

**WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!**

**NINA POPOVA**

*Women in the  
Land of Socialism*

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# FORWARD

The great Soviet people have every reason to be proud of the way the woman question has been solved in the USSR. For centuries the position of women in Europe, Asia, America and Africa has been one of dependence and subordination. Under capitalism the lot of working women is rendered still worse by ruthless exploitation in factories and mills, the joy of motherhood darkened by poverty more than ever before, increased child mortality and increased prostitution.

The ruling classes of capitalist countries and their hired agents exalt bourgeois so-called "democracy" to the skies. But the fact remains that under capitalism the great majority of women are inhumanly exploited and they suffer from numerous disabilities, from restrictions of their rights in public and political life, from degrading marriage and divorce laws which place women in a humiliating and inferior position to men, from economic dependence and household drudgery.

Marxism-Leninism, which has become the banner of liberation for millions of working people the world over, pointed out the correct way to solve the woman question. Lenin and Stalin led the working men and women of our country to victory over Tsardom and capitalism.

In the fire of relentless battles fought by the working class under the leadership of the great Party of Lenin and Stalin, the first socialist state in the world was born.

Under the wise leadership of the Bolshevik Party, the Soviet people travelled a glorious and heroic path, in the course of which they have done away with capitalism and have built up socialism in our country.

From the backward country it used to be, our Motherland has become transformed into a mighty

industrial and collective-farm power, the home of the most progressive culture in the world, a model of true democracy, and an impregnable stronghold of socialism.

The great achievements which the Soviet system brought the working people have radically altered the position of women.

The Soviet system abolished all legal restrictions imposed upon women and granted them equal rights with men in all fields of government, economic, cultural and public and political life. Women became free and economically independent. The Bolshevik Party elevated women — workers and mothers — and awakened the great creative power latent in them.

“In Soviet times a new generation has grown up and is beginning to spread its eagle wings.”

“It must be admitted that one of the greatest achievements of our revolution is the new spiritual make-up, the intellectual growth of our people, as Soviet patriots. This is true of all Soviet people, in town and in countryside, of those engaged in physical labour and those engaged in mental labour. That is, indeed, a supreme achievement of the October Revolution, an achievement of epochal significance.”

“The Soviet people are not what they were thirty years ago.” (V.M. Molotov.)

These words fully apply to Soviet women.

Masters of the country on a footing of equality, women, along with men, built the majestic edifice of socialism, and in the years of trial during the war, they defended the honour and independence of their country. They contributed their full share to the historic victory over fascist Germany and imperialist Japan. And today they give all their strength and knowledge to the work of fulfilling and exceeding the post-war Stalin five-year plan, to the work of building communism in the USSR.

The share of Soviet women in the world-historic victories of socialism in the USSR is enormous. They



are a great force in Soviet society, active participants in the political, economic and cultural life of our country.

Women's high position in Soviet society, the position they have won under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, has placed them, together with the rest of the Soviet people, in the vanguard of the progressive forces of mankind.

Soviet women deservedly enjoy the respect of all freedom-loving peoples who perceive in them a powerful force in the fight against reaction and warmongers, for a lasting and stable peace, for democracy and for the great progress of all mankind.

The successful solution of the woman question in the USSR is eloquent, irrefutable evidence of the advantages of the Soviet social and state system over capitalism; it shows that only the path of Lenin and Stalin, the glorious path to communism, leads to freedom and happiness for the people, to freedom and happiness for mankind.

# I. THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION BROUGHT WORKING WOMEN FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS

Ever since the dawn of history, when private ownership of the means of production first appeared, women's position in society has been an inferior one. Engels traces women's dependent position to the rise of class society, which at the various stages of its development produced various forms of inequality and social disabilities. The first class antagonism which appeared in history, he wrote, coincided with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in individual marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male. Women of the exploited classes, besides being degraded and kept in an inferior position to men, shared the hard lot of their class — first as slaves, then as serfs and lastly as proletarians obliged to sell their labour-power to the capitalist.

From the slave societies of ancient times through to present-day capitalism the ideologists of the ruling classes have always argued, in accordance with the interests of the exploiters, that the existing form of exploitation and the existing order are “just,” “wise” and “natural.” They have spoken of “immutable laws of nature,” which, they have asserted, destine some to be rich and rule, and others to be poor and be ruled. The same arguments are used to justify the inequality and subjugation of nations. The exploiters have always found it convenient to claim that “nature” justifies exploitation.

All through the history of class society the shameful attitude towards women as inferior beings, inherently

incapable of attaining the intellectual level of men, has prevailed. For two thousand years, wrote Maxim Gorky, the church and the state have instilled into women the belief that she is second-rate, and this idea prevailed, poisoning the minds of people. Women were treated as perpetual minors.

The ideologists of the ruling classes have filled innumerable volumes in the attempt to prove man's "right" to rule over women, to justify the subordinated and degrading position of women, to implant in women the false idea of the deficiency of their sex and the slavish psychology that this idea engenders. The champions of the reactionary bourgeoisie cynically assert that nature itself created woman inferior to man, made her subordinate to man, unfit for public activities, her interests confined to the family, the kitchen and the church.

Lenin summed up the position of women in capitalist countries in the following words: "It is the business of the bourgeoisie to promote trusts, to herd women and children in factories, to torture them there, to corrupt them, to condemn them to extreme poverty."<sup>1</sup>

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Hard and devoid of hope was the life of women in tsarist Russia. For the post-revolutionary generation of Soviet people, who have not known the yoke of the tsarist autocracy and life under the bourgeoisie and the landlords, fully to appreciate the freedom and equality women enjoy in our country today, they must be told about women's hard lot in the past. The equality of women was won by our people in battle and in labour under the leadership of the Communist Party. The girls of the Soviet Union, said Maxim Gorky, can realize and

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XIX, pp. 316-17.

appreciate all that the Bolshevik Party has achieved in the struggle to better the conditions of the people, only if they know about the hard lives their mothers and grandmothers led.

Especially hard were the conditions of women factory workers and farm labourers in tsarist Russia. In Russia, as in other countries of Europe, America and Asia, the increasing use of machinery reduced the need for big muscular strength in the factories. The capitalists were not slow to take advantage of this fact and began to employ women and children in large numbers, exploiting them most ruthlessly, forcing them to accept lower pay than men for the same work, and employing them on the least skilled jobs.

However, this influx of women into industry did not improve the well-being of the worker's family, for according to the law of value operating under capitalism the value of labour-power is determined by the minimum required to keep the worker and his family alive. Therefore, the more women the capitalists employed the more they lowered the wages of men workers.

There were no laws to protect the labour of women and children, not even elementary provisions for mother and child welfare. Women and children worked 13-15 hours a day. This system of appalling exploitation reduced the woman worker to the status of a mere slave. Chronic unemployment and starvation, inevitable under capitalism, bred prostitution, which often involved even children.

In tsarist Russia the wages of a man working in a factory were not sufficient to pay for the bare subsistence of his family. The wages of women workers, according to data compiled by Professor I. Yanzhul, well known in his day, averaged about one-half of what was paid to men. Svyatlovsky, a factory inspector in the Kharkov area, reported that the average wage of a

woman worker was 71/2 rubles, of a man — 141/2.

The capitalists thought only of their profits and flagrantly disregarded the most elementary requirements of women workers. There was no maternity leave, nor were nursing mothers given time off to nurse their infants. Capitalist methods of production rapidly ruined the health of working women, and this had a disastrous effect on the physical condition and development of their children. The barbarous conditions under which millions of working women lived resulted in an abnormally high death rate among children.

“How inhumanly working mothers were treated in tsarist Russia!” wrote Leningrad working women in a letter to Comrade Stalin. “If a woman became pregnant she was driven from the factory. Working women therefore concealed their pregnancy, tortured themselves until they were driven mad with pain, and frequently gave birth right in the shop. Immediately after childbirth the women would have to go back to work... what can be more terrible than a mother not wanting her child, and there were any number of working women who cursed their children.”

As a rule working women received no medical assistance at childbirth.

The condition of peasant women in old Russia was no better than that of the working women of the cities. A peasant woman had no right to own land. This alone was sufficient to deprive her of all rights and place her in a position of subservience in the village and in her home. She knew neither rest nor respite. Her back was ever bent in hard work for the landlord and the kulak, in the fields, in the house and in the barnyard.

An especially profound and vivid description of the condition of the peasant woman before the revolution has been given by Joseph Stalin:

“Indeed, just stop and think, what was the status of

women formerly, in the old times. Before a woman was married she was regarded, so to speak, as the lowest among the toilers. She worked for her father, worked without respite, and still her father reproached her, saying: 'I feed you'. After she was married, she worked for her husband, doing what her husband compelled her to do, and he too reproached her with the same words: 'I feed you.' The woman was the lowest among the toilers in the village."<sup>1</sup>

The following contract, which the women employed on the estate of Count Potocki had to sign, provides a graphic illustration of the unbridled power of the landlords and the system of inhuman exploitation of women farm labourers.

I, a peasant woman from the village... of my own free will, contract to work on the estate of Count Potocki for a period of 144 working days, without bread, doing any kind of farm work I am told to do, for a wage of 34 rubles for the whole time. I have received an advance of 10 rubles, the remainder to be paid to me later, in accordance with what I shall have earned. I agree:

- 1). To work from sunrise to sunset.
- 2). If I leave work without lawful excuse I will refund double the advance and forfeit my wage for the work done.
- 3). I undertake to report for work whenever I am summoned.
- 4). If summoned to work on a Sunday or a holiday I have no right to refuse.
- 5). If I leave the estate without permission on a holiday or on a weekday I must work off the time.
- 6). If I get sick or die my family must work for the agreed period in my stead.
- 7). Under no circumstances may I leave my work

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<sup>1</sup> Lenin and Stalin, *Collection of Works for the Study of the History of the CPSU(B)*, Russ. ed., Vol. III, P. 642.

before this contract expires.

I am aware of the above conditions and sign my name thereto.

This outrageous contract bound the labourer even after death.

The few paltry laws protecting female labour, enacted after a stubborn struggle, were not observed at all whenever a lull in the labour movement set in.

The inhuman capitalist exploitation of women in tsarist Russia was further aggravated by the survivals of feudalism in the country's economy, in the home and in the social and political organization. Women were denied electoral rights. They were excluded from political life. The tsarist civil service regulations banned women from "clerical or other positions in all government and public offices in which positions are filled by appointment or by election."

The laws defining matrimonial rights and duties were most humiliating to the women. "The wife's duty is to obey her husband, who is the head of the family," reads Article 107, Volume X of the Code of Laws of the Empire of Russia, "to love and respect him, to submit to him in everything, to minister to his needs in every way and to show him every mark of attachment, for he is master in the home." "The wife is in duty bound to comply above all with her husband's wishes. If the husband changes his place of residence the wife is obliged to follow him." "A woman may not seek employment without the permission of her husband." These are all statutes of the tsarist code.

A married woman did not have her own passport but was registered in the passport of her husband. She had no right to dispose of her property. All this made women still further dependent on men.

As a rule, tsarist laws did not permit women to act as guardians of minors. Guardians were often appointed for children even while their mothers were alive. Girls

were in the complete power of their guardians, who had full control over their property until marriage. It often happened that a guardian, unwilling to lose the income from the property of his ward, would refuse to allow her to marry.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin scathingly described marriage and family law in tsarist Russia as extremely odious, base and hypocritical.

Among the papers of an old Ryazan physician which are now in the town archives there is a description typical of the condition of children in pre-revolutionary Russia.

“Yesterday I was called to some sick children on Kasimovka Street. The oldest girl, Zina, seven, has the grippe. Lyuba, age five, and Liza, two, have the whooping cough. A five-month-old baby is sick too. The oldest boy, Kolya, age eight, lives with a relative, because there are too many mouths to feed at home. The father, a typesetter, died a month ago. The family has no means of support whatsoever. The mother, who used to be a village schoolteacher, cannot find any suitable work. The temperature in the house is no more than 80. They don’t heat the stove — there is only enough wood to last till tomorrow. The children shiver with cold, cough all the time and ask for food.”

Capitalist oppression of women in industry, the hard lot of the peasant woman who owned no land, the inferior position of women in society, their subservient status in the home combined to make women in pre-revolutionary Russia culturally backward and bowed down. Only 13% of the women in pre-revolutionary Russia had the opportunity of gaining an education, and these were chiefly from families of the privileged, wealthy sections of the population — the nobility, bourgeoisie, government officials and the clergy. Almost all working and peasant women were illiterate.

The condition of Russian women was wretched, but



that of the women of the non-Russian nationalities in outlying regions of tsarist Russia was truly appalling. To the national-colonial oppression of tsarism and the yoke of the Russian bourgeoisie and the native landlords were added the traditions of feudalism, slavery and patriarchy which were strong in the Eastern colonial regions of old Russia. Women were kept in seclusion and had to wear the horsehair veil in public. Polygamy, the marriage of minors and the sale of small girls as “brides” were common practices. This backwardness was not only the result of the history of the East, but was due also to tsarism’s brutal national policy.

The Uzbek, Turkmenian, Tajik, Kazakh, Azerbaijan women, as well as the women of all the other nationalities oppressed by tsarism, were beings without any rights, mere chattel at the disposal of their masters. Illiterate, locked in the house of father or husband who had the power of life and death over them, they led a miserable existence. “Many were the tears that watered the lands of Bokhara,” says a letter written by working women of Central Asia to the women of Transcaucasia. “Those tears, shed all through life, from birth to death, can never be forgotten... In the Bokhara of the Emirs a woman had five masters: her first master was God, her second master was the Emir, her third master was her employer, the man who owned the land and the water, her fourth master was the mullah and her fifth — her husband. We were sold for money, for rice, exchanged for all sorts of commodities; while still children we were given away in marriage to old men who already had several wives. We were the slaves of our husbands.”

In terse, official language, documents preserved in our state archives paint a shocking picture of the attitude to women and children in the outlying regions of tsarist Russia. Here, for example, is a statement submitted to the town court of Kuba (Azerbaijan) by a resident of a nearby village, Nagy Karbimar Nur

Aliogly: "Concerning my serf and her four small children, namely: Naringyul, her daughters Gaibat and Saibat, her sons Karchagi and Fatulla; these five peasants I have voluntarily sold to Lieutenant Mahmed-Hanbek, resident of Kuba, for 500 rubles in silver, and therefore he, Mahmed-Hanbek, has the right to the possession of the above-mentioned peasants."

Right up to the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet government in these regions, the women of the non-Russian border districts were mere slaves. Their whole world lay within the narrow confines of the family; their fathers and husbands had unrestricted power over them.

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Despite their subordinate position and the shameful attitude of the exploiters towards them, women furnished many an example of patriotism, courage and pluck in the struggle for freedom and progress even under the conditions of class inequality. While, on the one hand, the medieval *Domostroi*<sup>1</sup> recommended that women be kept under rigorous restraint, Russian folk-epics extolled the deeds of courageous women whose bravery was equal to that of the heroes of old. Vasilisa Kozhina and Nadezhda Durova covered themselves with glory in the Patriotic War of 1812. Even in the backward East, Tutibikeh, the wife of a progressive Azerbaijan statesman, Fatali-khan of Kuba, directed the defence of the fortress of Derbent in the eighteenth century.

The degrading, subservient position of women in tsarist Russia could not but evoke protests on the part of the progressive section of Russian society. Many a stirring page in the works of the foremost

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<sup>1</sup> *Domostroi* — a Russian book of the sixteenth century laying down the rules of household management and family life for the wealthy sections of the population. — *Trans.*

representatives of advanced social thought in Russia — Herzen, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky — was dedicated to the struggle against the oppression of women. Belinsky vehemently denounced the ruling classes: “Your attitude towards women,” he wrote, “is purely utilitarian, almost commercial. All she is to you is capital plus interest, a village, a house with an income; lacking that, she is a cook, laundress, nurse; at best an odalisque.” A.I. Herzen wrote that a “world of universal interest” is open to a man — work, public activities, art — but a woman’s world is confined to the family and to housework. “The poor woman has nothing but her family life... her world is limited to the bedroom and the kitchen. It is a strange thing — nineteen centuries of Christianity have not succeeded in teaching regard for woman as a person. One would think it much more difficult to comprehend that the earth revolves around the sun, yet after some argument about it the matter was settled; but that a woman is a human being just doesn’t seem to penetrate the mind.”

A.N. Dobrolyubov pointed out that the spiritual and economic enslavement of women was the result of the entire system of relations in contemporary society. Like all the finest, most progressive people of those times, he voiced his angry protest against the enslavement of women; he regarded this enslavement as a characteristic feature of a society based upon the supremacy of one person over another, of the husband over the wife, of man over woman.

N.G. Chernyshevsky, one of the greatest Russian revolutionary democrats, declared that when man recognized the equality of woman he would cease to regard her as his property. Many pages of his novel *What Is To Be Done?* deal with the means of achieving economic and intellectual independence for women.

The ideas of Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky were like a shining beacon to the democrats and enlighteners

of the peoples of Transcaucasia, Central Asia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia. The fight against the autocracy and serfdom was the common cause of the Russian progressives and the foremost representatives of the non-Russian nationalities. In the nineteenth century they were drawn closer together, ideologically and politically, in what amounted to a united front. And it was the influence of the great Russian thinkers that led M.F. Akhundov, one of the most outstanding nineteenth-century enlighteners in the East, to voice his impassioned protest against the slavery in which Mohammedan women were held.

However, these representatives of progressive Russian social thought in the last century could not fully fathom the causes of the subjugation of women and were, therefore, unable to point out the road mankind must follow in order to achieve the emancipation of women.

Only revolutionary Marxism, only the Party of Lenin and Stalin could solve this problem both in theory and in practice. It was solved on the basis of the truly scientific principles that “where there are landlords, capitalists, merchants there can be no equality between men and women, even in law.”<sup>1</sup>

Equality for women can be ensured only by a fundamental change in the social relationships of the old bourgeois-landlord world.

Leninism absorbed all the best traditions of the Russian revolutionary democrats of the nineteenth century, but freed them of the imperfections due to the historical conditions, laid bare the true causes of the inferior position of women in society and showed women the way to emancipation. Leninism exposed the lies of the scientific flunkeys who deliberately slandered

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXV, p.

women, attributing their unequal position to “nature” and asserting that women “always” have been and always will be inferior.” Leninism showed that the inequality and oppression of women is rooted in class inequality and caused by the system of private property and the exploitation of man by man.

Marxism, according to Stalin’s definition, is the scientific expression of the fundamental interests of the working class. The utopian socialists based their theories on a feeling of sympathy for the sufferings of the working class. Marxism-Leninism, which is the most humane of all social theories that ever existed, rose much above mere sympathy for the sufferings of the workers. It discovered the laws of social development and on this basis revealed in all its grandeur the mission of the proletariat as the class destined by history to head the movement for social progress and for the emancipation of all mankind. That is why only the founders of scientific communism were able to point out how to achieve real equality for women. Marxism-Leninism proved that sympathy and pity alone for women would never gain this goal, which can only be achieved by women joining the struggle of the working class for socialism, for the overthrow of the social system based on class inequality, on the exploitation of man by man.

Revolutionary Marxism closely links the fight for the emancipation of women with the general fight of the proletariat for its liberation, for the abolition of class society and for the victory of communism.

From the very beginning of the Russian revolutionary working-class movement, the most courageous and class-conscious women from among the workers and the intelligentsia joined the ranks of the Bolshevik Party. Any number of historical facts refute beyond question the reactionary theory that nature has fitted women for certain vocations only and that they are

incapable of taking part in creative, public and government activities. Women have always taken an active part in the great movements for liberation in history and have contributed greatly to historical progress.

“There has not been a single great movement of the oppressed in history in which working women have not played a part. Working women, who are the most oppressed of all the oppressed, have never stood aloof, and could not stand aloof, from the great march of emancipation. We know that the movement for the emancipation of the slaves had its hundreds and thousands of women martyrs and heroines. Tens of thousands of working women took their place in the ranks of the fighters for the emancipation of the serfs. And it is not surprising that the revolutionary movement of the working class, the most powerful of all the emancipatory movements of the oppressed masses, has attracted millions of working women to its standard.”<sup>1</sup>

Since its establishment, the Bolshevik Party has consistently followed Lenin’s precept that working women and peasant women must be taught to fight together with their brothers and husbands against tsarism and capitalism in order to achieve their full emancipation.

The Party of Lenin and Stalin, intimately bound up with the people, not merely in word but in deed, was the only party that persistently demanded full economic and political equality for women. No other party fought so resolutely and boldly against the enslavement of women as did the Bolshevik Party. As far back as in 1903, at the Second Congress of the RSDLP, demands for the franchise for women, for the protection of female labour

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<sup>1</sup> *Joseph Stalin, A Short Biography*, Moscow 1947, pp. 102-03. (All references are to English editions, unless otherwise stated. — Ed.)

and of working mothers and their infants were included in the Party program.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin pointed out that the experience of all emancipation movements shows that the success of a revolution depends on the extent to which women participate in it.

Lenin and Stalin taught that only a movement in which working women — factory hands and peasants — participate is a truly mass movement. They therefore attached great importance to the task of organizing women, of rallying them around the Bolshevik Party and of enlisting their participation in the fight for the abolition of the system of exploitation. It was a difficult task, because women were then the most backward section of the working population, the most inexperienced in the political respect, and it was they that had to be enlisted in the greatest emancipatory movement in history, that of the proletariat led by the Communist Party.

Prompted by their own class interests, the capitalist exploiters made various attempts to arrive at a bourgeois “solution” to the woman question. Bourgeois political parties strove to isolate the struggle of working women from the class struggle of the proletariat as a whole, to lure proletarian and peasant women away from the class struggle with flowery talk about “women’s common cause” and bourgeois-feminist illusions divorced from the underlying facts of social life. One of the harmful illusions which the movement known as feminism sought to spread was that women could attain equal rights with men without fighting for a radical, progressive change in the social system. The bourgeois feminists tried hard to make working women blind supporters of capitalism and of the imperialists’ colonial policy, to convert them into a women’s guard of capitalism.

By isolating the women’s movement from the fight

for social progress the bourgeoisie aimed to weaken women's efforts in the fight for freedom. The bourgeois feminists flaunted the flag of purely feminine interests and made a great deal of noise about political rights for women and about their right to education, ignoring the fact that for millions of women these rights, under capitalism, have no real meaning. At the Fifth International Assembly to Combat Prostitution one of the suffragette ladies expressed her admiration for the police surveillance over "fallen" women, "but all she had to say about raising the wages of working women was that they do not deserve better wages."<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the bourgeois-feminist movement distracted the attention of women from their chief enemy, the capitalists and the landowners. They insisted that not the exploiters but men in general are responsible for women's subservient position. The bourgeoisie never could, nor can it, solve the woman question, for its rule is based on social inequality and class oppression. Even in a period of revolutionary upsurge in France in 1792, the bourgeois Convention opposed equal rights for women.

The Bolshevik Party's struggle against bourgeois feminism was a struggle to free women from the influence of the bourgeoisie, to reveal the harmfulness of bourgeois-feminist ideas and illusions, to expose the efforts of the bourgeois-feminist organizations to keep the working women out of the class war waged by the proletariat.

The Bolshevik Party surmounted all difficulties. Under its leadership, the working women of Russia organized in ever-increasing numbers and joined in the class struggle, in the struggle to overthrow the rule of the landowners and capitalists.

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XVI, p. 516.



Women took an active part in many “riots” and strikes, as, for instance, at the Krenholm Textile Mills in 1872, in Orekhovo-Zuyevo and at the Yaroslavl Textile Mills in 1885, in numerous strikes in St. Petersburg and in other Russian cities. In those years and in the years that followed women were very active in strikes, and in the mills where female labour was widely employed they frequently took the lead in the struggle.

Marfa Yakovleva, a working girl, played a prominent part in the famous strike at the Obukhov munitions plant in St. Petersburg in 1901. She fought fearlessly on the barricades, was arrested and put on trial. Lenin wrote in an article entitled “Penal Servitude Rules and a Penal Servitude Sentence”: “The memory of our heroic comrades killed and tortured in prison will multiply the number of new fighters tenfold and bring to their assistance thousands, who, like 18-year-old Marfa Yakovleva, will say openly: ‘We stand by our brothers!’<sup>1</sup>

The Bolsheviks succeeded in organizing the women and in training many of them to become excellent revolutionary fighters against tsarism and capitalism. In this way a working-class women’s movement developed in Russia.

The results of the Party’s work in drawing women factory workers and peasants into the revolutionary movement were fully evident in the revolution of 1905. Many women joined the ranks of the Bolsheviks and took an active part in strikes and demonstrations, conducted agitation and propaganda among workers in factories and mills and among peasants in the countryside, helped conceal and distribute illegal literature.

Klavdia Ivanovna Kirsanova joined the Bolshevik Party at the age of sixteen, just before the revolution of

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 289.

1905. For 43 years she was a fiery propagator of the ideas of Lenin and Stalin, a staunch, courageous fighter for the emancipation of the working people, for the cause of communism.

In 1907 Klavdia Kirsanova was imprisoned, but this did not break her spirit. When she was released she worked in the military department of the Bolshevik Party and fearlessly spread Bolshevik ideas among the troops. In 1908 she was arrested again and confined in a fortress. Immediately upon her release she resumed activities in the underground movement. After her third arrest she was exiled to Siberia for life, but soon escaped and continued her work in underground Bolshevik organizations. Again she was arrested. Four years of prison and four years of exile steeled the will of this splendid daughter of the Bolshevik Party. After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution Klavdia Kirsanova was appointed to responsible positions in Soviet bodies and in the Party; during the Civil War she joined the ranks of the Red Army. For many years she held leading positions in Party educational institutions and was a lecturer for the Central Committee of the CPSU(B). During the Patriotic War Kirsanova devoted all her knowledge and strength to the effort to defeat the enemy. Her fiery speeches inspired Soviet people in the rear and at the front to perform heroic deeds in labour and in battle.

Klavdia Kirsanova did much to further the organization of an international women's movement that would unite democratic women all over the world in the fight against reaction and the instigators of a new war. Death, in October 1947, cut short this remarkable life, a life dedicated to work and struggle for the liberation of the working people from exploitation, for the victory of communism.

Klavdia Ivanovna Nikolayeva began to work for a living at a very early age, while still a child. For several

years she worked in printshops as a folder.

Klavdia Nikolayeva was also very young when she took the path of revolutionary struggle. In 1909, at the age of 16, she joined the Bolshevik Party. From that time on Klavdia Nikolayeva was an active underground worker. The tsarist police arrested her many times. Time and again she was exiled and imprisoned, but this only steeled her will. She fought on in exile too. During her exile in the Province of Vologda she conducted revolutionary propaganda among the working women of a linen mill.

Only after the February Revolution was Klavdia Nikolayeva able to return to her native Petrograd. Here the Party delegated her to carry on organizational work among working women.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution Klavdia Nikolayeva devoted herself entirely to work among women. She became head of the women's department of the Petrograd Provincial Committee and of the working women's department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

In acknowledgement of Klavdia Nikolayeva's selfless work the Soviet Government decorated her with the Order of Lenin.

In 1936 she was elected Secretary of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. She visited factories and mills, took an interest in how the workers lived and worked, and with all the passion of a revolutionary called upon them to redouble their efforts to fulfil the tasks set by the Party and the Soviet Government.

From the very first days of the Patriotic War Klavdia Nikolayeva was active in the struggle against the German fascist invaders. She supervised the training of nurses and medical corps women, fixed up rest homes and sanatoriums as hospitals and set up a wide network of children's homes. She was indefatigable in everything she did. Her speeches inspired workers on the home

front to self-sacrificing effort for the cause of victory over the enemy.

Klavdia Nikolayeva died in 1944. Death took her at her post, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and Secretary of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions.

In response to the Bolsheviks' appeal to fight side by side with the men, working women took part in armed uprisings in various Russian cities in 1905.

"In the December days," wrote V.I. Lenin with reference to the Moscow uprising in December 1905, "the Moscow proletariat taught us magnificent lessons in the art of ideologically 'converting' the troops,... when two working girls, carrying a red flag in a crowd of 10,000 people, rushed towards the Cossacks and cried: 'Kill us! We shall not surrender this flag as long as we are alive.' And the Cossacks were disconcerted and galloped away, followed by the shouts of the crowd: 'Long live the Cossacks!' Such instances of courage and heroism must live forever in the memory of the proletariat."<sup>1</sup>

Those were the years when Maria Nikolayevna Kurkina, now on the staff of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, joined the revolutionary movement. Maria Kurkina took part in the general strike of Ivanovo weavers at the age of 18, and from that time on she fought tsarism and the bourgeoisie, always remaining true to the banner of communism.

Led by the Bolshevik Party, proletarian women inaugurated the annual celebration in Russia of International Women's Day, which comes on March 8. The celebration of International Women's Day wakened

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow 1935, p. 350.

the Russian working women to revolutionary consciousness and played an important part in rallying their forces.

A resolution passed on March 8, 1913, at a mass meeting of women in St. Petersburg said: "The proletariat demands that universal suffrage be extended to working women, in order that they too may participate in the struggle for the conquest of political power, which is a prerequisite for the achievement of socialism."

Great revolutionary enthusiasm reigned at the International Women's Day meetings in 1914, held in an atmosphere of sharpened class conflicts. The Bolshevik slogans calling for a struggle against predatory war were the keynote of these meetings. In St. Petersburg working women held mass demonstrations on March 8. The Bolshevik newspaper *Put Pravdy* brought out a special edition with letters and articles from working women in factories and mills. The paper pointed out that March 8 was the concern of the entire proletariat and denounced the Mensheviks who asserted that this day was merely a women's holiday and had nothing to do with the class struggle.

In 1915 the Bolsheviks observed International Women's Day in spite of rigorous police persecution. An illegal proclamation issued by the Party and distributed among the working women read:

"Comrades working women!

"On this day we demonstrate our solidarity. Today working women, breaking their age-old chains of submission, slavery and oppression, proudly join the ranks of the international proletariat in the fight against the common enemy — capitalism.

"Working women! The government has sent our sons to be crucified for capital. So build your organizations, consolidate your ranks in the factories and workshops, in offices and stores, and let us fling our

first mighty cry into the face of insatiable capital:

“Enough of blood! Enough of war! Let the criminal autocratic government be brought to trial before the whole people!”

Under the leadership of the Bolsheviks working women came out into the streets with the slogans: “Down with the imperialist war!”, “Send us our husbands back from the trenches!”, “Bread for our children!” Soldiers’ wives were among the initiators of the anti-tsarist, anti-imperialist popular demonstrations.

The militant protest of women against the imperialist war, starvation and tsardom was an important factor in the revolutionary struggle against the tsar’s government and against the bourgeoisie. In 1917, on International Women’s Day, February 23 (March 8) “at the call of the Petrograd Bolshevik Committee, working women came out in the streets to demonstrate against starvation, war and tsardom. The Petrograd workers supported the demonstration of the working women by a city-wide strike movement. The political strike began to grow into a general political demonstration against the tsarist system.”<sup>1</sup>

The bourgeois-landlord Provisional Government, set up after the overthrow of tsarism, was concerned with clearing the road for the imperialists and continued to wage the imperialist war which was ruining the country. It was evident that the imperialist bourgeoisie could not and would not save the country and carry out democratic reforms.

*Rabotnitsa (The Working Woman)*, a Bolshevik magazine then published, rallied the masses of women to the fight for the revolutionary Bolshevik slogans, called upon the women to join trade unions and the

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*, Moscow 1949, p. 215.

Bolshevik Party, to fight against the imperialist war, against capitalism, and for the victory of the socialist revolution.

“Freedom and Equality for the Oppressed Sex!” was one of the immortal slogans of the October Revolution along with “All Power to the Soviets!”, “Land to the Peasants!”, “Peace to the Nations!”

Rallying around the Bolshevik Party on the eve of the October Revolution, working women marched in the front ranks of the revolutionary army of Lenin and Stalin, trained for the battle against the bourgeoisie, learned to administer first aid and bear arms.

On October 15, 1917, a general meeting of the working women of Moscow passed a resolution declaring that only a government of the Soviets could extricate the country from the difficult straits it was in, bring peace and save the revolution.

During the October uprising working women acted as nurses, managed the feeding centres of the Red Guards and revolutionary units, and took a direct part in the fight against the whiteguard Cadets, patrolled the streets and guarded factories, dug trenches, built barricades and defended them.

The masses of working women fought actively for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the power of the Soviets, both in the period of preparation for the revolution and during the Great October Socialist Revolution. Together with the whole working class, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, they trod the difficult and heroic path of revolutionary struggle which led to the victory of socialism in our country and, at the same time, to the establishment of complete equality for women.

## II. SOVIET WOMEN — EQUAL BUILDERS OF THE SOCIALIST SOCIETY

### WOMEN BEGIN TO TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORK

As a result of the victory of the proletarian revolution in the Soviet Republic “not a trace has been left of the laws that placed women in a subordinate position.”<sup>1</sup>

The great charter of the October Revolution, the Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, heralded the genuine solution of the woman question. No party ever fought for the emancipation of women so consistently as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did and is doing now. “Not a single state, not even the most progressive republic, the most progressive democratic, bourgeois state, has granted women full equality. The Soviet Republic of Russia, on the other hand, promptly swept away *all* legislative traces of the inequality of women *without exception* and at one stroke ensured them full equality before the law,” said V.I. Lenin.<sup>2</sup>

No sooner was Soviet power established than all civil disabilities for women were abolished, and the Bolshevik Party set to work to draw working women and peasant women into the administration of the country.

“We are not utopians,” wrote Lenin just before the

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXIV, p. 468.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXV, p. 63.



October Revolution. “We know that not every labourer or cook could at present undertake the administration of the state... We demand that the class-conscious workers and soldiers should conduct the *training* in the business of state administration, and that this should be begun immediately, i.e., that all the toilers, all the poor should *begin* to be trained to this business immediately.”<sup>1</sup> Lenin, who had deep faith in the creative powers of the people, wrote: “There is no doubt that there is far more *organizing talent* among the working women and peasant women than we are aware of, people who are able to organize in a practical way...”<sup>2</sup>

In a note to J.V. Stalin on State Control, Lenin wrote:

“In my opinion the following should be added to the decree on Control:

1) The establishment of central (and local) organs of workers’ participation.

2) Require by law the systematic participation of delegates from the proletarian population, stipulating that up to 2/3 of such delegates must be women.”<sup>3</sup>

Lenin repeatedly stressed that it is impossible to build a socialist society without the most active and extensive participation of women.

Lenin’s ideas were further developed by Stalin. “The working women,” Stalin said, “the female industrial workers and peasants, constitute one of the biggest reserves of the working class, a reserve that represents a good half of the population. Whether this female reserve goes with the working class or against it will determine the fate of the proletarian movement, the victory or defeat of the proletarian revolution, the victory or defeat

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow 1935, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol.ed., Vol. II, Moscow 1947, p. 499.

<sup>3</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXIX, p. 379.

of the proletarian government. The first task of the proletariat and of its vanguard, the Communist Party, therefore is to wage a resolute struggle to wrest women, the women workers and peasants, from the influence of the bourgeoisie, to politically educate and to organize the women workers and peasants under the banner of the proletariat.

“But the working women,” Stalin went on to say, “are something more than a reserve. They may become and should become — if the working class pursues a correct policy — a regular army of the working class operating against the bourgeoisie. To mould the female labour reserve into an army of women workers and peasants fighting shoulder to shoulder with the great army of the proletariat — that is the second and all-important task of the working class.”<sup>1</sup>

The wisdom and perspicacity of Lenin’s and Stalin’s approach to, and solution of, the woman question can be fully appreciated now that, with socialism victorious in the USSR and the country advancing gradually towards communism, we see what a great role women have played and are playing in these achievements.

The Bolsheviks possess a “magic means,” V.I. Lenin wrote, whereby, with one stroke, they can multiply the strength of the state apparatus tenfold, a means which no capitalist state has or can have. “This magic means is to get the toilers, the poor, to share in the day-to-day work of governing the state.”<sup>2</sup>

Expounding the principles of the Soviet system, which consist in providing wide scope for the initiative and activity of the masses, Lenin repeated time and again that “...it is impossible to draw the masses into politics without also drawing in the women,”<sup>3</sup> for

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<sup>1</sup> *Joseph Stalin, A Short Biography*, Moscow 1947, pp. 103-04.

<sup>2</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow 1935, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 500.

women comprise one-half of the population, and “there can be no socialist revolution unless a vast section of the working women take part in it.”<sup>1</sup>

The working class, guided by the Bolshevik Party, successfully accomplished the tasks Lenin and Stalin set.

The introduction of equal political rights for working women was an important step towards enlisting the participation of the masses of women in state activities. Hundreds of thousands of advanced working women and peasant women became active builders of the new society. The Bolshevik Party took the lead in the Soviet government’s great effort to draw women workers and peasants into political activities. In the autumn of 1918 the “Working Women’s Committees,” which had been set up by the Party organizations, were supplanted by departments for work among women — factory workers and peasants. Their function, besides political education, was to enlist the participation of women in the practical work of government bodies and trade union and cooperative organizations.

In November 1918 the First All-Union Congress of Working and Peasant Women was held in Moscow. Despite the fact that the country was in the throes of the Civil War, 1,147 delegates attended, including delegates representing government office workers, post and telegraph employees and domestic servants. Among the questions discussed were: women’s role in industrial production and in the home, female and child labour, and the tasks of social education. The resolution adopted at the congress declared that it was essential for working women to take an active part in the revolutionary struggle, in all its forms and manifestations.

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXIII, p. 285.

That congress, as Comrade Stalin wrote, “was a landmark in the work of our Party among working women. The invaluable service rendered by that congress consisted in the fact that it laid the foundation for the *organization* of political education among the working women and peasant women of our Republic.”<sup>1</sup>

Questions of work among proletarian and peasant women were discussed at congresses of the Bolshevik Party along with the major problems on the solution of which the fate of the Soviet system depended.

The main points on the agenda of the Eighth Party Congress, held in March 1919, at the height of the Civil War and armed foreign intervention, were the Party Program, the policy toward the middle peasants, problems connected with the building up of the Red Army. The Congress also pointed out the necessity of paying the most serious attention to work among women. The resolution adopted says: “Recognizing the pressing necessity of consolidating our forces by enlisting the participation of working women and peasant women in the struggle for communism and in the advancement of the Soviet system, the Eighth Congress of the Party calls upon all Party Committees to take practical steps to carry out this task.”<sup>2</sup>

Another decision concerning work among women was adopted one year later at the Ninth Party Congress (March 1920), in connection with the discussion of the immediate tasks confronting the Party and the Soviet Government. The Eleventh Party Congress, in 1922, stressed the special importance of enhancing the Party’s political influence among the broadest possible masses of working women and peasant women under the new conditions of life in the country. Every effort should be made, the resolution said, to get women workers to join

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<sup>1</sup> J.V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. V, p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> *Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU(B)*, Russ. ed., 1940, Vol. I, p. 311.

the trade unions, and they should be elected to trade union and Soviet government bodies. The Congress stressed the role peasant women could play in raising agricultural output and in the development of farm cooperatives. The Twelfth Party Congress, held one year later, noted “considerable achievements in the work among women” and pointed out that the Party should “...increase its efforts to draw working and peasant women into work of Party, Soviet, trade union and cooperative organizations...”<sup>1</sup>

The Congress gave special consideration to work among women of non-Russian nationalities.

A resolution “On Work Among Working and Peasant Women,” drafted by the Central Committee of the Party in accordance with a decision of the Thirteenth Party Congress, reads in part: “...the Congress considers it necessary to call the attention of the whole Party to the fact that the present extent of participation of working and peasant women in Party, Soviet, trade union and cooperative development is far from sufficient, and it is therefore of prime importance for the Party to carry on work among working women and peasant women. The conservative attitude towards women, an attitude inherited from capitalist society, must be combatted.

“Our Party organizations should be the first to set an example.

“The construction of socialist society,” as Comrade Lenin said, “will commence only when we, having achieved the complete equality of women, take up our new work together with women relieved from petty, stultifying, unproductive work.”

“It is by unswervingly following this path outlined by the hand of the great leader that the principles of Leninism will be realized in the Communist Party’s

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 522.

work among working and peasant women.”<sup>1</sup>

The Party of Lenin and Stalin attached great importance to the political education of women as a factor contributing to a really basic solution of the woman question, and it held that the way to ensure the political education of women was to get them to participate in the practical work of all Soviet government bodies. In 1920 Vladimir Ilyich Lenin wrote in a message to working women during the elections to the Moscow Soviet:

“What we want is that the working woman should achieve equality with the working man not only before the law but in actual fact. It is necessary for this that working women should take an increasing part in the administration of public enterprises and in the administration of the state.

“In this way, women will learn fast and will catch up with the men.

“Therefore elect more working women to the Soviet, both members of the Communist Party and non-Party women.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1923, in an article entitled “Fifth Anniversary of the First Congress of Working Women and Peasant Women,” J.V. Stalin wrote: “Now, when power is in the hands of the workers and peasants, the political education of working women is of prime importance.”<sup>3</sup>

In the same article, Stalin emphasized that success in industry and in the development of agriculture depended to a large extent on the political awareness and maturity of women, workers and peasants, working side by side with the men in the factories and in the fields. He pointed out that:

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<sup>1</sup> *Resolution and Decisions of the CPSU(B)*, Russ ed., 1940, Vol. I, p. 620.

<sup>2</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXV, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> J.V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. V, p. 349.

“Working women and peasant women are free citizens on an equal footing with men workers and peasants. They vote in the elections to our Soviets and to the management of our cooperatives. They are eligible for election to the Soviets and to the management of cooperatives. The working women and peasant women can improve our Soviets and cooperatives, and strengthen and develop them if they are politically educated. The working and peasant women can weaken and undermine them if they are backward and ignorant.”<sup>1</sup>

A great part in the work of organizing and politically educating the working women of town and village was played by some of the glorious daughters of our people, leading members of the Bolshevik Party who devoted their lives to the heroic struggle which the Party waged.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya is a shining example of a woman who selflessly served her country and fought for the happiness of the people. She was a young girl when she joined the revolutionary struggle — in the days when the Party was just coming into being — and she devoted all her life to the fight for the Party’s cause, for the welfare of the people, for communism.

Almost sixty years ago, in 1890, Nadezhda Krupskaya joined a Marxist circle in St. Petersburg. In the winter of 1894, Nadezhda Krupskaya, who was teaching at an evening Sunday school, met Lenin. She remained the close friend and loyal companion of the great founder of the Bolshevik Party until the last day of his life. In 1895 Lenin united all the Marxist workers’ circles into a League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, and Krupskaya took an active part in the work of this League. She was secretary of the editorial board of *Iskra*, in the days when Lenin was its editor, and later of the Bolshevik paper *Vperyod*, both

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 350.

published abroad. Hers was the difficult job of maintaining secret contacts with the Party organizations in Russia, and she helped in the preparatory work for the Second and Third Party congresses, in both of which she took a most active part. In 1905 she was living in Russia, where, working as secretary of the Central Committee, she took a leading part in the underground Bolshevik Party work. During the years of rabid reaction which followed the Revolution of 1905, Krupskaya was compelled to live abroad. But she maintained close ties with Party leaders in Russia. She was secretary of the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary*, took an active part in the fight against the opportunist Liquidator and Otzovist trends, and maintained contact with the Bolshevik Newspaper *Pravda* (published in Russia) and the Bolshevik group in the Fourth State Duma.

During the imperialist war Nadezhda Krupskaya was very active in the work of rallying the revolutionary forces for the fight against imperialism, against defeatism, and for turning the imperialist war into a civil war. She attended the International Women's Congress in Bern at which the Russian delegates expounded the Bolshevik position on the war.

After the revolution of February 1917, Krupskaya, as a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, conducted extensive educational work among the working people and explained to working women and soldiers' wives the Bolshevik slogans of the struggle for a victorious socialist revolution in Russia.

Krupskaya took part in the work of the Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, which set the aim of an armed uprising to overthrow the government of the imperialist bourgeoisie and to transfer power to the Soviets. She participated in the Great October Socialist Revolution and defended the Soviet government at the fronts in the Civil War. After the victory of the Soviet system and until her death Nadezhda Konstantinovna



Krupskaya took an active part in the construction of socialism in the USSR. She was an outstanding leader in the field of communist education, and a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) and a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Maria Ilyinichna Ulyanova was born in 1878. Her whole life was closely bound up with the life and work of her brother, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (Ulyanov).

Maria Ilyinichna's oldest brother, Alexander, was executed on orders of the tsar's government in 1887. He had taken an incorrect path of struggle, the path of individual terrorism. "The path to follow is a different one," said Vladimir Ilyich, and it was that different path, Lenin's path, that his sister followed.

In those years a working-class movement was just beginning to appear in Russia.

Maria Ulyanova came to St. Petersburg in 1896, at a time when the working-class revolutionary movement was already making great strides. After three years of underground work, she was arrested and exiled to Nizhni Novgorod (now Gorky). When her period of banishment was up she went to Moscow and there flung herself into revolutionary work with still greater energy. In 1901 she was arrested again, imprisoned and exiled, this time to Samara (now Kuibyshev), where she continued the struggle against the autocracy.

After her return from exile in 1904 Ulyanova was so closely watched by the tsarist police that it was impossible for her to engage in any revolutionary work in Russia. That year she went abroad to join Vladimir Ilyich. Maria Ilyinichna helped Lenin in his fight against the Otzovists and the Conciliators. She translated Marx's *Letters to Kugelmann* and took a course at the Sorbonne. In 1910 she moved to Saratov but was soon arrested and expelled to Vologda Province, where she engaged in revolutionary work among the railwaymen and did her full share to strengthen the Bolshevik Party

organizations.

After the revolution, Maria Ulyanova was appointed secretary of the *Pravda* and not long after was made a member of its editorial board. She became editor of *Pravda's* "Working Women's Page," and her articles taught millions of women to fight persistently for the fulfilment of Lenin's precepts. Warm-hearted and alert, she always took a particular interest in problems affecting working and peasant women.

At the Fourteenth Party Congress, Maria Ulyanova was elected to the Central Control Commission and then to the Presidium of the Central Control Commission. At the Seventeenth Party Congress, she was elected to the Bureau of the Soviet Control Commission and was put in charge of the complaints department. In this position, Ulyanova fought for the correct Party line and worked persistently and capably to get all mistakes and distortions in the activities of Soviet organizations rectified.

Maria Ilyinichna Ulyanova died in 1937. Hers was the noble life of a staunch Bolshevik, a life of boundless devotion to the cause of the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

The Party carried on its organizational and educational activities among the masses of working women through the women's departments of its Committees and through the women's sections of the higher Soviet government bodies, which took care of the political and vocational training of women and saw to it that the interests of women workers, mothers and children were protected.

Woman delegate assemblies were another highly effective means whereby the Bolshevik Party conducted its work among women. It was mainly through these assemblies that the Party kept in touch with the broad non-Party masses of working women. In the year that elapsed between the Eleventh and Twelfth Party congresses (March 1922-April 1923), the number of

women participating in the delegate assemblies rose from 16,000 to 52,000. Delegates were sent to work in various offices for a definite period and then reported back to the assemblies.

The appointment of women to take part in the work of various commissions and sections of the Soviets and in the investigation of the work of government offices was one of the means of drawing them into responsible government activity.

In the rural districts, the Party conducted its work among women through village and *volost* delegates' assemblies and through district conferences of peasant women. The following letter, sent to Nadezhda Krupskaya by an uneducated peasant woman from Ryazan Province, gives a clear idea of the specific difficulties the Party encountered at the initial stage of its work of getting peasant women to participate in public life.

"I am now chairman of the mutual aid committee and village women's organizer. I just started this work this year. I have got quite a good deal done in my village. Firstly, I have organized delegates' sections. That was very hard to do. The women of our village didn't want to attend meetings. I asked my *volost* organizer for books and she gave them to me. Then I asked the women to come and listen to them read aloud. I told them it was interesting, but they wouldn't come. They said they couldn't leave their homes alone. So I decided to go to them. I went to each house and read aloud. The women liked it. They asked me to come again. Then I said to them: 'You know what? Let's get the women from ten houses to come together. You will be doing something, while I read aloud.' They agreed. I did this for a long time. Then I suggested that they attend a meeting. I said a speaker would come from the *volost* and it would be very interesting. I persuaded them: and they came. The first time almost the whole village was there. If you

knew how happy I was! But unfortunately, it's hard for me because I am not educated and don't know how to go about these things..."

This letter, truly a human document, shows what striking results were achieved by the Party's practical organizational work among the recently backward peasant women, and what great influence the ideas of Lenin and Stalin gained among them.

The aloofness and extreme individualism peculiar to peasants were becoming things of the past. The peasant woman began to feel that she was a citizen, a member of the great Soviet community. A radical change was taking place in her mentality, a mentality shaped by ages of submission and routine.

The Party of Lenin and Stalin organized special women's clubs in the non-Russian regions for work among the extremely backward Mohammedan women.

All this organizational and educational work carried on by the Party and the Soviet state roused millions of working women of town and countryside to political activity.

In October 1927 an all-Russian congress of women members of urban and rural Soviets and of their executive committees was held. It reviewed the work done in ten years of Soviet government in getting women to take part in the work of all branches of state administration. The results recounted were impressive. In 1927 there were 21,221 women in urban Soviets, 146,251 in village Soviets, 45,741 in *volost* Soviets. About 20,000 peasant women participated in the work of the Peasant Mutual Aid Committees. In 52 provinces 102,146 women were elected people's assessors. The total number of organized women workers and peasants who took part in public activities (delegates) was 620,000.

In just about ten years after the destruction of the foundations on which the bourgeois-landlord society

rested women in our country had become builders of the people's Soviet state on a footing of really full equality with men. The force and wisdom of our Party's policy, the policy of Lenin and Stalin, and practical socialist construction had utterly confounded the assertions of bourgeois ideologists concerning the inferiority of the female sex and put an end to the attitude towards women which had prevailed in class society for thousands of years.

The Soviet Revolution's power of transformation was evident in the changes brought about in women workers and peasants. In her impressions of the congress, published in *Pravda*, Krupskaya wrote:

"The first thing that struck one at the congress was the altered language used by the delegates. Two or three years ago women workers and peasants did not talk that way. Their language has preserved all its originality, but many new ideas and expressions have been added to it. The speakers — poor peasant women and female farm labourers from various republics, women workers from the mines, textile mills, fisheries — spoke boldly and frankly about everything — the good and the bad. These women, with kerchiefs on their heads and their hands roughened by toil, spoke about planned economy, schedules, taxation, practical work, attendance at presidium meetings, farm inventory, the promotion of women, the fight against bureaucracy and red tape, improvement of quality, control, deficits, etc."<sup>1</sup>

## THE MIGHT OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY OF THE USSR

The doctrine of Lenin and Stalin says that women can attain full equality only on the basis of economic and

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<sup>1</sup> N.K. Krupskaya, *Women of the Land of Soviets — Equal Citizens*, Russ. ed., Partizdat, 1938, p. 42.

social emancipation. Engels pointed out that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the re-introduction of the entire female sex into public industry.

The October Revolution destroyed all social, juridical and conventional barriers to the participation of women in public industry. This first premise for the emancipation of women was fulfilled as a result of the victory of the October Socialist Revolution and the abolition of private ownership of the instruments and means of production.

The Soviet economic system created all the conditions required for women to achieve what is most important for their emancipation — economic equality, equal status with men in production and unrestricted opportunities for participation in public industry.

In capitalist society, as Lenin repeatedly pointed out, despite “emancipatory” laws, women remain enslaved and subordinate. The labour-power they sold to the factory owner for a miserable wage was only a slight addition to the man’s income. It did not bring women economic independence, they still remained subjected to men and slaves to household drudgery.

Immediately after the Soviet state was established, tens of thousands of women entered all branches of industry and began to work shoulder to shoulder with their husbands, brothers and fathers helping the young Soviet republic to repulse the foreign interventionists and the white guards and to end the economic chaos and famine. Lenin declared that the success of the Soviet state, its growth and strength, directly depended on the participation of women in public industry.

“This work begun by the Soviet government,” said Vladimir Ilyich, “can be advanced only when, instead of hundreds of women, we have millions and millions of women, all over Russia, taking part in it. Then, we are confident, the work of socialist construction will be safe.

Then the working people will show that they can live and manage without capitalists and without landlords. Then socialist construction will be so firmly established in Russia that the Soviet Republic will have no cause to fear any external enemies in other countries or within Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The process of drawing women into industry advanced most rapidly since 1930, when unemployment was abolished in the USSR. Year after year, especially during the period when socialist industry and collectivized agriculture made gigantic strides forward, the number of women engaged in public production kept increasing. This was in great measure due to Comrade Stalin's efforts. Stalin chose this moment when it was necessary to muster all our people's labour forces to cope with the grand tasks involved in the socialist transformation of the country "...to bring prominently to the fore the question of the status of woman, of her position in society and her contribution to the labour effort as a worker or peasant, and to stress the important role she had to play in public and social life. Having given the problem of women the salience it deserved, Stalin indicated the only correct lines along which it could be solved."<sup>2</sup>

An especially large number of women entered industry during the years of the Stalin five-year plans. The way for the First Five-Year Plan adopted by the Party "...had been prepared by the whole course of development of industrialization and collectivization and it had been preceded by a wave of labour enthusiasm which caught up the workers and peasants and which found expression in *socialist emulation*."<sup>3</sup> This

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXIV, p. 472.

<sup>2</sup> *Joseph Stalin, A Short Biography*, Moscow 1947, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> *History of the CPSU(B), Short Course*, Moscow 1949, p. 365.

was a grand plan for the construction of socialism. The main object of the First Five-Year Plan was to create a heavy industry in the country which would make it possible to re-equip the other branches of industry, agriculture and transportation with modern machinery and reorganize them on the basis of socialism.

The vast amount of work involved in the realization of Stalin's plan to build up the foundations of the socialist system of economy called for additional labour-power in industry. In response to the appeal of the Party and the Soviet government hundreds of thousands of women from the towns and the villages came to work in the factories and mills, in heavy and light industries, on construction jobs, wherever labour-power was needed.

Throughout the country rose the scaffoldings of giant plants of socialist industry under construction. At the rapids of the old Dnieper River work on the Dnieper Hydroelectric Power Station was in full swing. Construction work on the Kramatorsk and Gorlovka iron and steel plants and reconstruction of the Lugansk Locomotive Works had begun in the Donetz Basin. New collieries and new blast furnaces came into being. The Urals Machine-Building Works, the Berezniki and Solikamsk Chemical Works, the huge Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Plant were all built in those years. The erection of big automobile plants in Moscow and in Gorky was well under way, as was the construction of harvester combine plants and the biggest tractor works in the world. A second coal base, the Kuznetsk field, was being developed in the East.

The number of women taking part in this gigantic construction of socialist industry rose steadily, and the dividing line between "men's" and "women's" trades gradually disappeared. The technical re-equipment of all branches of the national economy, the introduction of machinery replacing manual labour, and the establishment of a wide network of vocational training



courses and schools, as well as a system of training novices on the job, contributed to this in great measure. State social insurance for all workers, regulations for the protection of female labour, the growing number of nurseries, kindergartens, maternity centres, public dining rooms, free medical assistance and vacations with pay that could be spent at health resorts, likewise made it possible for more and more Soviet women to enter the industry.

The figures showing the increase in the number of women employed in the national economy (not including collective farms) during the First and Second Five-Year Plan periods speak for themselves:

Years	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Number of women (in thousands):	3,304	3,877	4,197	6,007	6,908	7,204	7,964	8,492	9,357
Compared with 1929 (per cent):	100.0	117.3	127.0	181.8	209.0	218.0	241.0	257.0	283.2

In contrast to the situation in capitalist countries, where the great majority of the female proletariat is employed on badly-paid jobs or doing the unproductive work of domestic servants, in the Land of Socialism there was a rapid increase in the number of women employed in large industrial enterprises. While, as we see from the above table, in the nine years from 1929 to 1937 the number of women employed in the national economy as a whole increased by 6,053,000, i.e., almost tripled, the number of women in big industrial enterprises increased during the same period from 880,000 in 1929 to 3,298,000 in 1937, i.e., nearly fourfold.

Thanks to their status of genuine equality, women in the Soviet Union quickly advanced to jobs requiring the highest technical skill, and found wide scope for their

abilities and every opportunity of developing their talents.

The Party's policy of widely encouraging the teaching of industrial trades to women as well as men yielded excellent results. Here are some figures showing how greatly the proportion of women employed in industries formerly considered men's exclusive sphere increased in the period covered by the first two five-year plans. In 1929, the percentage of women employed in the coal mining industry was 9.4 %, in iron and steel manufacturing — 9.3%, in machine building and metal processing — 10.3%. In 1938 the corresponding figures were 24.5%, 26.3% and 31.1%.

As employees of socialist enterprises women boldly tackled and quickly mastered jobs requiring much skill — they became turners, adjusters, moulders, railway engine drivers, coal-cutting machine operators. They learned to run the most complicated machinery.

More than 4,000 women worked as engine drivers on the railways of the USSR just before the recent war. Not a single woman was then employed on this job anywhere else in the world.

Women took full advantage of the wide opportunities offered them by the Soviet system to acquire higher technical education. The number of women engineers and technicians increased year by year in all the branches of Soviet economy. In 1930 there were 3,600 women engineers and technicians in our industrial enterprises, in 1938 there were 140,000. In eight years the number was multiplied thirty-nine times! The Party boldly promoted capable women to positions of shop managers, factory directors, and other leading positions in industry.

With the Marxist-Leninist theory for its unflinching compass and with Comrade Stalin as its leader, the Bolshevik Party transformed our country into a mighty socialist industrial power, economically and technically

independent of European and American capital. In 1940 Soviet heavy industry produced nearly twelve times as much as in 1913.

The Party accomplished this because millions of working people entered industry fully conscious of the fact that they were builders of a new society. And women made their great contribution to the magnificent successes of socialist industrialization.

Under the five-year plans, from 1928 to 1940, the number of women workers multiplied fourfold. On the eve of the Patriotic War, there were 11,000,000 women employed in industry, transport and on construction jobs — about 40% of all workers employed. Over 170,000 of these women were engineers and technicians.

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As more and more women entered public industry in the Soviet Union, with its prevalent socialist relations of production, and as they acquired skill and knowledge and advanced to positions of responsibility, technical and managerial, the complete and real emancipation of women workers became an accomplished fact.

It was not an easy task to bring this about, but the difficulties were even greater when it came to emancipating the millions of peasant women.

The Great October Socialist Revolution turned over to the peasants over 150,000,000 dessiatines<sup>1</sup> of land which had formerly belonged to the landlords, capitalists, the tsar's family and the monasteries. Under the Soviet system the peasants at last became masters of their own fate. The facts bore out the truth of Lenin's words:

“Every factory from which the capitalist has been expelled, or in which he has at least been curbed by genuine workers' control, every village from which the

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<sup>1</sup> A dessiatine is about 2.7 acres. — *Trans.*

landlord exploiter has been smoked out and his land confiscated, is now, and has only now become, a field in which the workingman can reveal his talents, unbend his back, straighten himself, and feel that he is a human being.”<sup>1</sup>

However, during the first years of the Soviet system, there remained in the countryside, along with the most numerous toiling class in the country, the poor and middle peasants, also the most numerous class of exploiters in the country, the kulaks, or rich peasants. Unlike the towns, which were developing along socialist lines, the villages were still in the grip of private-property relations. Therefore the process of emancipating women and investing them with economic and civil equality on a par with men was much slower and more difficult in the countryside. Peasant women, who comprised the vast majority of women in the country, were generally more backward and ignorant than women industrial workers, and the private-property psychology had a much stronger hold on them. This, naturally, made it all the more difficult to bring equality to women in the rural districts.

The abolition of the tsarist laws, which sanctioned women’s subordination and oppression, at once greatly altered the peasant women’s position. Like all working people they were granted political rights — the right to vote and to hold office. Every opportunity was given them to learn to read and write and to gain an education. Peasant women were drawn into public and government activities. During the periodic redistributions of village community land in old Russia women were not taken into account, and therefore the birth of a girl was regarded as a “visitation of the Lord.” Now, after the October Revolution, women had the same rights as men

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow 1947, p. 257.

in every respect and, consequently, began to feel more independent economically. However, it was only after the collectivization of agriculture, and as a result of it, that peasant women became really emancipated and began to take part in economic, cultural and public life on a footing of full equality with men.

Not long before his death Lenin, with the insight of genius, sketched in his article "On Cooperation" an outline of the means by which millions of petty producers should be led onto the path of socialism. Lenin regarded the struggle to make the countryside socialist as the last and decisive battle against capitalism. "As long as we live in a small-peasant country there is a surer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism," he wrote. The way out, he said, was to build up large-scale heavy industries that could supply agriculture with machinery and, with this as a basis, to reorganize farming on socialist lines. Comrade Stalin developed Lenin's precepts into an integral theory, the theory of the collectivization of agriculture. The Bolshevik Party persuaded the peasants to take the path of collective farming and led the toiling population of the countryside in an offensive against the fiercely-resisting kulak exploiters. Under Comrade Stalin's wise leadership, the Party and the Government put into effect his teaching on collectivization. In the countryside, as in the towns, socialism triumphed.

Collective farming put an end to poverty, pauperism, kulak exploitation; it switched millions of small individual peasant farms to the new, bright road of socialism.

No longer were there millions of poor peasants in the countryside. The collectivization of agriculture was "a profound revolution, a leap from an old qualitative state of society to a new qualitative state, equivalent in

its consequences to the revolution of October 1917.”<sup>1</sup>

During the years of socialist construction an entirely new peasantry arose in the USSR, a peasantry such as the world has never known before. The work of the peasants who have become collective farmers is not based on individual work in tilling small, privately-owned plots with primitive implements, as was the case in tsarist Russia and as is the case now in capitalist countries, but on collective work with up-to-date machinery and the application of scientific methods. This opened up wide vistas for the development of agriculture. The system of collective farming has been the basis of the Bolshevik Party’s epoch-making achievements which have fundamentally changed the social life and psychology of tens of millions of peasants and transformed them into active builders of a new way of life, of new social relationships.

The victory of collective farming brought about great changes in the condition of the Soviet peasantry as a whole and had a far-reaching, beneficial effect on the condition of peasant women. The system of collective farming gave women an equal economic status with men, enabling them to work on the same footing as men and receive the same remuneration for their work.

The system of collective farming freed women from much of the household drudgery. Along with the collective farms, electric power plants, children’s nurseries and maternity hospitals made their appearance in the rural districts. Collective farming brought with it extensive opportunities for cultural advancement. Radio, the village reading room, the library, the club and the cinema gradually became part of the Soviet village scene.

The First All-Union Congress of Collective-Farm

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the CPSU(B), Short Course*, Moscow 1949, p. 376.

Shock Workers demonstrated the great changes and improvements that had taken place in the countryside. Joseph Stalin said in his speech at that congress:

“Look at this congress, at the delegates, and you will realize that women have long since advanced from the ranks of the backward to the ranks of the forward. The women in the collective farms are a great force. To keep this force down would be criminal. It is our duty to bring the women in the collective farms forward and to make use of this great force...

“As for the women collective farmers themselves, they must remember the power and significance of the collective farms for women; they must remember that only in the collective farm do they have the opportunity of becoming equal with men. Without collective farms — inequality; in collective farms — equal rights. Let our comrades, the women collective farmers, remember this and let them cherish the collective-farm system as the apple of their eye.”<sup>1</sup>

Women worked zealously to carry out Stalin’s advice. They encouraged the introduction of machines and learned to handle them. By the beginning of 1941 over a hundred thousand women operated combine harvesters, tractors and other complicated farm machinery.

“In all branches of socialist construction — in industry, transport, agriculture, in science and art — tens and hundreds of thousands of Soviet women show splendid examples of socialist work,” the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) said in a statement on the occasion of Women’s Day, March 8, 1941.

The millions of women engaged in socialist construction have helped strengthen our country and have made a valuable contribution to the cause of

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<sup>1</sup> J.V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow 1947, pp. 450-51.

communism. They, our glorious working women, share with the men the historic credit for having established socialism in the USSR.

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Public ownership of the instruments and means of production, socialist industrialization and the development of collective farming gave rise to a wave of labour enthusiasm which caught up millions of manual and intellectual workers and found expression in socialist emulation. As Lenin foresaw, socialist emulation became an inexhaustible source of energy for the progress of Soviet society, an important method of building up communism. Socialism made the working people the masters of their country and for the first time in history raised the common man, the toiler, formerly enslaved by capitalism, to the status which should be his by right. Labour in the USSR became a matter of honour, a matter of glory, a matter of valour and heroism.

“The working people of the USSR — workers, peasants and intellectuals — had undergone profound change in the period of socialist construction.<sup>1</sup>

The new attitude towards labour as towards a matter of public importance is characteristic of Soviet people. This new attitude manifested itself in the first communist *subbotniks*, in the formation of shock brigades and the splendid achievements of shock workers; in the wave of socialist emulation in response to the call of the Sixteenth Party Conference (1929) for the fulfilment and overfulfilment of the plan in industry, transport and agriculture. Socialist emulation is one of the most wonderful features of the creative effort of the people to realize the Stalin five-year plans.

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the CPSU(B), Short Course*, Moscow 1949, p. 423.



In his pamphlet, "A Great Beginning," about the first communist *subbotniks*, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin wrote:

"It is the beginning of a revolution that is much more difficult, more material, more radical and more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for it is a victory over personal conservativeness, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits that accursed capitalism left as a heritage to the worker and peasant. Only when *this* victory is consolidated will the new social discipline, socialist discipline, be created; only then will a reversion to capitalism become impossible and communism become really invincible."<sup>1</sup>

This radical revolution in the attitude to work developed by leaps and bounds after the inauguration of the five-year plans.

And wherever new giant industrial plants were under construction, in desert steppes and in primeval forests, in bitter cold and torrid heat, Soviet women were to be found working shoulder to shoulder with men, showing splendid examples of a socialist attitude to work.

Many women initiated movements which acquired tremendous significance. Zinaida Troitskaya, for example, started a movement among women to become railway engine drivers. And 200,000 girls enthusiastically responded to the appeal issued by outstanding women tractor drivers for 100,000 girls to take up tractor driving.

Even housewives had the interests of public production at heart. Wives of factory workers, engineers and executives started a movement with the aim of promoting social and welfare work. In the opening speech at an all-Union conference of wives of engineers and executives in heavy industry, Orjonikidze expressed high appreciation of the efforts of these public-spirited

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow 1947, p. 482.

women for cleanliness and order in factories, public dining rooms, clubs, nurseries, children's homes, workers' dormitories. He pointed out that in this way "the daughters our great country, our sisters, have joined the ranks of the active builders of socialism, along with their husbands."

The policy of the Soviet Government and the Bolshevik Party and the emancipatory influence of the collective-farm system awakened tremendous forces latent in the masses of peasant women, helped many of them to reveal their hidden talents. That is why women collective farmers, in step with women factory workers, were in the first ranks of the initiators and heroes of the Stakhanov movement, a movement which opened another glorious chapter in the history of our socialist construction.

"Only collective-farm life," said Comrade Stalin in 1935 at a reception of women shock-worker beet growers, "could make work a matter of honour, could give birth to genuine heroines in the village. Only collective-farm life could abolish inequality and put women on their feet."

Women were the first to raise the banner of socialist emulation for a high crop yield. Their initiative was supported by hundreds of thousands of collective farmers and a nationwide movement developed for Stakhanovite harvests.

As the Stakhanov movement spread, hundreds and thousands of women in town and country joined it. They raised aloft the banner of struggle for increased labour productivity, for a high standard of work, for getting the most out of machinery.

The Stakhanov movement, said Stalin, is a movement of working men and women, which is destined to produce a revolution in our industry.

It was love for their socialist country, devotion to the cause of Lenin's and Stalin's Party, a desire to

contribute the most they could to the noble aim of building a communist society, that spurred Soviet women on to work selflessly and display extraordinary creative ability. Communism is what inspires the desire for great effort. It is the lofty aim which gives rise to the great energy of our people.

## **WOMEN OF ADVANCED SOVIET CULTURE**

During the first years of the Soviet system one of the most serious obstacles to the extensive participation of working women in public and governmental work was their cultural backwardness, a heritage of the past. Under the Soviet system, however, this cultural backwardness of women could not serve as an excuse for keeping them out of the great and creative work of building a socialist society. The Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government held that the quickest way to raise the political and cultural level of tens of millions of women in town and country was to draw them immediately into public production, political life and governmental work, and on the largest possible scale. The rise in the cultural level of women, in its turn, was bound to lend momentum to the cultural revolution in the country and accelerate the process of socialist construction.

For thirty years the Party and the Soviet Government have spared no effort to help women acquire the knowledge and experience which would enable them to take part, along with the men, in the cultural development of the country. The achievements in this respect are so tremendous that at present there is absolutely no dividing line between the contribution made by men and by women in the creation of a new, socialist culture. Sufficient to say, women university and college graduates comprise 42.3% of all the specialists in

our country — i.e., almost half of the country's intelligentsia, the professionals who are helping the workers and farmers build socialism, run socialist enterprises and govern the country. Nothing like this has been achieved, nor can it be achieved, in any capitalist country.

This alone is proof enough that in the USSR the position of women is equal to that of men not only in law but in fact. And the fact that equality has been achieved in the sphere of culture, a sphere in which three decades is an extremely brief period, is of world-historical significance.

A stupendous cultural revolution has taken place in the USSR. Illiteracy among the population has been completely eliminated as a result of the enforcement of the law-making primary schooling obligatory. Millions of workers and peasants have joined the ranks of the intelligentsia. The technical and cultural standards of the workers and farmers, men and women, are steadily rising. The women of our country take full advantage of their right to education, a right guaranteed by the Stalin Constitution.

No other country in the world has such startling achievements to its credit. In capitalist countries, a great number of working-class children are unable to acquire even an elementary education.

U.S. Attorney-General Clark admitted publicly that several million children in the United States do not attend school, and over two million children attend schools which are absolutely inadequate; three million adults have had no schooling at all and about ten million have had such insufficient schooling that they are virtually illiterate.

The fact that the peoples inhabiting the former border districts of tsarist Russia, including their most backward section, the women, have achieved a higher degree of literacy than the people of the United States is

convincing proof that only a socialist system can ensure the true florescence of culture, for the degree of literacy is a most conclusive index of the cultural level of a nation.

The means by which the standard of culture among women improved during the more than thirty years since the establishment of the Soviet system were diverse: women flocked into schools of all kinds, from elementary schools for adults to universities; they participated in administrative work from the bottom up, from the lower rungs in the management of economic, public and governmental affairs to positions of high responsibility as factory directors and heads of whole branches of economy, and to positions of leadership in the central Party, trade union and Young Communist League bodies.

The figures for higher education in the USSR eloquently illustrate the rise in the cultural standard of the masses of women.

The Soviet government inherited from the tsarist times 91 higher educational establishments with 112,000 students — the majority from families of the bourgeoisie and landlords. Compare this with 554,600 students who were admitted to Soviet higher educational institutions between 1938 and 1940. The contrast speaks for itself. Naturally, the number of women students in tsarist Russia was very, very small. Many universities and colleges admitted no women at all. For that matter, what was the use of giving women a college education when under the existing order they would have no opportunity of applying their knowledge?

The Soviet government attached great importance to the development of higher education in the country; it was part of the general plan of socialist construction. The success of the efforts to advance the national economy and of the cultural revolution largely depended on the training of highly-skilled specialists.

The Soviet government fostered the people's desire for knowledge and education and opened wide the doors of colleges and universities to the working-class and peasant youth.

There are now 800 institutions of higher education in the Soviet Union training highly-qualified cadres of the most diverse professions, and there are more students enrolled in them than in all the universities and colleges of Europe taken together.

The steadily developing socialist economy requires an ever-increasing number of college graduates.

The very opposite is to be observed in capitalist countries. There the number of people with college education is diminishing. This is due to unemployment and the absence of a demand for intellectual labour. Thus, for example, in the USA the number of students in 150 technical colleges dropped to one-third, from 110,000 to 38,000, in the period between 1940 and 1946.

Within a short space of time the numerous Soviet colleges and universities graduated 1,500,000 young men and women, a veritable army of intellectuals who came from the ranks of the people, an army which has taken a most energetic part in the immense effort which has transformed our country into the most advanced in the world, into a socialist state, with a mighty industry and great military strength. In the stern trial of the Patriotic War the Soviet intelligentsia, reared and trained by the Soviet system and the Bolshevik Party, fulfilled its duty to its people and to its country with credit.

From year to year the proportion of girls among Soviet students has been increasing. During the first ten years after the establishment of the Soviet system — 1917 to 1927/28 — the number of girl students rose to 28% of the total number of university and college students. By 1939/40 they already comprised 49.3% of the student body. During the war this percentage

increased still further and today women comprise more than half of the student body in social-economic, pedagogical, medical and some other colleges.

Especially noteworthy is the fact that the proportion of women has been steadily increasing in industrial, transport, building and agricultural colleges and now amounts to about 40% of the total.

Thus, almost half of the future leaders in industry are women.

Before the revolution women engineers or technicians were practically unheard of. Fifty years ago there were 848 engineers in St. Petersburg, and only three were women. According to the 1939 census, there were 76,000 engineers in Leningrad (formerly St. Petersburg), and 24,000 of them were women.

Besides those attending regular schools, millions of women and girls learn a trade or profession by attending the numerous evening schools, training courses and circles at factories and collective farms. Correspondence courses are very popular too. At present there are approximately 500 special correspondence colleges and correspondence departments of regular colleges, with over 850,000 students on their rolls, a considerable percentage of them women.

The proportion of women is especially large in the educational and medical fields. There are over two million women working in public education. Women teachers dedicate their knowledge and strength to the noble task of educating the Soviet youth in the spirit of adherence to high principles and of loyalty to and love for their country. Over one million women are employed in the medical services, 126,000 of them physicians, whereas before the revolution there were in Russia two thousand women physicians all in all.

Before the revolution the woman scientist was a rare exception. The students of the Moscow Institute of Ethnography regarded Khalyuzina, who lectured on

ethnography there, with curiosity and amazement. Doctor Tsiklinskaya, a bacteriologist, attracted universal attention when she taught at the Higher Courses for Women.

The world-renowned mathematician, Sophia Kovalevskaya, could obtain no permission to work and teach in Russia. In reply to her request for permission to return to her native land she received the following letter from the President of the Academy of Sciences, Grand Prince Konstantin Romanov: "Inasmuch as our university chairs are closed to women, regardless of their ability or knowledge, there is no place for Madame Kovalevskaya in our country." That was typical of old Russia.

Under the Soviet system science has obtained unlimited opportunities for development, opportunities wider than any that exist or can exist in capitalist countries. In our country science serves the people and therefore boundless vistas open up before it. The Communist Party, the Soviet Government and Comrade Stalin personally devote unflinching attention to the development of science, and see to it that scientists are provided with all the necessary conditions for fruitful work. In thirty years Soviet science has multiplied our country's cultural heritage and enriched all fields of knowledge by great discoveries and outstanding inventions. Soviet science, developing in complete accordance with the tasks of building communism in the USSR, has greatly contributed to the conversion of our formerly backward country into an advanced and mighty socialist power.

And no small share in the progress of Soviet science has been contributed by women, for under the Soviet system they have unrestricted access to scientific research. The number of women engaged in research work has grown steadily and now amounts to approximately half the total number of researchers.



Thirty-five thousand women are doing research work in scientific-research institutes and in laboratories, four thousand of them in the institutions of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Over 600 of the latter hold Master's or Doctor's degrees. During the war about 1,500 women earned their Master's or Doctor's degrees, became professors and docents. Science has ceased to be the privileged field of men.

Soviet women are working with creative ability and talent in all fields of culture. There is not a single scientific, artistic or technical sphere in which women do not freely display their abilities.

One hundred and eighty-seven women have won Stalin prizes in medicine, in physics and mathematics, in history, philology, agricultural and technical sciences, in literature and in art. Stalin prizes have been awarded to dozens of working women and peasant women for important inventions and radical improvements in production methods. Women, Stalin Prize winners, have distinguished themselves in Soviet art — in sculpture, drama, opera, ballet and the cinema.

By the inexhaustible creative powers Soviet women display in all fields of science and culture, by their initiative, political maturity and high sense of social duty, they have disproved the fabrications of bourgeois ideologists to the effect that women's intellectual capacities are limited. Soviet women, who have attained to the pinnacles of culture and knowledge, who are builders of our economy and mothers and educators of the younger generation, are a shining example of high development and advancement.

The Soviet state affords women every opportunity for physical, as well as intellectual, development. "In our country of labour," said V.I. Lenin, "millions of physically strong people are needed, people with strong wills, courage, energy and perseverance. It is to them that the future belongs, with their hands the right to

build new foundations of human society will be won.”

Our physical culture celebrations and parades excite the admiration of the whole world. Of 3,696,000 members of Soviet sports organizations, about 1,700,000 are women. The achievements of Soviet women in international sports meets testify to the high development of physical culture in our country.

Soviet women have brilliantly upheld their country's prestige at the sports stadiums of many countries. Their achievements and records demonstrate to the whole world the superior, all-round development of Soviet people.

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The victorious development of socialist society would have been impossible without the most active participation of women.

We cannot picture the work of our factories and mills, collective farms and state farms, our governmental, Party, economic and public organizations without the participation of women.

We cannot picture successful work in the field of education, of the training of Soviet children, without the participation in this great work of a huge army of women teachers.

Women doctors and other medical workers are an important force in the public health services.

Soviet art owes its florescence in great measure to women, who comprise a good half of the people working in this field of cultural activity.

In his novel *What Is To Be Done?* the great Russian revolutionary-democrat Chernyshevsky made his hero Lopukhov say: “What sure, strong, penetrating intelligence women are naturally gifted with!... The history of mankind would advance... more quickly if this intelligence were active, if it were not rejected and killed.”

And in the same vein A. M. Gorky wrote:

“There is no doubt that if woman were not misdirected in her development, if the circle of her interests were not artificially narrowed, if her duties were not restricted to those of concubine, mother, housekeeper, if she were not held at arm’s length from wide public, cultural and political work, culture would progress twice as fast.”

Only under the Soviet social and state system, only under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, did such unparalleled achievements of women in the technical and cultural fields become possible. The Communist Party and Soviet Government have to their credit truly extraordinary successes in bringing about such wide and active participation of women in the economic and cultural progress of the country.

### III. MOTHER AND CHILD CARE IN THE SOVIET UNION

Women hold a highly respected position under the socialist system, the living embodiment of Leninism, built by our people under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party. The Soviet system has made the right to work a reality, has done away with economic crises and unemployment, and created unlimited possibilities for the improvement of the people's standard of living.

On this unshakable foundation rest the provisions made by the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government for the care of mother and child.

In the first period after its establishment, the Soviet Government was beset by many difficulties. It had to organize the people's war against foreign intervention and internal counter-revolution; the country was in the grip of starvation and chaos. Yet even then it took special measures to ensure the welfare of mother and child.

A Committee for the Protection of Children was set up by the Council of People's Commissars. Love and paternal solicitude for children and the most warm-hearted consideration for the needs of mother and child pervade the decree issued by the Soviet Government in January 1918.

"The lives of two million infants, hardly begun on the earth," the decree reads, "were extinguished in Russia every year due to the ignorance and backwardness of an oppressed people and the callousness and indifference of the class state. Every year two million afflicted mothers watered the soil of Russia with bitter tears, as, with toil-roughened hands, they filled the tiny graves of innocent victims of a monstrous state system, whose death was so senseless.

"After centuries of vain seeking, human intelligence

has finally found the path to that radiant and happy era in which the working class itself is freely establishing such forms of protection of motherhood as will preserve the mother for the child and the child for the mother.”

This decree laid the foundation for the introduction of various measures and regulations for the protection of mother and child, measures which became possible only in our socialist state.

Year by year a more extensive program of measures in this field was put into effect. Numerous laws adopted by the state and decisions passed by trade unions define the rights and privileges of mothers and children.

The Soviet laws ensure hygienic, healthful working conditions and contain special provisions for the health of mothers.

Factory and office administrations are obliged to transfer pregnant women to easier jobs, to work they can do without detriment to their health, and to pay them wages equal to their average earnings for the previous six months. It is against the law to let pregnant women and nursing mothers work nights or overtime.

In addition to the regular dinner hour, mothers are allowed intermissions of at least half an hour in length each, at intervals of no less than 3 1/2 hours, so that they may nurse their infants. No part of their wages is deducted for these intermissions.

Whenever the country was in difficult straits the Soviet Government paid special attention to the needs of mothers and children. During the strenuous, tense days of the Patriotic War, when people worked literally without respite, the Government of the USSR ordered all factory and office managers to give mothers of children under eight a regular weekly free day, and all pregnant women their regular annual vacations, to follow maternity leave if so desired. Even before the war was over the government increased maternity leave from 63 days to 77, with the provision that it may be extended

in cases of abnormal childbirth or of the birth of twins.

In view of the increased mechanization of labour and the improvement of safety devices and working conditions in our industries, the Soviet Government found it possible to permit the more extensive employment of female labour. However, the Soviet law forbids the employment of women on jobs that are too heavy for them or likely to affect their health, as enumerated in a special list. The law makes it the duty of directors of factories and offices in which female labour is widely employed to provide special restrooms for women and a room where women may nurse their infants.

The above-mentioned measures show the concern displayed by the state for the health of working women. The same concern is displayed for the health of mothers on collective farms. The Stalin statute of the agricultural artel (or collective farm) provides that "women shall be relieved from work one month before and one month after confinement, for which period they are to be credited with one-half the average number of workday units they earn when working."

Expectant mothers in the USSR are able to place themselves under the continuous supervision of doctors at free maternity centres for the whole period of pregnancy. There they are instructed on prenatal and infant care.

Before the revolution, only a very small number of women could afford medical attendance at childbirth. On January 1, 1914, there were altogether 6,824 beds in maternity wards and maternity hospitals. Ninety-five percent of the women had no medical assistance whatsoever during childbirth. The result was that 30,000 women died annually in labour.

In the USSR a ramified system of children's institutions has been developed on an unprecedented scale, as the following table shows:

	1914	1937
Number of beds in regular nurseries	550	627,817
Number of maternity centres	9	4,175
Number of visits to such centres per year (thousand)	44	39,300
Number of maternity beds in general and maternity hospitals	6,824	81,342
Number of infant feeding centres (milk kitchens)	none	1,509

The number of maternity homes and maternity wards in general hospitals is so large that practically all expectant mothers get hospital treatment. In 1944, for example, 95% of all pregnant women had their babies in hospitals. In 1941, before the Patriotic War, there were 141,878 beds for expectant mothers in maternity hospitals and wards, of these 61,261 in the rural areas.

Quacks and self-appointed midwives have disappeared from the villages entirely. All women in childbirth are taken care of at the collective-farm maternity hospitals. As a result, childbirth mortality has begun to disappear from the countryside.

Just as in the towns, nurseries have been opened in the rural areas. Besides permanent nurseries open all year round for children whose mothers are employed regularly at state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms, there are additional nurseries open during the busiest agricultural season. In 1946 the total number of places in permanent nurseries was 777,000.

It is interesting to note that as far back as in 1937 the Orekhovo-Zuyevo District, Moscow Region, alone had more maternity centres and three times as many nursery beds as the tsarist government maintained in all Russia.

The young citizen of the Soviet Land enjoys the most solicitous attention from the moment of birth. The infant is under the observation of mother and child centres. There the mother can obtain any expert advice

she needs on the care of the child, can have her baby vaccinated and inoculated against various diseases. The milk kitchens maintained by these centres prepare special vitamin-enriched baby foods.

The centres also have legal advice offices which maintain close contact with trade union and other public organizations. They help the mothers protect their own interests and those of their children.

The assistance rendered mothers by the Soviet state is great and varied. Working women are paid from the state social insurance funds up to 100% of their wages or salaries all through the period of maternity leave. Mothers of large families receive special grants of money. Parents of newborn babies receive childbirth allowances from the social insurance funds for the purchase of layettes and special infant foods.

There are special children's clinics, sanatoriums and forest schools for sickly children over three. Millions of children spend their summers at country homes maintained by the trade unions and at Young Pioneer camps, or at special playgrounds. These institutions combine medical treatment with educational work which broadens the child's knowledge.

The Stalin post-war five-year plan provides for the further extension of the mother and child care program. By the end of the five-year plan period, in 1950, the number of permanent places in nurseries is to be increased to 1,251,000. This does not include the seasonal nurseries which cater to three or four million children every year. This number will be sufficient to meet the needs of all applicants in town and countryside. About ten thousand pediatric specialists will be graduated from medical colleges during the same period.

At the very beginning of the war the Soviet Government took energetic measures to evacuate children from the danger zones in order to save them



from the Hitler hordes. 1,869 children's institutions were opened during the first years of the war in twenty eastern regions of the RSFSR and in the Kazakh Republic. This figure does not include the new children's institutions established in other parts of the USSR. Despite the wartime difficulties, the total number of children's institutions increased. The number of places in children's homes nearly doubled, and there was an increase in the number of milk kitchens, maternity centres and beds in children's hospitals. In October 1942 a decree was issued "On measures to improve the work of the public health services and children's institutions in medical treatment for children and to provide more food for needy children." This greatly improved conditions for children during the war. A chain of special-diet public dining rooms, catering to 502,375 children, was established. Arrangements were made for every town, workers' settlement and district centre to have a pediatric specialist in charge of the work of the children's institutions.

As the war proceeded, and despite the enormous difficulties with which the country was faced, further measures were adopted by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government for the advancement of the welfare of mothers and children. On July 8, 1944 the Supreme Soviet of the USSR promulgated a decree which still further raised the status of mothers in our country.

Under the Soviet system motherhood is glorified; the mother is exalted, she enjoys universal respect and honour, receives every attention and consideration. Motherhood, which used to be, and still is, a heavy and bitter burden for working women under the bourgeois system, has become a proud and noble duty in the Land of Soviets.

By the decree of July 8, 1944, state assistance to pregnant women, mothers of large families and unmarried or widowed mothers has been considerably

increased. Women receive money grants upon the birth of their third child, and a regular monthly allowance in addition upon the birth of the fourth. The amount of these grants and allowances increases with the birth of each new child.

Unmarried mothers also receive state assistance to help them bring up their children. A monthly allowance is paid to such mothers until the child reaches the age of twelve. Or she may place her child in a home where it is brought up at government expense.

In 1940 the Soviet Government spent over 1,000 million rubles for mother and child care, for the protection of female labour, and for the care of newborn infants.

In the period since the promulgation of the Decree on July 8, 1944 till January 1, 1947 a total of 7,300 million rubles was paid out in allowances to mothers for the support of their children, and in the one year 1947 the sum amounted to 6,000 million rubles. In 1945 over 2,000 million rubles was paid out in allowances to mothers of large families.

Here are a few illustrations. Upon the birth of her twelfth child L.V. Timonkina (Lenin District, Moscow), who has been awarded the title of Mother Heroine, received a state premium of 5,000 rubles. By the time this child reaches the age of five the state will have paid her 18,000 rubles more allowances. Besides, in accordance with the law of June 27, 1936, Timonkina received 40,000 rubles for the support of her other children. Matryona Tikhonovna Loshchinova, of the city of Frunze, a mother of ten children, received allowances amounting to 40,750, rubles in the course of three years. Mother Heroine Mirkhalikova, a collective farmer of the Charvodar Collective Farm in the Tajik Republic, who has given birth to and brought up twelve children, received over 80,000 rubles in state allowances.

The Soviet Union is the only country in the world where motherhood and large families are held in such esteem by all. The noble work of mothers in bringing up young citizens is appreciated and exalted by the whole nation. This attitude has found expression in the institution of the title "Mother Heroine," which is conferred on mothers who have brought up ten children and more, and also in the institution of the Order of Maternal Glory and the Maternity medal awarded to mothers of from five to nine children. In eighteen months the Mother Heroine title was conferred on 5,838 Soviet women, and over 750,000 mothers received the Order of Maternal Glory or the Maternity medal.

By the beginning of 1948 the total number of Mother Heroines in the Soviet Union was 24,993. The Order of Maternal Glory had been awarded to 592,604, and the Maternity medal to 1,640,452 women.

The huge, steadily increasing sums expended by the Soviet Government on housing construction and on social and cultural services naturally improve conditions for Soviet mothers and Soviet children every year.

Housing construction in towns and villages was started by the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government on a vast scale as part of the effort to repair the damage caused by the war. Hundreds of thousands of houses have been rebuilt and as many new ones built in the liberated areas of the Soviet Union. Millions of people in the RSFSR, the Ukraine and Byelorussia, made homeless by the war, have moved into new or rebuilt houses.

The expenditures on social and cultural services provided for in the USSR budget for 1948 exceed by almost 10,000 million rubles the expenditures on such services in 1947. There will be many more pupils attending grammar schools than there were before the war, and the number of medical institutions, maternity hospitals and children's institutions will be increased.

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The first decrees of the Soviet Government, which put an end to the degrading forms of marriage relations as laid down in the tsarist laws, ushered in the rise of a new kind of family, the Soviet family, based on woman's equal position in society, on mutual respect and cooperation between husband and wife, on their equal legal status in the family and equal rights regarding the children. In the USSR, where there is no exploitation of man by man and where none of capitalism's jungle laws operate, friendship and fraternity among nations prevail. This is part and parcel of Soviet ideology. All this provides the framework within which the new, socialist family becomes ever more strongly knit together — a process of vast importance for the destinies of the nation. In our country marriage is a voluntary union of man and woman, free from all ulterior motives and based upon the sincere affection of both parties. Marriage in the Soviet Union is free from all traces of oppressive economic dependence, class, national, racial or religious restrictions common to marriage in capitalist society.

The Soviet law on the registration of marriages is designed to encourage stable family ties. The Soviet law, which is based on the vital interests of the nation, frowns upon any frivolous attitude to marriage. It obliges parents to support children and children to care for their aged parents.

The range of intellectual interests of Soviet mothers is extraordinarily wide, for in the USSR all the conditions are provided for women to take advantage of their right to work and to an education without having to neglect their duties to their children, duties which in our socialist society are regarded as sacred.

Inspired by their honoured position in society and conscious of the Soviet state's daily concern for them, Soviet mothers bring up courageous citizens with high

principles and infinitely devoted to their country. While playing an important part in all spheres of public and economic activity, women have a great responsibility for the education of their children. It is their high duty to their country.

At the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party, Comrade Stalin said that “women represent half the population of our country; they represent a huge army of workers; and they are called upon to bring up our children, our future generation, that is to say, our future.”<sup>1</sup>

Particular importance attaches today to training in the spirit of communist morality, communist ethics and Soviet patriotism. Lenin said: “The basis of communist morality is the struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism. That is also the basis of communist training, education and teaching.”<sup>2</sup>

This precept of Lenin’s is sacred to Soviet women, and they are indeed bringing up citizens of the USSR who will carry on the great cause begun by Lenin and continued by our Party under the leadership of Comrade Stalin until its final victory.

We know that, as Lenin told us and Stalin teaches us, the danger of an attack on the USSR and of a new world war remains real as long as imperialism exists. Only the people can prevent such a war.

In 1916 Lenin, writing of the role of working-class women, advised them to bring their children up as fighters for socialism, taught them to say to their sons:

“You will soon be a man. You will be given a gun. Take it and learn to use it. The proletarians need this knowledge not in order to shoot your brothers, the workers of other countries, as they are doing in the present war, and as you are being told to do by the

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<sup>1</sup> J.V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow 1947, p.492

<sup>2</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow 1947, p. 670.

traitors to socialism, but in order to fight the bourgeoisie of your own country, to put an end to exploitation, poverty and war, not by means of good intentions, but by vanquishing the bourgeoisie and by disarming it.”<sup>1</sup>

Soviet mothers are bringing up patriots of our socialist country, loyal to the great cause of the people, the cause of Lenin and Stalin. They enjoy universal affection and regard. By their high moral qualities they have shown themselves worthy of the solicitude displayed for them by the socialist state, the Communist Party, and the leader and teacher of the people, Comrade Stalin.

Take, for example, the case of Yekaterina Yefimovna Revi of Alma-Ata. Her family consists of 61 children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. When the enemy attacked the Soviet Union 17 members of her family went to the war to defend their country. Eight of them became officers of the Soviet Army, distinguished themselves in action and were decorated by the Government. On the day of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (in 1946) 34 members of Yekaterina Yefimovna Revi’s family accompanied her to the polls. They all voted for the candidates of the bloc of the communists and the non-Party masses.

Mother Heroine Maria Yegorovna Kolodishnikova has lived in the village of Mushgora, Archangel Region, all her life. She brought up thirteen of her own children and eleven adopted ones. At the outbreak of the war her husband, eight sons and two daughters went to the front. She herself worked indefatigably on the collective farm and has gone on working after the war. In 1946 she earned 400 workday units.

Many Soviet mothers who have been honoured with

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. I, Moscow 1947, p. 730.

maternity decorations had a very hard time of it before the revolution.

“My childhood was cheerless,” recalls E. Andreyeva, who has been decorated with the Order of Maternal Glory, First Degree. “My father was an illiterate railway labourer who toiled by the sweat of his brow to feed us and clothe us. At the age of thirteen I went to work in a sand pit and never managed to get an education. My children have had a different kind of life. As the mother of a large family I received 24,000 rubles from the Government. With this money we built a house and bought a cow. My little daughter Galya asked me: ‘Who built our house, who bought us a cow?’ and I told her: Stalin did it all.’

“All my older children have received an education — graduated colleges or technical high schools. The younger ones still go to school. My son Eugene was at the front and has five decorations. My children are happy and healthy. They have all spent summers at Young Pioneer camps and at health resorts, and I am happy in their happiness.”

Mother Heroine M. Kirillova relates: “My youth was spent in hard and exhausting labour. There were many, many things I had to do without in the past. We were nine children. All of us wanted to get at least a little learning, but not one of us had a single day’s schooling. Poverty compelled us to go to work. At the age of ten each of us was sent out ‘into the world.’ I went to work, first as a nursemaid and later as a servant. All nine of us remained illiterate...”

“The Soviet system has changed my life entirely. I have ten children now. Before the revolution my children would all have been illiterate like myself. But now, even in primary schools they begin to make plans for the future, discuss what they will do after graduation.”

And their dreams come true. M. Kirillova’s eldest

son, Mikhail, graduated a technical high school for electricians and is an officer in the Soviet Army. Her daughter, Nina, graduated a teacher's college and is teaching a foreign language there. Eugene finished a factory school and is an instructor in automobile mechanics. Maria entered a Cooking School after she graduated grammar school. Varya has graduated a medical high school. Nikolai attended a factory trade school and has become a highly skilled shoemaker. Olga graduated a Building Trades School, and the youngest, Lyuba and Vanya — are still at primary school. Lyuba is planning to become an engineer and Vanya wants to go to sea. They shall certainly realize their plans: their right to an education is guaranteed by the Stalin Constitution.

M. Kirillova herself did not want to lag behind her children. She enrolled in a school for adults and is no longer illiterate.

The proper education and welfare of the younger generation is not just a private affair in our socialist country, it is a concern of the state and of society.

The statement of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) "On International Women's Day March 8" of 1946 says: "The Central Committee of the CPSU(B) demands of Party organizations that they should still more make it their daily concern to look after the interests of women and children, never forgetting that the education of children is a matter of paramount importance to the state. All Soviet government, Party and public organizations should render women every possible assistance in bringing up the rising generation."

The public initiative and activity displayed in the Soviet Union in the education of children knows no bounds.

Long before the war the Kirov Works in Leningrad was famed for its excellent children's institutions. One of the most popular of them and highly appreciated by the working women was the children's club. Children of



factory workers came here after school to rest, study or attend various circles. The club was founded in 1933 and there are many Stakhanovite workers in the factory who remember the days they spent in it with a sense of gratitude. During the war the club was closed, the Government evacuated the children of besieged Leningrad farther into the interior. Now the club has been reopened. The factory trade union committee has secured the services of experienced teachers and instructors and allocated the necessary funds for the purchase of books, toys and equipment. Mothers working at the factory are perfectly easy, for they know their children are taken care of.

The system of children's institutions established in our country has made it possible for millions of Soviet women to have families without giving up work, studies or recreation.

In tsarist Russia the lot of orphans, foundlings and "illegitimate" children was filled with bitterness and gall. They perished in bureaucratic orphanages. "Guardians" possessed unrestricted rights over wards, the government and bourgeois society were indifferent and callous to the fate of orphans.

The Soviet government put an end to this for good and all. There are no more homeless children in our country. The war, forced upon our country by the fascists, deprived hundreds of thousands of children of their parents. But the number of children's homes was doubled during the war and now accommodate 627,000 young citizens. Soviet public organizations greatly assist in the education of orphans. Many offices and factories "adopt" children's homes, nurseries, kindergartens, or schools. They help them furnish their buildings, supply them with extra fuel, assist with transportation facilities when the children go to the country for the summer and help them get up celebrations.

Many people adopt or regularly assist orphans. This

is a manifestation of the sentiments of humanity characteristic of Soviet people. Tens of thousands of Soviet families have adopted small children who have lost their parents.

The following is an excerpt from a letter to the Department of Education of Leningrad from a simple Soviet woman, Fyodorova, who adopted an eight-year-old girl: "People ask me what made me adopt a stranger's child," she writes. "But that is putting the question wrongly. There are no strangers' children in our country. All Soviet children are our children, our future. And that is why the whole country takes care of them. And it seems to me that every Soviet woman bringing up a child, be it 'her own' or a 'stranger's,' should be a real mother to the child, just as our country is a mother to us all."

There are many cases on record of one family adopting several children. In the RSFSR alone 30,000 children have been legally adopted and 162,000 have patrons.

The Soviet land fosters its children lovingly and solicitously, striving to make those of them who suffered in the war forget their injuries, bringing them up to be cheerful and energetic, unafraid of difficulties. The people in our country always keep in mind Maxim Gorky's heartfelt words:

"Never before have children been so precious as they are now that they have before them a cause of world significance, a cause wonderfully well-begun by their mothers and fathers, a cause which is gradually stirring among the toiling people of the whole world the intelligence and the desire to build a new life."

The education of the future citizens of the socialist country by the Soviet schools is conducted in close contact with the family. The children are brought up to be men and women of culture, industrious, devoted to the Party of Lenin and Stalin, patriots to whom there is

nothing above the welfare and ever-greater prosperity of their country.

In addition to the family and the school, educational work is conducted in a large number of extra-school institutions, which contribute to the all-round development of the future builders of communism. Thousands of children's clubs are open to boys and girls. There are 100 young naturalists' centres, 200 children's technical training centres, 170 children's gymnasiums, 700 children's libraries, with a great many books, 143 children's theatres and a large number of tourist and excursion centres for children, art clubs, amateur dramatic and music groups.

Soviet women are deeply thankful to their Government and their Party for the real emancipation they have achieved, and are fully aware of their moral responsibility in bringing up their children.

The statement of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) "On International Women's Day March 8" in 1947 stresses the exceptional services rendered by mothers in bringing up the younger generation. "Patriotic Soviet women," says this statement, "have brought up the glorious Soviet youth who, during the Patriotic War, proved their boundless devotion to the Party of Lenin and Stalin and their love for their country, and are now valiantly coping with the post-war difficulties, working hard to rehabilitate and further develop the country's national economy."

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Leningrad working women wrote in a letter to Comrade Stalin:

"When we look back we seem to be looking down from a high mountain and we can hardly believe that that was our yesterday, that we lived in that dirt, poverty and humiliation." It is the Soviet system that has opened before women all opportunities for developing their

native abilities and displaying initiative, and that has secured them the happiness of cloudless motherhood.

“In no other country in the world are women, as mothers and as citizens who bear the great responsibility of giving birth to and bringing up citizens, so respected and so protected by law as in the USSR,” stated a Decision of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR of June 27, 1936.

The Stalin Constitution accords women equal rights with men. The actual means of exercising these rights to the full are ensured by the policy of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government. Article 122 of the Constitution of the USSR states that the possibility of exercising their equal rights is guaranteed by “women being accorded an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.”

The Stalin Constitution gives legislative embodiment to women’s freedom and to the conditions which enable them to take real advantage of their freedom.

The concern shown by the Party and the Government for mothers, for the health and education of the rising generation of builders of communism, and the all-embracing protection of the interests of mother and child are most noteworthy features of our socialist state. Lofty Soviet humanism, the concern for the human being taught by Lenin and Stalin, underlies all the efforts of the Soviet state for the protection of the interests of mother and child.

## **IV. FREE AND EQUAL DAUGHTERS IN THE STALIN FAMILY OF PEOPLES OF THE USSR**

As we have seen from the previous chapters, the victory of socialism, the Bolshevik Party's policy towards women, the policy formulated by Lenin and Stalin, have ensured women in the USSR an equal economic and political status with men. And Soviet women have a great share in the victory of socialism in the USSR. In the course of our country's socialist development hundreds of thousands of women learned to manage public industry and to administer the state.

Here are some figures which eloquently testify to this. In 1922 the First Congress of Soviets elected five women to the Central Executive Committee; fifteen years later, in December 1937, the people elected 227 women to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; and on February 10, 1946 the number of women elected to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was 277. Besides, more than 1,700 women are members of Supreme Soviets of Union and Autonomous Republics, and hundreds of thousands are members of local Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The following are the figures for the number of women members of government bodies as of February 1948: 277 in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, i.e., 20.7% of the total number of members; 1,235, or 26.5%, in Supreme Soviets of Union Republics; 503, or 29%, in Supreme Soviets of Autonomous Republics.

Here is a table showing the proportion of women elected to the local Soviets of Working People's Deputies in 1947 in some of the Union Republics:

	Total number mem- bers elected	Number of Women	Percentage
Byelorussia SSR	64,897	19,379	29.87
Georgia SSR	26,652	7,995	30.00
Kazakh SSR	53,219	17,992	33.81
Kirghiz SSR	12,735	4,269	33.49
Azerbaijan SSR	23,348	8,207	35.15

The women elected to central and local government bodies are among the finest daughters of the Soviet people. Some of them have won fame by their achievements in work, others are noted scientists, distinguished writers or artists. Among them are women of all the nationalities of the USSR and of the most diverse professions and trades: factory workers and collective farmers, doctors and engineers, teachers and agronomists, scientific workers, literary and art workers, executives, public leaders, Party and government workers. Millions of women hold positions of responsibility in government bodies, in social organizations, in industry and other branches of the national economy. Millions of women belong to trade unions, and hundreds of thousands of them are active members of leading trade union bodies — from local committees to central bodies. Over 80,000 women are members of district trade union committees, comprising 56.3% of the total number of members of district committees; 450,000 members of factory trade union committees, i.e., 46.9%, and 350,000 trade union group organizers at factories, mines, power stations, Soviet government institutions, etc., or 45.2% of the total, are women. In recent years many women have been promoted to positions of responsibility in trade union bodies — positions of chairmen, secretaries and members of presidiums of central and regional trade union committees.

The fact that women of all trades and professions —

factory workers, collective farmers, scientific, literary and art workers — and of all nationalities of the great family of peoples of the Soviet Union take part in economic and cultural construction and in state administration as equals among equals lends additional strength to the Soviet social and state system, it is one of the great and undeniable advantages of socialist democracy as compared with the vaunted democracy of bourgeois countries.

“My lot would have been quite different were I living in some capitalist country and not in the Soviet Union,” said Zinaida Troitskaya, Railway Director-General, Third Rank. “Only in our socialist country have all people, men and women, every opportunity to work in their chosen field...”

“I was only 22 when I drove a train myself for the first time. I felt elated, the knowledge that I could do this difficult and useful job filled me with joy. In the grim days of the defence of Moscow I was put in charge of directing the flow of transport, and I was truly happy to be holding a responsible position in those days of anxiety, to feel that I was doing something that was of help to my Country.

“In 1945, I attended the International Women’s Congress in Paris as a member of the Soviet delegation. Our delegation was the centre of attention. And that was natural. For in what other country are women so active in economic, cultural and political life as citizens enjoying full equality?

“This knowledge filled all of us with particular pride.

“At present I am the assistant chief of the Moscow Metropolitan Railway. The government has acknowledged my modest efforts highly and awarded me the Order of Lenin, the Order of the Red Banner of Labour, the Order of the Red Star, the Badge of Honour, and several medals...”

The biography of anyone of the hundreds and

thousands of women members of Soviet government bodies provides the most convincing proof of the fact that women enjoy true equality in our country, that they have, as Vladimir Ilyich Lenin said, caught up with the men. Women are a great force in Soviet society.

Yelena Chukhnyuk is a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. She was a young girl when she started to work as an engine driver not long before the Patriotic War broke out. During the war she drove munitions trains, displaying fearlessness and skill which could well be envied by the bravest soldiers and most experienced engine drivers. She drove through fire curtains of enemy artillery, and by ably manoeuvring eluded the attacks of German bombers. And she always managed to deliver her precious cargo to the men at the front on time. She won nationwide fame by her fine work, and became a Hero of Socialist Labour. Could a plain girl of the people like Yelena Chukhnyuk attain to such a position were she living in a bourgeois country? Of course not!

Only in the Soviet Union, where the people are master, is real appreciation shown for the self-sacrifice, heroism, skill, talent and patriotism of any ordinary man or woman. By the beginning of 1948 the title of Hero of Socialist Labour had been conferred on 59 women in the USSR.

“My mother’s lot was a bitter one, the lot of the long-suffering peasant woman,” relates Hero of Socialist Labour Praskovya Angelina, Member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. “And her children shared her poverty and her tears. Her older sons had no childhood. All of them went out into the world when still small children, to work for rich peasants at a miserable wage. I was no exception. At the age of eight, I left home and hired out in order to earn my crust of bread...”

“My father is 70 years old now, yet he does all he can to help with the work on the collective farm. He was



awarded a medal for valorous labour during the Patriotic War. The Soviet Government has decorated my mother too for having brought up seven children. My oldest brother is an agronomist and has been decorated for his wartime work with the Order of the Patriotic War and several medals. My second brother, Vasili, is a colonel and has earned eleven decorations for valour in active service. My sister, Nadezhda, has been awarded the Order of Lenin for her splendid work on the collective farm and two medals for participation in the Patriotic War. My brother Konstantin is now chairman of a collective farm and also has government awards.

“My work as a tractor driver has brought me honour. Twice I have been elected to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and I have been awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour for the large harvest our collective farm obtained in 1946.

“We owe all this to our Soviet system. It is the Soviet system that has made us what we are today, that has raised us so high.”

The Krasnoye Znamya Collective Farm, one of the best in the Kursk Region, is called a women’s kolkhoz. More than three-fourths of the total number of workday units are earned by women, and women hold all the leading positions in the collective-farm administration. Its chairman is T.P. Dyachenko, member of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. In her youth Dyachenko was a nursemaid in a rich peasant’s house. Now her own children, as well as many of her friends’ children, have graduated college. Her daughter, Anna Dyachenko, is a physician; Yekaterina Kalmykova is an engineer, her sister Praskovya and her brother Sergei are agronomists. Children on the collective farm attend school where Nina and Tatyana Orlova, former collective farmers, teach.

Many Soviet women, trained by the Bolshevik Party, have become eminent statesmen of the Lenin-Stalin

type.

Yelena Dmitrievna Stassova, an old Bolshevik and outstanding member of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, is well known far beyond the borders of our country. Yelena D. Stassova is 75 years old. Fifty years of her life have been devoted to the struggle for the liberation of the working people, and for the victory of communism in our country. Stassova was one of that original group of like-minded fighters who gathered round Lenin to build a proletarian party, the Bolshevik Party. Stassova became well-known as an outstanding Party worker before the first Russian revolution of 1905. In 1905 she was the secretary of the Northern Bureau of the Central Committee. She was a loyal disciple of Lenin and waged a determined struggle against the Mensheviks, giving all her energy to the cause of training the proletariat for the revolution and of rallying the Party round Lenin. Stassova took an active part in the preparations for the Prague Conference of the RSDLP which expelled the Mensheviks from the Party and at which the Bolsheviks formally constituted themselves an independent party, a party of a new type, the Party of Leninism. Repeated arrests and banishment to Siberia could not swerve Stassova from the path she had taken.

At the Sixth Congress of the Party, the congress which headed the Party for armed uprising, Stassova was elected to the Party's general staff, the Central Committee, as an alternate member (later she became a full-fledged member of the Central Committee). She took a direct and active part in the Great October Socialist Revolution. For three years, from 1917 to 1920, Stassova was a secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. In all the succeeding years she held leading positions in the Party. Despite her advanced age, Yelena Dmitrievna Stassova, glorious daughter of the Bolshevik Party, steeled in many battles, is as active as ever, an ardent propagator of the great doctrine of Lenin

and Stalin, the doctrine of the Party which is leading our people to the complete victory of communism in the USSR.

In our country it is quite the usual thing for women to hold leading government positions. Maria Sarycheva, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Moscow City Soviet, is also Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. P.G. Radchenko is Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR. Zoya Andreyeva is President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Chuvash Autonomous SSR, and also Vice-President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. Chimnaz Aslanova is Vice-Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Fatima Kadyrbayeva is Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Kirghiz Republic.

The Public Health Minister of Azerbaijan is a woman, Kyubra Faradjeva. The Minister of Justice in the Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic is Nuri Karadjayeva. Tatyana Zuyeva is Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR; Olga Lauristin is Minister of Social Insurance of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic; Praskovya Kalinina is Minister of the Food Industry of the Chuvash Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Three women, Basti Bagirova, Varvara Vakholdina and Natalya Kuklina, are members of the Council for Collective Farm Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Many women are deputy ministers of the USSR, and of Union and Autonomous Republics, as well as chairmen of Executive Committees of local Soviets of Working People's Deputies. In the RSFSR alone over 27,000 women head village Soviets.

An especially vivid illustration of women's absolute equality in the USSR is the fact that many of them are judges. This was impossible in Russia before the October Revolution. At present there are fourteen

women members of the Supreme Court of the USSR. Women comprise 33.9% of the members of Supreme Courts of Union Republics. Many women are presiding judges of regional and territorial courts, and 35% of all people's courts judges are women.

Soviet women, as we thus see, hold a prominent place in state administration bodies. They take full advantage of their equality in political life, they really exercise their equal rights — an achievement of historic significance. The Stalin Constitution makes equal political rights for women the law of the land, and it provides the guarantees for the full exercise of these rights.

Since the inauguration of the Stalin five-year plans the material conditions have been created permitting millions of women to take an active part in the building of socialism. The policy of extensively enlisting women in public industry in town and in country and the constant solicitude displayed by the Party and the Government for the welfare of all the working people have made Soviet women economically independent, widened their outlook and the range of their interests.

However, the mere fact of the existence of these conditions would not have been enough to draw more and more working women and peasant women into active public and government work. It was necessary, besides, to give women a political education, to train them in the spirit of communism, and this the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government have done and are doing. The splendid fruit of this work is evident. We feel proud to have the full right to say that women, along with men, are building the first great socialist state in the world and are taking part in the administration of this state.

Only the Bolshevik Party proved capable of accomplishing the world historical task of transforming a capitalist society into a socialist one, and the Soviet

people regard the Party as their leader and teacher, wisely guiding them under the leadership of the great Stalin on the way to the pinnacles of communism. Soviet women, like all the Soviet people, regard Comrade Stalin as their best and most beloved friend, their great leader and teacher.

In the 1947 elections to local Soviets the people chose Comrade Stalin their first deputy. The hearts of working women and women collective farmers, the hearts of all Soviet women, are filled with ardent love for and faith in the great Party of Lenin and Stalin. The elections proved once more that the Soviet people stand heart and soul behind the policy of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government, that the working people of town and country, men and women, consider the Bolshevik policy their very own.

Both Party members and non-Party people are part of one united community, welded together by the ideas of the Bolshevik Party, by the Soviet system, and working to multiply our country's strength. Communists and non-Party people fought shoulder to shoulder in the late war, shedding their blood in common for their country's victory. In recent years, both during and since the war, Party membership has greatly increased. The Party has now a membership of 6,300,000 as against 3,800,000 before the war. Over one million women, the finest daughters of our people, are members of the great Party of Lenin and Stalin.

As far back as in 1920 the immortal Lenin said that "the peoples are being taught by the course of events to regard Russia as a centre of attraction."<sup>1</sup> All over the world all true champions of equality and freedom for women regard the USSR as a great model to emulate. The banner of Lenin and Stalin is the banner of the

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXV, p. 509.

people's struggle against imperialism, for a lasting peace, for national freedom, for people's democracy and socialism.

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From the very first days of the October Revolution, the great Bolshevik Party took steps to ensure the genuine emancipation of Mohammedan women, a cause to which it attached vast importance. In April 1921, when in parts of the Soviet land the thunder of Civil War had not yet entirely died down, the first non-Party convention of women of the East was held in response to the call of Lenin and Stalin for a new, free life. The Party's work among women of the Soviet East was an inseparable part of Lenin's and Stalin's wise policy in the national question, the aim of which was to strengthen the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry.

Women's clubs and delegates' assemblies were organized in the Eastern republics and regions, and conferences of women promoted to work in Soviet government bodies were held regularly. The Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government assured the economic emancipation of Eastern women, rendered material assistance to women's cooperatives, drew women into industry and organized industrial training courses for them.

Soviet law, which most emphatically protects the rights of women, made it a special point to protect the interests of Eastern women. That was a manifestation of Bolshevik consideration for the special condition of women in the East.

The remnants of the bourgeois-landlord world — the local landowners, kulaks, who sucked the blood of the poor, merchants and religious fanatics — obstinately opposed the Soviet system, persecuted, even murdered Muslim women who sought freedom and knowledge and

went to work in factories and mills. The emancipation of Muslim women from the yoke of the old life and customs had to be accomplished in the midst of an acute class war that was being waged in the non-Russian border regions. The enemy was not particular about the means employed in the fight against the emancipation of Muslim women, resorting to treachery, vile slander, terrorism and even murder.

The Bolshevik Party boldly organized the struggle, and worked painstakingly and perseveringly, to uproot the centuries-old heritage according to which women in the East were treated as slaves.

Now, as we look back over the path that has been traversed, we have every right to declare that the Soviet system has secured for the Muslim women all civil rights, as it did for all the women in the non-Russian republics and regions. Socialism and the collective-farm system have ensured women economic independence and rapid cultural progress. Many thousands of women in the non-Russian regions have developed into excellent Bolsheviks, Party and non-Party, have become statesmen and leaders in industry and cultural activities.

All this has become possible only because the Soviet system wrought a basic change in the condition of the peoples of the East. The opportunity was provided for them to exist and develop as free and equal peoples on a par and in fraternal cooperation with the other peoples of the USSR. The consistent implementation of Lenin's and Stalin's policy with regard to nationalities ensured the rapid economic and cultural advancement of all the Union and Autonomous republics.

With the fraternal help of the great Russian people the formerly backward regions of old tsarist Russia have become prosperous socialist republics with modern industries, mechanized agriculture, and highly developed culture, national in form and socialist in content.

At a conference of leading collective farmers, men and women, of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan with Party and Government leaders on December 4, 1935, V.M. Molotov pointed out that: "Our successes are not based on the exploitation of one people by another; they are based on the premise that the success of one people becomes the success of all the other peoples of our country." And that is why many women collective farmers of our non-Russian republics, "only recently backward and obscure people in the village, now, by their honest work in the collective farms and their persistent struggle for the advancement of the collective-farm system, give ample proof that they are firmly holding the banner of victory for the collective-farm system in their hands."<sup>1</sup>

The achievements scored under the Soviet system in the development of culture, national in form and socialist in content, among all the nationalities of the great family of peoples in our country seem as if out of a fairy tale. The tsarist government and the ruling classes of Russia looked down upon the non-Russian nationalities and regarded their lands as their colonial possessions. Tsardom oppressed and exploited these peoples, deliberately hindered their progress, and never permitted the establishment of institutions of higher learning in the non-Russian frontier regions. Even primary secular schools were a rare thing there. Among the Azerbaijanians, Uzbeks, Turkmenians, Tajiks, Kazakhs and many other nationalities the number of people with a higher education could then be counted on the fingers of one's hands. And it goes without saying that a higher education was out of the question for women of these nationalities, or of the great majority of other non-Russian peoples. Even a semiliterate woman

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<sup>1</sup> V.M. Molotov, *Articles and Speeches*, Russ. ed., Profizdat, 1937, pp. 200-01.



was a rare exception among the oppressed, subservient slaves women were there. Forty non-Russian peoples in the country even had no written language.

The imperialist bourgeoisie of today, which stifles every striving for culture among the peoples it oppresses, is like tsardom in its brutal colonial policy.

One of the finest achievements of the non-Russian Soviet republics of the East is the advancement of the cultural standard of the masses and the rise of a national intelligentsia among them — engineers, physicians, agronomists, teachers, scientists, poets, artists, writers, many of them women. School attendance is compulsory for boys and girls alike in the formerly backward non-Russian regions of old Russia, which are now Union or Autonomous Republics of the USSR. Universities and colleges, technical high schools and various vocational schools have been established in these republics, and there are places of culture, clubs, libraries and museums.

In pre-revolutionary Turkmenia only seven persons per thousand could read and write. In 1946 the proportion was nine hundred to a thousand. At present over 200,000 boys and girls attend public schools in Turkmenia. This does not include the pupils of factory trade schools, vocational courses and evening schools. Formerly Turkmenia did not have a single higher educational institution. Now there are several, including a teachers' college, a medical college and an agricultural college. There are about a thousand libraries in the republic. Ashkhabad, the capital of Turkmenia, boasts one of the largest public libraries in the Soviet Union. Turkmenia has over 1,200 clubs and reading rooms, five museums and dozens of other cultural institutions. Before the revolution the theatrical art was unknown to the Turkmenian people. Now there are fourteen theatres in Turkmenia, including an opera and ballet theatre.

The extent to which women are represented in the

teaching profession in the non-Russian Soviet republics is indicative of their cultural progress. The percentage of women among teachers in primary and secondary schools before the war, in 1941, was as follows: Georgian SSR — 51.3%, Kazakh SSR — 37.8%, Armenian SSR — 30.9%, Kirghiz SSR — 30.2%, Azerbaijan SSR — 29.5%, Uzbek SSR — 25.4%, Turkmenian SSR — 17.6%. In recent years the percentage of women teachers has still further increased.

The number of scientific workers among the non-Russian peoples has increased so rapidly that it has been possible to organize Academies of Sciences or branches of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in all the union republics. Many women are among the foremost Academy workers. Over 100 women are employed in the Georgian Academy of Sciences, nearly 100 in the Azerbaijan Academy, about 200 in the Kazakh Academy, about 50 in the Turkmenian branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 30 in the Tajik branch, 30 in the Kirghiz branch.

Every republic has its own dramatic theatres and opera houses with talented producers and actors. Before the revolution there was not a single theatre on the territory now occupied by the Kazakh, Tajik and Kirghiz republics. In 1947 the Kazakh republic had 42 theatres, the Uzbek — 40, the Tajik — 17, the Kirghiz — 11, besides a large number of moving-picture houses and amateur dramatic and music groups. In 20-25 years under the Soviet system modern dramatic theatres, opera and ballet have been built and splendid actresses, dancers and singers have developed in the countries where formerly there were no professional theatres at all and where men played the female roles in amateur performances. The names of many outstanding actresses of these republics are known all over the Soviet Union.

“The revolution emancipated our woman, removed

the horsehair veil in which she had been wrapped for centuries,” says a letter from the Azerbaijan people to Comrade Stalin. “Azerbaijan women have become active builders of our socialist society. Women hold positions of responsibility in the government, in factories, in the oil fields, on college teaching staffs and in surgical wards of hospitals. There are women ships’ captains and aeroplane pilots.”

Stalin’s solicitude for mother and child has penetrated to the most distant corners of our vast socialist country. The women of our non-Russian republics find a new happiness and joy in motherhood. Mothers enjoy the solicitude of the government and universal respect. A ramified system of maternity homes, obstetrical centres, and nurseries cater to the needs of mothers and children of these republics.

In 1913 there were nineteen kindergartens in all of Russia. Now there are sixty-two in Northern Ossetia alone.

Libraries, clubs, electricity, telephone, radio, good furniture are common in the towns and villages of the republics where not long ago patriarchal law and plain barbarism reigned supreme.

The influx of masses of women into industry, their participation in state administration and public activities and the large number of women political leaders in the USSR is the proof, provided by history, of the truth and force of the Marxist-Leninist principle that the woman question can be fully solved in all its aspects only after the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, class inequality and the oppression of man by man.

Women of our East have come a long way from domestic slavery and subservience, from the horsehair veil to active, intelligent participation in the building of socialist society as Stakhanovites in industry and agriculture, as engineers, physicians, teachers,

geologists, scientists, leaders in industry and agriculture, in government administration and political activities. This way was cleared for them by the Soviet system, by the Bolshevik Party, by its great leaders Lenin and Stalin.

Women who have recently come to the Soviet Union from abroad, where they and their families led a life filled with sorrow, humiliation and poverty, are deeply grateful to their new-found country. Armenians, who were scattered all over the world, are returning to their homeland, to Soviet Armenia. One of the first to return was the family of Anna Pogosovna Deiremejian.

Hers was a joyless life, and her seven children had nothing better to look forward to. All of them had to go to work at a very early age.

“Our native land welcomed us cordially and with joy,” Anna Pogosovna relates. “Our big family was given an apartment. I was amazed and deeply moved by the constant care and attention shown mothers of large families by the Soviet Government. In no other country in the world is motherhood so honoured. By government decree I was awarded the Order of Maternal Glory. That was the happiest day of my life. I receive a monthly allowance for bringing up my children — this in addition to assistance in the shape of a large lump sum of money.

“My children will never again have to suffer what they did in the past. I have no worry about their future. They can study in their native language and work for the good of their country.”

One of the women on whom the Soviet Government has conferred the lofty title of Mother Heroine is Maria Petrovna Pechekha, an immigrant from Poland. The story of her life is an illustration of the position of women who are languishing under the yoke of exploitation.

Maria Pechekha spent 43 years of her life in Poland under the gentry. When still a small child she hired out

to a landlord and worked from dawn till dusk. Later she married a farm labourer like herself and together they shared sorrow and misfortune. They never even dared dream of a house and land of their own, of a farm of their own. The birth of every child was welcomed with joy mixed with fear for the future. The children grew and had to be clothed and given at least some education, but there wasn't enough money even for bread. Their children were barefoot, ragged and hungry. The older children, Yekaterina, Ivan and Maria went to work for the landowner without ever having been able to go to school.

When Maria Pechekha immigrated to the Ukraine, which is her native country, the Government gave her a house, land for a vegetable garden, over a ton of grain, clothing for the children, and 2,000 rubles. Her children Genya, Fanya, Yosif, Hannah and little Franek go to school. The older ones work.

Maria Pechekha's eyes filled with tears of joy when the Order of Mother Heroine was handed to her. At that moment her heart flowed over with love for the great leader of the Soviet people.

The position of women and children in Bessarabia, in Lvov Region and in other districts freed from the rule of the landlords and capitalists has also changed fundamentally.

A large number of schools, colleges, clubs, libraries, theatres, medical institutions have been opened in Western Ukraine, and state universities function in Lvov, Uzhgorod and Chernovitsy. Within the last three years 466,000 illiterate adults in Western Ukraine have been taught to read and write, and over 242,000 illiterate and semi-literate persons are attending special schools for adults. By the end of 1949 illiteracy will have been entirely eliminated in Western Ukraine and in the Izmail and Transcarpathian regions of the Ukraine.

The story of the life of L.D. Demyakh, Vice-

Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, is a, typical one and provides a vivid picture of the new, Soviet life of the people of Western Byelorussia.

“My life began in a poverty-stricken hut in the poor Byelorussian village of Ostrovo, Grodno Province. My mother — ‘Widow Alyona’ she was called — could not support the family. We were hungry and poorly clad and there were no shoes in the house at all.

“‘You’ll have to find a job, my daughter,’ my mother said to me when I was thirteen.

“And my life as a farm labourer began — a life devoid of joy and devoid of hope for anything better in the future. There was nothing ‘Alyona’s daughter,’ — nobody even called me by my own name — could hope for.

“In 1939 a new life began for me. Immediately Soviet government was established in Grodno I was given the opportunity to study, to cost off the burden of ignorance which was the lot of all working women in Poland under the gentry. I was sent to a special school and in a short time I was made chairman of our village Soviet.

“In 1940 I was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR.

“Is this really you, ‘Alyona’s daughter,’ a deputy?” I kept asking myself the first time I came to Minsk to attend a Session of the Supreme Soviet.

“During the war, when our country was in danger, I took up arms to defend the great rights brought to the people by the Soviet system.”

In the Latvian SSR the expenditures on cultural development in 1947 were 92,600,000 rubles more than in 1946. The doors of secondary schools and colleges are wide open to young people. Public health services and social insurance have improved. The number of medical institutions is larger than before the war.

The free and equal women of the non-Russian Soviet republics are working heart and soul for the further strengthening of the Soviet state and for the development of our national economy and culture.

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Only in our country, where the people rule, have women of all nationalities the widest, absolutely unrestricted opportunity to participate in public and political activities. Only in our country is it possible for women from all walks of life to stand at the helm of state, as equals among equals, to become members of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, as Pasha Angelina, the Ukrainian tractor driver, Gaji Perigyul, Azerbaijanian oil fields worker, Aikanush Danielyan, Armenian actress, Naimo Bazanova. Kazakh biologist, Orz-gul-Anna Muhamedova, Turkmenian cotton grower, Aishe Gurgenidze, Georgian director of a tea factory, and many, many other women of all nationalities inhabiting the USSR.

The consistent application in our country of the Lenin-Stalin policy with regard to nationalities and the provision of full, genuine equality for women in all fields of economic, government, cultural, public and political life, formed the basis for the political and cultural progress of women in the non-Russian republics, even in those which were especially backward before the Revolution.

The number of women in various organs of state power are highly revealing in this respect. In the Tajik SSR eighty-six women are members of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic and over four thousand are members of regional, city, district and village Soviets. Thirty-two women are members of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh Republic, 345 are chairmen of village Soviets and thousands are members of local Soviets. In the Uzbek and Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republics

one-third of the members of local Soviets are women. The same is true of other republics of the Soviet Union.

The women of the Soviet republics and regions which have comparatively recently become part of the Soviet Union and for whom the Soviet system has opened up hitherto non-existent horizons have likewise begun to take an energetic part in state affairs.

Thousands of recently backward Galician working women of the Lvov region are members of village and district Soviets and of the regional Soviet. Many are members of various permanent committees of village Soviets.

The very best have been elected to the higher organs of state power. Alexandra Ivanovna Pastushina, a peasant woman, is now a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR M.S. Kikh, M.R. Matsko, P.A. Moskal and D.D. Polotnyuk are members of the Supreme Soviet of Soviet Ukraine.

Maria Kikh, Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, had a hard time of it in Western Ukraine before it became part of Soviet Ukraine. She was the daughter of a farm labourer and at an early age went to work as a tailor's apprentice. Very soon she became connected with the underground movement and her revolutionary work led to arrest and imprisonment in the Tarnopol and later in the Lvov prison.

"There were many people in Western Ukraine," relates Maria Kikh, "who strove for the establishment of the Soviet system. Its establishment in 1939 was the greatest joy in our life. In my own life a momentous change took place: I was elected to the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine.

"Our hearts were so full of joy, our emotions so keen and so new to us, that each day seemed like a wonderful festival. Our boldest plans and ambitions were becoming realizable. One year later I was a student of the Lvov University. When the Germans tried to force



capitalist rule on my people again, I joined a partisan detachment that fought in Western Ukraine.

“Now we are again building our life in accordance with the Stalin laws of the Land of Soviets.”

In bourgeois Estonia women were kept out of government bodies, and they were paid less than men for the same kind of work. Now, in Soviet Estonia, they have equal rights with men, and many women who are talented and loyal to the people have become public and political leaders. There are twenty-four women deputies in the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR, among them Elfrieda Augustovna Selgmia, a peasant, Linda Gustavovna Otto, a schoolteacher, Elfrieda Robertovna Kastra, a working woman employed at the Krenholm Textile Mills.

In bourgeois Latvia women, formally, possessed equal rights with men. Actually, they were made to feel at every step that they were inferior and unequal. Women received less pay than men for the same work. It was much more difficult for women to find jobs, even the most unskilled, than it was for men. Many women with high school and college education had to go to work as domestic servants in rich homes or as farm labourers for rich peasants. Scientific work was an unattainable dream for Latvian women. There was not a single woman in the Latvian bourgeois parliament.

The Soviet system has opened all roads to the women of Latvia. There is nothing and no one to prevent them from taking part in government bodies, nothing and no one to interfere with their political activities. And they are, indeed, becoming more active with every passing day. Thousands of women are members of district and village executive committees. Thousands of women are representatives of ten-farm groups and members of permanent committees. Women comprise 25% of the employees of Soviet government institutions. Eight women have been elected to the Supreme Soviet

of the Latvian SSR and seven Latvian women are members of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The Moldavian people have elected sixty-six women to their Supreme Soviet. Hundreds of Moldavian women are members of town, district and village Soviet executive committees, dozens of village Soviets are headed by women, and hundreds of women are vice-chairmen and secretaries of village Soviets. Thousands of women are farm representatives. About two thousand women have been elected to the boards of cooperatives and to store committees.

The elections of deputies to regional, district, and village Soviets, held at the end of 1947 and the beginning of 1948 in the Union and Autonomous Republics, once again demonstrated how closely the people are rallied around the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government, around the great leader and teacher of the peoples, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin.

## V. IN DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY

Soviet women distinguished themselves by the great fortitude and grandeur of spirit they displayed in the Great Patriotic War, in which they defended the freedom and equality, the happy motherhood and opportunities for creative work they had gained as the result of the victory of socialism in our country. The high moral standard of our women, infused by the Soviet system and the Communist Party, revealed itself to the full during the late war.

Women replaced men who had gone to the front, became skilled in the most difficult trades, and by their strenuous efforts helped to win the war. Nor did they neglect their children. They took proper care of them and brought them up, staunchly enduring the wartime privations.

Soviet women fought heroically by the side of men in the ranks of the Soviet Army and in partisan detachments. The whole world was impressed by the matchless morale of the Soviet women, their stainless probity, their readiness to give up all, even life itself, for that which was dearer to them than life — for their country and for their people. Soviet women combine majestic simplicity, warm-heartedness, and the indefatigability of worker and mother with, when necessary, the wrath of the valiant soldier.

Joseph Stalin's appeal to the Soviet people to rise in defence of the honour, the freedom and the independence of our country inspired all Soviet people to perform deeds of valour in battle and in labour. In his historic radio address on July 3, 1941, Stalin, speaking to all the Soviet people, whom he addressed as brothers and sisters, pointed out that the issue was one "of life and death for the Soviet state, of life and death for the

peoples of the USSR, of whether the peoples of the Soviet Union shall be free or fall into slavery.” The beloved leader, friend and father of the Soviet people urged them to reorganize all work immediately on a war footing, to subordinate everything to the interests of the front and to the task of organizing the defeat of the enemy.

Stalin exhorted the Soviet people working in the rear to organize all-round assistance to the Red Army, to ensure the supply of everything the defenders of the country required — food, more rifles, machine guns, guns, cartridges, shells and aircraft.

The great Party of Lenin and Stalin roused the Soviet people to the defence of the country, mustered all their inexhaustible forces, directed them towards the one aim, and thus ensured victory over the strong and treacherous enemy.

Stalin’s appeal sank deep into the hearts of Soviet women, as of all Soviet people. The simple, sincere words of a Stakhanovite woman of a Moscow plant, Comrade Kirpicheva, expressed the feelings of Soviet women at that time.

“As I listened to Comrade Stalin’s speech I kept nodding my head, as if in confirmation of his words. And my heart was so full... The whole past and the present rose before my eyes, one picture after another. Then I heard Comrade Stalin talking about production, saying that we would defeat the Germans if we worked with all our strength to increase the output of tanks in our country; the output of antitank rifles, aircraft, grenades, mortars. Why, I thought, that’s something that concerns me, too.

“I began to figure — how many parts could I produce in a shift? We must answer Comrade Stalin with deeds. I went back to my machine and as I worked I thought: every screw, every nut will be of help to our country. And it is up to us. We’ll make as many as are needed.”

Women working at a Moscow brake factory wrote to Soviet Army men in the summer of 1941: “Go into battle against the enemy boldly, defend our land, our children, our freedom. You are leaving for the front; we are staying behind in the rear. But there is no difference between the front and the rear in our country. We will give all our strength, all our energy, to replace you in industry, to supply you with everything you need. If necessary, we will work day and night; if necessary, we will help you arms in hand. Don’t worry about us, don’t be anxious — we are wholly conscious of our duty to our country, we fully understand the difficulty and the seriousness of the situation.”

The foremost Soviet women patriots wrote in an appeal addressed to all women of the Soviet Union:

“We know that victory will not come easily. So let our hearts be an inexhaustible spring of courage. Let each of us, seeing a beloved son, husband or brother off to battle, instil confidence and calmness in him. Let our hatred for the enemy, our determination to defend our land unto the last drop of blood, be our maternal blessing. Let our men feel sure that we are calm, cheerful and as indefatigable in labour as they are in battle.”

Soviet people appreciated how grave was the danger that threatened their country.

“Everything for the Front, Everything for Victory!” was the slogan. A mighty wave of socialist emulation swept the whole country — it surged in the factories of Moscow and Leningrad, the Urals, the Volga regions, Siberia, the Far East, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan. The entire nation joined the patriotic socialist emulation movement. “Front teams,” as they were called, formed at many factories. They markedly sped up output.

Undaunted by difficulties, women took up jobs at which they had never worked before. Housewives and office workers went to work as fitters, turners, drillers,

miners, engine drivers, weavers — wherever labour-power was needed. They worked at their new jobs strenuously and with a will, knowing that their effort was needed to rout the enemy. The number of women employed in industry, especially in its leading branches, increased by leaps and bounds. Already in October 1941 women comprised 45% of all workers in industry. Between 1940 and 1942 the number of women employed increased from 41% to 53% in industry, from 25% to 36% in railway transport, from 58% to 73% in education, from 76% to 83% in the medical services.

In the first year of the war the number of women tractor drivers employed in machine and tractor stations multiplied eleven-fold; the number of women working as combine harvester operators and chauffeurs multiplied sevenfold, tractor brigade leaders — tenfold.

As the result of the Bolshevik policy of industrialization implemented before the war, our people were able to forge the mighty weapons of victory. In the last three years of the war the USSR produced — on an average per year — over 30,000 tanks, self-propelled guns and armoured cars, approximately 40,000 aircraft, 120,000 guns of all calibres, 450,000 light and heavy machine guns, 100,000 mortars.

Comrade Stalin's speech at the celebration meeting of the Moscow Soviet on November 6, 1941, gave rise to a new wave of patriotic enthusiasm among the Soviet people. "Our army and navy," said Stalin, "must receive active and effective support from our entire country; all our workers and office employees, men and women, must work with might and main in the factories and supply the front with ever-greater quantities of tanks, antitank rifles and guns, aircraft, artillery, mortars, machine guns, rifles and ammunition; our collective farmers, men and women, must work with might and main in their fields and supply the front and the country with ever-greater quantities of grain, meat, raw

materials for the industries; our entire country and all the peoples of the USSR must organize in a single fighting camp, waging, together with our Army and Navy, the great war of liberation for the honour and freedom of our country, for the rout of the German armies.”<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet people responded to the leader’s call with fresh deeds of heroism in battle and in labour. The whole country, from end to end, became a single fighting camp. The creative genius of the people gave birth to new methods designed to increase labour productivity to the utmost.

The movement started by Yekaterina Barishnikova, a Young Communist League member employed at the Kaganovich First Ball-Bearing Plant, is a vivid example of the patriotic initiative and devotion displayed by Soviet working women during the Patriotic War.

Yekaterina Barishnikova’s team added the following postscript to a letter written to Comrade Stalin by the young workers of her factory just before the 25th anniversary of the Young Communist League: “Our dear Joseph Vissarionovich, our whole team promises you that we will raise our output to 400% of our quota.”

In response to the beloved leader’s appeal to all Soviet people for a new exertion of effort in order to smash the German aggressors’ war machine, Yekaterina Barishnikova, an energetic Soviet girl, and the other girls working with her resolved that henceforth half the team would produce as much as the whole team had done before.

The team processed important parts on planning machines. “Formerly one girl operated one machine,” relates Barishnikova. “We undertook to operate two machines each. It was considered impossible for one

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<sup>1</sup> J.V. Stalin. *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow 1946, p. 36.

person to operate more than one machine of this type, but we proved that no job is too hard for Young Communists. We planned our day so as to get maximum efficiency: we don't lose a single minute now. Then we speeded up the machines. And we have rationalized our work so that while one machine is running a new part is being adjusted on the other."

It was not easy at first for Barishnikova and her friends to do the work of two each. But in their ardent patriotism, in their eagerness to answer the leader's appeal to help the army, Soviet people, old and young, like Barishnikova, demonstrated that they could perform wonders.

Barishnikova's example was followed by others, and, before long, the work of the front teams of the plant made it possible to transfer one hundred workers to other jobs. Barishnikova and other girls of her team issued an appeal to the young workers of Moscow factories to follow their example. This appeal met with enthusiastic response among workers in Moscow and in other cities. Within a few months about 20,000 teams were employing Barishnikova's methods. In this way over 76,000 workers were freed to do other work — enough labour-power for a dozen new big factories.

Women went to work in the mining industry, descended into collieries and iron ore mines. Thousands of women did men's work in the collieries, mastered the basic mining trades and covered themselves with glory in the fight for coal. It was not easy for women and girls to learn to do the work of miners — work done exclusively by men from time immemorial. But the country required it, and they gallantly put their shoulders to every kind of work.

"We are perfectly aware of the value of coal," girl miners wrote in a letter to the men at the front. "We know that coal means iron and steel, new tanks, guns, aircraft. Every one of us will perform her duty to our



country with credit.”

Extraordinary valour was displayed by women who worked on the railways in the war area. Hundreds of thousands of women were employed on the railways, many as engine drivers, station chiefs, dispatchers; and they stuck to their jobs under enemy fire. More than 5,000 women were engine drivers and they drove trains not only in the interior, but close to the firing line. Over 20,000 women railway workers were decorated for distinguished services in ensuring the transportation of supplies needed for the front and for the national economy, and for exceptional achievements in restoring railway transport under difficult wartime conditions. The title Hero of Socialist Labour was conferred on the most outstanding women railway workers.

The wives of many Moscow subway workers replaced their husbands when the latter went to the front. Special short-term training courses were organized where they learned the trades required. They worked as mechanics, crane operators, electricians, train drivers, in charge of power station apparatus, stations and block sections.

Yekaterina Mishina, a senior subway driver, formed the first all-women's train crew. All the members of the crew became good mechanics. They did all the minor repairs of the electrical equipment themselves and learned everything about their train and how to run it. This train ran strictly on schedule and the crew effected a considerable saving of electricity. Three of Mishina's assistants soon became train drivers themselves. The Government awarded Yekaterina Mishina the Order of Lenin.

Work on the construction of the third Moscow subway line continued during the war. This in itself was a demonstration of the Soviet people's deep confidence in the invincibility of their country, in ultimate victory over the enemy. Seventy percent of all the workers and

engineers employed on the construction job were women. Many of them were in charge of shifts or worked as foremen and team leaders.

When plants and factories were evacuated from the front areas to the interior of the country, women helped reassemble the machinery of the transferred plants in record time. Staunchly enduring all hardships and privations, women helped expand the country's powerful arsenal in the east, the arsenal which supplied our army with materiel.

During the war women comprised the majority of workers in the light, food and textile industries. They made clothing and uniforms for the soldiers, leather footwear and felt boots, prepared dehydrated and canned foods.

The defence fortifications built by the people of Moscow played an important part in the heroic defence of the Soviet capital. In response to the appeal of the Moscow Communist Party Committee, 500,000 Moscovites, chiefly women, worked day and night building a belt of fortifications around Moscow. They excavated twice as much earth as was excavated in the construction of the Dnieper Dam and Power Station. The Hitlerites never succeeded in piercing these lines at any point.

Working women of the heroic cities of Leningrad, Stalingrad, Odessa, and Sevastopol inscribed immortal pages in the history of the Soviet peoples' titanic struggle. For twenty months the fighting line was just a few tram stops away from Leningrad. The enemy strove to break the brave spirit of the people of Leningrad by incessant air raids and artillery shelling. He tried to starve the heroic city into submission.

"There is no distinction between the front and the rear in Leningrad," said Andrei Zhdanov during the heroic defence of the city. "Every inhabitant of Leningrad, man and woman, has found a place in the

struggle and is honestly fulfilling the duty of a Soviet patriot.”

Irina Borisovna Bulygina, foreman at the Kirov plant, in Leningrad, relates:

“For 900 days we lived under enemy fire. The fascist murderers fired 10,194 shells at our plant alone; yet in our plant, as in others, there was no absenteeism or tardiness even during the most terrible days of the siege. If I had stayed home instead of going to work I would not only have been ashamed, thinking of the men at the front, of my husband, a captain of the Red Army, and of my comrades at the Kirov plant; I should have been ashamed to face the very buildings of Leningrad.”

She goes on to describe how hungry, half-frozen working women, hardly able to drag their feet, assembled tanks which were immediately sent off to the front.

Olga Kovalyova, of Stalingrad, was a steel smelter during the war. She worked through heavy enemy air raids until the fascists were at the city walls, and then she left the shop to join the people’s volunteer guard in which she fought heroically till she fell in battle.

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Women played an important part in the advancement of collective farming before the war. During the Great Patriotic War women collective farmers bore the brunt of the effort of providing the Soviet Army and the country with wheat, grain and other agricultural produce. The nation will never forget this great service rendered by women collective farmers during the war.

The work of the Sotsorevnovanye Collective Farm, Moscow Region, during the war is an excellent illustration. The majority of the men from the farm were called up. Most of the work had to be done by the women, and they coped with it splendidly. Whereas

during the last four pre-war years the collective farm gathered 7,305 centners of potatoes and 12,330 of vegetables, in the war years, with women doing almost all the work, the farm grew 15,722 centners of potatoes and 28,589 of vegetables. The women collective farmers purchased state bonds and war lottery tickets for millions of rubles, which went for the construction of aircraft and tanks.

In the last year of the war Cossack women of the Kaganovich Collective Farm in the Kuban region planted 2,702 hectares of land to various field crops, a much larger area than was under cultivation before the war when the farm had more workers, more machinery and more horses. They delivered to the state 4.5 times as much grain as in the last pre-war year, thousands of centners over and above their quota. The increased output per member of the collective farm is an eloquent testimonial to the enthusiasm with which the women worked. In the last war year the grain output per able-bodied farmer was 63 centners against 37.6 centners before the war.

In 1943 women earned over 70% of the total number of workday units credited to collective farmers all over the country. During the Patriotic War women became a decisive force in the village.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin's prediction that many splendid, talented practical organizers would be discovered among working women and peasant women was fully borne out.

Many women collective farmers were promoted to leading positions during the war. In 1944 over 250,000 women worked as chairmen of collective farms, brigade leaders, managers of stock farms.

Women collective farmers showed some striking examples of socialist labour in the effort to obtain bigger crops. "We Russians are not the kind of people to submit to the enemy," said Anna Kondratyevna

Yutkina, a Siberian collective farmer. "We'll do everything in our power, we won't spare ourselves, and we'll hold out, we'll beat the enemy." Anna Yutkina and her field group received a Stalin Prize for introducing improved farming methods several years in succession and for obtaining a record potato crop in 1942 — 1,330 centners per hectare. Anna Yutkina's methods were emulated by many other women collective farmers.

The importance of tractors in socialist agriculture is well known. As a rule, tractors were formerly driven by men. During the war women began to take the place of men, and with good results. Three of the five tractor brigades that won prizes in the all-Union socialist emulation drive during the war were made up of women.

Women comprised 62.5% of the specialized agricultural machine operators, on whom the harvests of the war years greatly depended.

In 1944 there were over 100,000 high-yield field groups (i.e., teams who undertook to get extra-high yields) working on the collective-farm fields. "Testimonial Diplomas" were awarded to 1,150 field-group leaders for their outstanding achievements when the results of the all-Union socialist emulation were summarized, and 968 of these were women.

Millions of Soviet women worked with might and main in industry, transport and agriculture during the war. Comrade Stalin mentioned the great services of this army of ordinary Soviet patriotic women in a speech delivered in 1944: "The unprecedented labour heroism displayed by our Soviet women and our valiant youth, who have borne the brunt of the burden in our factories and mills and in our collective and state farms, will go down in history forever. For the sake of the honour and independence of our country our Soviet women, youths and girls are displaying courage and heroism on the labour front. They have proved themselves worthy of their fathers and sons, their husbands and brothers who

are defending our country from the German fascist fiends.”<sup>1</sup>

Stalin praised Soviet women for their self-sacrificing work for the front, for their courage in face of all the wartime hardships, for their example which inspired the soldiers of the Soviet Army, the liberators of our country, to perform deeds of valour.

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Not only on the labour front did Soviet women defend their country; they also defended it arms in hand.

Back in the years of the Civil War and foreign intervention thousands of women joined Red Army formations as ordinary soldiers, political instructors and commanders. In those years V.I. Lenin wrote that proletarian women would not look on passively while well-armed imperialists shot badly-armed and unarmed workers, that they themselves would take to arms. And women — factory workers, peasants, and representatives of the intelligentsia, the finest among them — took up arms and selflessly helped their brothers and husbands, fathers and sons rout the Whiteguards and foreign invaders who were pressing in on all sides.

In the Civil War the Red Army had in its ranks women who distinguished themselves as doctors and nurses, as intelligent political instructors, as capable scouts and as valiant soldiers. Nadezhda Krupskaya and Rosalia Zemlyachka were two of the prominent women communists who conducted important educational and political work in the Red Army in that period.

Rosalia Samoilovna Zemlyachka's was a life of splendid work and achievement. She was born in 1876 and joined the revolutionary movement at the age of

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<sup>1</sup> J.V. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow 1946, pp. 164-65.

seventeen. At twenty she was a member of the Kiev Committee of the RSDLP. That same year, 1896, she was arrested and imprisoned for over three years. When Lenin's newspaper *Iskra* began to appear she became its earnest supporter, spreading its ideas and working as an agent for the paper.

In 1904 Rosalia Zemlyachka participated in the Geneva "Conference of 22 Bolsheviks" and was elected to the Bureau of the Committees of the Majority.

Zemlyachka took a direct part in the revolutionary events of 1905, first as secretary of the St. Petersburg organization of the Bolshevik Party, and later as secretary of the Moscow committee. After the defeat of the armed uprising in Moscow she continued her work in the underground movement. While attending the all-Russian military conference of Bolsheviks she was arrested together with the other delegates, but soon escaped from prison.

In 1909 the Central Committee of the Party sent Rosalia Zemlyachka to Baku as secretary of the Bolshevik organization there. But, hounded by the tsarist secret police, she had to go abroad. In 1915-16, after her return to Russia, she was a member of the Moscow Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party. During the October Revolution Zemlyachka led the heroic struggle of the workers in the Rogozhsk-Simonov district of Moscow.

The years of Civil War were filled with strenuous work for Zemlyachka, who was in charge of the political department of an army. She was decorated with the Order of the Red Banner for her distinguished services at that time. After the Civil War Zemlyachka devoted her energies to the work for the consolidation of the Soviet state. All her life she was a staunch fighter for the great ideas of Lenin and Stalin, for the purity of the Bolshevik Party line. Rosalia Zemlyachka's life was a shining example of selfless service to the country.

Working women of Petrograd played an important part in the rout of the Yudenich hordes during the Civil War.

When the Party issued an appeal: "Working women must not lose a single minute; they must do everything they can to help gain victory..." over 11,000 women marched to the front and joined the men as machine gunners, signallers, sappers and nurses. Thousands of women served in the city's security force. The Women's Soviet Detachment of the Neva District did especially good work apprehending deserters.

All through the Civil War, wherever the fate of the young Soviet republic was being decided, women shared all hardships and dangers with the men, displaying valour and heroism.

Many valiant deeds performed by women in the Red Army are recorded in the annals of the Civil War. In the Urals there was a plain peasant girl who fought in the ranks of the Red Army under the name of Ivan Penkov. She took part in many a battle. And time and again at critical moments she would rush forward against the enemy and inspire the others by her example. In her last engagement she held advancing Whiteguard Cossacks at bay with fierce machine-gun fire, thereby enabling our men to effect an orderly retreat to new positions. She went on firing even after she was surrounded on all sides by enemies, and she died at her post.

Lyuda Makievskaya was in command of an armoured train, with which she often penetrated behind the enemy lines, opening machine-gun and artillery fire and sowing panic in the ranks of the Whiteguards. Company commander Gedimy, a Buriat girl, often led her unit in attack. Nurse Balandina, a Communist Party member, was always in the front ranks during battle, ministering to the wounded. In an engagement at Yalutorovsky she was taken prisoner and ordered to be shot by the Whiteguard officer. The fearless woman



talked to the soldiers who were sent to execute the order, told them the truth about the Red Army and explained the aims of the Soviet government and Communist Party to them. The soldiers not only refrained from carrying out the officer's order, but joined the Red Army.

The fact that women — factory workers and peasants — took part in the fighting for the establishment of the Soviet system sent Whiteguard commanders into fits of fury. Here, for example, is a document characteristic in this respect. It is an order of the day dated April 23, 1919, issued by the Whiteguard general Tomashevsky to the garrison of the town of Kustanai and made public for the information of the civilian population. It reads as follows:

“I have personally established that not only men but women too actually took part in the rebellion of the Bolshevik bands in the town of Kustanai and villages of the district, and that they made bold to fire from around corners, from windows, roofs and attics... Heretofore these female criminals have been left alone in most cases and have not received the punishment they deserved. I consider shooting or hanging quite unsuitable and too much of an honour for such female criminals, and I warn that the only form of punishment I shall apply to such persons is flogging to death. I am quite sure that this homely method will have the desired effect on the weak-minded creatures who should busy themselves with pots and pans and bringing up a better future generation, and not meddle with politics which they are absolutely incapable of understanding.”

Those who like the tsarist satrap Tomashevsky spoke of women as “weak-minded,” tried to chain them to pots and pans and doom them to eternal exploitation and oppression, have been flung into history's refuse heap.

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The shining examples of the intrepid heroines of the period of struggle for the consolidation of the Soviet system have been a source of inspiration to our women, old and young, and also to Soviet writers, poets and artists. The people will never forget the names of the thousands of glorious heroines who fought for the young Soviet republic against the hordes of internal and external counterrevolution in the period of civil war and foreign intervention. But the history of mankind has never before known mass heroism like that displayed by Soviet women in the Great Patriotic War which our people fought against the German fascist invaders.

“How numerous are the women in the literature and history of our country who have been exemplary in the lofty morale they have displayed!” said Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin. “Yet everything that has gone before pales into insignificance when compared with the grand epic of the present war; with the heroism and readiness for sacrifice of Soviet women, their civic valour, fortitude in bereavement, and enthusiasm in struggle manifested with a force and, one might say, majesty, never witnessed in the past.”<sup>1</sup>

For many generations to come people everywhere in the world will remember the Soviet women, many of them very young girls, who performed deathless deeds. The world, deeply stirred, witnessed how amid the flames of the Patriotic War Soviet woman stood up in her full stature as a staunch and indomitable patriot, a heroine, prepared to sacrifice her own life and encouraging her children to perform deeds of valour and endure every trial in the defence of the honour and independence of the Soviet Motherland. It is characteristic of Soviet women that they take the nation’s interests close to heart, are imbued with ardent

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<sup>1</sup> M.I. Kalinin, *The Moral Complexion of Our People*, Russ. ed., Gospolitizdat, 1947, pp. 31-32.

patriotism and prepared to sacrifice for their country even what is dearest to them.

At the beginning of the war Zhenya Zhigulenko wrote to her mother:

“I am going to join the air force. Don’t ask any questions, Mother, don’t try to dissuade me and don’t worry. It must be so.” The years went by. Mother and daughter corresponded, and not once did the mother betray her anxiety for her beloved daughter. Only four years later, when Zhenya Zhigulenko came back home a Hero of the Soviet Union, did her mother tell her of her anxiety of her sleepless nights and the tears she had shed.

Alexandra Martynovna Dreiman, a collective farmer, gave her own life and the life of her infant son for her country. She was arrested by the German invaders and was told that her life would be spared if she betrayed the whereabouts of the partisan detachment of which she was a member. The commandant led her naked through the streets of the town, offering to return her clothes to her piece by piece as she pointed out the houses where her friends lived. The Soviet woman did not point out a single house. Furious, the monsters killed her child.

“You have killed my son, but I have a forest full of sons, the whole detachment,” Alexandra Dreiman hurled her defiance at the murderers. Her last words — “Dear mothers, do you hear me? I did not spare my son, I did not betray anyone!” — reached thousands of Soviet women and inspired them to perform fresh deeds of valour.

Soviet women displayed their heroism both on the fighting front and on the home front. Devoted wives and loving mothers, they taught their children to be brave in battle, to endure the greatest trials without flinching for the glory of their beloved country. Women like Yelena Nikolayevna Koshevaya and Alexandra Vasilievna

Tulenina, mothers of the young heroes of Krasnodon, embody the noble qualities of millions of Soviet mothers. Alexandra Tulenina, a simple miner's wife of Krasnodon, together with her son Sergei, a member of the "Young Guard" underground resistance organization, was subjected to terrible torture in the Gestapo dungeons. Not for one minute did it occur to her to save her life and that of her son by shameful betrayal. "Keep quiet, Sergei," she said to her son in front of the torturers. And when, before her eyes, the fascist monsters thrust red hot iron rods into her son's wounds, when Sergei's arm was broken and his face drenched with blood, this Soviet mother had the supreme courage to comfort her son and to support him, to instil Bolshevik courage in him: "Don't give in, Sergei, my darling, don't tell them anything, the dogs, not one word!" By their own example Soviet mothers like Alexandra Tulenina taught their children infinite loyalty to their country and their people, taught them not to lose heart, never to submit to the enemy, to avenge their country's wrongs and fight to the end, unto victory.

It was women like this simple Russian heroine who gave her country a heroic son whom Maxim Gorky had in mind when he said:

"Let us sing the praises of the mother, the inexhaustible source of all-conquering life! Without mothers there are no heroes, no poets... Everything the world takes pride in comes from mothers."

Anya Pavlova, a Young Communist League member who died the death of the brave during the siege of Leningrad, wrote in her diary:

"I often think of our country's fate. For, after all, my country and I are one. If things go well with the country, they will go well with me. When shells burst in Leningrad, when the enemy spoils and demolishes our palaces, museums, houses, I feel as if the Germans were

shooting at my heart, and my heart says to me: Be brave, be honest, keep in step with the soldiers.”

Our glorious patriotic women did indeed keep in step with the men. They fought in the front ranks of the defenders of the country, and showed examples of fearlessness and boundless courage.

Our people will never forget Marina Raskova, that outstanding aviatrix and heroine of the Great Patriotic War.

Many heroic deeds were performed by the fliers — all girls — of the 46th Taman Guards light bomber regiment which was decorated with the Red Banner and the Suvorov Order, 3rd degree. This regiment was commanded by Yevdokia Bershanskaya, a Cossack girl from the Kuban, and the personnel consisted of volunteers — former students and working girls. The regiment covered itself with glory in four years of fighting — all the way from the Northern Caucasus to Berlin — and took part in the final bombing of that city. Many of the brave girl-fliers made over ten combat flights per day. They excelled in flying planes by instrument only and in precision dive-bombing. They dropped thousands of tons of death-dealing bombs within enemy lines, annihilating men and materiel. The title of Hero of the Soviet Union was conferred on twenty-one fliers of this regiment.

Guards Major E. Nikulina made 600 night combat flights bombing enemy railway trains, bridges and stores. The squadron commanded by Maria Smirnova made 3,260 combat flights and Maria Smirnova herself dropped 100,000 kilograms of bombs on enemy motorized units. Yevdokia Pasko's score includes 157 heavy explosions, 109 fires started, 6 fuel and ammunition dumps blown up in the enemy rear. Eugenia Rudneva dropped 80,000 kilograms of bombs on German formations.

Many were the cases of women inspiring the men on

the battlefield by their personal example. Hero of the Soviet Union Junior Lieutenant Maria Batrakova, who fought at Leningrad and at Stalingrad, when the officer in charge of an armoured task force, in which she took part, was disabled, assumed command of the force and won the engagement. In another engagement, on the Molochnaya River, Maria Batrakova replaced a disabled battalion commander and directed the action which ended in victory for her battalion after 120 hours of fighting. The Soviet soldiers, who had captured an advantageous position, held it against 53 enemy counterattacks and 18 enemy air raids.

Valeria Gnarovskaya, a young Soviet girl, sacrificed her life heroically. Two German "Tiger" tanks broke through our defences and headed for her regiment's lines. Valeria Gnarovskaya picked up a heavy bunch of grenades, ran towards the first tank and flung herself under its treads. The tank blew up. In the time thus gained other soldiers succeeded in putting the second tank out of action. Valeria Gnarovskaya's heroic deed saved the day. She was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

The finest daughters of all the nationalities inhabiting our country defended its freedom and independence on the fields of battle. Shoulder to shoulder with Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian girls, fought Tatar girls and Georgian girls, girls from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bashkiria and Uzbekistan. They fought bravely defending Leningrad, Odessa, Kiev, Sevastopol, Minsk, the Donbas, the Caucasus, the Ukraine.

Machine-gunner Mashuk Mahmetova, a Kazakh girl volunteer, fought till her last breath, repulsing three successive enemy counterattacks. Nineteen-year-old Alia Maldagulova, another Kazakh girl, was an expert scout and supplied our command with valuable information. Fatally wounded, she mustered the

strength to kill an enemy officer with her last bullet. Both girls were made Heroes of the Soviet Union posthumously.

Ziba Ganieva, an Azerbaijan girl, was studying at a Moscow theatrical school. When the war broke out she volunteered as a nurse. Before long she learned to handle a mortar and a machine gun. However, Ziba Ganieva found that sharpshooting was her true vocation at the front and in a short time she became a sniper. She shot down 128 Hitlerites.

Burning hatred of the enemy and ardent love for country caused thousands of girls to become snipers — an honourable and difficult job.

Natasha Kovshova, a Moscow girl just out of school, joined a labour battalion as a volunteer as soon as the war broke out and went to the front. The letters this young communist wrote to her mother are permeated with dauntless courage and grim hatred of the invaders. In one letter she wrote:

“I promise you, my beloved mother, that my rifle will not waver in my hand, that every bullet will hit its mark and strike a fascist swine.” Natasha Kovshova was true to her word.

Natasha Kovshova and Marusya Polivanova, her friend, a girl of her own age, shot down over three hundred German soldiers. Dozens of excellent snipers, both men and women, learned sharpshooting from these two girls. One day Natasha and Marusya were trapped by the enemy while on duty. They fought on till their last bullet was gone, and then, rather than surrender, blew themselves up with a grenade. Both girls were posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

The brunt of the work of saving the lives of the wounded and restoring them to health was borne by the women serving in the medical corps of the Soviet Army. They served as doctors, nurses, medical assistants and

orderlies, rendering expert aid to the wounded and taking excellent care of them.

Nina Kluyeva, a trained army nurse, carried six hundred men off the field of battle at the risk of her life.

Medical assistant Maria Pavlenko saved the lives of eighteen men during one operation when a group blundered onto a minefield. She worked through the night carrying these men to safety from the minefield.

Approximately half a million women were blood donors during the war. Over five thousand of them were awarded orders, medals and “Honoured Donor” badges for their help in saving the lives of Soviet soldiers and restoring them to health. Among those decorated was Nadezhda Arsentievna Skachkova, great-granddaughter of the great Russian general, Mikhail Kutuzov, who gave her blood forty times. She was awarded the Order of the Red Star.

Soviet women sent gifts to the fighting men at the front, cared for the wounded in hospitals, and donated their savings for the construction of tanks and aircraft. Turkmenian women gave up their traditional silver ornaments, contributing more than eight thousand kilograms of silver to the defence fund.

Thousands of Soviet women adopted and cared for orphans, taking the place of the mothers they lost. Thanks to the measures adopted by the Soviet Government — the founding of Suvorov cadet schools, the opening of new trade schools and the organization of children’s colonies to take care of war orphans — the war, despite its vast scale, did not bring in its train any child homelessness, one of the tragic consequences of the war of 1914-18.

The lofty patriotism of Soviet women revealed itself in numerous ways during the Great Patriotic War. Women defended their country alongside of men in all the arms of the service — in the infantry, the tanks, air force, artillery, engineers and communications. They



cared for orphaned children, gave their blood for the wounded and contributed their hard-earned savings to the army; they participated in anti-air-raid defence and helped build defensive fortifications.

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The large number of Soviet women who took part in partisan warfare was an unexampled manifestation of their patriotism. Women responded enthusiastically to the appeal of the leader of the people, Comrade Stalin, to form partisan detachments on the enemy-occupied territory, to kindle partisan warfare everywhere and make conditions unbearable for the enemy and his accomplices. Members of the Communist Party were the organizers and leaders of the partisan movement. They fought in the front ranks of the people's avengers, took part in the most difficult operations, were fearless in battle and unwavering in their love for their country; their example inspired Komsomols and non-Party people to perform deeds of heroism. Thousands of women joined the ranks of the people's avengers and fought side by side with the men. Women who only yesterday followed the most peaceful pursuits boldly chose the hard path of grim struggle.

The names of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Liza Chaikina, Ulyana Gromova, Lyuba Shevtsova, Anna Maslovskaya and many other heroic partisans are known and infinitely dear to all Soviet people. These cherished names will go down through the ages as a symbol of heroism, a clarion call to contemporaries and to future generations always to place their socialist country above all things, to uphold its honour, freedom, and independence as true patriots.

The Germans captured a young partisan girl near the town of Vereya, Moscow Region. She was subjected to the cruellest torture, but not a word escaped her lips. She did not betray her comrades, she did not even give

her real name. She said she was called “Tanya.” Only some time later was it discovered that “Tanya’s” real name was Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya. People who witnessed her heroic death related how, in her last moments, she had the strength to cheer and encourage those who survived and were continuing the fight for our cause behind the enemy lines.

“Farewell, comrades!” Zoya cried as the noose was put around her neck. “Fight on, do not fear! Stalin is with us! Stalin will come!...”

When Maria Melnikajtes, a valiant Lithuanian partisan, heard the story of Zoya, she said to her comrades: “That is how we should all act if we ever find ourselves in a similar situation.” Some time later Maria was wounded in an engagement with a German punitive detachment, and, all her ammunition gone, she was taken prisoner. The Germans subjected the girl to horrible torture to make her give information about her detachment, but they failed.

Maria stood with her head high beside the gallows on which she was to be publicly hanged. She faced the crowd of local people whom the Germans had ordered to come to witness the hanging. She shouted: “Don’t weep, the Red Army will avenge us. Long live Soviet Lithuania! Long live Comrade Stalin!”

Women and girls were active in the Communist Party and Young Communist League underground resistance organizations that functioned on enemy-occupied territory. They struck terror in the hearts of the Germans, drove them mad with rage. The Germans called the underground workers and partisans “Hell’s fiends” and “night devils.”

The Gestapo offered a reward of 3,000 marks, 5 poods of bacon and 25 hectares of land to anyone who would betray to them “Katya” (Varya Virvich), the leader and organizer of the Young Communist League underground resistance group in the town of Dobrush,

Gomel Region. But no one betrayed Katya and her friends, and, supported by other Young Communists, they successfully fought the invaders until Soviet troops liberated the town.

Thousands of girls distributed leaflets, newspapers, Soviet literature to the population in German-occupied towns and villages, disseminating among the people who languished in fascist slavery the fervent word of Bolshevik truth and urging them to sabotage all the Germans' undertakings.

Hero of the Soviet Union Liza Chaikina travelled from village to village reading Comrade Stalin's report to collective farmers, instilling in them faith in the victory of the Soviet Army. She was captured and tortured, but, looking straight into the rifle barrels, she flung into the faces of her murderers these words of defiance: "Death to the German invaders! Long live Stalin! Victory will come!"

Hero of the Soviet Union Anna Maslovskaya sheltered escaped Soviet war prisoners and helped them cross back to their own lines or join to form partisan detachments. She connected scattered underground groups left in the rear with the partisan command and obtained arms for the partisans. The information supplied by Anya helped the people's avengers — communists, Komsomols and non-communists — to carry out daring acts of sabotage and raid German garrisons.

Lyolya Kolesova, a Moscow schoolteacher, was put in charge of a sabotage group assigned to operate behind the enemy lines. The group crossed the front line, and moving by compass, sleeping in the snow and keeping out of the way of German patrols, they penetrated far behind the enemy lines and brilliantly carried out their assignment. They blew up stores and routed two German garrisons. Lyolya and her group eluded all the attempts to catch them, even though the Germans sent

special detachments to hunt them down. The group made many bold attacks and derailed dozens of enemy trains.

The heroes of the “Young Guard” underground resistance organization in Krasnodon covered themselves with undying glory. Nearly half the members of this organization were Komsomol girls. Ulyana Gromova and Lyuba Shevtsova (posthumously awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union) were members of the “Young Guard” leadership. They never thought of their deeds as heroism, nor did they perform them for the sake of glory. They were simply doing their duty as young citizens of the splendid Land of Socialism, brought up in the ranks of the Young Communist League, doing it as naturally as they grew, lived and studied. Girls, so different from one another in character and temperament, each with her individual traits, banded together when the country was in danger, and inscribed on their banner Stalin’s sacred words addressed to the partisans, his words about fighting the treacherous and implacable enemy.

The activities of the dauntless Soviet girls and boys filled the fascist oppressors with fear and dismay. Now the whole nation knows of the feats of the young heroes of Krasnodon.

The Young Guards were caught. The Hitlerite brutes flung them, still alive, into a colliery pit. But even in the face of inevitable death the heroes of Krasnodon did not lose heart. Their faith in the final victory of the just cause for which they had sacrificed their young lives remained unshaken. Before the doors of their cells opened for the last time the members of the Young Guard listened to a last message “from headquarters,” tapped on the walls in Morse code: “This is the final order... We will be led to our death. We will be led through the streets of the town. We will sing Ilyich’s favourite song.” And, their hands bound behind their

backs, covered with blood and exhausted, the Young Guard members talked to their graves, and solemn and sorrowful sounded the words of the song: “Dying as martyrs, fighting for freedom, so did we die...”

With soul-stirring power the Young Guard members demonstrated their unconquerable hatred of the enemy and boundless love for their Soviet Motherland — feelings fostered in their hearts by the heroic Bolshevik Party.

The partisans rendered the Soviet Army invaluable assistance. They annihilated enemy personnel and materiel, routed garrisons and severed communications. Women partisans frequently displayed examples of staunchness and endurance in unequal battle, in dangerous and difficult marches through swamps and forests, in enemy encirclement, when superhuman will power was required of mere humans.

There were tens of thousands of women partisans. Thousands of them have been decorated for valour.

The Supreme Commander-in-Chief Comrade Stalin addressed women partisans in his orders of the day and mentioned them in terms of high praise in his historic speeches.

The wellspring of the heroism displayed by Soviet women is their fervent patriotism, love and boundless devotion to their socialist country. The fiery patriotism and unparalleled heroism of Soviet people is eloquent evidence of the vitality and strength of the socialist system.

Referring to Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya’s heroic deed, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin wrote that she “attained the summit of patriotism and moral grandeur. She imbibed, as it were, all the finest emotions that have moved our people.”<sup>1</sup> These inspiring words are true of

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<sup>1</sup> M.I. Kalinin, *The Moral Complexion of Our People*, Russ. ed., Gospolitizdat, 1947, p. 32.

thousands of Soviet women and girls, partisans of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic region, Smolensk and Moscow regions, the Don and the Kuban; they are true of soldiers of all arms and all fronts, who, like Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, held their country's interests, the honour, freedom and happiness of their people above everything else.

The country paid homage to the valorous deeds of Soviet women. Over 120,000 women in the armed forces have been decorated for distinguished services on the fronts. The Soviet people are proud of the sixty-nine women who have been made Heroes of the Soviet Union. The memory of the women who gave their lives in the fight for the just cause, for their socialist country, will ever be sacred to the Soviet people.

Speaking to girls demobilized from the Red Army and Navy, Mikhail Kalinin said:

“And there is another thing you have accomplished. Women have enjoyed equal civil rights in our country since the first days of the October Revolution. You have won equality for women in still another field — you have personally defended your country, with arms in hand. You have won equality for women in a field in which they have hitherto not acted so directly.”

Lenin prophetically said that the might of the Soviet state lies in the fact that it is the people's state, created and administered by the people in the interests of the people.

With the invincible strength of the Soviet state behind them the Soviet people won a world-historic military, economic, moral and political victory in the Great Patriotic War. Our people saved the civilization of Europe from the fascist brigands. This, said Comrade Stalin, is a great historic service the Soviet people have rendered mankind.

The Soviet Army won because it was led by experienced commanders, trained and raised by the

Party of Lenin and Stalin; it was guided by the most advanced military science, the science created by Comrade Stalin. The Soviet Army was victorious because the Soviet people and army were led by the heroic Bolshevik Party, which created and trained the Soviet Army, converted the country into a single fighting camp and sent its best sons to the front, where they performed their duty to their country with exemplary staunchness. Within the first five months of the war the Moscow Communist Party organization sent over 100,000 of its members into the ranks of the army; 160,000 members of the Leningrad Party organization joined the Home Guard divisions.

In battle communists were models of bravery, valour, courage and skill. Sixty-five percent of the Heroes of the Soviet Union are Communist Party members, and thirteen percent Young Communist League members.

The Soviet Army was victorious because it fought its enemies in accordance with the plans and under the guidance of Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, leader and general of genius. "It is our good fortune that in the trying years of the war the Red Army and the Soviet people were led forward by the wise and tested leader of the Soviet Union — the great Stalin. With the name of Generalissimo Stalin the glorious victories of our Army will go down in the history of our country and in the history of the world." (V.M. Molotov.)

The international consequences of the great victory won by the Soviet Union in the war of liberation against German fascism become more tangible all the time. The destructive forces of the imperialist camp have been weakened. The forces of democracy and socialism on a world scale are now superior to the forces of reaction and imperialism.

The Soviet Union is proud of the fact that women played a big and honourable part in the great efforts and

heroism displayed by our people in the war years.

The example of Soviet women shines like a beacon lighting the way for the women of all freedom-loving countries, for those whom fascism brought incalculable suffering, grief and loss. During the war the example of Soviet women taught others not to submit to the enemy, not to lose heart, to take vengeance for the injuries inflicted by the enemy.

The heroic deeds and selfless efforts of Soviet women showed what rich fruit the emancipation of women has borne, what brilliant results have been produced by the great educational work done by our Party and our state, which brought women full equality and wide opportunities for the development of their creative abilities, for the development of all the best that was in them.



# VI. THE CONDITION OF WOMEN ABROAD

## IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

In all capitalist countries — in the USA, England, France, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Argentina, Brazil, China, Japan, Spain, Portugal, Greece, etc., and in the colonial countries — women's political, economic and civil rights are to a greater or lesser degree curtailed. Women enjoy no equality with men in society.

The “theory” that women are inferior is part and parcel of the ideology of the contemporary bourgeoisie, a tool in its fight against democracy and socialism. The practical aim of this “theory,” besides that of upholding and perpetuating conditions most advantageous for the unbridled exploitation of the working people in general and of women in particular, is to exclude women, who comprise half of humanity, from public and political activity and struggles. The bourgeois ideologists realize that the larger the section of exploited people who take part in the active political struggle grow, the more acute will that struggle become and all the more reason will there be for misgivings about the fate of capitalism. The unavowed but real aim of all the diverse bourgeois “theories” on the woman question is to prevent the millions of working women from taking a direct and active part in the class struggle, and thus to hamper the course of social development and prolong the existence of capitalism.

The ruling classes of the USA leave no stone unturned in their efforts to present the American way of life as the ideal of political freedom and democracy. But no matter how hard they try, the journalists, “scholars” and politicians, bought and maintained by the magnates

of capital, cannot convince anyone that the USA is a model of democracy and political freedom.

Innumerable facts disprove the fairy tale about American democracy, assiduously spread by the bourgeois ideologists and propagandists for the purpose of deceiving millions of people both in the USA and in other countries on which the American imperialists want to fasten their will. One need but acquaint oneself with the condition of women in the USA to see how utterly narrow, empty and false is American bourgeois democracy.

Officially, under the Federal law, American women enjoy equal rights with men. But this is mere form. Bourgeois legislators have nothing against passing a law now and then which may give them a chance to advertise their “democracy.” But it is a far cry from legislated rights to their actual implementation.

The factories and mills, mines and power stations, oil fields and railways, trading firms and banks are in the hands of an insignificant minority, of a handful of monopolists who are the real bosses of the country. The possession of untold wealth gives them the power to subordinate the government’s internal and foreign policy to their own interests. They own all the means by which ideological influence is exerted on the masses — the newspapers, radio, publishing houses, cinema, etc. The millions of exploited people, on the other hand, do not possess one thousandth of the material means and opportunities necessary in order to oppose the truth, that which might really promote the interests of the people, to the stupefying, corrupting propaganda of the bourgeoisie. Clearly, under such conditions the really free expression of the wishes of the great majority of voters — the working people of town and country — is virtually ruled out.

In 1924 Comrade Stalin gave an exhaustive characterization of bourgeois democracy, one which has

been borne out again and again by subsequent developments. "Under capitalism," he said, "the exploited masses do not, nor can they, really participate in the administration of the country, if for no other reason than that, even under the most democratic regime, governments, under the conditions of capitalism, are not set up by the people but by the Rothschilds and Stinneses, the Rockefellers and Morgans, Democracy under capitalism is *capitalist* democracy, the democracy of the exploiting minority, based on the restriction of the rights of the exploited majority and directed against this majority."<sup>1</sup>

By its very nature, bourgeois democracy always has been and always will be, as Lenin and Stalin repeatedly stressed, formal democracy, pseudo-democracy. Bourgeois democracy is one political form of the rule of the bourgeoisie, of the propertied classes. It is inimical to the people, because it is directed against their real rights and interests. This anti-popular essence of bourgeois democracy becomes most evident when we consider the condition of women.

The bourgeois ideology according to which women should be relegated to an inferior position in society is widely propagated in the United States. At the first session of the Council of the Women's International Democratic Federation in Prague in February 1947, the American delegate Helen Phillips pointed out that in the USA women have to wage an incessant struggle against public pressure exerted by the press, radio, cinema, the clergy, who describe women as inferior beings of no importance to the country. Fully in accordance with this ideology and in manifest contradiction to the Federal law, which proclaims the equality of women, the laws of various states greatly restrict women's rights in society

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<sup>1</sup> J.V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow 1947, pp. 43-44.

and in the family. Under the laws of forty-one states a married woman can have no other residence save her husband's. In eight states the husband alone has the right to dispose of the family's property. The laws of six states compel women to turn their earnings over to their husbands. In four states women's right to conclude contracts or agreements is limited.

All these laws plus the widespread propaganda belittling women's role in society actually lead to their exclusion from participation in the political life of the country. The facts speak for themselves. The number of women in the highest government bodies is insignificant — of 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives, only nine are women. Women comprise only two percent of the members of state legislatures.

The equal pay for equal work issue is still on the order of the day. In recent years this issue has become a particularly sore point because during the war, when many of the men were called up, while war production was being vastly expanded, millions of women entered industry. In 1944 the number of women in industry was eighteen million, or over 30% of all labour employed. During that period women's wages increased slightly, but by the end of the war they were still, on the average, only 65% of men's wages for the same work. To this day women in the USA are paid less than men for the same work.

When the war ended, the position of women in the USA became much worse. Unemployment hit them first. Several million women workers were discharged. Yet only 16 out of 100 women who work can subsist in case they lose their jobs. The USA laws do not guarantee working women maternity leave. On the contrary, in most cases women are fired at the first signs of pregnancy.

This is women's inevitable lot in a capitalist country,

where everything is subordinated to the interests of a handful of exploiters. Millions of American women whose work during the war yielded the exploiting capitalists billions of dollars in profits have now become superfluous, thrown out of work and doomed to poverty and starvation.

Very few women in the USA are in the position to obtain a college education. High tuition fees are the first barrier, for only well-off Americans can pay them. Besides, not all institutions of higher education admit women. Even medical colleges, where one might expect women to make up a considerable part of the student body, have a 5% quota for women.

Racial discrimination is a part of the American scene. Negroes were slaves for centuries, and their status is virtually the same today. This has always been considered a natural state in bourgeois America. Even Abraham Lincoln, an outstanding progressive leader in the fight against slavery in America, set himself very limited objectives. He said that it was not his intention to introduce political and social equality between the races.

And political and social equality between whites and Negroes certainly does not exist in America today.

The laws of most of the states forbid marriages between whites and Negroes, Indians or representatives of the "Mongolian" races. The penalty for infringement is imprisonment for from two to ten years. In some states, according to these laws, persons with 1/4 "non-white" blood are classed as Negroes, Indians or representatives of other non-white races. In other states the corresponding figure is 1/3, and under a Virginian law a person with 1/16 non-white blood is not legally a member of the white race.

The discriminatory race legislation in America does not differ from the pure "Aryan" blood policy the Nazis enforced in their day. As a matter of fact, the ruling

classes of America were the predecessors of the German obscurantists, in this respect.

Considering all this, it is easy to understand how cheerless is the life of the 6,000,000 Negro women in the USA. Since the first slave ship arrived in North America three hundred years ago, Negro women in the U.S. have been exploited ruthlessly, and to this day they are employed on the heaviest and dirtiest jobs, mostly unskilled — as laundresses, scullery maids, domestic servants.

According to figures for 1940, only eight percent of working Negro women were employed in industry. This percentage increased somewhat during the war, but when the war ended Negro women were the first to be discharged or transferred to heavy and dirty work. The average wage for Negroes is half that of a white worker. Hardly any safety devices or proper sanitary conditions are provided for Negro labour. As a result, the mortality rate among Negro women and children is twice as high as among white women and children.

Negroes in the USA live under unbearable conditions. They cannot reside in sections where white people live. The Negro sections are overcrowded and sanitation there is very poor. In many states Negroes are debarred from moving-picture houses, theatres, libraries, restaurants patronized by whites, nor may they ride with whites in the same street cars or railway cars. Lynching of Negroes is still a frequent occurrence in the USA. Day after day the newspapers, books, theatre, cinema, radio conduct unbridled anti-Negro propaganda, no different from the racist hate propaganda which the German fascists carried on against many peoples of the world.

The position of Negroes in the USA is a manifest example showing that in capitalist society the class oppression of the working people is combined with national oppression, both products of this society.

Millions of Negro women in the USA endure a triple yoke — as women, as workers, as Negroes.

Since the end of the second world war American imperialism has adopted an aggressive, openly expansionist policy, aiming to gain world supremacy, and, naturally, the reactionary forces have stepped up their offensive against the democratic rights of the working people in the USA. The American imperialists are bent on introducing more and more fascist methods in the country's political life, in order to crush the class protest of the exploited and all popular resistance to the policy of reckless ventures abroad.

The Taft-Hartley Law actually nullifies the workers' rights. According to this law, the capitalists, in violation of obligations undertaken in collective agreements with the workers, have the right to hire non-union members. This is a blow against the trade unions and opens the doors wide for strike-breakers. The trade unions' right to declare strikes and their right of collective bargaining with the bosses has been restricted. The law obliges trade unions to remove communists from leadership. But the fight against communists is merely a pretext for the persecution of all democratic elements in the country. The same law drastically restricts political activities of the trade unions, making it illegal for the latter to make any contribution for political campaigns, including presidential and congressional elections.

American reaction is using the Taft-Hartley anti-labour law in order to fetter the American proletariat.

The most elementary democratic rights of tens of millions of people are being trampled in the USA today.

The whole world knows about the doings of the "un-American activities" Committee. The Committee has blacklisted whole organizations and hundreds of thousands of Americans, has subjected them to humiliating examinations. Filthy and fraudulent methods are used to stamp people as "disloyal," and

thousands of democratic, progressively-minded people are discharged from government services.

The path which the USA has taken in its home and foreign policies is not a sign of strength of the American bourgeoisie; it is a sign of weakness. The profound crisis of bourgeois democracy stands out most glaringly in the USA. The imperialists are conducting a frenzied offensive against the remnants of bourgeois-democratic liberties, striving to establish a regime of terrorism in the country and in international affairs they are violating the principle of the sovereignty of nations, large and small. Actually, this is a continuation of the policy of the fascist countries, the savage policy which was utterly defeated thanks to the mortal blows dealt fascism by the Soviet people and the Soviet Army in World War II.

While pursuing an aggressive foreign policy, the American imperialists are reducing the standard of living of working people within their own country. In a demagogic campaign speech President Truman had to admit that in the USA inflation “is undermining the living standards of millions of families. Food costs too much. Housing has reached fantastic price levels.” “Millions of them,” [the youth], he said, “live in city slums and country shacks,” “most of our people cannot afford to pay for the [medical] care they need.” “Our educational systems face a financial crisis... millions of children... do not have adequate schoolhouses or enough teachers for a good elementary or secondary education”

Such are the realities of American democracy.

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England, that land of “classic parliamentarianism,” also provides an example graphically revealing the effects of the general crisis of capitalism. England has, in fact, become the junior partner of rapacious American monopoly capitalism, its mere satellite. British foreign



and home policy is directly influenced by the undeniable fact that capitalist England is steadily losing its independence and becoming dependent on the USA. The British government's policy furthers this process. Nor does the fact that a Labour government is in office in England, a government that calls itself "socialist," make any difference in this respect. On the contrary, the Labourites, as right-wing socialists, are capitalism's most loyal defenders. They try to disguise the true rapacious essence of their imperialist policy with talk about democracy and socialism, while actually they are in all things the faithful tools of the imperialists, doing their best to demoralize the ranks of the working class. This is the true essence of Attlee and Bevin, as well as of the right-wing socialists of other countries, as pointed out in the declaration of the conference of nine communist parties in 1947.

Lenin wrote:

"Practice has shown that leading figures in the working-class movement who adhere to the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeoisie itself. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not have remained in power."<sup>1</sup>

In a radio address in January 1948 Attlee sang the praises of the Labour government and Labour Party, which, he alleged, was consistently following the principles of "democratic socialism," "individual freedom" and "political democracy," "freedom of opinion," "freedom of speech." Naturally, Attlee refrained from illustrating his statements with facts from life in Britain, for the facts are in crying contradiction to his demagogic declarations.

Here is one fact: 2% of the population of England

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXV, pp. 343-44.

own 64% of the national wealth. Is it not clear, then, that only a handful of rich enjoy "individual freedom," while millions of working people, men and women, have no freedom, except the "freedom" of selling their labour-power to the capitalist and living in poverty?

The Labour government, far from cutting short the fascist intrigues in the country, condones them. The fascists in England get police protection, openly hold their meetings, and organize anti-Semite pogroms. In the name of "individual freedom" and "freedom of opinion," the police of the "socialist" government guard the fascist assemblages and beat up anti-fascists. Of late, the British fascists have become so aggressive as to cause serious alarm among the broad masses of the English proletariat.

The offensive of the reactionary forces in England is gaining momentum. Elementary democratic rights are being curtailed more and more every day. As in all other capitalist countries, women are in the worst position.

Officially, women in England enjoy the franchise, but the formal, hypocritical recognition of women's right to vote and hold office in government bodies is a screen for numerous restrictions which greatly limit women's rights and their part in political life.

The electoral rights of both men and women are limited by educational, residential and property qualifications. It is not difficult to see that these restrictions are directed primarily against the exploited classes, who comprise the majority of the population, and this affects working women especially, for they are materially dependent on men and have even less opportunity than men to acquire an education.

How small is the part women play in political life in Britain may be seen from the fact that of 640 members of Parliament only 24, i.e., less than four percent, are women.

Is it possible in general to speak of real political

rights of the people, when the upper house of Parliament is not elected but made up of men who belong to it by right of birth or of position, appointed by the king? Not representatives of the people but dukes, marquises, counts, viscounts, barons, archbishops and bishops make up the House of Lords.

The law forbidding the employment of married women in the civil services in Britain was repealed only at the end of 1946. However, this does not mean that women are widely admitted to the civil service. The law permits the employment of women in courts and in state attorney's offices, yet there are no women judges in England.

Thus, not only is the right of women to participate in government administration limited; even their right to work in government administration is restricted. The great majority of Englishwomen are excluded from active political life.

The economic rights of Englishwomen are also infringed. Inequality in payment for equal work is a crying form of discrimination against women and one of the most characteristic and disgusting features of capitalist exploitation. The employment of female labour-power increased rapidly during World War II. In 1944 the proportion of women working in war industry was 37% against 16% in 1939. Several million women in England work side by side with men in capitalist factories and mills, in public utilities, in trade, but for the same work they receive only from 50% to 70% of the wages paid to men. Women are doubly exploited by the capitalists, who exploit all wage workers.

At the Labour Party Conference in Margate, in May 1947, the great majority of delegates, against the will of the Party leadership, adopted a resolution calling for an end to be put to discrimination against women in respect of wages. However, the resolution remained no more than just another pious wish, for the Labour government

leaders declared that it was impossible to carry out this decision at the present time. They “forgot” to explain that if the Margate decision were carried out it would cut into the capitalists’ profits.

The Labour government in England faithfully serves monopoly capital. The standard of living of the working people there keeps falling steadily. On the pretext of “reducing dollar expenditures” food rations were considerably cut in 1947.

In September 1947 meat rations were cut to 350 grams per week; on October 15 the milk ration was cut 25%; in November a weekly potato ration of three pounds was introduced, the butter (fats) ration was reduced to 240 grams per month; the price of sugar was increased 66%. Simultaneously with the reduction of food rations prices of food, fuel and clothing and other prime necessities have considerably risen. Rent, gas and electricity cost much more, as does transportation of all kinds. There has been a big increase in taxes working people have to pay. They are on an average 50% higher than during the war. On the other hand, the profits of British capitalists increased by 85% between 1938 and 1946.

Naturally, the capitalists, who refuse to satisfy working women’s irrefutable right to equal pay for equal work, cannot be expected to give women paid maternity leave and guarantee them their jobs upon return. Thus, the vital interests of mothers as well as of women workers are trampled underfoot. The laws of England, like the laws of other capitalist countries, do not provide for maternity protection or care of mother and child. In France it was only after World War II that a clause was included in the Constitution granting women equality of rights, and this was the result of a stubborn fight waged by women with the support of the progressive forces of the country. However, constitutional recognition of equal rights is far from equality in fact.

For instance, the law provides for equal pay for equal work. Actually, women's wages are from 10% to 15% lower than men's in industry, and 20%-30% lower in agriculture. In addition, women's rights to a professional education and to advancement at work are restricted.

At present the French people are in very difficult straits as a result of the betrayal of their national interests by the right-wing socialists and the ruling reactionary circles who servilely curry favour with American imperialism. Frenchwomen are suffering want and privation.

The conditions are described in a letter to Soviet women from Simone Beauclais, a Frenchwoman:

"You probably know that we almost never have enough bread. Endless queues line up before bakeries which are open once a week, and the bread we get is baked from imported American flour which is part soya and part cornmeal. The bread is bad, mouldy and absolutely inedible. My youngest daughter had a liver attack and my sons got bad stomach pains due to eating this bread, while for me, who have been suffering from intestinal trouble for years, this bread is simply poison. You know that for centuries bread and wine have been staple foods in France. Wine is extremely expensive now. Last year's grain crop was an excellent one. Naturally, one asks, where did the bread go?! This year the crop is poor. Most peasants won't even manage to pay for new seed from the proceeds. The peasants say that the harvest won't last them more than a month or two. I don't like to bore you with these problems of food, but they haunt me: I have four children, I have to count every franc, and I have many worries. Besides, it is terribly depressing to see wretchedness all around, and the number of unfortunates is countless. I am referring to people who work with all their strength, not sparing themselves. One of my neighbours is a

dressmaker. Yesterday she showed me a beefsteak she bought, hardly enough for lunch, and it cost her two days' earnings."

The butcher Franco, Hitler's and Mussolini's fascist fosterling, is still in power in Spain, and this is due entirely to the fact that reactionary forces in America and England are helping him. 125,000 Spanish republicans are being inhumanly tortured and are dying in hangman Franco's prisons, among them many heroic daughters of the Spanish people. There are 20,000 Spanish women in the prisons of Franco Spain.

In Belgium, Switzerland, Argentina and many other bourgeois countries a married woman has no right to perform any legal act without her husband's consent. She does not even have the right to dispose of the personal property she owned before marriage. In Switzerland, Turkey and other countries women employed in the civil service must give up work at once if their husbands order them to. Under the laws of many states mothers have no parental rights; only the father has parental authority. In many countries a woman has no right to sue for divorce even when she has sufficient grounds for it.

Almost thirty years ago V.I. Lenin gave the following description of bourgeois democracy, which remains true to this day:

"Bourgeois democracy is democracy of flowery phrases, solemn words, pompous promises, high-sounding slogans about *freedom and equality*, which actually disguise the lack of freedom and equality for women, the lack of freedom and equality for the toiling and the exploited people."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 3rd Russ. ed., Vol. XXIV, pp. 517-18.

As we see from the above, women's rights are greatly curtailed in the capitalist home countries. In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, which are under the yoke of imperialism, women's position is very much worse.

The great majority of the population of the globe, and, consequently, the great majority of women, live in the colonies and semi-colonial countries. England, France, Holland and Belgium, as we know, possess colonies which are many times as large as themselves, both in territory and in population. Formally the USA has no colonial possessions, but actually many countries in the world are controlled and exploited by American imperialism.

The life of the peoples of all these countries presents a dismal picture.

Morocco is not a colony juridically. It is a protectorate of France, which has undertaken to "promote" the economic and cultural development of that country. The population of Morocco is 8,000,000, Arabs and Berbers. Morocco is a fertile country, rich in natural resources. Yet Morocco cannot provide its own inhabitants with bread. Naked, dirty, tubercular Moroccan children, covered with sores and tormented with the itch, fill the city streets, hunt for food in garbage dumps. In Casablanca, homeless women give birth right in the street. Many women die on the sidewalks, with their babies still sucking at their shrivelled breasts. There are no hospitals, nurseries or sanatoriums for children in Morocco. Over 2,000,000 children of school age do not attend school. Syphilis and tuberculosis carry off whole tribes.

"We are full of fear for the future of our Morocco," said a representative of Moroccan women at the first session of the Council of the Women's International Democratic Federation. "We are full of fear for the future of our children, of our people! We are horrified by the prostitution, thievery, the utter loss of human

dignity.”

There is no limit to the avarice, selfishness and rapacity of the imperialist colonizers. They ruthlessly exploit not only the rich natural resources of the colonies, but also the most precious wealth on earth — human beings. India — the jewel of the British Empire — is a vivid example. In 1943 famine killed 3,500,000 people in India. That is ten times the number of dead the British Empire lost in the war. And famine is a common thing in India. In this country of fabulous wealth millions of people die of starvation every year.

“With their own hands mothers killed their babies to end their suffering,” said Vidya Kanuga, delegate from India, at the WIDF Congress.

National disasters are turned to account by profiteers and marauders. Thousands of colonizer-profteers grew rich through the death of millions of Hindus. The British authorities did not deem it necessary to interfere with their sordid practices.

In a country of about 400,000,000 inhabitants there are only 600 maternity hospitals and childcare institutions, i.e., one institution for 667,000 inhabitants. And it is not the state that maintains these few institutions. They are maintained by non-governmental organizations.

Child mortality in India is among the highest in the world. It is especially high in industrial cities. In the one-room homes inhabited by 90% of the factory workers of Bombay, child mortality reaches 55%: less than half the number of children born live to be a year old! Millions die of starvation and disease.

The evils of economic and racial discrimination are aggravated by the dire material plight of the people, by the absence of any laws protecting female labour, or providing for mother and child care. There is no such thing as social insurance. Here are characteristic figures: In India the average length of life of women is 26.6



years; six million women die of various diseases every year.

A communist newspaper in India published a letter from a peasant woman of Bengal, Mina Ron Gaudharn, to the Provincial Prime Minister. Here is an excerpt:

“If you want to behold India as she really is you will see, first of all, a crowd of middle-aged women with hungry children in their arms, looking for work. They replenish the ranks of those who die in the streets of Calcutta... Children die for lack of milk, and those who survive bear no resemblance to human beings... In the villages many people die of cholera. Do not be surprised if you see corpses in the wayside, covered with plantain leaves or merely with paper. For where can the dead get clothes if they did not have them when they were alive!?...

“If you stop at our house (my husband is a teacher, and his pupils come home to him for their lessons), you will see that the pupils are naked, while the teacher wears only a loin girdle. We own only one dhati between us for wearing in the street...

“Sir, will our troubles never end? When will we be in a position to cook dinners for our husbands and sons? When will landless peasants have land?”

The full extent of the falseness of bourgeois democracy is revealed most glaringly in the colonial policy pursued by England and the USA. The imperialists continue to oppress hundreds of millions of colonial slaves, at the same time trying to sweeten their brutal policy with hypocritical talk about granting them sham independence.

An article in the *Daily Worker*, describing the condition of women in Nigeria, shows that they live in horrible poverty, starve, suffer and perish from disease. No more than one percent of the women of Nigeria know how to read and write. Nigeria has only four secondary schools for girls.

The majority of women in Nigeria suffer from disease, and mortality — from malaria, skin diseases, tuberculosis — is extremely high. Women and children receive no medical attention. In Nigeria women have to pay a special tax after they have reached a definite age, and official tax collectors frequently strip girls right in the street in order to determine whether they are subject to taxation.

The author of the article declares that the English are to blame for the lamentable condition of the people in Nigeria.

In Kenya Africans are paid one-fiftieth of the wage paid Europeans for the same work. The two thousand British residents of Kenya, which has a native population of four million, own fifty percent of the most fertile land. Natives are actually deprived of all civil rights. Ninety-five percent of the population are not represented in the Legislative Council of Kenya. Child mortality in Kenya is 500 per 1,000 children born.

In a number of countries of the East, where the Anglo-American imperialists openly and insolently interfere in the internal affairs, the reactionaries crush every hint of democratic liberties; they persecute democratic organizations and progressive leaders. This naturally makes life even harder for women.

Egyptian women sent a letter to the secretariat of the WIDF describing the hard lot of Egyptian women. The anti-communist campaign launched by the government served as a pretext for arresting many patriots, shutting down democratic clubs and banning newspapers that expressed opposition to the treaty of “alliance” between Egypt and Britain. The Egyptian League of women college students and college graduates has been disbanded. Orderly student demonstrations are dispersed by force of arms.

Activities of pro-fascist organizations are encouraged in the countries of the Levant with the

knowledge and the protection of the British, while the activities of democratic organizations, including the Women's Social-Democratic League, are restricted.

Reactionary elements in Iran, enjoying the support of the Anglo-American imperialists, savagely repress every manifestation of the democratic movement. Women in Iran possess no rights whatsoever. They are deprived of the franchise, along with the insane and criminals. They must obey in everything their fathers or husbands. Girls may not marry of their free will; wives have no right to sue for divorce. The husband possesses unlimited power over his wife, he may cast her out into the street and take her children away from her.

In Abadan, the British banned seventeen Iranian trade union clubs and opened brothels in most of the buildings. Iranian reactionaries together with the foreign imperialists who are behaving like masters in that country humiliate and outrage the Iranian people, Iranian women.

In Turkey only seventeen percent of the population are literate. Tens of thousands of villages have no schools at all and there is a strict ban on the sale of such world literary classics as the works of Fonvizin, Griboyedov, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Ostrovsky, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Saltykov-Shchedrin and Chekhov, labelled "communist propaganda."

There are numerous brothels in the capital of Turkey. In Istanbul, there is a whole street of them, and they are listed in the city's official directory. Prostitution is encouraged by the Turkish authorities.

In a letter to American women the Union of Democratic Women of Korea wrote in 1946:

"On behalf of 800,000 members of the Union of Democratic Women of Korea we consider it our duty to inform you of the fact that Korean women in the American zone of occupation possess no civil rights..."  
The situation has not improved since then. In Northern

Korea, where the working people have set up a people's government, women enjoy equal rights with men. In Southern Korea, the American zone of occupation, women are still deprived of elementary human rights, and their democratic organizations are persecuted.

The whole world knows how bitter is the lot of women in Japan. From time immemorial Japanese cities were full of brothels, into which girls were sold for a mere pittance by their poverty-stricken parents. According to official statistics for 1933, fifteen percent of the female population of the prefecture of Akita between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five were sold to brothels, into domestic service or to factories. The war and its aftermath have made the condition of Japanese women even worse, for not only have the democratic changes called for by the surrender terms not been introduced, due to the policy of the American occupation authorities, but they are countered in every possible way by the placement of American reaction in Japan.

In fact, the compulsory labour system for women has been reintroduced in Japan. The majority of working girls are bound by contracts concluded with their parents. They live in barracks divided into small cells of ten to twelve square metres each, six or seven girls in a cell. They must have permission of the management to leave the premises even for a short time. The girls live like veritable slaves.

At present brothels are officially banned in Japan. However, in Tokyo the red-light district is being rebuilt much faster than any other section. Hose Otome, a medical nurse, writes that, unable to find work anywhere, she had no other way out but to sell her body. That is the fate of many thousands of women in Japan.

The lot of women in Kuomintang China is a tragic one. Decades of interference in the internal affairs of China by European and American imperialists, the years

of the Japanese invasion and of civil war have devastated the country, drenched it with the blood of tens of millions of men, women and children, condemned hundreds of millions of Chinese toiling people to an existence of semi-starvation and misery.

The sanguinary war in China started by the reactionary Kuomintang government with the direct military support of American imperialist circles, is still going on, even though World War II has been over for several years now.

Ruin, unemployment, famine reign in the Kuomintang-controlled areas. Over half the arable land lies fallow, for the peasants have been brought to such dire straits that they have no seed to plant.

The situation is no better in industry. Factories, mills and shops keep dosing down, and masses of men and women workers are cast out into the street, doomed to death by starvation. In May 1947, according to a statement by a Chinese leader, over two thousand persons died of starvation daily in the streets of Shanghai.

Unbridled terrorism against democratic and trade union leaders and against various social organizations, assassinations of progressively-minded people, and fusillading of student demonstrations are all typical of Kuomintang China. Naturally, there is no hint there of elementary political and civil rights for women.

Family customs entangle Chinese women in a hopeless web, make them dumb and obedient slaves to the head of the family, first the father, then the husband and father-in-law. Polygamy and the sale of daughters into slavery by their parents, are still practised.

Large numbers of young women and girls who are without homes, work or any other means of support become prostitutes or slaves of the rich.

The percentage of women workers in industry in Kuomintang China is very high and their condition is

appalling. Women workers receive lower wages than men for the same work. They work eleven, twelve and more hours a day. The lot of Chinese working women is unbearably hard — no labour protection regulations or medical aid, semi-starvation with mass tuberculosis as a consequence, frightful housing conditions and absolutely no rights at all. They are not allowed to read newspapers or books, and there are even rules against laughing.

There is not a single social right women enjoy in colonies and semi-colonial countries. They receive miserable wages for their work, and are relegated to a position of inferiority in the family. Semi-starvation from birth to death, hopeless ignorance, the absence of elementary mother and child care, epidemics which carry off every other child — that is the lot of women in these countries.

All this is an excellent illustration of the “civilizing” influence of the imperialist colonizers.

Only the achievement of freedom and independence can ensure real progress for the colonial peoples. A vivid illustration of this is the Mongolian People’s Republic, which, with the help of Soviet Russia, inaugurated a new life, took the path of free development.

At present women in the Mongolian People’s Republic take an active part in all spheres of life. There is not a single branch of economy or field of culture in which women do not participate.

About twenty-five years ago Mongolian women were granted full equality. In 1947 seventy-five women were members of the highest Mongolian organ of state power, the Small Hural, thirteen women were members of the Presidium of the Small Hural and 1,193 were deputies to local councils.

Of the leading cattle breeders honoured with the title “Merited Cattle Breeder of the Republic,” 30.5 percent are women. Thirty-eight percent of the industrial

workers in the Republic are women, while in Ulan-Bator, the capital, women comprise 73 percent of the industrial workers. Eighteen percent of the schoolteachers and 70 percent of the medical workers are women. Women comprise 25 percent of the college students.

The law guarantees women equal pay for equal work and provides for maternity leave. Women receive free medical aid, can place their children in nurseries and kindergartens, and mothers of large families receive special allowances.

Orders for valour in battle were awarded to sixty-five women for their part in the war against the Japanese aggressors in 1945. Mongolian women formed a Women's Democratic organization with a membership of 125,000 which is affiliated to the WIDF.

Time and again the peoples of colonial countries have risen against the imperialist robbers, have taken to arms to fight for their liberation.

The second world war further aggravated the crisis of imperialism's colonial system; it has brought about a further upsurge of the movement for national liberation of the peoples in colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The heroic fight the Chinese people and its People's Liberation Army are waging, and the magnificent victories they have won against the American-supported Kuomintang government clearly show that the colonial and semi-colonial peoples are up in arms, determined to fight it out to the end with the imperialist invaders and their agents. The fight of the Chinese people for national liberation is led by the Communist Party of China. The People's Liberation Army is waging a heroic and successful war against the Chinese reactionaries and American imperialists.

In a report to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in January 1948, Mao Tse-tung, its Chairman, analysing the current situation in China, said

that the revolutionary war of the Chinese people had reached its turning point. The Chinese People's Liberation Army had repulsed the offensive of the Kuomintang reactionary army, watchdog of the USA, which was seven million strong at the time, and had itself taken the offensive. Mao Tse-tung spoke of the mighty resistance the People's Liberation Army offered the forces of world imperialism and Kuomintang reaction and declared that the Kuomintang army was approaching its doom. The People's Liberation Army was firmly treading the path to victory, he said. It was the turning point — away from the road to destruction along which the Kuomintang had been leading the country in the twenty years of its counterrevolutionary rule. It was the turning point from the extermination to which the Chinese people had been subjected for over a century of imperialist rule in China.

This was a great event, he continued — great because it was taking place in a country with a population of 450,000,000 and because it was heralding the certain victory of the people throughout the country. It was a great event because it was taking place in the East — a part of the world with a population of over one billion, a part of the world inhabited by a half of mankind and suffering from the yoke of imperialism.

All anti-imperialist forces in all countries of the East, concluded Mao Tse-tung, must unite against imperialism and the reactionaries in their own countries. They must set themselves the goal of liberating the oppressed countries of the East, with their population of over a billion.

## **IN THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACIES**

The political, social and economic position of women is a true index to the degree of democracy that exists in a country. Only in genuinely democratic



countries are women equal members of society, active participants in their country's political, economic and cultural life.

The victory of the new democracy, of people's democracy, in a number of countries in Central and Southeast Europe opened up to the people wide fields of activity and opportunities to work for the good of their countries, made it possible for these countries to start on the path to socialism.

The victory of the Fatherland Front in Bulgaria brought women equality in social, economic, political and cultural life, and this vitalized the boundless energy latent in them.

Like all the working people, the progressive women of Bulgaria enthusiastically welcomed the five-year plan (1949-53) for the development of the national economy adopted in December 1948. In the villages women are playing an important part in forming cooperatives. Women in all fields of endeavour — factory and office workers, teachers, actors, artists, actresses — take an active part in labour and culture brigades.

The number of women employed in industry is growing, and they are prominent in the emulation movement for higher output per worker.

The Fatherland Front government attaches great importance to mother and child care. Whereas in 1944 there were only 19 maternity hospitals in the country, in 1948 there were over 150, and about 80,000 children from 3 to 7 years of age were taken care of in nurseries and kindergartens. Special dining rooms for children have been opened in the cities. The number of special medical institutions and various facilities for women is growing all the time.

The elections demonstrated women's rapidly increasing part in political activities in Bulgaria. Thirty-eight women are members of the Grand National Assembly. Over 2,600 women took an active part in the

election campaign.

In an article entitled "The Pride of New Bulgaria," Tsola Dragoicheva, Chairman of the National Women's Union, said:

"The Bulgarian women see from the example of their Soviet sisters who have travelled the glorious path of socialist construction for over thirty years what boundless opportunities open up for women emancipated from social oppression. We are aware that the sacrifices which the Bulgarian people made in the trying years of struggle against fascism and the despicable Coburg monarchy might all have been in vain, that our fate might have proved a tragic one, had not the eldest brother of the Slav peoples, the powerful Soviet Union, given us help. Bulgarian women will never forget this.

"It is with deep love and gratitude that Bulgarian women utter the name of the great man who saved their country from German enslavement and who is defending the cause of peace and democracy all over the world, the name of the leader and teacher of peoples — Stalin."

Romania, too, has a truly democratic regime for the first time in her history. Women there now have equal rights with men in all fields — economic, social and political.

The women of Romania are active in the struggle for the establishment and consolidation of democracy in their country and do their part working for Romania's economic transformation.

Romanian women take full advantage of the political equality granted them by the new, democratic regime and they play an increasingly prominent part in political life. At the last elections about 3,800,000 women came to the polls and voted for the democratic government.

All women who have reached the age of 21 have the right to vote, and at 23 they are eligible for election to

any government body. In the last elections 20 women were elected to Parliament. Two ministers of the republic are women. Anna Pauker, splendid daughter of the Romanian people who devoted her whole life to the fight for the interests of the people, is Foreign Minister of the Romanian People's Republic.

Working women, peasant women, women engaged in intellectual pursuits and housewives are united in the Federation of Democratic Women of Romania. One of the Federation's aims is to rally all the women of the country for the fight against the instigators of a new war. It sets itself the task of rallying women for the effort to consolidate the regime of democracy and to further the progress of the national economy, of helping women to make the most of their newly-won equality, of conducting extensive educational work among the masses, and of promoting the proper education of children.

The Federation has before it the big task of helping speedily to wipe out the accursed heritage of boyar rule. The fact that there was not a single maternity hospital in the rural areas of old boyar Romania is an illustration of what this heritage represents. Within two years the democratic Romanian government established 508 maternity hospitals and 539 children's homes for orphans in the rural areas.

One of the main tasks of the Democratic Federation of Romanian women is to put an end to illiteracy and semi-literacy among women and young people.

In all their work for the welfare of their rejuvenated and renovated country Romanian women take the women of the Soviet Union for their example. Speaking at a meeting of women active in various public organizations in Moscow in November 1947, Maria Sirbu, head of a Romanian women's delegation, said:

"We have not seen even one-hundredth part of what you and your people have built, but we are already

impressed by the respect shown human labour in your country, by the high cultural standards of your country, by the care and attention your children receive, by the way women perform their duty to their country and their people.

“Soviet women, their heroic efforts, their inexhaustible enthusiasm and strength in work were an inspiration to us in the days when we were kept in prison and concentration camps, in the days of the hard fight against reaction.”

The League of Polish Women heads the women’s democratic movement in Poland. It takes a most active part in the political, economic and cultural life of the country. The League has arranged thousands of meetings of women. It has organized assistance to the government in the restoration of Warsaw. Women all over Poland make contributions to the fund for the reconstruction of the capital.

Polish democratic women are active in many fields. They take part in the fight against profiteering, help the farmers in the sowing and harvesting, work for the organization of cooperatives, establish public laundries, tailor shops, dining rooms, women’s medical institutions, vocational courses and schools for teaching adults to read and write. Assisted by the democratic authorities and the whole Polish people, women have been able to achieve a great deal.

The women of the other new, people’s democracies are likewise making the most of the true emancipation and equality they have gained.

The splendid way the woman question has been solved in the USSR is and will always be an inspiring example to all freedom-loving peoples of the world, to the oppressed and enslaved women of all the countries who are fighting for their emancipation.

In his greetings to Moscow on its eight-hundredth anniversary Comrade Stalin wrote:

“Moscow now is not only the source of inspiration for the construction of new Soviet democracy, a democracy which rejects every kind of inequality, direct or indirect, of citizens, sexes, races, nations and which guarantees the right to work and the right to equal pay for equal work. Moscow is at the same time the standard of the struggle of all working people the world over, of all oppressed races and nations, for their liberation from the rule of plutocracy and imperialism.”

## **VII. SOVIET WOMEN IN THE VANGUARD OF THE STRUGGLE WAGED BY WOMEN IN ALL COUNTRIES FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY AGAINST THE INSTIGATORS OF WAR**

At the very beginning of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union Comrade Stalin appealed to all Soviet people to rise to repulse the hated enemy. His appeal met with the fervent and unanimous response of all patriots of the socialist homeland.

With the insight of genius, Stalin expressed the firm conviction that the peoples of Europe, enslaved by the German fascists, as well as the freedom-loving peoples of the whole world, would unite to fight the German invaders until the latter were completely defeated.

During the war, when the splendid daughters of the socialist country, together with the whole people, were self-sacrificingly defending the honour and independence of their homeland, Soviet women began to work for the organization of international cooperation of democratic women throughout the world for the struggle against fascism.

Mothers, wives and sisters of soldiers fighting at the front against the inhuman fascist hordes, famed women factory and transport workers, authors, actresses, and scientists, attended anti-fascist meetings at which they spoke of the heroism displayed by Soviet women in the defence of their country, and called upon freedom-loving women the world over to fight against the common enemy.

On behalf of millions of Soviet women, they appealed to the women of England, America, France, to the women of the enslaved and oppressed Slav countries of Europe which were groaning under the iron heel of Hitlerism, to join forces in the fight against fascism.

“The time has come when we must all unite in order to destroy bloodthirsty fascism utterly,” wrote Soviet women. They urged women the world over to enlist in the holy war.

It was necessary to make women of all countries understand how much they could accomplish if they fought against fascism actively, to make them realize that by helping the Soviet people in their war against fascism they would be helping themselves and their own countries, they would be defending the honour and independence of their own peoples, would be fighting for culture, for civilization, for the dignity of women and the rights of mothers and children, for the happiness of their children.

To the women in the German-occupied countries of Europe Soviet women said:

“Don’t lose heart! Fight, fan the flames of the popular war of liberation! Justice is on our side! Victory will be ours!... Sabotage Hitler’s war orders!... Prevent troop trains from getting through to Russia!...”

The heroic efforts of the Soviet women and their appeal to freedom-loving women throughout the world met with warm response abroad.

Women of other countries regarded the fight Soviet people were waging with hope; it heartened them and gave them strength.

Soviet women took the lead in the struggle women all over the world were waging for democracy and progress. And that was natural, because they were citizens of our wonderful, free country, brought up by the Soviet socialist system, by our Communist Party, by our great and wise leader Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin.

In every country, especially in the fascist-occupied states of Europe, women, inspired by the heroism of the Soviet Army and of Soviet women, joined forces and rose against the common enemy. Guided by the communist parties, the women's underground resistance movement grew and gained in strength along with the entire front of the enslaved people's national-liberation movement. It was in the underground, in the resistance movement against fascism, that new women's organizations were formed and proved their vitality and vigour.

The broad democratic movement of women during the war was not limited to Europe and America. It extended to the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The selfless heroism, courage and grit of Soviet patriotic women fascinated millions of freedom-loving women all over the world, lent them strength and showed them how one should defend and love one's country.

The fight of the freedom-loving peoples against Hitlerism, cemented as it was by common sacrifice and common victory, was bound to draw the forces of democracy close together, was bound also to bring about closer unity of freedom-loving women within the various countries and on an international scale.

Unity of the democratic forces was all the more necessary because even before the end of the war the reactionary forces in England and the USA became increasingly busy, and their efforts were directed primarily against the Soviet Union — the bulwark of democracy and the decisive force in the war against Hitler Germany. The reactionaries were anxious to save the fascist aggressors from utter destruction.

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Before the war no mass women's organizations existed either on an international scale or in any single



country. There were about a dozen or so international feminist organizations of various kinds, most of them reactionary and built on professional or religious lines, like the Union of Christian Temperance, Catholic Leagues, Young Women's Association, League of Country Women, University Women's Association. The membership of these organizations was small, and they used demagogic slogans in order to divert working women from the real fight for their equality and democratic rights. No wonder all these associations speedily collapsed when confronted with a formidable war danger. The "Women's International Organizations Contact Committee," which was connected with the League of Nations, disappeared together with the latter. The extremely conservative and reactionary "International Alliance of Women Voters" was not heard of during the war. In some countries members of the Alliance supported the fascists. The collapse of this type of women's organization was inevitable in the period of great trials which fell to the lot of hundreds of millions of people, for they did not have the support of the masses of working women; their interests and needs were alien to them. The moral and political influence of these organizations was negligible.

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After the enemy was defeated the conditions were ripe for the establishment of an organization to keep alive the wartime unity of democratic women of different countries and enable them to take part in solving the new, post-war problems facing the peoples of the world.

In June 1945 an Initiative Committee was formed to prepare for and convoke a Women's World Congress. It consisted of representatives of the USSR, France, Spain, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Italy, China and England.

Soviet women, whose efforts on behalf of democratic women's unity date back to the days of the war, when they issued their fervent appeals to women the world over to unite for the joint struggle against fascism, took a most active part in the work of the Initiative Committee for a World Women's Congress.

The World Women's Congress met in Paris on November 26, 1945, and was attended by 850 delegates and guests representing 181 women's organizations in 42 countries in all parts of the world.

The Congress discussed such questions as how to preserve and extend the democratic gains of the peoples, how to rally all forces to consolidate the victory by establishing lasting and just peace among the nations, how to work to extirpate fascism, how to fight for democratic rights in general and for women in particular, how to achieve genuine, not merely formal, equality, and how to help the oppressed and enslaved women of the colonies.

The Congress established a new international democratic organization, the Women's International Democratic Federation, which joined the serried ranks of the democratic front of the peoples of the world.

The Congress elected executive bodies: a Council, Executive Committee, Secretariat and Auditing Committee. The USSR has five members and three alternate members in the Council, which is made up of representatives of all the countries that were represented at the Congress. The Congress reviewed what democratic women had done to bring about the defeat of fascism during the war, and adopted a Constitution and a Program for the Women's International Democratic Federation.

The women's international organization set itself the task of drawing millions and millions of women into the fight for the complete annihilation of fascism and of the fascist ideology, for the establishment of a just, stable

and lasting peace among nations and for the prevention of new aggression, for political, economic and other social rights for women of all races and nationalities in all countries of the world, bearing in mind that there can be no real democracy in a country in which women do not enjoy full political and economic equality.

The Congress stressed the necessity for strengthening the unity of the peoples of democratic countries, the unity which arose during World War II and brought the United Nations victory over the enemies of humanity, the German fascists and Japanese imperialists.

The decisions of the Paris Congress were and remain powerful means of rallying and uniting the democratic forces in the international women's movement.

The Congress issued an appeal to women all over the world and adopted the following oath:

“Before returning to our countries and to our families, we solemnly vow to facilitate the development of this powerful women's organization, which came into being after the termination of the second world war.

“We solemnly vow to defend the economic, juridical and social rights of women.

“We solemnly vow to fight for the creation of conditions necessary for the happy and harmonious development of our children and future generations.

“We solemnly vow to fight untiringly for the complete destruction of fascism in all its manifestations, and for the establishment of a real democracy throughout the world.

“We solemnly vow to fight untiringly to secure a lasting peace throughout the world — the only guarantee of the happiness of our hearths and homes and of the well-being of our children.”

After the Congress the Federation proceeded to put into effect its resolutions, to live up to its historic mission — that of heading the struggle for peace and

democracy carried on by the various national women's organizations.

Women of the Soviet Union are in the vanguard of the struggle of women all over the world for the lofty and noble aims proclaimed by the Women's World Congress. They take the lead in the efforts to strengthen cooperation among women of all freedom-loving nations.

The WIDF has become one of the biggest mass organizations which comprise the democratic front of the peoples of the world. The Federation enjoys increasing influence and prestige among the masses of women, for it concerns itself with problems of vital interest to all democratic women, problems resulting from the complicated and tense international situation which has developed since the end of the war.

The Federation's Executive Committee and Council have discussed at their meetings the ways and means of rallying women of all countries to fight for peace and democracy, against the survivals of fascism and fascist ideology, and against aggressive reaction.

The overshadowing fact characterizing this post-war period is that while the general crisis of the capitalist system, which is growing ever more acute, is undermining and weakening the forces of the reactionary, imperialist camp, the forces of the democratic, anti-imperialist camp are growing stronger. As a result of the second world war the relation of forces in the political arena is developing in favour of socialism.

World War I gave rise to conditions favourable to the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which, for the first time in the history of mankind, established socialism on one-sixth of the earth. A quarter of a century later, in consequence of World War II, more links were broken in the chain of capitalist countries. A number of states of Central and

Southeastern Europe dropped out of the imperialist system. New, people's democratic regimes arose in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Albania. In a surprisingly short period these countries have carried out bold progressive social and economic reforms and taken firm steps towards socialism. These accomplishments were possible because they were wholeheartedly backed by the masses of the people.

The capitalist world has altered substantially. Of the six imperialist Great Powers, as they were called, Germany, Japan and Italy no longer count. France has been greatly weakened and lost her former importance. The United States of America and Great Britain are the only imperialist Great Powers left, and Britain's position has been seriously undermined. She is falling more and more under the sway of her trans-Atlantic rival and competitor.

The American monopolists, the real rulers of America today, grew fabulously rich during the war and are striving to take advantage of the military and economic might of the USA to extend their rule to the whole world.

“In the post-war conditions, the imperialists of the USA are bidding for the role of world gendarme, for the role of suppressor of the freedom and independence of nations. “The rapacious imperialism of the Americans,” as Lenin called it, is out to gain world supremacy, to enslave and subjugate all the countries of the world. The American imperialists are clearly aiming to take the place of fascist Germany and Japan and are preparing for a new imperialist war,” said Comrade Suslov in his speech at the memorial meeting in Moscow on the 24th anniversary of Lenin's death. The warmongers are openly calling for an attack upon peaceable countries, in the first place upon the Soviet Union. With the aim, as they say, of “combatting communism,” American

imperialists are organizing armed intervention against the freedom-loving peoples of Greece, China, Indonesia, and are interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. They resort to blackmail, threats, economic and political pressure in order to achieve their aggressive aims.

It is now becoming ever clearer to all the peoples that the notorious “Truman Doctrine” and the Marshall Plan, which is a variety of it, were prompted by the American imperialists’ desire to delay the threat of imminent economic crisis, which the Wall Street bosses fear so much, and at the same time to extend the power of the dollar to many countries of the world, to throw their noose over the peoples of Europe and Asia.

It is due to the assistance of the American reactionaries that Franco’s fascist regime still exists in Spain, that a fascist regime is being forced on Greece, that civil war rages in China, that fascist elements are becoming more and more active in Britain, France, Italy. The American imperialists are preserving Germany’s industrial war potential. In pursuit of their imperialist aims the USA reactionary government circles are violating the Allied agreements on Germany, preventing Germany’s demilitarization and democratic reconstruction and the formation of a central democratic government for the whole of Germany. They are dismembering that country by forming dwarf German states entirely dependent on the American monopolies.

To consolidate the victory won over fascism and to achieve security and peace throughout the world on the basis of unity and mutual cooperation — that is the immediate task facing the freedom-loving nations, the democratic forces of the world.

The anti-imperialist democratic camp is closing its ranks in the fight against the American imperialists, their agents and accomplices.

All the peoples want peace. None of them want a repetition of the horrors of war. They are becoming more and more aware of the necessity of carrying on an organized, united struggle to preserve the national independence and sovereignty of their countries, in defence of their rights and of the cause of peace against the instigators of a new war. The communist parties, steeled and tested in the fire of hard battles against fascism and trusted by the broad masses of the people, are in the van of the struggle against imperialism. The offensive of the People's Liberation Army of China against the reactionary Kuomintang forces, the formation of a provisional democratic government in Greece, the Popular Front in Italy, the wave of strikes and mass demonstrations that swept France and Italy, and many other events are eloquent evidence of the strengthening of the democratic and anti-imperialist camp all over the world.

This camp derives most of its strength from the great Soviet Union which constitutes its vanguard, and also from the New Democracies. The increasing resistance offered by the democratic anti-imperialist camp to the schemes of the aggressors and warmongers has a powerful support in the great Soviet Union and in its foreign policy. The Soviet Union is a true and consistent champion of the freedom and independence of nations, big and small, it stands guard over the interests of humanity and civilization.

Soviet women clearly see what their task is at the present juncture, when reaction is on the offensive and fascist elements are growing more active, when the elementary democratic liberties are being violated and progressive organizations and people persecuted, when attempts are being made to split the forces of democracy and to weaken the democratic front of freedom-loving peoples of the world. They are working hard to extend and strengthen the ranks of the Federation, to make it

and its national sections a growing factor in the struggle for peace, for democratic gains, against the instigators of a new war, against international reaction.

Our representatives who take part in the work of the WIDF, who attend its Congresses and Executive Committee meetings and engage in the daily work of its governing bodies, are guided by the mandate of Soviet women enjoining them to base their activities on the Stalin foreign policy of the Soviet state, which is directed against the warmongers and upholds peace and democracy.

The women's democratic movement headed by the Federation is an integral part of the general democratic movement of the whole world. The Federation and its affiliated organizations, together with the international democratic trade union and youth organizations, conducted a mass anti-Franco campaign. Together with the International Association of Democratic Jurists the Secretariat of the Federation sent a commission of lawyers to Spain to investigate the condition of political prisoners held in Franco prisons.

In 1946, as a result of the protest voiced by the WIDF and its affiliated organizations, a protest which had the support of world public opinion, the death sentence of three Spanish anti-fascist women was reversed. In order better to organize the fight against Franco, the national sections of the Federation in Poland, Hungary, France, Finland and other countries formed relief committees for the Spanish democrats and have made arrangements to help Spanish women political prisoners. These committees have collected large sums of money to assist Spanish anti-fascists.

Women determined to fight for the extirpation of the remnants of fascism and fascist ideology demand of their governments, those which still maintain diplomatic relations with Franco, that they break with Franco Spain and enforce an economic boycott against it.



The WIDF is conducting a campaign in defence of the heroic Greek people who are fighting against the monarcho-fascist regime. Protests against foreign intervention in Greece were sent to the Greek ambassador in Paris and to the governments of the USA and Great Britain.

The Federation initiated a movement against the suppression of the freedom and independence of the peoples of Indonesia and Viet-Nam.

The Federation and its national organizations are conducting a campaign demanding the unconditional fulfilment of the United Nations decisions on armaments reduction and on the prohibition of the atomic weapon and of war propaganda.

Inasmuch as the fate of peace in the post-war world depends to a great extent on the correct solution of the problem of Germany, the Federation, on behalf of its millions of members, demands the implementation of the Potsdam decisions, effective demilitarization and denazification of Germany, the formation of a single central German government and the establishment of four-power control of the Ruhr industry. Twice the WIDF sent a commission to Germany, which investigated the condition of German women and the development of the democratic women's movement in the Soviet and French zones of occupation. It also visited the American and British sectors of Berlin. Despite the Federation's repeated requests, the Anglo-American occupation authorities refused to permit the commission to visit their zones.

The commission found that in the American, British and French occupation zones the position as regards denazification and democratic reconstruction is very unsatisfactory, that, in line with the wishes of the American imperialists and with their plans for a new war, the occupation authorities hinder the democratic development of Germany and persecute the democratic

organizations of the German people. They have been interfering with and hindering the activities of women's anti-fascist committees and the democratic union of women, at the same time encouraging and supporting reactionary women's organizations.

The same commission visited the Soviet zone of occupation and found that genuine democratic changes had been accomplished there, that the Soviet occupation authorities were carrying out in practice the provisions for denazification and for the democratic reconstruction of Germany, and that in the Soviet zone the conditions had been created for the development of democratic organizations, including women's organizations.

The USSR is a country of genuine popular government. It is therefore deeply interested in the triumph of democracy in Germany and is doing everything in its power for the establishment of a democratic system in all of Germany.

In the Soviet zone of occupation of Germany the anti-fascist committees of German women started a movement to unite all women's democratic forces. In March 1947, a congress of German women was held in Berlin, at which the Union of Democratic Women of Germany was founded.

In a Manifesto to German women the Union states:

“The Union wants to preserve peace, to defeat fascism, militarism and reaction; it wants to work for the unity of Germany by taking an active part in the political life of the country; to help towards rehabilitation and to reduce poverty, to settle legal, economic and social problems concerning women on the basis of equal rights and obligations; to lay the foundation for a healthy and cultured family life.”

995 delegates from the Soviet zone and 114 from the western zones attended the congress. Most of the delegates from the western zones had to travel to the congress secretly in order to elude the police of the

Anglo-American occupation authorities which refused them permission to go.

The delegates all spoke of the democratic measures of the Soviet military administration. They acclaimed the organization of the Union and demanded unity in the women's movement.

Since its foundation the Union of Democratic Women of Germany has grown considerably. Its membership runs into hundreds of thousands and it has its representatives in almost all the German central organs of administration in the Soviet zone. Members of the Union also work on housing and food committees and are active in the fight against profiteering.

The most immediate political task the Union sets itself is the fight to preserve peace and achieve the unity of Germany, to prevent the splitting of Germany, which is being pushed by the USA imperialists and their agents, the right-wing socialists.

Convinced that the character and trend of the women's democratic movement in Germany is of vital importance to the peace-loving nations, Soviet women, through their representatives in the WIDF, are doing all they can to direct this movement into the proper channel and make it an integral part of the united anti-imperialist and democratic camp, of the camp which is fighting against the aggressive plans of American imperialism, against its designs to destroy the freedom and sovereignty of nations.

Acting in accordance with the wishes of all Soviet women, the Soviet delegation in the Federation exposes the warmongers and explains to the broad masses of the women in foreign countries that the war scare created by the American militarists and the war propaganda they are conducting may bring mankind new disasters.

At the Stockholm session of the WIDF Executive Committee in September 1947 the Soviet delegation declared that all war propaganda, whatever its form,

must be condemned as a menace to society, and that those who carry on war propaganda should be brought to trial and punished severely as criminals. The ideological weapons of war, our delegation said, must be put under a ban as effective as the ban mankind is demanding for the atomic weapon.

These demands which our representatives formulated at the session of the WIDF Executive Committee were fully in line with the Soviet Government's foreign policy. Just then the Soviet delegation at the UN General Assembly submitted comprehensive material exposing the warmongers and demanded that warmongering should be made a criminal offence. All progressive mankind, the common people the world over, were grateful to the Soviet delegation for its declaration.

During the war the example of the heroic deeds of Soviet women and their fervent appeals roused millions of women in the fascist-enslaved countries to join the fight. Similarly, Soviet women in the WIDF are in the vanguard of the fight for the achievement of the Federation's task. Soviet women play a leading part in the world democratic women's movement, for the Soviet Union is the base and bulwark of the anti-imperialist democratic camp. The weight and influence of the Soviet Union in international affairs and the high moral and political prestige it enjoys among the freedom-loving peoples of the whole world are the principal reasons for the success of Soviet women in their activities in the international arena and for the sincere affection which women the world over feel for our countrywomen.

The Soviet women's delegations which took part in the work of the Paris Congress, the Executive Committee and Council have worked persistently to strengthen the Federation and augment its ranks, to make its national sections into a powerful factor in the struggle for peace, for democratic achievements, for the

social and economic rights of millions of women in capitalist countries. The Soviet Women's Anti-Fascist Committee, which was formed during the Great Patriotic War, plays an important part in this work.

Thanks to the contacts Soviet women maintain with women's organizations abroad, they have been able to exercise considerable influence on the development of the international democratic women's movement. Through the extensive activities of their Anti-Fascist Committee Soviet women bring to the women in foreign countries knowledge of the advantages of the Soviet system, of the achievements of Soviet women, their part in the political and economic life of the country, and expose the slander and lies disseminated about the Soviet Union abroad.

The Committee receives letters and telegrams from women abroad, and all of them express their affection for the Soviet people and their desire to continue and to strengthen their friendship with Soviet women.

Here, for instance, is a message sent by French women on the first anniversary of Victory Day:

"We greet Soviet women and your entire people whose share in the destruction of fascism was so great. French women thank you for having contributed so much to the fight against fascism and for having helped us. Our two nations are joined by friendship, and in the future this friendship will grow still stronger."

A representative of women's organizations of India wrote:

"We must strengthen the connections and extend the exchange of information between the women of USSR and the women of India. This will help the women of India in their struggle for the right to live."

Jeanette S. Turner, Vice-President of the Congress of American Women, made the following statement to the press when she was leaving the USSR at the end of October 1947:

“My visit has permitted me to see and observe the great strides the USSR has made toward post-war recovery — I have met and spoken with trade unionists, farmers, intellectuals of all professions and I have gained an insight into that which has made the Soviet Union great — namely, the deep love the Soviet peoples have for their land — their undying patriotism, their faith and trust in the leadership of Joseph Stalin; the manner in which they cherish the socialist ideals — the Soviet state.” This statement exposes the lies and slander spread about our country by reactionaries.

The bonds between Soviet women and the women of the people’s democracies are especially extensive.

Women’s democratic organizations of these countries are extremely interested in the experience Soviet women have had working in factories and on collective farm fields; they strive to emulate the work of our women; they introduce labour emulation and shock work in industry, form women’s building brigades for the rehabilitation of towns and villages destroyed during the war, organize children’s institutions modelled on Soviet children’s institutions.

The women’s organizations of Mongolia and Korea requested Soviet women’s sponsorship in joining the Women’s International Democratic Federation. Many women ask for invitations to the Soviet Union and invite Soviet women’s delegations to visit their countries.

Visits of foreign women’s delegations to the USSR and of Soviet women to foreign countries have helped to strengthen the friendly relations, and working contacts between Soviet and foreign women’s democratic organizations. They have enabled women of all countries to see for themselves the advantages of the Soviet system, and this has helped to explode the slanderous, anti-Soviet lies invented by the enemies of democracy.

The magnificent historic achievements and rights

gained by the working people of the first socialist state in the world serve as an inspiring example to the masses of women in capitalist countries.

Since the struggle between the imperialist and anti-democratic camp on the one hand and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp on the other is growing ever more acute, Soviet women have been demanding that the Federation should combat the intrigues of the reactionaries with still greater perseverance and determination, that it should expose the warmongers before the millions of women all over the world, and should actively and consistently cooperate with other democratic organizations. Soviet women demand that the Federation should fight more resolutely to augment and consolidate the ranks of democracy, that it should imbue the champions of peace and democracy with faith in their own strength.

Democratically-minded women are aware that unity is a most important condition for success in the fight for peace and for their political and economic rights. It is by no means fortuitous that the forces of reaction are intriguing against the unity of the women's democratic movement.

The progress of the preparations for the First WIDF Congress, held in November 1945, showed that the democratic women's movement was rapidly gaining in scope. And reactionary elements did their best even then to hinder the formation of an international democratic organization of women or at least to delay its formation. Thus, British delegates on the Initiative Committee insisted that the program of the international women's organization be restricted to economic matters. They even proposed to eliminate so burning a question as that of the fight against fascism, on the pretext that it might give the whole organization a communist character. The British delegates asserted that in their country fascism never existed and never would. But these assertions are

clearly at variance with the steadily increasing activities of fascists on the British Isles. Oswald Mosley, the leader of the British fascists, does not confine himself to fascist propaganda, as everyone knows. His toughs organize anti-Jewish pogroms in various towns of England and fight workers' organizations.

The representatives of Britain on the Initiative Committee advised against haste in calling the congress and persisted in trying to get it postponed. In this manner they hoped to hinder the formation of the WIDF.

At the congress, too, the British delegation strove importunately to form blocs of representatives of various countries which would push through their proposals and thus dictate their will to the congress, but these manoeuvres *did not succeed*. It is a fact that from its very birth adversaries and enemies of the WIDF began to undermine it. But the various democratic women's associations worked energetically for its growth and progress.

The growing unity and mutual understanding of the members of the WIDF shows that this organization possesses vitality and vigour. Ever larger masses of women are joining it, and not only national but international government and social organizations are beginning to recognize it. The future in the women's movement definitely belongs to the WIDF.

Reactionary elements have been increasing their efforts to undermine the WIDF. The centre of these activities has now shifted from London to Washington.

The reactionaries foam with rage as they watch the growth of the forces of world democracy, and of the WIDF, which is one of its detachments. They are trying to destroy the democratic women's movement, to stop its development by undermining it from within. They want to use the women's movement for their own ends and therefore encourage the activities of reactionary



feminist organizations. The forces of reaction in Britain, USA, France and other capitalist countries are working hard to divert women from the struggle for the aims and tasks which most closely concern them.

In the woman's movement of the USA and Britain reactionary elements prevail. They keep on attempting to form new international organizations, demagogically using the slogans of peace and democracy in order to attract the attention of women and divert them from the fight for genuine peace and genuine democracy.

Repeated attempts have been made to form a new international women's organization of a reactionary bent, in which the Anglo-American bloc would play the leading role and which would speak in the UN in the name of "world womanhood."

Reactionary Catholic forces, the Vatican especially, are likewise working to gain influence on the masses of women.

In 1947 the Vatican convoked two "international women's congresses": the International Council of Catholic Girls and the International Union of Women's Catholic Leagues. The keynote of those meetings was the "glorification" of motherhood and the appeal to women to stay home and take no part in public and political affairs. The Pope spoke at the congresses, and his speeches were as reactionary as might be expected from the highest church dignitary.

Hundreds of millions of men and women all over the world are astir today. They have become active in the political struggle. And it is no wonder the reactionary forces, including the Catholic church and the Pope in Rome, have taken fright, no wonder they are trying to divert women from public activity and to limit their interests to the home.

Obedient to the will of their imperialist masters, the right-wing socialists are doing everything they can to break up the unity of the working class and undermine

the foundations of the international democratic front of the peoples of the world. The right-wing socialists, the most dangerous agents of imperialism in the labour movement and traitors to the interests of their countries, are trying to revive the Second International, defunct since the first world war, and to split the World Federation of Trade Unions. They are also trying to form an international organization of socialist women for the purpose of splitting the democratic women's movement and the WIDF, which is leading this movement. With this aim in view a conference of socialist women was held in Zurich in the summer of 1947, and later another one was held in Antwerp, at which it was decided to form an international women's socialist organization. A provisional executive committee of this future organization was set up.

It is now clear to the whole world that the right-wing socialists of France, headed by Leon Blum, have sold themselves lock, stock and barrel to the American monopolists, that they are working as agents of American imperialism in Europe, primarily in France itself. And that is why the right-wing socialist women of France are waging so furious a battle against the democratic women's organizations of France.

In their attempts to divert women from public activity and from the democratic movement the reactionary elements in the various countries, primarily in the USA, Britain, France and Italy, urge women at their congresses and conferences, and also through the press, radio and theatre, to return to hearth and home.

The reactionaries aim to weaken the influence of the WIDF and to lure women away from the active struggle against the instigators of a new war, from the fight for political rights and for the betterment of the economic position of millions of working women and mothers throughout the world.

However, these attempts are doomed to failure. The

prestige and influence of the Women's International Democratic Federation is growing steadily. This can be seen from the increased activity of the affiliated national organizations, from the fight they are waging for peace. In November 1948 mass meetings were held throughout France in support of the Soviet delegation's proposals at the third session of the UN General Assembly. The Italian women's organization sent to the UN a petition calling for peace, signed by three million women. Petitions supporting the Soviet proposals for the prohibition of the atomic weapon and for a reduction of armaments were signed by 2,500,000 Czechoslovakian women, 2,110,000 Bulgarian women, 5,000,000 German women. Signatures were also obtained in England, Belgium, New Zealand, Holland and other countries.

The women of fighting Greece constantly feel the support of the Federation's national organizations, which systematically send medicines, food and clothing for Greek women and children. The Federation tirelessly exposes before the whole world the crimes being committed by the Anglo-American imperialists against democratic Greece and other freedom-loving peoples of the world. Women's organizations in France and Holland have held meetings of protest against the bloodshed perpetrated by the French and Dutch governments in their efforts to suppress the freedom-loving peoples of Vietnam and Indonesia.

The women of France, England, Italy, Austria and other countries protest strongly against the "Marshall Plan" which is ruining and enslaving their countries, destroying their national industries, their freedom and sovereignty, and transforming them into bridgeheads for new war adventures.

The Second Congress of the WIDF, held in Budapest at the end of 1948, played an important part in mustering the forces of women in the struggle for peace.

The speeches delivered at the congress by delegates

from various countries of Europe, Asia and America, from Republican Spain, Australia, Cuba, Korea and Iran showed that the masses everywhere are offering increasing resistance to the offensive of the monopolists and the intrigues of the warmongers.

Delegates from many countries in all parts of the globe spoke with deep gratitude of the Soviet Government's peace policy, of the great Soviet Union which is consistently leading all the progressive forces of mankind in the defence of peace, tirelessly exposing the instigators of a new war, strengthening the ties of friendship among nations and states.

Jeanette Vermerche, representative of the Union of French women, expressed the feelings of millions of democratic women when she said at the Congress:

"We believe in the Soviet Union, the strongest force for peace, for we know that the people in power cannot want war... We also know from experience that if the Soviet Union is attacked it will fight with the courage of a lion unto victory, instilling courage in the hearts of all who are fighting for the common cause of the peoples."

As she concluded her speech she unfurled the banner which the French women sent to the women of the Soviet Union. The inscription read: "French mothers will never give their sons for a war against the Soviet Union."

The congress enthusiastically applauded the words of the Chairman of the WIDF, Eugenie Cotton, words which expressed the love of millions of common people for the great homeland of socialism.

"The fact that the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe have a feeling of attachment for the Soviet Union," she said, "is not the result of pressure from Moscow, as the reactionaries try to make the peoples of the world believe; it is the result of deep gratitude to the country which gave the blood of millions of its people for the common victory over fascism. It is

the expression of gratitude of millions of men and women to the great people who made the revolution in 1917, who were the first to begin the fight to ensure that the power really belongs to the people. To the countries to which England and France brought “Munich.” the Soviet Union brought liberation. The USSR is the country where the great dream of socialism which lives in the hearts of all workers of the world — men and women — has been translated into reality.”

“Women of all countries!” says the Manifesto issued by the congress. “We have a great responsibility to our children, to our peoples, to mankind and to history. And if all of us women — and we are half of mankind — close our ranks and fight the warmongers, there will be no war.”

The Manifesto calls upon the women of capitalist countries to defend their democratic gains, for without democracy there can be no peace. The Manifesto calls upon the women of colonial and dependent countries to continue the fight against imperialism, for the national independence of their countries.

On behalf of 56 countries the delegates to the Second World Women’s Congress declared that the 80,000,000 women they represent “will fight even harder and more staunchly for peace, for democracy, for the security and independence of the nations.”

The decisions of the Second World Women’s Congress and the work to carry out these decisions will further consolidate the ranks of progressive women the world over and contribute to the common struggle of the democratic forces for peace and democracy, against the instigators of a new war.

Soviet women play the leading part in strengthening the whole international women’s front, in uniting the efforts of democratic women the world over in their struggle for peace.

Soviet women believe it is more important now than

ever before for the Federation to multiply its efforts in the struggle against the imperialist forces, in the struggle for a lasting peace, for democratic liberties and women's rights. Only in this way can the Federation justify the hopes put in it by millions of democratic women. Democratic women's organizations must wage an even more determined struggle against the main forces of the imperialist camp, against American imperialism and its British and French allies.

Mothers and wives the world over, all the national organizations of the Federation must make it their task to expose the warmongers' machinations, the increasing activities of fascist organizations and the offensive of reaction against the democratic achievements of the working people and their organizations.

In its daily work the WIDF must bear in mind that it is absolutely necessary for the cause of peace, democracy and progress, in the interests of all the nations, further to strengthen the democratic movement.

In all their activities, in all their work to strengthen the democratic movement, Soviet women always and forcibly stress that the Federation and its affiliated organizations must not at present confine themselves to lodging protests. There must be more action in their struggle against the forces of reaction, and they must take the offensive more often. They must work more energetically to rally the democratic forces in every country, to expose the lying inventions of the reactionary press about the Soviet Union and the New Democracies — sentinels of peace and defenders of the national independence and sovereignty of all peoples and countries, big and small. They must rouse hundreds of millions of women for the struggle against the instigators of a new world war.

The WIDF was founded because millions of women willed it and many millions of women have rallied to its

standard. Not all women's organizations, however, are members of the Federation yet. As heretofore, the Federation is faced with the task of working with might and main to unite women's organizations within the various countries and to draw ever broader strata of democratically-minded women into its own ranks.

There is a vast amount of work for the Federation to do in the women's movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. It must consolidate that movement and help it to take an active part in the struggle for the independence and sovereignty of the colonial peoples and for their social and economic progress. The upsurge of the national-liberation movement in these countries augments the forces of the anti-imperialist and democratic camp in the post-war world.

The WIDF exists and is growing stronger despite the attempts to undermine it from within, or to substitute for it a reactionary international women's organization. It has been founded to work for the realization of the aspirations of hundreds of millions of women all over the world, and it is performing this task.

It is strong not only by virtue of its numbers but by virtue of the fact that it has in its ranks women who travelled the glorious path of struggle against fascism in the years of hard trials and who are now taking an active part in solving post-war problems. The Federation's main source of strength is the fact that it has inscribed lofty aims on its banner, and that the fight for the realization of these aims will help to ensure peace among the nations and a happy future for coming generations.

It is vital to the interests of peace, democracy, progress, to the interests of all the peoples, that the international women's democratic movement be further strengthened. Referring to the unprecedented rise in the activity of the masses and of their striving for peace, Comrade Zhdanov said in his address on the Twenty-

## Ninth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution:

“Millions of working people are organizing in order to defend the cause of peace in all countries. I am referring to the significance of the World Federation of Trade Unions, which is conducting an active policy of international cooperation among the workers, the Women’s International Democratic Federation and the World Federation of Democratic youth... The forces of democracy are growing, and that is the guarantee that the cause of peace will triumph.”

Backed by the growing forces of democracy, by the joint actions of freedom-loving women of the world, of the organized working class and democratic youth, and by the sympathy and support of many millions of women, the Federation must in future too hold firmly the banner of struggle for the lofty aims for which it was formed.

Soviet women are fully confident that the WIDF will take the lead in the democratic women’s movement of resistance to the imperialist aggressors, and that it will rally and unite the forces of freedom-loving women all over the world under its banner. It will not yield to threats and will adhere resolutely to its anti-imperialist, democratic stand in the defence of peace and democracy, of national sovereignty, of freedom and independence for the peace-loving countries.

The forces of democracy are great. The peoples are eager to work together, they want unity and the establishment of a democratic peace. They want freedom and social justice. These ideals of progressive mankind are expressed most fully and defended most consistently by the great Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union is a staunch and consistent defender of peace, democracy, freedom and the independence of all the nations of the world, just as it was before the war. Comrade Zhdanov said: “As the



embodiment of a new and superior social system, the Soviet Union reflects in its foreign policy the aspirations of progressive mankind, which desires enduring peace and has nothing to gain from a new war hatched by capitalism. The Soviet Union is a staunch champion of the liberty and independence of all nations, and a foe of national and racial oppression and colonial exploitation in any shape or form.”<sup>1</sup> And that is why the most malicious attacks of American and all other reactionaries are directed primarily against the Soviet Union, the country which stands guard over peace and confidently counters the attempts of the USA to achieve world supremacy.

All men and women who value the democratic liberties and peace among nations, the vital interests of their people and their country, regardless of their position in society, political affiliations, nationality or race, must wage a most energetic and determined fight against the reactionaries who slander the USSR, against those who provoke quarrels and sow suspicion among nations, against those who advocate fresh bloodshed and are feverishly preparing for a new war.

The stronger the democratic front the less chance reaction has to destroy the democratic gains and start a new war.

The declaration of the conference of nine communist parties of European countries pointed out that the only correct and certain way of struggle for the toilers and all other democratically-minded people is for them to unite all their forces against the warmongers, against the imperialist enslavement of nations, for the freedom and independence of all the countries of the world. Soviet women are convinced that this program, which accords with the vital interests of all freedom-loving peoples of

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<sup>1</sup> A.A. Zhdanov, *The International Situation*, Selected Works, p. 283.

the world, is the foundation for a consistent, firm and resolute struggle of democratic women the world over.

Citizens of the most democratic and peace-loving country in the world which consistently and steadfastly opposes the aggressive foreign policy of the imperialist circles in capitalist countries and the instigators of a new world war, the women of the great Soviet Union have a special part to perform in strengthening the international women's democratic movement.

Dolores Ibarruri said of the Soviet women:

“Soviet women are our pride, the pride of their people, the pride and model of women the world over.”

True daughters of our great victorious people, reared by the Communist Party and the great Stalin, Soviet women are the most consistent fighters in the ranks of the Federation for peace and democracy, for freedom and the independence of the peoples. They fight courageously and resolutely against reaction, against the imperialist warmongers, bearing in mind that the union and solidarity of all women fighting for democracy and peace is a powerful blow to the imperialist and anti-democratic camp.

# CONCLUSION

Remarkable new achievements of the Soviet people marked the year 1948. The program for the third, decisive year of the five-year plan was fulfilled 106% in industry, with output 18% above the pre-war level. Workers in socialist agriculture also accomplished great things. Over seven billion poods of grain were harvested in 1948, which is almost as much as was harvested before the war.

Thanks to these achievements in the national economy the conditions were created for a further rise of the material and cultural standards of our people. The financial reform and abolition of rationing considerably raised the standard of living of the Soviet people.

On March 1, 1949, retail prices of food and manufactured goods were again cut by decision of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Central Committee of the CPSU(B). This decision was another manifestation of the great solicitude of the Party, the Government and Comrade Stalin personally for the welfare of the Soviet people.

Soviet women play an outstanding part in the effort for the rehabilitation and development of the country's national economy, and take an active part in the all-Union socialist emulation for fulfilling the post-war Stalin five-year plan ahead of schedule. A patriotic movement for Stakhanovite methods of work of whole shops and factories, for economy and socialist accumulation, over and above the plan, for accelerated turnover of funds and for high quality was initiated in Moscow factories and swept the country.

The Soviet people's ardent love for their country and for the Bolshevik Party is vividly expressed in the numerous letters sent to Comrade Stalin reporting achievements in fulfilling the post-war five-year plan

ahead of schedule.

The names of the workers leading in fulfilment of the post-war five-year plan are well known in our country, and women are prominent among them. In almost all branches of industry workers followed the patriotic examples set by the Orekhovo weaver Maria Volkova, by youth brigade leader Anna Kuznetsova at the low-power automobile works, by brigade leader Klavdia Zenova of the Krasny Bogatyr Plant, by Lyubov Ananyeva, spinner at the Glukhov mills.

In 1948 new names were added to the galaxy of eminent workers of Moscow industries. They include: Nina Vasilieva, core-maker at the Stalin Automobile Plant, Valentina Khrisanova, brigade leader at an electric bulb plant; Klavdia Zheltova, weaver at the Trekhgornaya Textile Mills; Alexandra Kuzmina, motorwoman at the Krasnaya Shveya Needlework Factory; Ludmila Nemitsheva, frame operator at the Glukhov Cotton Mills, and many others. All these women display initiative and resourcefulness and are outstanding organizers and innovators of production.

Vying with the best core-makers of her shop — Alexandra Byelova, Olga Chechetkina, and Nina Sadovskaya — the young Stakhanovite Nina Vasilieva, of the Stalin Automobile Plant in Moscow, put out in one shift 1,400 cores for casting the body of ZIS-150 carburetors instead of the 228 called for by the quota. This was a splendid achievement. The third foundry shop, where Nina Vasilieva works, completed its 1948 plan by November 28 and was named a Stakhanovite shop. Nina Vasilieva herself completed by December 5 — Soviet Constitution Day — as much as she was supposed to do in five and a half years.

Over one year ago Valentina Khrisanova's youth brigade at the Moscow Electric Bulb Factory began to work on an hour-by-hour schedule, i.e., planning their work and checking it by the hour. The brigade regularly

fulfills its shift assignment, putting out one hundred, two hundred and more radio tubes. It completed the 1948 plan by September 25. Output per worker increased by almost twenty-five percent. "We got these results," says Khrisanova, "without any extra expenditure, merely by improving organization and technology. Moreover, the brigade freed a number of workers for other jobs."

At the Glukhov Cotton Mills, where Lyubov Ananyeva began her fine work of tending extra spindles, a young spinning-frame operator, Ludmila Nemitsheva, Young Communist League member, improved the technological process and speeded up the spindles so that output increased ten percent. The valuable example was followed by the spinning, flyer and twist frame operators of the Trekhgornaya Textile Mills, Orekhovo mills, the Istomkino mills and other factories in Moscow and all over the Soviet Union.

A new splendid movement for putting out goods of the highest possible quality was started by Alexander Chutkikh, assistant foreman at the Krasnokholm Worsted Goods Mill. His example was followed with enthusiasm not only by textile workers but also by the workers in other industries. Brigades of workmen and working women all over the country are vying with one another for the honour of being called excellent quality brigades.

Many women have distinguished themselves in 1948 by their efforts to raise the standard of agriculture and stockbreeding, and to obtain abundant and stable crop yields on collective farms. For example, Antonina Gudkova, Maria Lyamina, Alexandra Shishkina — field-group leaders on the Borets Collective Farm, Dmitrov District, Moscow Region — obtained a potato crop of 561, 540 and 555 metric centners per hectare, respectively; Yevdokia and Anna Kozhukhantseva — field group leaders on the Tretya Pyatiletka Kolkhoz,

Ukhtomskaya District, Moscow Region — gathered over 500 metric centners of potatoes per hectare; Anna Sokolova, of the Soviet Army Collective Farm, Kolomna District, grew 503.6 metric centners of potatoes per hectare; Alexandra Kislyakova, pig tender at the Novy Put Collective Farm, Kim District, raised 228 suckling pigs to the age of two months, average weight 15.9 kilograms each, in the past year; Agafya Yermakova, field-group leader on the Budyonny Collective Farm, Mozhaisk District, harvested 531 centners of potatoes per hectare.

These achievements reflect the great strength of the collective-farm system, the ardent patriotism of the Soviet farmers, who are working with enthusiasm to raise the country's agriculture to an even higher level.

Advanced Soviet women working in factories, mills, or on collective-farm fields are active builders of communism. They are helping to further the material and intellectual culture of the USSR. And they owe all their achievements and successes to the Bolshevik Party, to its great leaders Lenin and Stalin.

Only the socialist system could have inspired millions of women with creative initiative, could have brought to the fore heroines of labour — Stakhanovites in industry, transportation and agriculture, outstanding cultural workers, Heroes of the Soviet Union and Heroes of Socialist Labour, women Stalin Prize winners and women statesmen.

Soviet women fulfil their lofty duty of raising the younger generation with honour and credit. They educate their children in the spirit of selfless loyalty to the Party of Lenin and Stalin, in the spirit of love for their country. They teach them to strive for knowledge and to work for the benefit of their people, of Soviet society. The Soviet Union is proud of the mothers who brought up their sons to be fearless, valiant soldiers in the Great Patriotic War. That war showed the whole

world what a heroic generation the Bolshevik Party has brought up — a generation that is beginning to spread its eagle wings.

Together with the whole Soviet people the women of the Soviet Union made an invaluable contribution to the defeat of Hitlerite Germany and the liberation of the peoples of Europe from the fascist enslavers. Soviet women's selfless struggle against fascism won them the universal respect of the freedom-loving peoples of the world. Soviet women play a leading part in the efforts to strengthen the international movement of democratic women of all countries, to unite their efforts for the fight against the instigators of a new war, against imperialist reaction.

The influence of the Party of Lenin and Stalin has produced a lofty spirit in Soviet women. Boundless love for their country, patriotic pride in its glorious achievements, staunchness and courage, perseverance in forging ahead towards the goal they have set themselves, ability to surmount difficulties — all these qualities have truly become national characteristics of Soviet women.

The hearts of patriotic Soviet women are filled with boundless love for the Bolshevik Party. Unshakable and impressive is their faith in the strength and truth of the Bolshevik Party, "which is the highest expression of the moral and political unity of our people which is confidently advancing to communist society and which, under the leadership of the great Stalin, is pointing out the road to universal peace, to the abolition of bloody wars, to the overthrow of capitalist slavery and to the great progress of nations and of all mankind." (V.M. Molotov)

The self-respect of Soviet people — heroes and creators of a new life — is based on their awareness of the great advantages of the Soviet social and state system as compared with the capitalist system, on the knowledge that our socialist culture is superior to

bourgeois culture.

Soviet women are proud of their socialist country, which has become a pillar of civilization and progress, of durable democratic peace throughout the world.

They jealously guard the honour and dignity of their great country.

The work of Soviet women, their creative activity contributes to their country's might, adds to its prestige, to its greatness and glory.

Soviet women will continue to march in the front ranks of those who are helping to accelerate the development of socialist economy, who are working to fulfil the five-year plan in four years and to further improve the material and cultural standard of the Soviet people. Deeply conscious of their patriotic duty to their country, filled with boundless love and gratitude to the Party of Lenin and Stalin, and to the great leader of the peoples, Comrade Stalin, Soviet women devote all their energy and all their creative powers to further the prosperity of the Soviet country, to the construction of a communist society in the USSR.







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