardless of whatever garb they have on. The people express this in these terms, “poverty begets discord.” From the viewpoint of our philosophy, this means that the poor do not quarrel among themselves but raise their voice against those who possess economic power and political power, so to speak.

In the family there exist disagreements and, at times, open conflicts between the young bride and her husband’s parents. We might say that both are to blame. Possibly so, but we should not forget that there exists (especially among the generation of our par-

ents and even among ourselves, however less acute than among the former) the tendency of parents to think that their son and his bride should obey them in everything. They have not cleansed their world outlook and this is understandable. Having been brought up in a patriarchal bourgeois society, they find it hard to fully understand that the bride is not bound to obey them for everything. They view everything the bride, an alien come to their family, does with scepticism lest she weans their son, "the pillar of the household," away from the authority of his parents and thereby affect their personal economic interests. This happens somewhat oftener when our elderly parents have no other economic support than the income of their son. They often quarrel also with their son when they see that he loves his wife. This gives rise to jealousy, bickerings and, at times, to lack of good feelings between the bride and her husband's parents.

The bride, on her part, entertains just aspirations to free herself, to win her position in the family, not only from her husband's parents but from her husband as well. The mother-in-law is well aware of the young bride's inclinations for, in her day, she had the same instinctive inclinations but, since she failed in her legitimate attempts, she does not consider it right that her son's bride should win.

Herein lies the contradiction which is up to us, old and young, to do away with. But I think that the heaviest burden and the greatest responsibility lies primarily on us, the younger ones. The Party has imbued us with the ideol-

ogy of the class which should render us more understanding and more patient towards our parents, towards whom some people and even communists, posing as people of "modern principles," err at times and leave their parents at the crossroads even if they bear part of the blame. This is not right; this is neither Marxist nor humane. We should understand our parents, we should understand the time when they have lived and help them keep pace with our new times. The Party builds up brilliant times.

The coming generations of our country will be fully freed from many prejudices and survivals of old precepts under which our own generations have languished. Our daughters, the worthy mothers and citizens of the future, will no longer feel under constraint as our mothers did, they will no longer suffer from ignorance and will no longer depend economically on their husbands, sons or daughters as our mothers do. Their complete economic independence and education, socialist culture, the merited place the Albanian woman will occupy in production, in the state and in society will contribute to a large extent to the perfection of this new world the Party is forging, in which the material and spiritual life will flourish as never before, in which the exalted sentiments of man for man, of husband and wife towards each other, of parents towards their children and vice-versa will find full, natural expression totally freed from backward, idealistic, religious, patriarchal and bourgeois survivals which still foster harmful

and restrictive opinions among us.

We are well aware that all this great work that lies ahead for the Party to do will come up against all kinds of difficulties and will not be accomplished within a short period of time. This is the work of whole generations, but the course and method used by the Party to guide the coming generations along this road is of great importance. Each generation will accomplish its own task of development and perfection. To our own generation the Party assigned the task of laying the sound foundations and taking the brilliant road to socialism. The Party is wisely leading us with pluck and courage along this clear road. In a huge harmonious complexity and through great efforts characterized by a deep revolutionary spirit, all the masses of people are engaged in transforming the country, in transforming themselves, in strengthening the socialist economy, in developing culture and education, in further revolutionizing the new man of our country who, in battle with the old views, is being imbued with new ideals worthy of socialism. Along this brilliant complex course, which constitutes our proletarian revolution marching full speed ahead, we are fully convinced that the sooner, the better and the more fully cognizant of their role, their rights and their obligations the Albanian women become in our society, the greater will be the achievements of our revolution, the shorter will be the time limit within which that happy period will be reached, which the generations coming after our own will further build and embellish.

Our Party has considered and considers the great battle for the emancipation of women as part and parcel of revolution and socialist construction, as a “conditio sine qua non” to development and progress in genuine freedom and democracy. Our Party never loses sight of the teachings of Marx who regards the development of a given historical period as always determined by the degree of the progress of women towards freedom, the triumph of nature as manifested most clearly in the relations between husband and wife.

Thus, so long as there is no true freedom for women in the society of a country, there cannot be genuine freedom in that country.

In this major problem, our Party has not been content only with enacting laws on the equality of man and woman and then having these laws remain a dead letter, but it has applied, applies and is enforcing them more and more in practice since Lenin advises us: **“This equality of man and woman by law is not yet an equality in practice.”** And in the rapidly changing tableau of our socialist life, we see the truth of Lenin’s ingenious thesis for, in spite of laws we have enacted on this matter, we come up against many difficulties and obstacles and feel we need to take many further measures to finally reach our goal.

Our Party and people as a whole should in no way underrate the major role of women in life and in revolution. Therefore, open up all the portals of work, of learning, production and management to the women and girls, protecting them from sources of retrogression,

helping them to create their own personality on sound foundations, to acquire self-reliance and courage in everything. These are the monopoly of neither sex but are set up, earned and tempered in life, by work and study.

“Education, culture, civilization, freedom,” Lenin said, **“all these high-sounding words are accompanied in all the capitalist, bourgeois republics of the world with incredibly foul, disgustingly vile, bestially crude laws that make women unequal in marriage and divorce... that give privileges to the male and humiliate and degrade womankind.”**¹

Therefore, the emancipation of women in our country pursues neither the methods nor the aims which the bourgeois capitalist countries pursue. We should work for the emancipation of women at such a speed as to make up for lost time. The emancipation of Albanian women has nothing in common with that which goes by the name of “emancipation of the coquettes of the bourgeoisie.” We realize the emancipation of our women along the lines of proletarian revolution, through Marxist-Leninist spirit and the marvellous qualities of the women of Albania in history.

Despite social oppression and the state of ignorance in which they were kept (within the general ignorance in which foreign occupationists and the local feudal-bourgeoisie have kept our people), the role of Albanian women has not been slight and insignificant in con-

¹ V.I. Lenin, “Soviet Power and the Status of Women,” *Collected Works*, Volume 30, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 122.

solidating the Albanian family, in consolidating our nation, in safeguarding the traditions and virtues of the Albanian people.

“There has not been a single important movement for emancipation in the history of mankind,” Stalin has said, **“in which women have not closely participated...”**¹

Despite oppressive conditions, the Albanian women, particularly those of the countryside, have been an important factor of economic and social development. Consequently, a progressive factor of outstanding love of freedom and patriotic sentiments bound to the work and land made them skilful and wide-awake heroines indeed.

“But the present revolution,” Lenin has said, **“relies on the countryside, and therein lie its significance and strength. The experience of all liberation movements has shown that the success of a revolution depends on how much the women take part in it.”**²

When speaking of the liberation battles of the Albanian people in history one cannot separate from them for one moment the great struggle and resistance of the Albanian women side by side with their husbands, brothers and sons, both in the field of battle as well as through passive resistance against the enemies of our people and of our land. We

¹ J.V. Stalin, “Greetings to the First Congress of Highland Women,” *Works*, Volume 5, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953, p. 61.

² V.I. Lenin, “Speech at the First All-Russia Congress of Working Women, November 19, 1918,” *Collected Works*, Volume 28, 1965, p. 181.

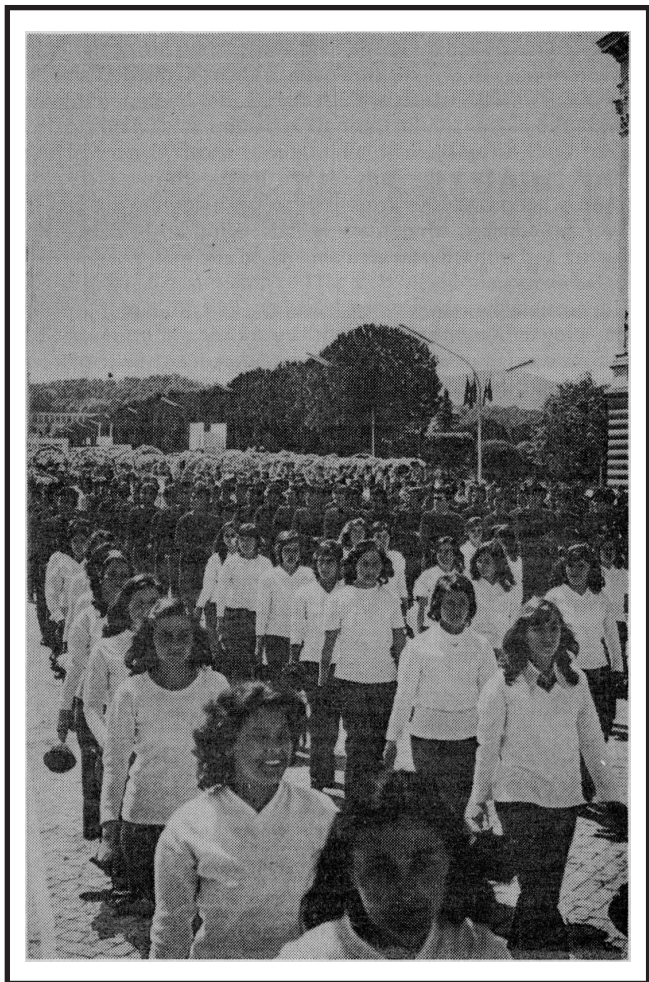
understand too well that under social conditions before liberation, the contribution of women was not made public, but this major contribution was substantial, incontestable, powerful, moral and material. During our national-liberation war this contribution and the participation of the Albanian women side by side with their husbands, sons and daughters was massive, powerful, and tangible in the countryside and in cities. Their strength, valour, wisdom and patriotism after liberation burst forth with a great force which kept flowing like a huge river.

What colossal changes have come about in the life of an Albanian woman, what great progress has been made in all the domains of activity of our new life which, with all due efforts, the Report submitted today to the plenum of the Central Committee was unable to do justice to! Only actual life with all its grandeur can give a real idea of what great vital force the Party set free through the emancipation of women, what progressive creative force lay hidden in this great part of our population, what marvels it is doing and will be doing hereafter and with what incalculable moral and material values it will enrich our socialist life!

The emancipation of women led by the Party in our country is far from being a "feminist movement" as in capitalist countries, but is the advancement of women to a higher level, it is the rise of women to the level of equal rights with men, it is a shoulder to shoulder march of men and women in a harmony of pur-

est and highest sentiments, aims and ideals of humanity, it is a march towards communism.

(Reprinted from the English edition of "Enver Hoxha Speeches, 1967-1968," originally published by the "November 8" Publishing House, Tirana, 1974. Minor grammatical changes have been made by the Norman Bethune Institute.)





**The dentist of the Zejmen agricultural cooperative in
the Lezha district**



**Asime Ymeri, worker in capacitors sector, chief of the
factory's trade union council**

ON THE FURTHER INTENSIFICATION OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN AND FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF THEIR ROLE IN SOCIALIST SOCIETY

*Report by RAMIZ ALIA, member of the
Political Bureau and Secretary
of the Central Committee of the
Party of Labour of Albania*

The historic decisions of the 5th Party Congress and the speech Comrade Enver Hoxha delivered on February 6, this year in Tirana furthered the revolutionary spirit which has characterized and characterizes our Party and people. Under the leadership of the Party and the inspiring influence of these, its important documents, our country has been gripped by self-denying work and great revolutionary enthusiasm to build socialism. In this atmosphere, new initiatives and profound revolutionary movements have sprung up and have been quickly embraced by urban and rural people of all walks of life in the field of developing production and, in particular, in the ideological field, both of which are transforming the conscience of people, their world outlook and concepts about many problems and manifestations of our social life.

Among revolutionary movements and in-

initiatives taken so far, that of achieving the complete emancipation of women is of foremost importance. It has now gripped all the people, men and women, old and young and has spread to all regions of the country. The mass popular movements for the emancipation of women, the numerous initiatives taken against medieval survivals and customs that degraded women, that curbed their personality and made their lives unbearable, should be viewed as a new outburst of revolutionary zeal of colossal importance.

The movement for the emancipation of women in our country, as part and parcel of socialist revolution as a whole, has now made major progress and marks a new qualitative leap forward. This leap is manifested not only in the unprecedented proportions and variety of forms it has taken but, more particularly, in the revolutionary ideological substance of the present movement for the emancipation of women. Its essence lies in the fact that the conservative, patriarchal, feudal and bourgeois concepts are being broken and revolutionary concepts about women and their role in society are gaining ground, and that the old ideology of the exploiting classes in this field are being smashed and socialist ideology is winning.

Now the struggle for the emancipation of women is being waged, and is every day more lively. It is not only being waged by activists, the most progressive sector of the population and of youth in particular, but also by social forces which, in spite of their incontestable

political loyalty to the Party and people's rule, have so far maintained an attitude of indifference, passivity and even conservatism towards the problem of women. This is borne out by the mass participation of men and women, especially of those advanced in age, at the numerous meetings and conventions that have taken place everywhere in the country, in the mountainous regions of Kukës and Shkodra, of Tirana and Mati, of Tropoja and Berati, of Peshkopia and Korça, of Mallakastrë and Lezha. At these meetings, the past was fearlessly criticized and condemned, the people pledged their word and vowed to do away with the survivals of customs and canons, of religious beliefs and all bizarre conduct that oppressed women and lowered their dignity. They resolved that they would see to it that the sacred law of the Party "to protect the rights of women and girls" is enforced to the letter.

Participating in the present movement for the emancipation of women are most of the women themselves and especially the young women, including the women and girls of those mountainous and other regions where women have had to bear most of the weight of backward customs, canons and religious prejudices. Women everywhere have risen and, giving vent to resentments accumulated in their hearts through centuries against every alien thing that lowered their dignity and denied them their rights, have embarked on a bitter struggle for their complete emancipation and to render a fuller contribution, side by side with their menfolk, to the prosperity and prog-

ress of our socialist homeland. Thousands of mountaineer young women and grown-ups are engaged in volunteer work at the mass actions of youth. Many others from cities and lowlands like those of Myzeqeja, Shkodra, Korça and Gjirokastra have expressed their wishes to go to mountain regions for the purpose of conveying to their mates the experience and revolutionary drive which characterizes them in their productive work, in their struggle for the emancipation of women and so on.

The main objective of the movement for the complete emancipation of women is to fight against the survivals of bourgeois, feudal and patriarchal ideology, to fight against old, outworn reactionary concepts on women which constitute one of the main obstacles to their complete emancipation and their real parity with their male partners. Of particular significance is the fact that this struggle and consequently, the movement for the complete emancipation of women, has begun to be conducted also in the family itself. A thorough knowledge of the ideological aspect of the movement for the complete emancipation of women and the growing power of seeing into the problem of the emancipation of women on the part of communists and of all workers, are the surest warranty that the tasks outlined by the Party with regard to the problem of women will be successfully carried out.

The qualitative leap which is now met in promoting the struggle for the emancipation of women is not casual. It has been prepared by the entire historical development of our

country under the leadership of our Party of Labour, by the persistent and systematic struggle and work done by our Party for more than 25 years in succession for the emancipation of women. It is the result of the correct Marxist-Leninist line which our Party has pursued and also continues to pursue towards the problem of women.

Right at the start of its very existence, our Party pointed out to the Albanian women, just as it pointed out to all the people, that the only way to their complete emancipation was for them to participate in the struggle waged by the people to put an end to all kinds of oppression and exploitation. Putting into practice this lesson of the Party and under the Party's guidance, the women of our country also took an active part in the liberation struggle, winning their equal rights with men by shedding their blood. The mass heroism of women in the struggle for liberation, the names of Zoja Çurre, Bule Naipi, Margarita Tutulani, Liri Gerro, Shejnaze Juka, Qeriba Deri, Floresha Myteveliu, Bukurie Bazo, Pinelopi Pirro and many other women comrades who laid down their lives on the field of battle will be honoured and remembered to the end of time not only for the great contribution they rendered to ensure the freedom of people and to lay the foundation of our people's rule, but also as outstanding pioneers and fighters for the emancipation of Albanian women.

Since liberation, good results have been attained in the struggle for the complete emancipation of women thanks to the persevering

efforts and concern of our Party and Comrade Enver Hoxha. In our socialist society women have not only been freed, like all our working people, from every class oppression and exploitation, but they have also won equal political rights and democratic freedoms with men, sanctioned in law by our people's power. They have won the right to elect and be elected to all organs of government, as high a level as the People's Assembly, to take part in running the affairs of the country, in filling all state and social functions. Women take an active part in all fields of social production in both rural and urban regions, enjoying equal pay for equal work. They have become a major force in the struggle to complete the construction of socialism. The Party and people's government have conferred the right, and created substantial opportunities, for women to acquire education and culture, to raise their technological and professional capabilities which have made them capable of working and playing a leading role in all the sectors of people's economy and culture. During the years of people's power a great change has been wrought in the world outlook of Albanian women; their political awareness and ideological level have been enhanced. They are now an important factor in promoting the process of revolutionizing the whole life of the country. All this has raised the personality of women in our society and made their role decisive in building socialism.

The magnitude of victories achieved by the Albanian women under conditions of people's rule is more clearly seen if we keep in sight

their deplorable state under former anti-popular regimes which Comrade Enver Hoxha has described in these terms: "All the people used to suffer under bondage in the past but the Albanian women suffered most. They had to bear the whole weight of feudal and bourgeois laws which made real slaves of them. The canons of the Sharia and of the Church, closely linked with the laws of the bourgeoisie, considered women as chattels, as things which could be bought and sold by males, mercilessly exploited, not daring to open their mouths and express their opinions and whose only function was to bear children and toil day and night as slaves. Just as the bourgeoisie had turned workers into their proletarians, so to had the old ruthless customs of the Sharia, of the Church, of feudalism and of the bourgeoisie turned the women into the proletarians of their husbands" (From Comrade Enver Hoxha's speech at the 4th Congress of the Women's Union of Albania, 1955).

These profound changes in the life of women of our country could be achieved within a period of little more than two decades only in a socialist country like ours, which is guided by a Marxist-Leninist Party like ours. The revolution which has been effected in the status of women, the radical changes that have come about in their life, are a clear manifestation of the grandeur of the profound revolutionary changes that have taken place in all fields in our country. **"The development of a given historical epoch,"** Marx says, **"can always be gauged by the degree of progress of**

the women towards freedom... the level of emancipation of women represents the natural measure of total emancipation.”¹

In spite of all these achievements, our Party is well aware that there is still a good deal to be done with regard to the problem of women. First of all, the whole of our society, including the women themselves, should get rid of all backward customs and mentalities alien to our proletarian ideology and ethics. These still exist among us and lower the personality of women, smother and prevent them from developing their capabilities and their active participation in building the new life. With a view to achieving the complete emancipation of women so that they may fully enjoy in life equal rights with men, that they may occupy the place they deserve in our society and may properly play their major role, it is necessary to solve a series of other matters which deal with raising their participation at work, their promotion to posts of responsibility, their greater activization in the political and social life of the country, their educational and cultural uplifting, their deliverance from household drudgery and the strengthening of family ties on a sound socialist basis.

To carry the struggle for the complete emancipation of women through to the end is one of the fundamental and vital problems of furthering our revolution and completing the construction of socialist society. In the April 29, 1967 Statement of the Central Commit-

¹ Marx, Engels, *Works*, Volume II, Russian edition, p. 224.

tee of the Party of Labour and the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Albania, we read: "No freedom of the people and of each individual, no progress of the country and achievement of our aims, can be thought of without the complete emancipation of women."

The problem of the complete emancipation of women is a broad and many-sided one requiring that a number of measures of a political, educational, economic and administrative character be taken for its solution. In this report, we shall dwell mainly on the ideological aspect of the problem of women because the solution of this problem involves a bitter ideological struggle between our Marxist-Leninist revolutionary socialist ideology and world outlook, and alien, conservative and reactionary, feudal-bourgeois and patriarchal ideology and world outlook.

This struggle is one of the most complicated lines of march of our ideological revolution. This revolution has now burst forth with vehemence and is being conducted as a frontal attack against all forms of the ideology of the exploiting classes — bourgeois and revisionist, petty-bourgeois and conservative, feudal and patriarchal — against all impurities ranging from bourgeois individualism, to the barbarous customs of enslavement and degradation of women. While always being on our guard against bourgeois and revisionist ideology which constitutes a danger not only to the present but also to the future, our Party also stresses the need for an intensive fight

against the most worn-out reactionary forms of the ideology of the exploiting classes which are equally dangerous since they smother the revolutionary drive of workers and hamper them from taking an active part in our struggle. It is within this framework that the fight is conducted for the all-round emancipation of women against old traditions, norms and customs which lie in the way of this emancipation.

It is part of the struggle to create the new man, who is guided in life by communist ethics and norms, one of the requirements of which is to consider women as comrades and fellow-fighters in building socialist society, a requirement that runs counter to the reactionary bourgeois ethics which legalizes the oppression and degradation of women just as it legalizes exploitation of the proletariat by capitalists. All denigrating concepts towards women, which appear in various measures also among communists and cadres, are offsprings and remnants of feudal, religious and bourgeois ideology, and therefore, alien and dangerous to our Marxist-Leninist ideology and to the cause of the socialist construction of our country. The struggle against them which lies at the root of the movements which have recently sprung up for the emancipation of women is a major and long one which the Party should lead at this stage of development of our society.

In pursuance of the decisions of our 5th Party Congress and Comrade Enver Hoxha's February 6 speech, this plenum of the Central

Committee of our Party should see to it that the flames of the revolutionary movements be kept ablaze, that the torch which has been kindled be taken to the most remote corners of the country so that it may not only burn up everything that lies in the way of the complete emancipation of women but also pave the way for the introduction of new norms, customs and traditions based on our communist ethics, so that the role and participation of women in the struggle to build socialism and communism may be further raised.

RAISE PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVITY OF WOMEN IN SOCIAL PRODUCTIVE LABOUR AND IN THE WHOLE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRY

Our Party has consistently clung and clings to the Marxist-Leninist view that the broad participation of women in productive work and in the whole political and social life of the country is decisive for the complete emancipation of women and the promotion of revolution and the socialist construction of our Fatherland.

1. On Participation of Women in Social Production

Work, social production, is the basis of human existence and social development. In social labour, women attain their economic independence and real parity with man. It is at work that they assert their personality and are trained as social activists, that they acquire

political awareness and revolutionary world outlook, that they get rid of backward prejudices and customs, that they are moulded and educated as fellow members of socialist society. "The work factor," Comrade Enver Hoxha says, "is a major factor for the economic, ideological and political emancipation of women. Toward this factor we should continually base our further efforts to do away with obstacles."

In line with this important principled thesis, our Party and government have always devoted special attention to the participation of women in production and have created all facilities for them to participate in an active way in social production.

After liberation this question was raised with special emphasis because of the utter economic and social backwardness our country had inherited from the past, when the participation of women in productive work was very limited and even unheard of in towns and cities. We had to start this work from almost nothing and overcome many obstacles and difficulties, both in creating the necessary material conditions for the women to take part in production, and also in eradicating fanaticism and old ideas, religious prejudices and backward customs which condemned women to stay within the four walls of their houses.

A radical change has been effected and a great victory has been won in this domain during the years of people's power: over 248,000 women and girls take part in production, and this is 42% of the total number of urban and rural workers. With rare exceptions, we find

the women engaged in all professions and branches of our people's economy while in some of these branches they make up the majority of workers; for instance, in the textile industry, 73%; in the food-processing industry, 52%; in public health and sanitation, 69.4%; and so on. This is a decisive step the Party has taken towards the emancipation of women, the importance of which is even more clearly seen when we draw a comparison with some other states which have not experienced the utter backwardness which characterized our country 20 to 25 years ago. For instance, according to official statistical returns, the number of women workers in Yugoslavia in 1964 made up 29.3% of all workers; in Bulgaria, 34%; in Poland, 36%; in Romania, 27.6%; in Italy, 22.9%; and in Greece, 27.8%.

Women in our country have now become such a great force that no five-year plan can be fulfilled, no major economic and social mass action can be undertaken without their participation. In no job do they do less than men and in many cases they work with a higher sense of duty, with more perseverance, with more attention to detail and with a higher sense of discipline.

In spite of this we should not arrive at the conclusion that the participation of women in productive work can now be considered as a problem which has been entirely solved in our country.

What problems emerge in this field? The first problem we have to tackle is that of getting all the women employed, for about 10%

of them (in cities about 17%) do not yet take part in social labour. This has negative consequences which are detrimental to the life of the women themselves and to socialist construction. The main difficulty here is not the lack of work fronts, as some people claim. Our country is being rapidly transformed. Vast construction works are being set up everywhere demanding manpower. Agriculture is another sector which stands in need of manpower. Education, culture and science are continually developing not only in depth but also in breadth. handicrafts and public services are expanding, therefore, there are work fronts in our country which stand always in need of workhands.

The question is that certain other reasons, mainly of a subjective character, reasons connected with certain wrong notions by many people have exerted their influence on preventing full participation of women at work. Thus, by viewing participation in work from a one-sided, individualistic angle, only dependent on the needs of the family budget, there are still women who do not take part in productive social labour. There are even cases, both in the countryside and in cities, when husbands, not standing in need of the income of their wives have withdrawn them from work and confined them to household chores. This, of course, smacks of proprietorship, of petty bourgeois egoism which considers women as the property of men and who should do only household chores. There are also cases when, because of alien concepts about work,

certain women in cities are shy of productive work where such work is needed, and run after "preferred jobs." In fact, this is an aristocratic attitude towards work incompatible with the ethical norms of our society. The Party should fight against the concepts of those who connect the participation of women in work with their financial needs and personal comfort, entirely ignoring the fact that the mission of women as members of society is primarily to participate in social productive labour for the socialist construction of the country.

These concepts do not only legalize the enslavement of women within the four walls of their homes but are also very detrimental to the general interest of socialist construction. It is a fact that the development of industry and construction in our cities has drawn and, in some cases, is still drawing workers away from the countryside. And this at a time when there are still unemployed city women and when the countryside itself stands in sore need of workhands. A tremendous gain would accrue to the national economy if these jobs were filled by city women.

The backward customs of leaving household chores to women and of not allowing them to take part in social production cause great damage to the development of socialist economy in the countryside as well. Apart from the fact that about eight percent of the women in the countryside do not participate at all in socialist production, the average number of workdays of women in all agricultural cooperatives is lower than that of men, while

in many cooperatives there are women who do not even reach the obligatory minimum number of workdays. Thus, the average number of workdays by women throughout the Republic last year was 195, while that of men, 294. About 1,200 women in the Tepelena district failed to reach the minimum number of workdays. The same thing happened in the Gramshi district. It goes without saying that the overall participation of women and an increase in the number of days they work, would go a long way to increasing social production and achieving their self-emancipation. In this respect, the Party organization and management of agricultural cooperatives in the countryside, particularly in mountainous regions, should see to it that the women should continually increase their participation in work all the year round.

The rapid development of productive forces in our socialist society has deepened, and widely specialized social division of labour has created new branches and sub-branches of the economy which create and can create many jobs for women. It must be said that, in spite of the achievements attained, certain erroneous views prevent women from embarking on a wider front of production. Thus, there prevails a striking conservatism among many cadres who hinder the participation of women in certain branches of social production, claiming that there are no suitable jobs in these branches for women. This, in fact, artificially narrows down the scope of work for women. In the electrical industry women

make up only 13% of the workers; in that of machine making, 19%; in building construction, 10%; and so on. Can it be that there are jobs for only so many women in these sectors? Experience shows the contrary to be true. Four hundred women and girls who passed through the school for training worker reserves and who took courses at the Tractor Machine Shop in Tirana are now employed as workers, producing as much and even more than the men. The fact that the number of women and girls employed at this plant makes up 30.7%, while at the Machine Shop, 54.6% of the total number of workers, refutes all pseudo-scientific "arguments" of these diehards and proves that women also can and should work on metal cutting machines, in repairing machinery and in every sector.

The view that jobs suitable for women are only those so-called "light" or "clean" ones is alien because of the very nature of our social order. This view endorses the opinion of many men and many women that a woman's profession is to sew, cook, do the cleaning, run crèches and so on.

The struggle of the Party against the conservative attitude of restricting jobs suitable to women in the various branches of the economy, culture and administration, should be one of the main directives to achieve the full participation of women in social labour. Conditions exist for the increased participation of women in the administration, just as they exist already in the sectors of public health, trade and education. But the better possibil-

ities, as we have said, exist in other sectors of the economy in which the participation of women is still on a limited scale.

While fighting against the conservative concepts and tendencies to draw a line between the professions of women and men, the Party should also fight the other erroneous tendency of assigning women to all kinds of jobs without taking into account their functions as mothers. Our socialist legislation protects women as workers and as mothers, therefore the organizations of the Party, of the trade unions and of the Union of Women should strive to protect women at work, and to create the most suitable conditions for the life and health of workers who are mothers.

It is clear that in order to draw all the women into productive social labour the organizations of the Party and those of the masses should not stand aloof and should not be content only with the general percentage of participation of women in work. They should firmly fight against all alien concepts which prevent women from taking an active part in work, detect where these concepts spring from and expose their reactionary bourgeois ideological nature. On the other hand, the problem of the participation of women in production should become the object of special study by the state and economic organs concerned. On the basis of this study, the concrete steps which should be taken both to broaden the participation of women in work in the existing sectors as well as to open up new fronts of work should be established. The experi-

ence gained during these recent months in the cities of Tirana, Shkodra and Durrës where, under the sponsorship of the organs of the Party and government, many new sectors of work have been created, clearly shows that there exist many opportunities for drawing as many women into work as possible.

An important problem that should draw the attention of the Party, of the trade unions and of the state and economic organs is that of assigning more and more women to qualified jobs and to posts of responsibility. The Party has continually pointed out that this is not a simple but a principled problem emanating from a correct understanding of the place and role of women in socialist society, from the ability of the women themselves, their loyalty to the cause of the Party and people, qualities which are by no means less prevalent in women than in men.

The Party and state organs have continually worked in this direction and the results are good, bearing no comparison with the past. In centres of work and production there are thousands of highly qualified women employed as directors of factories and combines, as brigade leaders and managers of agricultural cooperatives, and so on. Following the 5th Party Congress and Comrade Enver Hoxha's February 6 speech of this year, other special steps have been taken in Gjirokastra, Shkodra, Tirana, Burrel and elsewhere, both to raise the qualification of women as well as to promote them to posts of responsibility. Nevertheless, the situation in this direction

cannot be considered satisfactory.

It is a fact that the overwhelming majority of women engage in simple unskilled labour. This tendency prevails both in the countryside and in cities, both in economic enterprises and in the offices of the administration. Even in those branches of the economy where participation of women is highest, as for instance, in the light industries such as food-processing, in the woodworking and paper industries, etc., the jobs requiring high or medium qualification are occupied by men. The job of assistant manager in the textile industry, that of vacuum operator or presser in the food-processing industry, of superintendent of machinery and technology in the woodworking and paper industries, have been monopolized by men, although the possibilities exist for the jobs to be handled by women. Still worse is the situation with regard to promoting women to posts of responsibility. The number of women and girls in charge of brigades, of departments in factories, schools and other institutions, not to mention higher posts, is still quite small. Even in those sectors where the overwhelming majority of workers are women and girls, the posts of qualified work and responsibility are occupied by men. Thus, for instance, in the field of public health and sanitation, in which women make up about 69.4% of the total number of workers, of the 65 directors and assistant-directors of hospitals, only two are women. In the sector of trade where women occupy 50.1% of the total number of workers, of the 207 directors and assistant directors,

only 13 are women. In the sector of education and culture, of the 325 workers of the ministry and regional sections of education only 26 are women.

Why are the Party organizations and state and economic organs both at the centre and at the grassroots so hesitant in assigning women to qualified work and to posts of responsibility?

There is no doubt that one of the reasons is the low technological and educational level of the women themselves. We will take this up in more detail later on. But this is neither the only nor the principal reason. Teachers and physicians, for instance, possess both vocational training and the necessary cultural level, at least equal to that of men, and yet they are not appointed directors of schools or medical institutions, functionaries of responsibility in districts or at the centre. These posts are preferably given to men. It is clear that the main obstacle to turning over qualified jobs to women or promoting them to posts of responsibility lies in "blemishes" inherited from the past; lies in the conservative mentalities of our leading comrades who belittle women and who lack confidence in their efforts and capabilities. This is fundamental. Others, like the women's own hesitancy, the tendency of some of them to shirk responsible jobs and to prefer simple ones, etc. are of secondary importance, and claims that "women are overburdened with household chores" and should, therefore, not be assigned to leading posts, and so on, are unfounded.

Party committees, grassroot organizations, state organs, and the comrades in charge of them should study this problem seriously, should repudiate every alien idea, should look ahead so that a turning point can be reached within a short time in accordance with the wishes of the Party to assign women to jobs for which they are suited. On the other hand, one should not lose sight of the negative experience of the past when women comrades promoted to positions of responsibility were not given any aid, technical or educational, when they were left to manage for themselves under the pressure of a conservative environment, especially in the countryside. Instead of the women being seriously helped to overcome initial handicaps and to carry out their responsible jobs, they were charged with being incapable of doing the work, and later dismissed from the jobs. An end should be put to such impermissible practice. The Party should continually strive not only to promote women to posts of responsibility but to see to it that they accomplish their jobs well and always march ahead.

2. On Participation of Women in the Political and Social Life of the Country

The broad and effective participation of women in political and social life, in conducting class struggle, in directing the affairs of our state and society is the other decisive aspect for the complete emancipation of women, for it is a major school of the revolutionary education of women which awakens

their ideological and political consciousness, making them aware of their great and decisive role in society, giving them a chance to get a thorough knowledge of the line of the Party, imbuing them with the revolutionary ideals of the Party, making them active fighters for their rights. In line with the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, our Party has always attached importance to drawing women into the political and social life of our country, considering this as one of the decisive conditions both in the struggle for liberation as well as in socialist construction. J.V. Stalin has said: **“Women toilers — working women and peasant women — are a vast reserve of the working class. This reserve constitutes a good half of the population. The side that it takes — for or against the working class — will determine the fate of the proletarian movement, the victory or defeat of the proletarian revolution, the victory or defeat of the proletarian power.”**¹

The women of our country are closely bound to the Party. In the Party they see their salvation from age-old and manifold bondage; in the Party they see the mainspring of a free and happy life for themselves and their children. Organized in the ranks of their organization, the Women's Union of Albania, or taking part as outstanding activists in the ranks of the Labour Youth Union, the trade unions or the Democratic Front, the women of Albania strive with courage to build our socialist country and make it prosper. Participation of

¹ J.V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Volume 7, Moscow, 1954, p. 48.

women in the whole political and social life of the country is today very broad and active: 40 women are representatives at the People's Assembly; 10,878 have been elected to people's councils; 1,168 to people's tribunals; 30,088 women and young women take part in leading forums of mass organizations; over 8,280 women are members of our Party of Labour; 300,000 women are members of the Women's Union of Albania; and about 82,000 young women of the Labour Youth Union of Albania.

There is no major Party or state problem in which women do not have their say. They took an active part in deliberations and drawing up the 4th Five-Year Plan. They have rendered a valuable contribution in the battle against bureaucratic manifestations and aberrations which our Party has embarked on with courage. They have put their heart and soul into the major battle our country is engaged in; to uproot feudal and bourgeois ideology. They are working and striving like revolutionaries in all fields of socialist construction. The large-scale activation of women in all the revolutionary movements that have burst forth like a volcano in our country is vivid proof of the enhancement of the political awareness of the women masses and a factor of primary importance in promoting these movements.

Love of country, of the Party and of socialism has been and is a distinctive feature of the Albanian women. They have always upheld and have courageously fought for the line of our Party. They have shown themselves to

be resolute fighters in the struggle against the imperialists, against the Khrushchevite and Titoite revisionists, against the defectors and against all enemies of our country. The question of defending the freedom and independence of our country has become the most dearly cherished cause of every woman.

Elections were held a few days ago to the organs of local administration and to people's tribunals. The fact that thousands of women were unanimously nominated and elected as people's representatives to people's councils and as judges, representing 36.17% of all elected representatives and 36% of the judges, bespeaks not only the sympathy and confidence these activists have won among the labouring masses but it also shows the degree of the active participation of women in the political life of the country.

The great achievements attained in drawing women into the political and social life of the country bear no comparison with the past when women were kept altogether out of every political and social activity. This shows that, under conditions of proletarian dictatorship, the Party and people's regime have raised the role of women to a level hitherto unknown, unreached by even the so-called bourgeois democratic countries.

But while judging the role of women as one of the most revolutionary forces of our society, the Party lays down the task of urging the women to take a more active part in all fields of political and social life of the country. We must not lose sight of the fact that in the mat-

ter of urging women to take a more active part in political and social activities we have many flaws and deficiencies which become more apparent now when we are waging a campaign to further revolutionize the whole life of the country; when we are further deepening our revolution.

How can one speak of the emancipation of women and of urging them to take an active part in the political and social life of the country when some bigoted men, particularly in the countryside, forbid women to take part in meetings and conferences, deny them the right to speak and pretend that they alone represent the village or work centre? It is symptomatic that many young women members of the Labour Youth Union of Albania are very active and revolutionary but, once they are married, they turn into passive members of the organization, they cease to show the same verve and often are not even allowed by their husbands or their husbands' families to take part in the meetings of their organization. An equally disquieting fact too is the attitude of parents or husbands who, falling victims to bigotry and gossip, do not allow their daughters or wives to participate in sports and physical culture, in artistic and cultural activities. And, what is worse, there are communists among us who forbid their wives or sisters to take part in political and social life, who raise a hue and cry when their wives come late from meetings or who forbid their daughters to associate with their classmates or to take part in joint social labour or mass actions of

various kinds. Such conduct is altogether incompatible with the revolutionary features of a Party member.

This erroneous conduct has its source in the oppression and backwardness the women have been victims of through centuries. Traces of this oppression and backwardness cannot be wiped out at once, for they spring from patriarchal and bourgeois concepts which have struck deep roots in our minds and which constitute a backward world outlook influenced by the economic exploitation of women in the family, by feudal and bourgeois ethical norms and by the attitude of religion towards women. We should by all means uproot these alien concepts for they are at variance with the principles of our socialist democracy and deny to the women those political rights and prerogatives which our people's power has guaranteed by law.

Socialist democracy cannot develop, and the great principle of our Party on the line of the masses cannot be put into practice, without the broad activation of the women masses, without soliciting their revolutionary creative thinking. The positive experience accumulated by many Party organizations, especially of late, indicates clearly that women, just as men, are capable of correctly sizing up the policy of the Party and government; that they present a bold front at discussions, advancing remarks, suggestions and proposals about the work of economic enterprises and agricultural cooperatives, about the activities of the organs of administration and of the masses

where they militate. Therefore, it is essential that special concern should be devoted to the question of soliciting the opinions of women and that of cultivating their political awareness. This should be undertaken not only by the organizations of the Women's Union of Albania, as often happens in practice, but also by all the organizations of the Party and of the masses as well. A great deal of agitational work should be done with men, in the first place, but also with women as well. One should fight against such reactionary ideas as "politics is not within the scope of women," against fanatical suspicions that participation of girls and women at meetings or mass actions impairs their honour. The state of affairs in which the women, especially in the countryside, are under the constant pressure of the conservative views which ignore the say and opinion of women on political and social matters should be ended. It should be clear to the organizations of the Party and of the masses that the better informed the women are and the more they participate in directing and solving political, economic and social problems, the more democratic our people's regime will become.

Another important aspect of the participation of women in political and social activity is their participation in problems dealing with the organization and management of production. The Party has constantly stressed the need for strengthening socialist democracy, especially in agricultural cooperatives. This is of major importance also to state econom-

ic enterprises. Since women make up a great force in production, nearly half of the number of workers, their aid and contribution are considerable. Therefore, Party organizations and economic organs should devote special attention to soliciting the creative thought of women in this respect, to getting more of them to participate in various committees, like that of planning, of social control, etc. This will strengthen our democracy and will help our socialist economy to develop in the right way and with success; it will raise the role of women in the solving of problems in the economic life of the country.

Also of major importance is the active and broad participation, especially of young women in the cultural, artistic and physical cultural life of the country. On the one hand, we should see to it that women have their say and take an active part in creating and developing our national culture and art. On the other hand, we should see to it that women profit as much as possible from all the cultural, artistic and physical cultural activities which take place in our country. In this respect, a campaign should be waged both against trends that underrate and belittle the creative ability of women, as well as against the bigotry and the derogatory attitude that certain men maintain. These men in fact make it impossible for women to read, to frequent the theatre, movies and other activities, to engage in sports and physical culture, considering these as the privileges of men alone.

Our attention should especially be drawn

to the participation of women in the ranks of the Party. Their number has grown from one year to the next. This is a positive thing. Especially of late, the Party organizations have been doing better in this direction. Thus, for instance, as of January this year the number of women newly admitted to membership in the Party has been 30 in the district of Gjirokastra, 22 in that of Berat, 14 in the Shkodra district, and so on. Nevertheless, if we study figures carefully, it turns out that the number of women Party members is still small, making up only 12.4% of the entire roll-call of the Party. Why does this happen? This is first and foremost the result of lack of confidence in the capabilities of women, which has struck root also in the Party organizations. It reflects the extremely unsatisfactory work done by the Party organizations with women. How else can one account for the fact that in such work centres as the "Stalin" Textile Mills, there are twice as many men in the Party ranks as women, although most of the workers are women; or that all the organizations of the Kukës district have admitted only 54 women to Party membership since the liberation of the country to this day; or that those of the Librazhdi district have admitted only one woman to membership during the whole of 1966, etc.

The Party committees and organizations usually claim, in self-justification, that few women are admitted to the Party because the ideological and political level and the cultural training of women is still low. But who is

to blame for this? Does this not reflect the insufficient work done by the Party organizations to train women for the Party? It is, therefore, essential for the Party organizations to radically improve their method of political and educational work with women and, at the same time, to wage a resolute campaign against the conservative and backward ideas which some communists cherish about the alleged incapability of women.

If we throw away the conservative concepts which underrate the ability of women to be in the ranks of the Party, we will tear away the veil covering our eyes and will see women as they truly are: as capable champions of the cause of the Party, as great a revolutionary force as men. In certain aspects of life they are even more revolutionary and better aware of carrying out the line of the Party than men. The conscience of a woman is unstained, for she has never oppressed nor ruled, but has always sacrificed herself for the happiness of others. From this point of view, swelling the Party ranks with women comrades will invigorate the life of the grassroot organizations, will raise their combative ability and will strengthen the unity of the ranks of the Party. Therefore, it is the primary duty of all Party organizations to try to find, activate and train the most deserving women to become members of our Party without in any way affecting the requirements for admission to Party membership. The present marvellous revolutionary movements which have been spread throughout the country and which have wide-

ly gripped and are daily gripping women and girls constitute a very good basis to step up the process of swelling the ranks of the Party with women comrades.

3. On the Uplifting of the Cultural, Educational, Technical and Professional Levels of Women

One of the most important links in the struggle for the complete emancipation of women and, especially, for their participation in qualified work, for their promotion to posts of responsibility or for their political and social activity is the uplifting of their educational, cultural, technical and professional levels. In contrast with the past, stupendous changes have been brought about in these fields too, thanks to the concern of the Party and people's rule. Among women, over 90% of whom were illiterate before liberation, illiteracy has been wiped out almost entirely for those up to 40 years of age. All girls receive compulsory primary and eighth-grade education. A good number of women and girls pursue their studies in secondary, vocational and higher day schools and those of the night and correspondence system. In comparison with 1960, the number of girls attending eighth-grade and secondary schools has doubled, whereas in higher institutes of learning it is two and one-half times as high. Over 9,500 women and girls with secondary technical training and over 1,300 others of higher training are employed in various economic and cultural departments. Today, our enterprises and in-

stitutions employ more women engineers than the total number of engineers Albania had before liberation, and two and one-half times as many women physicians as the total number of physicians Albania had before liberation.

Despite this, the educational level of women as a whole is still low. This situation is connected with the backwardness and darkness which were the lot of women in the past. But this is not the only reason, for even during these years after liberation, when the doors of schools were opened to girls as well, when the education and culture of the people received special attention as a primary factor for the progress of the country, the rate at which women acquired technological and professional skill has been and continues to be lower than that of men. Why has such a thing happened? Among us there exist no privileges for men and no limitations for women in any field of education. Girls and women, just as everybody else in our country, are eager to acquire knowledge and education, although women and girl workers especially should exert more effort to raise their political, educational, technological and professional level. Thus there have been no specific objective reasons, at least during these recent years, to account for the deficiencies noted in the educational and professional uplifting of women. From a concrete analysis of facts it turns out that the main obstacle to the progress of women lies in the retrogressive ideas prevailing about women, ideas which underrate their creative abilities. These ideas are manifested in vari-

ous forms.

In the first place, many parents and husbands, especially in the countryside, hold the opinion that "girls have no need of schooling," that "girls belong to others." Consequently they not only fail to follow up the progress of their daughters at primary and eighth-grade schools, which they are obliged by law to do, but they even withdraw their daughters from school altogether under the pretext that they have grown up. Higher education is altogether out of the question for these girls. Thus, many young girls receive only primary school education which, in the long run, turns them into semi-illiterates if not illiterates in the full sense of the word. There are about 15,000 such women under the age of 40.

Without in any way belittling the responsibility of the parents and husbands of these girls and women, it is clear that neither the organs of people's education nor the organizations of the Party and of the masses can be exempted from responsibility for this unfortunate situation. Their duty is not merely to point out this sad fact, but to take special educative and organizational steps, so that these girls and women are taught, that illiteracy is wiped out and that in the future no children, especially girls, be allowed to break off grade schooling which is compulsory by law.

But this is not the only consequence of alien ideas. The fact that women are looked down upon, that the problem of their qualification and the enhancement of their cultur-

al standard is not rightly understood, can be seen also in connection with the training of cadres. It is a commendable fact that 13% of the cadres of higher training, and 37% of those of medium training, are women. But there is room for higher percentages. Up to now the number of cadres trained in schools, technicums and courses of agricultural cooperatives has reached 13,000, of whom only 415 are women. Or of the 682 students pursuing their higher studies in the Agricultural College only 24 are girls, while of the 332 students receiving instructions in farm mechanics only two are girls. Do these figures alone not indicate the lack of interest on the part of the Ministry of Agriculture and of the regional Party committees to train cadres from the ranks of women? A more or less similar situation exists in other sectors. During the 1961-65 five-year period, the higher institutes of learning, including the two-year Teacher Training Institutes, turned out about 6,400 cadres. Only 1,220 of them were girls. Technicums turned out 7,865 graduates of whom only 1,435 were young women. In the same way, twelfth-grade schools turned out 7,700 graduates of whom only 27 were girls, while of the 10,850 students that graduated from lower vocational schools only 2,600 were girls. Nor should we feel content that today there are 1,750 young women out of about 7,450 undergraduates enrolled in the State University and in other institutes of learning, and that in secondary, technical and professional schools there are 3,400 girls out of a total of 11,300 students. These

figures indicate the lack of interest of both the central organs and Party committees in the educational training of women and girls; they indicate the insufficient efforts exerted in breaking down all obstacles lying in the way of endowing women and girls with education and culture.

State organs and Party committees should put an immediate end to this situation. They should give priority to sending girls to professional and high schools with a view to raising their number much higher than it has been up to now. In awarding scholarships, top priority should be given to girls, especially those from the countryside.

Insufficient concern about raising the cultural, technological and professional level of women is also evident as far as the pursuance of night schools and the organization of qualification courses for women and young women workers goes. It must be avowed that the concern of the Party committees, the trade unions and economic organs in this regard has been quite insufficient. How else can one account for the fact that the number of women and girls who attend eighth-grade night schools, especially in recent years, has been on the decline. Today the number of women and girls attending eighth-grade night schools is only 1,370 while in 1960 there were 3,000. Of course, the blame here lies also with the women and girls who have left school; but what have the Party and mass organizations and the economic organs done to induce, to persuade them not to abandon school?

The work of the economic organs and trade unions is unsatisfactory as far as the qualification of women goes, which is the only way to assign them to qualified jobs and posts of responsibility. Of all women workers, qualified women make up 25%, while of approximately 14,700 qualified women, only about 2,100 possess 6th category and above. The organizations of the Party, those of the masses and state organs should be earnestly concerned about this problem, remembering not only to open courses of qualification for women but to create suitable conditions for these courses to be attended by the women, who, while being workers, are at the same time mothers.

Through persistent efforts by the Party and organizations of the masses, through harder work by the women and girls themselves and through the above technical and organizational measures, we will succeed, in a relatively short period of time, in overcoming the striking disproportion existing today between the low level of qualification of women and the demands of advanced technique for higher qualification. This will also help to more readily solve the contradiction existing between the decisive role the women play as a major revolutionary force and as half of the population in socialist construction, and their very insufficient mobilization for work of leadership in all phases of life.

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A broader participation of women in pro-

duction and in the political, social and cultural life of the country is the main road towards the complete emancipation of women, this major force of our revolution and socialist construction. The general conclusion to be drawn from all this is that the root of all evil and main obstacle to the emancipation of women in our socialist society lies in the alien concepts about women which are deep rooted in the mentality of men and, to a large extent, in that of women themselves. According to these concepts, women are considered as inferior beings destined to serve men, to give birth to and bring up children, to do housework, incapable of taking part on a basis of parity with men in social life, of creating, of mastering culture, science and technological skill, and so on. It is essential to bring home to every communist, to every cadre and to every worker that these alien concepts have no, or nearly no material basis in our socialist society. They are utterly at variance with our socialist reality. They are gloomy survivals of the past in the conscience of people, utterly incompatible with the principles of Marxism-Leninism, with the line and policy of our Party and our people's rule, and cause incalculable damage to the cause of our revolution and socialist construction. Without uprooting these concepts to the letter, there can be no question of total emancipation of women and of completing the construction of socialist society. It is only when this problem is viewed in this way that the complete emancipation of women, making them co-partners in our society, will take the right course and

be crowned with success.

**CARRY TO THE END THE CAMPAIGN
TO DELIVER THE WOMEN FROM THE
DRUDGERY OF HOUSEHOLD CHORES,
STRENGTHEN AND PROMOTE
SOCIALIST RELATIONS IN THE
FAMILY**

The complete emancipation of women, their participation in productive work and in political and social life depend to a large extent on the establishment of the new socialist relations in the family, on the complete deliverance of women from the drudgery of household chores and from the survivals of feudal and patriarchal ethics on the attitude towards women.

The establishment of socialist relations in production, abolition of the exploiting classes and relations of private ownership, dissolution of patriarchal families in the countryside, participation of women in social production, and transformations in the domain of the ideology and psychology of the urban and rural masses, have shaken the old relations between husband and wife to their very foundations. They have introduced in these relations many new socialist elements which have strengthened and developed the Albanian family on sounder foundations. Transformations in this field are underway and they are developing both in breadth as well as in depth. Socialist transformations are proceeding faster in urban families and slower in those of the countryside, especially in the remote moun-

tain regions.

The process of uprooting old relations and establishing new socialist ones in the family cannot be wound up all at once, because, being complex and many-sided social relations, they are linked not only with transformation in the sphere of the material life of society, but have a direct bearing also on the various forms of social awareness. Ideology, politics, ethics and religion, psychology and the many and varied customs which have assumed the force of unwritten laws and which exert a major conservative influence, have been preserved, are preserved and are passed on as a heritage from one generation to another. Therefore, transformations in the field of family relations and the setting up of new socialist relations require a long, persistent and all-round battle, on a complicated and difficult field, against the ideology, psychology, ethics and customs inherited from the old society.

1. Uproot Old Marital Relations that Obstruct the Complete Emancipation of Women and the Establishment of the New Socialist Family

Now more than ever one witnesses the new phenomena which are developing and taking a solid shape in the creation of the new family, as a result of the many years of work the Party has been doing with the masses on concluding marriages on new socialist foundations, and of the campaign against old and reactionary customs regarding this question.

What is new in this lies in the fact that the

young man and young woman, while working or attending school together, have better opportunities to get acquainted with, sympathize and love each other, get the consent of their families and join in wedlock. In other cases, when they do not work together, or when they have had no opportunity to get acquainted with each other, as occurs in certain agricultural cooperatives or villages, cases are not rare, where the parents, especially the mother, ask and get the daughter's consent before arranging a marriage. Now, and more so every day, in picking a bride or a bridegroom, people no longer give preference to "rank," to the past economic and social standing of the family as they used to do before, but to the good conduct of the young woman and young man. Cases are becoming more and more frequent where religious and other differences are no longer considered an obstacle to marriage by either the young women and young men themselves or by their parents.

What is of primary importance is that more and more conditions are being created to proceed along this line. The movements that Comrade Enver Hoxha's call on February 6 this year sparked off throughout the country in defence of the rights of women and girls aim, first and foremost, at setting up new marital relations and further strengthening our socialist family. Men and women have raised their voices against and condemn with indignation the ugly customs of betrothal of children, marriages between persons of very different ages, selling girls in marriage and

treating women as the last ranking person in the family. Hundreds of betrothals, which had been concluded on unjust criteria, have been dissolved as a consequence of this campaign and many people have pledged themselves to do away with all the backward customs that trample underfoot the freedom and dignity of women.

The Party organizations in many districts, especially in those of Mirdita, Mati, Shkodra, Tropoja, Tirana and Fier have succeeded in conducting this important campaign correctly by arousing people of all walks of life, men and women, old and young. This campaign should be kept up and carried through to the end. The Party organizations should not be content with the results achieved and obligations that have been pledged. The old is deep-rooted and is very conservative, and if it is not fought with consistency and in a systematic way through persistent educative work, it may come back into force again.

The struggle in defence of the rights of women and girls, especially regarding correct marital relations, should be firmly waged not only in the countryside, but also in the cities, because backward and feudal customs and concepts exist here also, which are intertwined with other bourgeois and petty bourgeois opinions. These are manifested in the endeavours of some conservative parents to pick husbands for their daughters mainly according to their social "rank," to their economic standing, to their "preferable" profession, even according to their place of abode,

and not according to the moral qualities of the grooms-to-be. They are manifested in the tendency of some parents to betroth their daughters, while they are still too young “lest they lose their reputation” because of gossip that may spread from their association with boys at work, at school, at various social gatherings, sport, artistic and other activities. Some young men and young women themselves are not exempt from such opinions on betrothal.

The organizations of the Party and those of the masses, particularly those of youth and women, should do more intensive educative work in order to create a new world outlook, the communist world outlook, about contracting marriages. Communist parents themselves should set an example in this direction. The youth organization is expected to do better work in this direction. In this problem which is directly connected with their own lives, as in all problems, the young men and young women should be unflinching fighters for the establishment of communist ethical standards. They should wage a special campaign against gossip, against all people, even the young, who indulge in gossip, who blabber here and there trying to stain sincere friendship, sound comradeship, the moral attributes of our young men and young women.

The Party has stressed time and again that in the campaign against backward customs which trample upon the dignity of girls and women, the source of evil is not to be looked for simply in the “ruthless conduct” of this or that father, brother or husband, but one should

delve deeper into the problem of why, how and where these age-old customs are kept alive. Many of the customs, which in our time are considered barbarous and inhumane, spring from other factors, such as the problem of establishing connections and concluding alliances between clans, of dire poverty and the anxiety of parents to provide dresses for their daughters, and so on. A deep insight into customs and their origin, into their blending with religious beliefs, prejudices, etc. will enable the Party organizations to undertake a more fruitful campaign to persuade people, even the most backward, of the futility of these customs and of the necessity of doing away with them in our day.

The problem of women, therefore, and the problem of strengthening the new family, "is not a problem that can be solved within one year," Comrade Enver Hoxha has said. "This is a perpetual problem, the solution of which requires long stages, each of which has its own various problems of development of quality. Each generation has its own problems. Old concepts disappear, new ones take shape. And it is precisely this development we do not intend to leave to spontaneity, we guide it with much ado and in the direction we desire." Our Party has treated and treats the problem of creating the new family with careful concern. It is guided by Marxist-Leninist teachings, according to which the new society cannot be built without establishing new socialist relations in the family too, between husband and wife and among other family members, and

that the sounder and cleaner the family, the stronger is socialist society itself.

Mutual acquaintance, unstained and sincere friendship established at work and in the common struggle of the young man and young woman should be at the root of the new family of our society. Marriage is a matter which is primarily their concern and they should not reconcile themselves to what is conservative and reactionary; they should be in the forefront of battle for what is new. But the parents also cannot stand aloof and not exert their influence on such an important problem of life as that of the marriage of their offspring. They possess the experience of life, the revolutionary spirit gained in life and struggle. At the same time, parents are often conservative and inherit many concepts and stigmas of alien ideology and morals from old society. Therefore, they should analyse their own experience in the spirit of criticism, judge with calm wisdom, study and try to understand the new objective and subjective conditions which have been created, the aspirations, sentiments for what is new, and the revolutionary impulse of the youth.

The Party and organizations of the masses should conduct more intensive, intelligent and all-round work with the masses of youth and young pioneers with a view to imbuing them with the sense of the progressive new, with a correct understanding of love and of the family. Young men and young women, imbued with communist morals by the Party, should fight against any alien manifestation in

relations among them. Their mutual relations should be characterized by a sound social spirit with sentiments of mutual respect and solidarity running through them.

The establishment of the new family cannot be effected without doing away with the ugly custom of dowries. This is an open manifestation of marital relations based on relations of private ownership, a moderate variation of the custom of buying and selling girls, and is preserved to this day in all the urban and rural regions of our country. The organizations of the Party and those of the masses should give full support to the revolutionary initiatives taken by the people at meetings of the Democratic Front to put an end to these medieval customs which have grave consequences in the relations between husband and wife and in the economy of each family, and they should conduct broad clarifying discussions with workers on this topic.

Dowry should not be confused with the concern of parents to come to the aid of their children, within their available means, to help them establish their new home. Parents should above all endow their children with the qualities of communist ethics so that they may be able to found a sound family, built on the joint efforts and contributions of both the bride and groom, and not on the dowry.

A determined fight should be waged also against certain other customs of the wedding day, which are intended to legalize the submission of the wife to her husband; for instance, the insolent ceremony of receiving the bride

into the groom's house as well as the ceremony of a religious character which sanctifies relations of oppression and exploitation. In Christ's name, the priest sanctified the wedlock of an aged man with a young woman in her teens, while the hoxha, holding the Quran in his hand, blessed the wedding of a man to his fourth wife. Both of them advised the wife in the name of religion to submit to the husband, for he is her lord and master.

While fighting backward customs regarding wedding ceremonies, we must legalize our new customs of socialist society. This implies that we should view all ceremonies connected with marriage with a critical eye so as to preserve what is good, give it a new content, and discard what is negative by creating new traditions for the ceremonies of marriages at the Registrar's Office and for wedding parties as an event of rejoicing, avoiding feasts involving large and useless expenses.

2. Establishment of Correct Relations Between Husband and Wife and Between the Wife and Other Members of the Family — an Essential Condition to Entitle the Wife to the Place Belonging to Her in the Family

Setting up the new socialist family, in addition to founding it on correct marital relations, also requires the establishment of truly equal relations between the wife, husband and other members of the family. It is a fact that in many families both in the countryside and in cities, even in certain cases when marriages have been concluded on sound foundations,

many remnants exist intact of feudal-bourgeois practices inherited from one generation by another, backward concepts and religious norms which have assumed the force of custom and law, and which stifle and enslave the woman in the family.

In spite of their participation in production and the contribution women render through their work, they do not yet occupy an equal post in the family, especially in the countryside. The opinion still prevails that "man is the master of the house," "the head of the family." The complete submission of the wife to the husband, the denial of her most elementary rights, legalized by religion and the "Holy" scriptures, continues.

At the numerous meetings and consultations which took place these recent months throughout the country, the people themselves firmly condemned these ideas and all the burdensome consequences weighing upon wives who are assigned to the most menial and humiliating jobs in the family. Her lot is the lash rope; she must wash the feet of her husband and of all the other members of the family, she must be the first to get up in the morning and the last to go to bed at night, she must eat after they have had their meals, carry wood, haul water and so on. Can one speak of parity and of a sound family under such circumstances? These ugly customs do not prevail only in the countryside, but also in one measure or another in cities where, in many cases, the woman is not treated as an equal, but as a being of secondary importance.

The social and economic basis under which these concepts thrived has totally changed. In our country the rights of women are guaranteed by law in this respect. But the force of habit smothers the men and other members of the family, as well as the women on whom these habits and customs weigh.

Let us take for instance, *The Canon of Lek Dukagjini*, and view it from this angle. It reflects a social order based on the patriarchal and feudal system of clans and tribes and, for that reason, it embodies patriarchal and feudal ideology. Concerning the attitude towards women, it contains the most enslaving, most humiliating and most ruthless norms that can be imagined. The material and general social conditions under which this Canon has sprung and which it reflects have, of course, radically changed. But the force of ideology, the force of tradition and customs still remain and, in certain regions, are even dominant, crippling and maiming the life of women. Is it not high time for us to uproot at once and burn at the stake all these savage and barbarous traditions and customs?

Or, let us view the discontinuance of the lash rope from this angle. When this initiative was first taken at the "Asim Zeneli" agricultural cooperative in Gjirokastra, certain old women said to the younger women and girls: "Well, never mind if you come back without a load on your back, but in any case, take the lash rope with you. It is unbecoming for a woman to go without her lash rope!" Here is a case of renouncing "the economic advan-

tage” accruing from this custom but holding fast to it as a symbol, a sign of the bondage and humiliation of the woman, a sign of her treatment as a beast of burden. And this custom was so strong that the lash rope was part of a bride’s trousseau.

Therefore, we should declare a merciless war on all old reactionary customs that are based on the force and inertia of tradition. That is why the organizations of the Party and those of the masses, and public opinion as a whole, should struggle with courage and without respite to uproot the psychology and old customs that degrade women and weaken our family. While intensifying their ideological and clarifying work, the organizations of the Party and those of the masses should support and encourage to the best of their ability all the movements and the many resolutions taken at meetings and consultations to respect the rights of women as a decisive condition for a sound family.

The women themselves should fight with courage to win equal rights with men in the family. They should not keep quiet and yield obediently to these ugly customs allegedly for the sake of preserving harmony and unity in the family. Harmony and unity in the family are basic elements for good marital relations. However, they are not strengthened by succumbing to prejudices and the backward customs of subserviency to man, but only by fighting them in the right way with courage and wisdom. Silence and submission of women have their source especially in the idea

that “the husband has you in his grip,” that he may divorce you and send you back to your parents’ house. Formerly, it was out of fear of being turned out of her husband’s house and of being pointed to as a divorcee that a woman tolerated sharing her husband’s house with his second wife. Today, being economically as independent as her husband, she is master of her own life, capable of bringing up her children, and is not intimidated by the threat of divorce when living together becomes unbearable. Divorce is an equal right of both husband and wife, and if this right is correctly understood, it will not hang over the wife like a sword of Damocles as before, but will help strengthen family ties. The couple should exercise just as much discretion and wisdom when contemplating divorce as they exercised before they joined in wedlock. Public opinion condemns any rash gesture which wrecks the family and affects especially the children, from wherever it comes. The force of public opinion is manifested especially in the revolutionary situation which characterizes the life of our country at present.

A negative influence in preserving the backward customs in the life of many of our families is exerted by people advanced in age, the old men in particular, who, being victims of the force of habit and unconscious of the damage they do, insist that the members of the family should respect these customs. This handicap should be overcome by tact and not by the open opposition which some young men and young women use and which is li-

able to create conflicts. It should be overcome by relying on the correct line of the Party, by working patiently with the old generation, by treating them with the highest consideration, confident that they will gradually and eventually give up their conservative views.

The organizations of the Party and those of the masses should do a great deal to point out the major rights women have won in the people's regime. They should point out the importance of establishing correct relations between the wife and husband and all the other members of the family as an integral factor for consolidating the family based on the equality of husband and wife, on respecting the personality of each and on their equal rights, and not on the mouldy, reactionary conservative thought of patriarchal, feudal and bourgeois families.

They should strive, at the same time, to uproot the remnants of religious, feudal and patriarchal ethics in the "proper" attitude towards women and should see to it that the moral requirements of public opinion should be equal for both women and men, that integrity and honour, fidelity in marital relations, freedom to choose life companions should be considered, and be in practice, the just rights of both the husband and the wife. We should in no way tolerate that social opinion should, allegedly in the name of proletarian ethics and of the sound traditions of honour and marital integrity of our people, treat and solve these problems by falling victims to the laws and usages of the Church or the Sharia, to

the norms of religious, feudal and patriarchal morals, which in every case throws the blame on, and condemns, women. It is precisely these concepts and customs which prompt many parents, and public opinion in general, to frown upon the association of a young man with a young woman, and the love that may develop between them. These concepts and customs encourage gossip, which as a rule weighs heavily upon the young woman and affects her dignity and personality. It must be brought home to everyone that without making both men and women morally equal there can be no genuine and all-round emancipation of women.

Problems of the family and family relations are not only a private concern but are problems of society as a whole. Our socialist society is vitally concerned for the consolidation of the family on sound communist morals, for the family is the cell of society. The concept of viewing problems of the family as a private affair has brought about a feeling of unconcern about the conduct of people in the family, a kind of separate assessment of the moral and political characteristics of each member's conduct in the family and in society. This accounts for the fact that up to now in our society, some workers and even communists and cadres who are resolved followers of the line of the Party, hard workers and endowed with a high spirit of sacrifice and self-denial, when in the family, allow themselves behaviour and acts which are incompatible with communist ethics. This accounts also for the

fact that often in the countryside, even Party organizations have maintained a lenient attitude towards alien patriarchal and bourgeois manifestations and have failed to mobilize public opinion to fight these manifestations with might and main.

The Party should fight equally against indifference and against vulgar intrusion into family affairs. The intimate, delicate and complicated nature of family relations should always be kept in mind in the work of Party organizations and workers' collectives. Society, the collective and every person may exert a positive influence, strengthening the unity of the family only when their intervention is performed with tact and good judgement, prompted by the sentiments of respect and social concern, and not by resorting to administrative methods, methods of dictate, of pressure and coercion. The intervention of others in every detail of family relations, in every problem that might arise in the family, often does more harm than good, and instead of exerting a positive influence in consolidating the family, does the opposite and leads to weakening it and even to breaking it up. Just as dangerous are ill-intentioned gossip and sensational assertions which lead to discrediting the wife or husband before public opinion. Public opinion should never be indifferent towards such gossips, and should pass harsh judgement on them and counteract their negative influence on family relations.

Towards anti-social phenomena which are manifested in family relations, be they on

the part of the husband, wife, parents or children, it is not only public opinion that acts and should act, but also state organs, especially the organs of justice and our legislation.

Our legislation on the family has played a major role in setting up socialist relations in the family, especially in freeing the woman from drudgery and in securing her equality with man. But considering the new conditions that have been created, the revolutionizing spirit in the whole life of the country and the tasks the Party has outlined to further deepen revolution, the organs of justice should intervene more actively, and be more skilful in protecting the rights of women and the norms of communist morals in family relations. On the other hand, in conformity with these conditions and this revolutionary spirit, they should re-examine with a critic's eye certain outworn legal dispositions which govern family relations and do not reflect, as they should, the socialist transformations which have taken place in our country.

It is only when coordinated work is done by all the organizations of the masses, state organs and the various cultural and educational institutions under the leadership of the Party organizations, and when educative and differentiated work is done with men and women, old and young and even children, that socialist public opinion and psychology can be formed, and negative phenomena and outworn customs and mentality in family relations can be discarded. On this basis, our families can always grow strong.

3. Free Women from the Drudgery of Household Chores

In order to carry the process of the complete emancipation of women further ahead and achieve the equality of women with men, the attention of the Party should be concentrated, now and for a long time to come, on the struggle to uproot all concepts and customs which treat women as slaves of the household, to free them from the drudgery of household chores. Lenin says: **“The woman continues to remain a household slave regardless of all laws passed to free her since she is oppressed, smothered, stifled and humiliated by the small-scale domestic economy which nails her down to the kitchen and the children, robbing her of her exertion for ruthlessly unproductive and grinding toil which shatters her nerves, benumbs her intellect and exhausts her altogether.”**

The complete and ultimate deliverance of women from the drudgery of household chores, of course demands, as Engels has pointed out, the collectivization of this domestic economy, turning it into a branch of social production. This collectivization of domestic economy in the countryside and even in cities, however, does not depend entirely on our wishes and our will. In the countryside especially this process is a very complicated one. It requires a large-scale development of present technique and its own material and technical basis, it requires the collectivization of all service work in the family, it demands, in short, the liberation of the family from its

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functions as an economic unit.

But we can not wait until the collectivization of domestic economy is fully achieved in order to free women from the drudgery of the household. We should start right away to work in this direction with the means available now and with those which will be created step by step.

Thanks to the concern of the Party and of the organs of the people's rule, a series of important steps have already been taken to shorten the time necessary for the daily chores of the household, for rearing and bringing up children and so on. Crèches and kindergartens have been set up in cities. Such institutions have also been set up in a certain number of villages, particularly during the periods of intensive agricultural work. The network of public health service free of charge in urban and rural centres has been extended. The network of trade units has been expanded and has been extended even to the remotest parts of the country; centres of handicraft service have been set up not only in the various city quarters but are being set up also in several villages. Popular restaurants have been opened in city quarters, the market has been flooded with ready-made garments for all ages, home-made pieces of furniture, household utensils imported also from abroad for laundry purposes, for cooking, house-cleaning, and so on.

At present, there are two main ways to solve the problem of stepping up the process, which has already begun in our country, to free women, and to create possibilities for

them to have more time available to devote to their educational, cultural and professional uplifting and recreation:

Firstly, to strive to uproot concepts and customs which consider household work and the rearing of children as the job of women alone. It must be borne in mind that the women workers today, after their day's work in factories, in fields or in offices, have a second day's job to tackle at home: cooking, cleaning and serving all the members of the family, and bringing up and educating children. In the countryside they have additional jobs to do: carrying wood and hauling water, kneading and baking bread. It can very well be said that a woman's workday lasts 15 to 16 hours. It is precisely on this account that every husband should seriously think out ways of helping his wife, his life companion.

The idea that men cannot and do not know how to do certain household chores is wrong and patriarchal. With the exception of a mother's function of nursing her infants, a man can very well take a hand in all the other chores of the household. This requires that men should cast off such concepts as that of being "ashamed" of doing kitchen work, house repairs, cleaning and ironing, of keeping and educating children, hauling water and so on and so forth, should make it a major concern for all public opinion, and fight against the force of habit which is a great stumbling block not only for men but also for women, especially those advanced in age.

The idea and psychology that household

chores should not be confined only to women but to all the members of the family including men should be inculcated deep into children by the family, the school and society. This objective cannot be attained if the family keeps drawing a line as it does today between jobs to be done by girls and those to be done by boys: girls to do the cleaning and putting the house in order, to learn cooking, sewing and embroidery, whereas boys learn only to chop wood, do the marketing and, in general, to do those jobs their fathers do. Such a division of “jobs for girls” and “jobs for boys” should not be made in schools and in various mass actions of the youth, in pioneer homes, crèches and kindergartens either. The Ministry of Education and Culture should re-examine and revise its programs of study connected with work and domestic economy so that no discrimination may be made between boys and girls.

Secondly, lighten a woman’s household chores by expanding the network of public services and making more efficient use of the existing ones.

It is necessary to create further conditions to lighten the work of women as far as bringing up and educating children is concerned. The Political Bureau calls on the Council of Ministers to take immediate steps to increase the capacity of kindergartens and crèches above plan on the basis of decisions on the use of funds accumulated as a result of the initiative taken by workers to voluntarily give up certain kinds of supplementary payments.

Concerning the long established agricultural cooperatives and those in the lowlands, the Political Bureau calls on every cooperative to make full use of its resources and set up, mainly in brigades, either permanent crèches and kindergartens or temporary ones during the big campaigns of farm work. This should be of great assistance to mothers and a measure of major importance for the correct upbringing and education of children.

With a view to shortening the time necessary for household chores, state organs should study the ways of taking other measures.

The organs of industry, handicrafts and trade may turn out and market larger quantities of household utensils and more economical means for cooking, cleaning and laundry purposes. Trade organs should expand the varieties of packaged and dried food products and should study the possibility of organizing the sale of foodstuffs on order, as practised in Tirana and Durrës, for the distribution of milk and a number of other commodities. They should expand, at the same time, the network of shops to sell cooked or half-cooked foodstuffs.

The organs of industry, handicrafts and trade should increase the quantity of ready-made clothes, improving their quality and complying with the demands of workers of all ages, of all districts and especially of those from the countryside. Municipal services and those of the handicrafts should extend their service shops both in cities, in certain large agricultural cooperatives and in localities, to

replace services ranging from tailoring to repairs of household utensils and pieces of furniture now being done at home. The Central Office of Communes should study and sum up the experience of the city of Tirana in expanding and utilizing public bath and laundry houses, so that they are of better service to families.

In the countryside, where women are loaded with heavier work, not only household chores and bringing up children but also work in individual plots of ground, agricultural cooperatives should take steps to set up public ovens which could serve not only to bake bread but also to cook certain kinds of dishes for peasant families; public baths and laundry houses as the cooperatives in the Durrës region have suggested; aqueducts to conduct water nearer to the dwelling quarters; collective cutting and transportation of firewood for each cooperative family; various workshops and so on.

The Party committees, and state and economic organs in general, should make more efficient use of the major resources of every district, work centre and agricultural cooperative. Experience gained already has gone to show that with a little initiative and utilizing resources at their disposal, a number of districts have created many facilities for household tasks.

Thus, by making a more equitable division of household chores among husband, wife and all the other members of the family and by gradually increasing measures to shorten the

time necessary for household chores, more favourable conditions will be created for women to render a larger contribution to social production and to the political and social life of the country. They will be able to develop from the political, cultural and professional point of view. This will mark a big step forward in the emancipation of women, giving a fresh impetus to their creative ability and raising the personality and role of women in our socialist society to a higher level.

MAKE THE PROBLEM OF WOMEN A PROBLEM OF SOCIETY AS A WHOLE

The Central Committee of the Party and Comrade Enver Hoxha have repeatedly stressed that the problem of women, affecting the fate of socialist construction, life and future of our country, is above all a major problem of the Party.

Regional Party committees and grassroot organizations, carrying out the directives and recommendations of the Party Central Committee, have improved their work and have increased their concern for problems dealing with the emancipation of women. Better organized work and more concern about this matter are noticeable particularly after the 5th Party Congress and Comrade Enver Hoxha's February 6 speech.

Nevertheless, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee asserts that major efforts should be exerted by the Party committees as well as the grassroot organizations so that the problems of the complete emancipation of

women may be better grasped in their breadth and depth.

In order to consolidate what we have achieved, in order not to return to where we started from, in order to take up the struggle for the emancipation of women as a campaign, the Party should be on the alert. It should pile more logs on the great revolutionary fire which has been kindled so that it may burn to ashes every alien concept which looks down upon and belittles women. Since the problem of the emancipation of women is a major one, it is essential that every separate aspect of it should be treated in all earnestness and become a problem of society as a whole.

In the forefront of the struggle for the emancipation of women there should stand, as always, the members of the Party who should educate and lead the masses of the people by the example they and their families set. To be a communist, a fighter for the ideas of the Party on the one hand, and to speak in general of the emancipation of women and do practically nothing to fight every day, everywhere and with all your efforts against customs and concepts which lie in the way of the complete emancipation of women, on the other — these are two irreconcilable things. It is to be regretted, but we have not a few such communists. There are those who, not understanding the line of the Party in this matter, remain slaves to conservative and backward influences. There are others who align themselves with the slogans of the Party in words, even repeat them out loud, but in reality they main-

tain a feudal and patriarchal attitude towards women in their homes and at work.

Comrade Enver Hoxha teaches us that one cannot be a communist while being a braggadocio, an insolent man and a petty bourgeois in the family, considering the woman as a piece of property, a household chattel. What kind of communist is he who resorts to a thousand ways to prevent the woman from participating in production and political and social life and who lacks confidence in her ability, or when it comes to trusting her with leading posts, frowns and scowls, exerts pressure and puts a range of obstacles in the way? The views and attitude of these communists should be submitted for principled discussion and criticism in the Party organizations so that they may be helped and educated. They must understand that such an attitude is incompatible with their membership in the ranks of the Party, that their attitude is not a private, personal affair, but a problem of principle, for without the example of communists, the problem of women cannot be properly solved and with success.

Not only the communist, but also any other person, be he a worker, a peasant or an intellectual, can call himself a man of the vanguard or a cultured man if he does not maintain a correct attitude towards women, if he does not fight against everything which hinders her from occupying the place she deserves in society. Therefore, the Party is faced with the task of working not only in a frontal and massive way, but also with each person and family individually according to the par-

particular conditions of every district, village or city quarter.

The question here is not to fight against men or women or to protect women from men. These ideas are alien to Marxism-Leninism, to our Party. The question here is to fight against backward views surviving from the past, particularly among men, but also among women themselves. That is why the Party and society should be prepared to carry this fight through to the end in the defence of women from all those who trample their rights underfoot.

In solving the problem of women, an important role should be played by the organizations of the masses, because on the one hand, girls and women constitute a powerful force in their ranks and without the activation of girls and women, and their complete emancipation, the organizations of the masses cannot properly accomplish the major tasks the Party has assigned to them; on the other hand, without the work of the organizations of the masses, without their active participation, the problem of women cannot be raised as a major social problem in our country with which we must deal. Therefore, it is necessary to discard all thought and practice according to which the problems of women are looked upon as problems of the organizations of the Women's Union alone.

The Democratic Front, the broadest political organization of the country, should be the platform from which to fight against old customs, religious dogmas and beliefs, which

hamper the genuine liberation of women. Broad popular discussions of these problems at meetings of the Democratic Front should help clarify and persuade people that our socialist society cannot be duly developed without doing away with these concepts. It should create everywhere a stifling atmosphere for all those who trample underfoot the sacred law of our Party to protect the rights of the Albanian women.

Through its widespread branches in cities, towns and villages, the Democratic Front should outline a broad program of political and propaganda work, so as to put into practice new socialist norms which deal with marriage contracts, facilities for women's household chores, women's active participation in the political and economic life, in the state and social and cultural activities of the country, to stimulate and develop the initiative of the broad masses of people, and to engage in concrete actions.

Bearing in mind that old customs pass from one generation to another, that they interfuse with the daily life and activity of the people, becoming a habit and taking root in their world outlook, the Party should devote special attention to the educative work with the young generation which should inherit all the virtues of our people, and be protected and kept safe from every vice and backward custom which poison their minds and conscience. The heroic youth of our country, this colossal revolutionary and progressive force, should be in the front ranks of the struggle for

the complete emancipation of women. How can our revolutionary youth tolerate that their mothers, sisters, the comrades of their organizations be trampled upon, discredited, treated according to medieval and religious laws? Our youth have always obeyed but one law; the law of the Party, the law of revolution and of the struggle for the happiness of the people. That is why the Party trusts that all the youth of our country will be resolved, intelligent and courageous fighters for the great cause of fighting against everything that lies in the way of the complete emancipation of the Albanian woman. The Labour Youth Union of Albania should devote special attention to the work with young women, so as to organize, educate and activate them in an all-round way. The young women who grow and are educated under conditions of people's rule should not only be prevented from falling victims to bigotry and conservative ideas, but they should be turned into courageous fighters for the emancipation of the Albanian woman. To achieve this, it is imperative that an end be put to sectarianism, which we meet with in the matter of their admittance to membership in the youth organizations, and to the fanaticism which prevents them from taking active part in the life of the organization and the formal work with young women. Of major importance in this respect is the attraction of as many young women as possible, especially from the mountain regions of the country to the mass actions of youth such as the Rogozhina-Fier railway, the highway in the Highlands, etc.

A major role regarding the problem of women devolves upon our schools, which as centres of ideological formation and scientific world outlook, and important educational means in the hands of the Party and of society, should lay the groundwork of sound proletarian precepts among young men and young women and gradually enhance their personalities. But at present our schools fall short of fulfilling these functions as they should. The Ministry of Education and Culture should delve deeper into the study of outlining correct scientific and pedagogical orientations in this field and of encouraging the adoption of revolutionary methods of teaching and of educating in general and of encouraging the moral uplifting of youth in particular.

Women are a major component part of the working class of our country. Without activating this force, without having it participate in all fields of life, the working class cannot play its role as the vanguard class which gives the tone to the whole life of the country. Therefore, the trade unions should devote special attention to the work of solving the problems of women workers, of their ideological, political, technical and professional uplifting, of creating facilities and applying our legislative measures in economic enterprises. Trade union organizations should be more active in drawing women to their activities and promoting more of them to responsible posts, helping them assert their personality not only as good workers and managers of production, but also as social activists. Trade union organizations

should be more particularly concerned about opening courses of qualification for women workers with a view to making them more efficient workers both in production and in political and social activity. The trade unions should courageously raise their voices against any obstacle or bureaucratic procrastination in this matter.

The complete emancipation of women cannot be successfully brought about if the women themselves and their organization, the Women's Union of Albania, do not raise their voices out loud and wage a persistent battle for it. We should admit that women themselves are the carriers of backward feudal customs and religious beliefs and superstitions. If the backward customs of selling off girls in marriage exist, if dowries and bridal trousseaux are widespread phenomena, this means that not only men but women, not only fathers but mothers, also often become guardians of these medieval customs.

The Women's Union of Albania in its capacity as the political organization of the masses of women under the leadership of the Party, has rendered great service to the country by enlightening the Albanian women politically, by mobilizing them extensively for all the activities of the life of our country. It has become a favourite organization of the women of our country and has always been an active auxiliary to our Party. But it should radically improve its work, in order to raise its political and organizational activity to the height which the times demand, so that it can better tackle

the great problems of the complete emancipation of women. Now that the cultural level of girls and women is being raised by all of them going through eighth-grade schooling, it becomes easier for the Women's Union organizations to intensify their activities in the countryside.

The basic task of the women's organization remains, for the days to come, to educate women to become resolute fighters to safeguard the rights they have won and to use these rights in the practical activities of their daily life. In every family we have more than one woman member of the Women's Union of Albania and each one of them should become a militant to carry the line of the Party, the progressive word, in order to establish new socialist customs and norms in the life of our families. The woman has a two-fold battle to wage: on the one hand, to cleanse her own conscience of everything that hampers her own progress, to fight against the backward ideas and gossip of the women themselves; on the other, to fight against the conduct and concepts of those who trample underfoot the rights of women and girls.

The work of educating and mobilizing the widespread numbers of women activists should be one of the main concerns of the Women's Union of Albania, to make them stand on the forefront of struggle for the complete emancipation of women and, by their example, to draw to them and educate the broad masses of urban and rural women. The intellectual women activists of the city should

carry on fruitful work in helping their rural comrades become agitators for the line of the Party among the women masses.

Further enhancement of the role of the organizations of the Women's Union of Albania in solving the problems the Party is facing for the complete emancipation of women requires, above all, a deeper insight into its own problems on the part of its leading organs and organizations, giving up for good the usual and injurious methods of practice. The organizations of the Women's Union of Albania should make a better combination of the ideological, educative struggle for the emancipation of women with the practical struggle of solving certain problems like that of a more cultured life in the countryside, of bringing up children, of cleaning the dwelling and working centres and so on. They should strengthen their relation with the broad masses of women, with their work and their daily life so as to have a closer view of the anxieties and opinions of the women and to organize their work to comply with the categories of women and their problems. The Women's Union of Albania should devote more attention to the women of the rural regions, to organizing all-round political and organizational, cultural and social assistance for them by sending time and again the best women activists of the city to them.

The successful fulfilment of the grand tasks we are outlining at this plenum of the Central Committee depends to a large extent on the method of work of the Party or-

ganizations and committees as well as those of the masses, on their ability to organize the work of carrying them out. Therefore, further improvement of the revolutionary method and style of work, as the Party has repeatedly recommended, is one of the tasks of primary importance for us.

This requires that the Party organizations and committees as well as those of the masses should not view things superficially, but should delve deep into their essence, they should not only engage in the practical struggle against customs that degrade women, but fight the concepts that have given birth to them, and every cause which keeps them alive. The Party organizations and committees should keep away for good from empiricism which characterizes their work in many cases, and should delve deep into the reality of our country and the materials of our Party, and into the classics of Marxism-Leninism and in this way, draw more theoretical generalizations from our practice and open wider horizons for themselves and for the people.

Considering that the further emancipation of women has ideological, economic, organizational and administrative aspects, the combination of the ideological work with the economic and administrative measures, giving priority to the former, is of major importance to the method of the work of the Party organizations and committees, of the organizations of the masses and the state organs. Political and ideological work outlined and supervised by the Party is the principal fac-

tor in fighting with success all customs and concepts that lie in the way of the solution to the problem of emancipating women. But this should be as concrete and militant as possible. The Party has repeatedly spoken against customs that degrade women, but when the grass-root organizations of the Party participated in criticism and self-criticism within the Party, when conflicting views came to grips with one another in exchanges of opinions and discussions, when these problems were laid out openly and the people and the masses themselves rose up to fight, then the fire was lit and this unprecedented revolutionary drive burst forth. It behooves the Party to make wide use of this revolutionary method to form public opinion, to carry out the mass line in the class struggle for the emancipation of women.

In order to make the problems of women the problems of the Party and society, to organize a more serious and scientific study of the problems of women, the Political Bureau has issued instructions to set up special commissions to work with women in the regional Party organizations and committees and under their direct supervision, and proposes to the plenum to set up a similar commission at the Central Committee of the Party. The creation of these commissions should be understood aright and considered an organizational measure of major importance to help strengthen the role of leadership of the Party in the struggle for the emancipation of women, and its concern about the problems of women. Their establishment should in no way push

aside or replace the great role of the Women's Union of Albania just as it should not push aside and replace the role of the Party organization and committees themselves.

The problem we are taking up at this plenum is of decisive importance to the further progress of our socialist homeland. The complete emancipation of women is one of the highest aims and one of the most fundamental tasks of our Party, in our struggle for the triumph of socialism and communism. Achievements attained so far in this field, opportunities that have been created by the socialist development of the country as a whole and the major revolutionary movement our Party has sparked for the emancipation of women, allow us today to raise to a new and higher level our fight for the complete emancipation of women. The Central Committee of the Party expresses its deep conviction that our people, men and women, peasants and city folk, like sworn patriots, progressive and revolutionary people, united around the Party and under its leadership, will muster all their efforts and render their fullest contribution to ensure women their full equality in life and to give them the place and great role they deserve in our new socialist society.

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