



THE WORKING WOMAN
IN THE USSR



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The creative endeavours of the Soviet people are directed toward fulfilling the decisions of the 24th Congress of the CPSU. In the years after that Congress, the Soviet people, guided by the Communist Party and its Leninist Central Committee, have scored formidable achievements in the economic, socio-political and cultural development of society. The USSR marked its half-century jubilee, as a country with a highly developed socialist society, a bulwark of unshakeable fraternity and friendship among peoples.

Implementing the Programme of peace, adopted by the Congress the Soviet Union unswervingly strives towards a healthening in the international situation, consolidation of the forces of peace, democracy and socialism. A leading part in this belongs to the General Secretary of the CC CPSU , L. Brezhnev, a staunch fighter for peace, social progress and the happiness of the people.

Soviet women have made a vital contribution to the development and strengthening of the multi-national socialist state. Together with their fathers, husbands and brothers, they took part in building up the Soviet Union. They fought heroically, protecting it from enemies. They have directed their efforts towards an all round development of the country.

Songs and legends, films and novels have paid tribute to the women who participated in the Great October Socialist Revolution and the Civil War to the machine gunners and commissars, to the scouts and armoured train commanders, to the infantry women and field nurses.

The image of the front-rank Soviet woman of the 1920s is a worker delegate. Such delegates were the "spartkplugs" of many bold undertakings. They acted as the most stringent public controllers. They worked tirelessly and bravely for the new mode of life, and in so doing, they learned how to run the country.

The unforgettable first Five Year Plans will always be linked with the names of such outstanding Soviet women as textile workers Dusya and Maria Vinogradova, the organiser of the first women's team of tractor drivers Pasha Angelina, leading collective farmers Maria Demchenko and Marina Gnatenko, the first locomotive engineer Zinaida Troitskaya and many other front-rank women.

During the Great Patriotic War our women fought bravely shoulder to shoulder with the men against the fascist invaders. It was no easier, for the women on the home front—working long hours in the factories, plowing the fields and taking in the harvest, bringing up the children in the grim years of the war.

After the war the women pitched in along with the men to rebuild the ruined factories and plants, the villages and towns; they built new cities and power stations, and developed "virgin" territories. Their participation, made possible the embodiment of the majestic plans of building communism in the USSR.

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The status of women in society is a question that was upper-most in the best minds since time immemorial. For centuries women struggled for their emancipation and for equality, for the right to decide their own future.

The founders of scientific communist laid bare the class roots and the specific features of the women's question, and mapped out the only correct, scientifically-founded way of solving it. They proved in their works that social-economic reasons lie at the basis of women's servitude in society and in the family.

V. I. Lenin played an outstanding role in elaborating the theoretical principles of the women's question and its practical implementation. In numerous articles and

platform documents he viewed the problem of emancipating women and providing them with equal rights as an inseparable part of the universal social question, the solution of which is directly linked with the revolutionary transformation of society.

The Great October Socialist Revolution swept away all legal restrictions of women. The first decrees and edicts of Soviet rule, that were elaborated with the direct participation of V. I. Lenin, established equal political and civil rights, and made it possible for the age-old dream of women—social and cultural emancipation—to come true.

Proudly speaking about these important acts of the Soviet state, Lenin went on to explain that equality of sexes according to law was actually only the beginning of the emancipation of women. It was necessary to provide women with genuine equality, to involve them in social production.

The Communist Party and the Soviet State carried out major social-economic, ideological and organisational measures in order to involve women in all spheres of social production, to ensure their active participation in the life of the state and society, the blossoming of their abilities and talents.

A significant role in resolving the women's question belongs to Soviet trade unions, which uphold the interests of workers and employees in the sphere of production, labour, life and culture.

Acting as one of the important units in the system of socialist democracy, in involving the working people in management of state and social affairs, as was stressed at the 15th Congress of the Trade Unions of the USSR, Soviet trade unions actively participate in developing the national economy, in moulding a communist attitude toward labour and public property. The specific problems of women as workers, as citizens, as mothers, have always occupied a prominent place in the work of trade unions.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNTRY

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is putting into life the behests of Lenin in its sweeping activity of enlisting women in governing the country and in the life of the entire society. There is a multitude of forms by which women in the USSR participate in governing the country and steering the life of society.

Women make extensive use of their Constitutional right to elect and to be elected.

There are approximately a million women today in the Soviets (Councils) of Working People's Deputies. Thousands of women work in the executive committees of local Soviets of Working People's Deputies as chairmen, deputy chairmen, department chiefs.

The number of women elected to the Soviet Parliament is constantly growing. If in 1937 189 women were elected to the USSR Supreme Soviet, in 1970 there were already 463 women in the USSR Supreme Soviet. It is noteworthy that one of the two chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet—the Soviet of Nationalities—is headed by a woman, Yadgar Nasriddinova, who prior to that had held the post of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek SSR for many years.

More than a third of the deputies in the Supreme Soviets of the constituent republics are women. They are in the Presidiums of the USSR Supreme Soviet and

the Supreme Soviets of constituent republics, they are chairmen of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviets in a number of autonomous republics.

Women also perform important state duties in the USSR Council of Ministers and the Councils of Ministers of the constituent republics. Nine women are deputy chairmen of the Council of Ministers of their constituent republics. Twenty-eight women have been appointed ministers, among them: Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Ministers of Foreign Trade and various branches of industry, Higher and Special Secondary Education, Public Education, Culture, Social Security, Communal Services.

Soviet women also play an important role in the judiciary system. Almost a third of the People's Judges are women, 35% of the lawyers are women, and they also account for 48,3% of the People's Assessors.

Over 3 million are members of the CPSU. They are elected to the steering bodies of the Party. They are members and alternate members of the Party's Central Committee, of the CPSU's Central Auditing Commission, Secretaries of the CC of the Communist Parties of the constituent republics, territorial, regional, municipal and district committees of the CPSU, secretaries of primary Party organisations.

The steadily growing political activity of women representants one of the basic features of Soviet socialist democracy and one of its vital sources. The status of Soviet women, their equal participation in social production, in all the affairs of the state and society never ceases to cause admiration.

Whenever we meet women's delegations from foreign countries, and especially from the young developing countries of Asia and Africa, we are asked in one way or another:

— How did you attain such achievements?

— Why do many of you take a job and waste time on social work? After all yours is a rich country and the material position of the Soviet family quite often permits the woman to remain at home.

These were the questions that were put to Tatiana Neshumova, a young assembler, who was in Japan with a trade union deldelegation. "I am working because my

work is my life, my joy", replied Tatiana. It is indeed so. After finishing a ten year course at school, she took a job at the Leninsky Komsomol Electronic Instruments Plant in Ryazan and found her calling there. A few years later, this young worker who had already scored major achievements was nominated and elected to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and was awarded the high decoration the Order of Lenin. On her job, with her workmates and in her social activities she matured spiritually and professionally, and learned to identify her thoughts and activity with the interests of the state. Her life is quite typical for the majority of women in our country.

The fact that women work in different fields of production and are involved in the life of the state and society is determined in the USSR not only by the rapid growth of the economy and the development of society, but mainly by the task of guaranteeing women genuine equality, by the need for their all-round harmonious development both as individuals and citizens.

Labour, which in our country is the source of all wealth and the decisive factor for creating an abundance of material and cultural benefits is not merely a means of income for the Soviet woman. It is a source of pride, a source of honour and the economic basis for an equal position in the family and in society. She cannot imagine life without work, in which she finds moral satisfaction and awareness of her share in the common cause of building communism.

During the 50th anniversary of the USSR, this thought was clearly expressed by a textile worker of the V. I. Lenin Flax Mill in Kostroma, Valentina Pletnyova, Hero of Socialist Labour. "I am proud," she wrote in her report, "that everything made by my hands belongs to the Soviet people."

An absolutely new image of woman has crystallised during the years of Soviet government she is today a wellversed, independent and full-fledged master at work, in the family and in the state. Our women are on par with our men in everything: in talent, industriousness and courage. And perhaps, the exploit of the world's first woman-cosmonaut, Valentina Nikolayeva-Tereshkova, serves as confirmation of this.

TECHNICAL PROGRESS AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIAL PRODUCTION

Socialism has opened up virtually unlimited possibilities before Soviet women to exercise their right to work. The state guarantees jobs to all women who want to work. Because of this, there is a high level of employment among the women of our country. There is not a single branch of the national economy where our women do not hold jobs.

The number of women gainfully employed in the national economy has grown continuously during the years of Soviet government. In the past 30 years alone, this figure has grown more than 3.5 times. Today 51% of the people working in different spheres of the national economy are women. In industry the corresponding figure is 48%, in agriculture—45%. All this points to the great role Soviet women play in building the material foundations of communism, their active participation in building up the country's economy.

However, opinion of the status of women should be based not only on figures alone, not only on how many women are engaged in social production, but on another vital factor—what place they occupy in it.

Scientific-technical progress, comprehensive mechanisation and automation of technological processes has qualitatively altered the very nature of work performed by women. All this has made their work more creative.

A woman at the control board of an automatic line, a woman assembling sophisticated instruments and machines, a woman operating mechanisms at livestock farms, a woman at the helm of a combine harvester—this is the natural image of a Soviet woman today.

Many trades in such contemporary branches of industry as machine-engineering, instrument building, electrical engineering, chemical and the tool-and-dye industries are becoming traditionally women's trade.

Following the Decisions of the 24th Congress of the CPSU, there are plans within the next few years to complete comprehensive mechanisation of production

and sharply cut manual labour in the most important branches of industry. To a significant degree, this concerns the work of women. Semi-automatic and automatic lines and other sophisticated equipment is used extensively in the textile and food industries which primarily employ women. This makes their work considerably easier.

Every year trade unions sponsor displays of the best achievements in scientific organisation of labour, mechanisation of heavy jobs and auxiliary work in order to facilitate their extension and development. The enterprises with the best showings in this field are awarded diplomas and bonuses of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU).

AUCCTU diplomas and bonuses were awarded, for instance, to the Luberetsk Rug Mill, whose employees are mainly women. During the past few years, many processes were automated and obsolete equipment was replaced with new, more efficient machinery. Each workbench was brought up to the level of up-to-date production esthetics and scientific organisation of labour.

The administrative officials and trade union leaders of the Luberetsk Rug Mill (incidentally, most of them, including the Director, are women) feel that there are no minor things when it comes to organising proper working conditions for women. Various devices have been introduced at the rug weaving machines, simplifying service and lessening the vibration. Rational footwear for women employees was designed together with the Ukrainian Leather Industry Institute. The interior of the workshops has been decorated with flowers and greenery, and provided with soft lighting.

Every year brings a greater number of such enterprises. In the past three years alone more than 80 factories, plants and state farms were awarded AUCCTU prizes for scientific organisation of labour and mechanisation of manual jobs. And many of them are enterprises where the majority of employees are women, for instance: the "Belaya Dacha" State Farm near Moscow and the Kossino Knitwear Factory, the "Svetlana" Electronic Instruments Plant in Leningrad, the Central Self-Serve Department Stores in Perm, the 40th YCL Anni-

versary Garment Factory in Tiraspol, the Nogin Spinning and Weaving Mill in Vichuga and many others.

Scientific-technical progress is actively promoted by Scientific-Technical Societies (STS) and National Inventors' and Rationalisers' Societies (NIRS), supervised by trade unions. These creative organisations have a membership more than twelve million scientists, engineers, technicians, innovators, agricultural experts, rationalisers and inventors. Among the problems they work on, there are many projects geared toward reducing women's labour in manual and unskilled jobs. Paramount attention is directed to automation and mechanisation of women's labour. Working women participate actively in creative engineering work. Today, approximately 1.3 million of them are members of the National Inventors' and Rationalisers' Society. More than 100 women have the honourable title Merited Inventor and Merited Rationaliser of their constituent republics.

The number of highly skilled specialists among women is growing from year to year. Today they number over 10.5 million in the USSR, i.e. 59% of all the specialists with a higher and special secondary education, gainfully employed in the national economy. Every third engineer in our country is a woman and 46% of the agricultural specialists are women. Many women are in charge of industrial enterprises, state farms, collective farms they are superintendents of factory workshops, departments and laboratories.

In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in the number of women engaged in intellectual work. The health and education of Soviet people today depends considerably on their talent and knowledge because three out of every four doctors are women, and women make up 71% of the teachers.

Ever more women are engaged in scientific research. Among the people engaged in scientific investigations in 1971 women made 39%; Doctors of Science—13% and Candidates of Science—27%. Twenty-eight per cent of the total number of post graduates, or 28,000, were women.

Pelageya Polubarinova-Kochina—an expert in hydrodynamics, Academician Militza Nechkina, a distin-

guished historian, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, physiologist Natalia Bekhtereva.

All the constituent republics have developed their own women scientists and scholars. They include: Antonina Prikhodko, Academician of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Lenin Prize Winner, Doctor of Physics and Mathematics; Maksuda Khadjinova, Academician of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Technical Sciences; Natailja Bazanova, Academician of the Kazakh Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Biology; Izzet Orudjeva, Corresponding Member of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Technical Sciences; Professor Jamal Kanlybayeva, Corresponding Member of the Kazakh Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Technical Sciences, and others.

More than 15 thousand women are members of creative unions—writers', composers', artists', architects' and journalists'. Many of them have won worldwide acclaim. Among them are masters of arts and People's Artists of the USSR Maya Plisetskaya, Angelina Stepanova, Bella Rudenko, Julia Borisova and many others.

The state values and rewards the women for their efforts in building a communist society. Five hundred women have been awarded Lenin and State Prizes in the fields of science and engineering, literature, art and architecture. For their achievements in all branches of the national economy Soviet women have received 1,405,966 decorations, or 33% of the total number. The title Hero of Socialist Labour has been given to 4,497 women.

SOCIALIST EMULATION AND WOMEN

Soviet women, holding firm positions in the economic life of society, create significant material and cultural values by their work and are persistently bending their efforts toward raising the all-round efficiency of production and to an even higher level. They participate actively in socialist emulation, which in our country is one of the chief methods for involving the



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working people in the campaign to fulfil national economic plans.

Socialist emulation is a form of comradely mutual assistance and cooperation among employees during their working process. Such emulation illustrates how to raise labour productivity not by increasing the physical and mental stress of the workers, but by better utilisation of machinery and equipment, progressive production experience and proper organisation of labour. Enveloping all spheres of life socialist emulation raises the cultural-technical level of people, promotes a conscientious attitude toward labour, collectivism and comradeship, and an uncompromising attitude toward shortcomings. Sponsoring socialist emulation campaigns, trade unions gear them to be effective. The emulation campaign in the USSR today has become virtually countrywide. More than 77 million workers, engineering and technical personnel, office workers—half of them women—are involved in this campaign.

The high level of class consciousness developed in them by the Party and the Soviet power, accounts for their genuine heroism in socialist emulation. They act as a working class detachment, full of creative energy and enthusiasm.

A Moscow textile working-woman, Hero of Socialist Labour Maria Ivannikova acted as the "sparkplug" of the campaign for economy involving millions of men and women. The Soviet people are proud of the women who initiated various innovation campaigns—Merited Builder of the Russian Federation Anna Illarionova, Leningrad footwear maker Nina Yevdokimova, the Altai tractor driver Nina Alexentseva, who triggered a broad movement to train women farm mechanics, Turkmenian textile worker Ene Ovezova, Estonian milk maid Leidi Paips and many others.

The Communist Party issued an appeal to make 1973, the third and decisive year of the 9th Five-Year Plan, a year of intensive work. Like all Soviet workers, our women took up many scientifically founded pledges which reflected improved technology at each workbench, mastering the most time-saving and least labour-consuming work methods and bettering labour organ-

isation. Aligned with the Party's economic policy, the watchwords of socialist emulation are: greater output, better quality, lower costs.

The working people of Moscow have launched a campaign to turn the capital into an exemplary communist city, and this campaign, aimed at fully utilising the reserves of production is spearheaded by a woman—Galina Arefieva, a team leader at the Electro-vacuum Instrument Plant. It was upon her initiative, with the backing of the Party and trade union organisations, that a nation wide campaign was launched for thrifty utilisation of material resources so that one hour a week the plant would work on economised raw material and electricity.

Alevtina Smirnova, weaver of the Yakovlev flax mill of the Ivanov region started off a campaign for top quality output from the work bench. She resolved to fulfil her five year assignment in three and half years and to produce 286 thousand meters of top quality goods above the assignment.

Liudmilla Rummyantseva, pattern cutter for the "Zaria" footwear center (Moscow), has taken the pledge to fulfil her five-year assignment in two and half years and to work eight days a year on the material she economised. She also will train 36 comrade-workers in the advanced techniques. Liudmilla Rummyantseva is keeping her word and is already two years ahead of plan.

These are but three of a multitude of examples showing the great potentialities of socialist emulation, fully bringing out the features of a new attitude to labour in women.

The nationwide socialist emulation campaign in rural areas is gaining momentum. Soviet farmers intend to harvest a bumper crop during the third and decisive year of the Five-Year Plan period. The women of the country actively supported the movement and achieved high labour results, matching those of men.

In 1972, a year of highly unfavourable climatic conditions, many women workers were among those with high achievements in agriculture.

An example of this are the labour exploits of the women farm mechanics of the Altai region. In 1972 the

Altai grain growers took in an unusual bumper crop for that area, inscribing a new chapter in the history of Siberian farming. Thousands of women combine and tractor drivers proved they could expertly handle agricultural machinery. Alexandra Kibkalo, a combine driver at the "Rodinsky" State Farm in the Rodinsky Region harvested almost 1,600 tons of grain. Not all men drivers could boast such results.

One of the winners of the socialist emulation campaign for the harvest was Natalia Shishayeva, Hero of Socialist Labour. She has been driving a harvester combine for more than 35 years, and no one can remember her not coping with an assignment. She has won the respect of everyone. She became a widow while still young, she raised two children, gave them an education, and instilled in them patriotism and love for work.

There are many such remarkable women workers as Natalia Shishayeva in the Soviet rural areas.

Both in town and country Soviet women, together with the men, search for new reserves in raising efficiency of production. They multiply our wealth and make our life still more beautiful.

EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND UPGRADING SKILLS

The cultural revolution played a great role in involving women in social production and management of the state. According to the Leninist definition, such a revolution signified a complete turn about, a whole new stage in the cultural development of all the people. Elaborating the theory and concrete plan for carrying out the cultural revolution in the USSR, V. I. Lenin pointed, in particular, to its direct significance in resolving the women's question.

Soviet power opened wide the doors of schools, establishments of higher and secondary education before women and provided them with actual opportunities to study and to acquire equal skills with men.

This is promoted by the truly public and highly humane nature of our Soviet system of education.

In 1973 the Supreme Soviet of the USSR confirmed the Fundamentals of Legislation, in which are reflected the achievements of the socialist educational system, from the kindergarten to the university, and the interrelation of all forms of teaching are determined by law.

In the Fundamentals of Legislation of the USSR and the union republics it is stressed, that the main principles of people's education in the USSR are: the equal right to education for everyone irrespective of race, nationality, sex, religious convictions, social or financial status; compulsory education for children and youth; state and social nature of all educational institutions; teaching in the native tongue or in the tongue of another people of the USSR; all forms of education free of charge.

Today, during the period of technical revolution, the demands in general and specialized training of all the workers, also women workers, are especially high. Some 81 million are at present studying at educational centers of the country; 72% of the population, engaged in national economy have a higher or secondary education. In the current Five-Year Plan period the country will complete the transition to a compulsory general secondary education for the younger generation. All citizens of the USSR, including women, can acquire a secondary school education at general secondary schools, secondary vocational training schools and special technical schools. Both boys and girls study here according to single curriculum.

Young working men and women without a secondary education can attend night school or take correspondence courses. All factories, plants, enterprises are obliged to provide the necessary conditions for normal work of these schools.

There is a ramified network of vocational training establishments in the USSR to get young men and women ready for professional work. The country has more than 5,700 vocational training and technical trade schools with a student body of over 2,600,000. There are three types of schools: vocational training schools (urban and rural) for young people who have finished 8-9 classes; technical trade schools for graduates of secondary schools. The third type of schools is the most

recent. They are secondary vocational training schools at which the youth simultaneously learn a trade and acquire a general secondary school education.

This type of training has been prompted by the vigorous requirements of the day, when a worker often has to cope with complex technical problems. The worker of today must not only be able to do his job professionally, but must display logic and creativity in his approach.

Young women can study at all these establishments and acquire professional skills in all trades except those which are hazardous to a woman's organism, to the health of the future mother.

33,5% of the overall enrollment at municipal vocational training schools in 1972 were girls. At technical trade schools, which as a rule, offer more complex professions 54.6% of the student body are girls, and at secondary vocational training schools—22.9%. The plan for 1971-1975 is geared toward enrolling more girls to vocational training schools.

The 24th Congress of the CPSU pointed out the need to continue developing vocational training, to expand the network of vocational training schools providing a secondary school education.

Trade unions direct their efforts toward bettering the system and conditions for training workers, including women employees, broadening the network of schools and improving the professional training of young people. They participate actively in compiling lists of trades and professions for the training of women, and supervise the observing of admittance regulations for schools, training in professions where women may be employed.

Higher education occupies a significant place in the system of public education and turns out specialists for all branches of the national economy, science and culture. The training process has undergone some major changes in recent years. It is being made to fit in more fully with the requirements of scientific-technical progress, with the overall level of present-day scientific know-how. The country today can boast 825 higher educational establishments with an enrollment of more than 4.6 million, almost half of them women. At tech-

nical higher educational establishments women make up 38% of the student body, at economic establishments—60%, at medical and physical culture and sports—56%, educational, the arts and cinematography—67%.

Girls who take jobs after graduating from a vocational training school can continue studying at a higher educational establishment without quitting work. Our state does a great deal to stimulate the working people to upgrade their knowledge, to expand the network of night schools and correspondence courses. Like all workers who continue to study while holding a job, women are entitled to quite a number of privileges.

Students attending night school, taking correspondence courses or attending special secondary schools are entitled to additional paid leaves for passing their examinations; they have a shorter work week with the same take-home pay; their fares to the educational establishment offering correspondence courses and so on, are also paid. So are their leaves—during no-school periods.

The fundamental law of collective farm life—the Collective Farm Charter—also gives women farmers the right to upgrade their general and professional knowledge. The Charter binds the collective farm to help them improve their skills, master modern farming implements, and create favourable conditions for them to conduct social activities and to more boldly promote them to management posts.

All women, just like men who have graduated from an educational establishment (special secondary, vocational training or higher educational establishment) are guaranteed a job that corresponds with their acquired profession and skill.

A woman (just like a man) can master a new trade or raise her skills directly at her place of occupation. The administration of an enterprise, together with trade union committees organizes individual or team courses and other types of production training, it offers special courses, study and training centres. These forms of training are of particular importance to married women whose leisure is limited because of family duties.

About five million employees acquired new trades in production conditions in 1972, and of this number approximately 32% were women. More than 13 million working people advanced their qualifications and professional skills.

But besides professional skills, the workers must have profound economic knowledge in order to effectively participate in management of production, to economize at all levels, to successfully operate sophisticated machinery and to advance in their careers. This is prompted by the high rate of scientific-technical progress, and the quantitative changes in the economy of production and the nature of labour.

Realizing the importance of this, working women strive to make a profound study of the fundamentals of economy. It is indicative that not only officials and specialists, but rank-and-file women employees upgrade their economic know-how in the system of Party and production training, at schools of communist labour and economic knowledge, so-called "people's universities" sponsored by trade unions, production organizer departments at economics schools.

On a national scale, the system of economics education embraces about 30 million women and men, i.e., approximately a third of all those occupied in material production.

The entire system of public education, training and advanced training of personnel at enterprises, training in the field of economy, is closely linked with the development of scientific-technical progress according to previous plans. Planned management of the economy, government bodies, as well as leaders of enterprises and trade unions makes predictable the coming changes in equipment, technology, organization of production and so on. This allows simultaneous introduction of technical novelties and purposeful re-training of personnel or upgrading of their skills.

As in other countries, scientific-technical progress in the Soviet Union enables machines to take the place of workers. However, thanks to the steady rate of growth of socialist production, all women employees, as well as men, are guaranteed full employment in any case.

There is no unemployment in the Soviet Union. Not a single worker whose trade has lost its significance due to introduction of new machinery is left without a job. For them special conditions are provided, they can master a new profession, and are given jobs at the same or other enterprise.

The government has set up special agencies for utilising labour reserves. They deal with the practical end of employment and job placements. If workers are sent to other regions of the country, all expenses are handled by the government.

Thus the citizens of our country encounter no difficulties in acquiring a trade, or changing it, if the need for this arises as a result of new machinery being introduced or due to modernisation of production.

However, it would be wrong to think that we have no unsolved problems. The advantages and possibilities the socialist method of production offers are not as yet fully employed. Regular surveys by trade unions indicate that the level of labour skills of women employees is still somewhat behind that of men. Not in all branches is the proportion of women sufficiently high among the personnel, holding leading professions in automated production. In spite of the same length of the working day, women have much less leisure than men because of maternal and household duties. This is something that we cannot be satisfied with. Because they have less time, women's opportunities to raise their skills and qualifications are correspondingly smaller. Hence, any further expansion of the program for advanced training of women employees depends on increasing this time. Much is to be done on a nation-wide scale to cope with the task during the current Five-Year period, in accordance with the Directives of the 24th Congress of the CPSU.

New ways of giving women employees more free time for raising the level of their professional skills and culture are being investigated locally, at the enterprises.

Collective agreements are to play a big role in this respect. In accordance with labour legislation, these are concluded annually at each enterprise by the trade union committee, acting on behalf of the employees,

and by the management, after preliminary discussion and approval by a general meeting. The collective bargains are binding for all employees—both men and women—whether they are members of the trade union or not.

Every collective agreement has a section containing bilateral agreements concerning women employees on the staff.

The collective agreement of Tomsk Manometer Factory is quite indicative in this respect. It provides for a further improvement of working conditions for women, upgrading their skills. The management and the trade union committee have pledged to organize special study groups for raising the general educational level of the women employees, and provide qualified teachers and consultants for this work. Children's day-care centres are to organize their work with due consideration to the working hours of mothers. A special grocery order service is to be opened up at the factory's cafeteria to facilitate the household chores of women and to give them more free time.

The management and trade union committee of the enterprise check up at regular intervals on fulfillment of the collective agreement and report on this to the workers and employees.

The management is juridically responsible for fulfillment of these commitments.

In recent years, trade union organizations and the management at many enterprises work together in drawing up long-term plans for the social development of worker communities. Such plans cover five and even more years. In particular, positive experience was accumulated by the factories, plants and construction sites in Leningrad and the Leningrad region. The social development plans outline concrete measures for raising the professional and general educational level, erasing the social differences between employees performing physical and mental labour, raising the material well-being and cultural services for the employees and their families. Special measures have been mapped out for stimulating the professional and cultural growth of women employees, for increasing their leisure and relieving from tedious household chores.

This type of social development planning in fact opens up prospects, before all workers, to better working conditions, living conditions, and for an all-round physical and cultural development.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

The socialist system of managing the economy, which guarantees women the right to work, totally excludes discrimination in payment as compared with men. In fact, Soviet legislation gives women a number of privileges. For instance, when a woman is transferred to an easier job because of motherhood, she still receives her previous pay. Girls (as well as boys) under 18 have a shorter working day, although they receive pay for a full working day.

Wages and salaries in our country are differentiated depending on working conditions. For instance, they are higher in the metallurgical, mining and chemical industries. As new, modern equipment is introduced, there is a levelling out of wages earned by workers in different branches of industry. It is noteworthy that in the past Five-Year period in the branches of industry employing relatively more women, the rate of growth of wages was approximately 1.5 times higher.

In particular, the average monthly increase in wages during 1966-1970 lined up in the following way: light industry (textile, garment, footwear)—32.1%, food industry—31.7%, machine engineering and metal tooling industries—29.2%, iron and steel industry—20.3%.

The government works in close collaboration with the trade unions in mapping out its policy in the field of labour rates and wages since this directly affects the material interests of each man and woman employee.

Trade unions participate directly in planning wage increases, regulating the wages of workers according to branches of industry and regions of the country. Not a single piece of legislation changing salaries and

wages can be passed without the consent of the trade unions.

In accordance with the law, the management at different enterprises can set down the system of wages for certain categories of employees' bonus and premium systems, introduce changes in the existing production norms and servicing standards only with the agreement of the factory, plant local trade union committees.

During the first two years of the 9th Five Year Plan, quite a number of measures were taken in accordance with the Decisions of the 24th Congress of the CPSU aimed at further raising the earnings of industrial workers, employees and collective farmers. The trade unions participated most actively in all these undertakings.

Wages and salaries were increased for railroad and subway workers, a large section of farm mechanics, as well as doctors, teachers, instructors of day-care centres, the majority of whom are women.

The minimal level of retirement pensions has been raised. Stipends were increased for students of higher educational establishments and technical schools.

An important social-economic measure was launched at the end of 1972—minimum wages as well as salaries are being increased for middle bracket employees in industry, transport, communications, state agricultural enterprises and certain other branches of production. This sweeping measure affects more than 50 million employees. The take-home pay of workers and employees will grow by approximately nine billion roubles annually as a result of this step. The new system of payment covers those working in the Northern and Eastern regions of the country, including the Urals, already this year.

Over the five-year period, the average monthly take-home pay will increase by 20-22%, while the earnings of collective farmers engaged in social production will go up 30-35%. It is obvious that all this will have a beneficial effect upon the budgets of many Soviet families.

WORKING CONDITIONS AND LABOUR PROTECTION

Equal rights of women and their participation in social labour does not mean that women have to perform men's jobs, which are quite often labour consuming. Besides general labour protection norms and standards, Soviet legislation provides for special rules and norms protecting women employees. They are based on the specific nature of the female organism and drawn up with consideration of mother and child health, as well as the role of the woman in the family.

These norms are set down in the Fundamentals of Labour Legislation of the USSR and the constituent republics that were drawn up with the direct participation of trade unions and endorsed in 1970 by the USSR Supreme Soviet. Our Fundamental Labour Laws have great political and social significance as they represent the first national labour laws in the history of the Soviet Union, embracing all the basic work norms and standards in the given period of communist construction.

One of the basic labour laws provides for the right to have healthy and safe working conditions. These questions are covered in "Labour Protection" chapter in the Fundamentals of Labour Legislation of the USSR and the constituent republics.

The Communist Party and the Soviet government direct their efforts towards raising people's welfare and labour productivity. And one of the important aspects of this work is the steady improvement of working conditions on the basis of technical progress. In fact, this is one of the fundamentals of the socialist method of production.

The USSR has a clearly defined system of labour protection, which includes safety engineering services for different branches of the national economy. Large sums of money are allotted for these purposes every year. In the first two years of the 9th Five Year Plan they came to a total of 2.5 million roubles, which is 50% more than for the same period of the 8th Five Year Plan. More than 50 million people, or 20% more than

five years ago receive special work clothes and footwear free of charge. The last item requires an expenditure of more than a billion roubles a year.

Labour legislation forbids a working week greater than 41 hours. And even this will be gradually reduced as economic and other necessary conditions are created. A five day working week with two days off is regarded as the basic working regime.

Depending on the type of work and the working conditions, a shorter working week has been established for certain categories of employees. For instance, the working week of secondary school teachers is 18 academic hours, kindergarten instructors and telephone switchboard operators—36 hours, doctors—30-39 hours. In the main, all these jobs are performed by women.

All categories of employees are entitled to annual paid leaves of not less than 15 days, employees below 18 to at least one month. Workers in the field of education, employees of scientific-research institutes and cultural establishments, a considerable portion of whom are women, have longer paid leaves—24, 36 and 48 days a year.

A special chapter in the Fundamentals Labour Legislation of the USSR and constituent republics reflects the legal aspects of women's labour.

There is a ban on the use of women's labour on heavy jobs and in hazardous conditions, as well as on jobs underground since this may be damaging to their health. Neither are women allowed to take jobs that involve lifting or carry objects heavier than established by law.

Women must not be made to work night shifts (except for those branches of the national economy where there is a special necessity, and even then, only temporarily). The number of women on night shifts is steadily decreasing thanks to improvement of production and better organisation of labour. More rational work-and-rest regimes make it possible to cut down night shifts to a minimum.

Labour legislation allows women to hold a job that involves a shorter working day or shorter working week. However, they are still entitled to the rights

and privileges enjoyed by employees at the given enterprise doing a full working day.

Over the past few years, the Communist Party and the Soviet government undertook some measures to have women perform skilled agricultural jobs (tractor drivers and machine operators, livestock farm mechanics, drivers of automobiles or trucks with payloads of up to 2.5 tons). Women are provided with the newest, and latest types of tractors and other farm implements, and their labour quotas are 10% lower. Other measures too are aimed at protecting women's labour in agriculture.

Special authorised government agencies, that do not depend on the management of enterprises (establishments, organizations) or their superiors are responsible for inspection and control of the way the labour laws are implemented, and for strict observance of rules and norms of labour protection for women employees as well as for all working people. The Procurator General of the USSR is the supreme supervisor over the precise execution of labour laws by all ministries and agencies, enterprises, establishments, organizations and their officials.

In accordance with Soviet law, state inspection and control of labour protection is also carried out by trade unions. This is one of the specific features of the socialist system of labour protection, when besides state agencies, the workers themselves and their most massive organisation the trade unions participate in creating healthy and safe working conditions.

Trade union organs at all levels, beginning with the trade union group in a work team, work section and ending with the AUCCTU, take regular measures for controlling organization of labour protection for all employees, and especially women; they keep a watchful eye on fulfilment of safety engineering rules and standards, sanitary production conditions and labour hygiene, in order to provide better services for women engaged in production, and take reports of officials on these questions.

The Statute on the rights of factory, plant, local trade union committees, which has been endorsed by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, provides

that no worker or employee can be discharged from an enterprise, establishment or organisation at the initiative of the management without the preliminary consent of the trade union committee. Overtime work may be done only with the permission of the factory, plant and local trade union committee.

State inspection over labour protection and fulfilment of labour legislation is carried out by technical inspectors (Now there are more than 5.000 of them). The rights of the technical inspector are broad. He may enter an enterprise at any time of day or night and check up on the state of labour protection at all stages of production. He has the right to demand from the management the necessary documents and explanations on labour protection questions. He has the right to instruct the management to rectify violations of labour protection laws. He also controls fulfilment of such instructions. Upon discovery of shortcomings which can damage the health of the workers, he has the right to halt work in a given place. Following his report, a corresponding departmental trade-union committee or trade-union council can pass a decision to stop the work of separate workshops or even on an enterprise, that does not comply with the safety engineering requirements and sanitary conditions of production.

A technical inspector has the right to impose fines on officials for violating labour protection rules and norms; he also has the right to submit the necessary material to investigating agencies in order to take legal action against responsible persons, and so on.

There are more than three million volunteer inspectors, members of corresponding commissions under factory, plant and local trade-union committees, and all of them assist the trade unions and their technical inspectors in the job of further improving the working conditions and labour protection of women. Among such volunteers are front-rank workers, specialists and activists.

Besides all this work, the technical inspectors and their assistants see to it that there is no infringement upon women's labour rights.

Control of the existing labour legislation affecting

women is not the only job of the trade unions. Acting for the trade unions, the AUCCTU has the right to initiate legislation. It can table draft bills and proposals in the USSR Supreme Soviet in the government and other executive bodies on questions of improving working, living and resting conditions, and medical service for women employees.

Here is one example. More than 75% of the employees in the textile industry are women. Proceeding from this, the AUCCTU and the Central Committee of the Trade Union of workers in the Textile and Light Industry submitted to the government a proposal to improve working conditions in that sphere. As a result, major organisational and technical changes have taken place at textile enterprises. New machines and equipment have been introduced. Better ventilating and air moistening systems and air conditioning units have been installed. Lighting has been rationalised. Women of 22 mass professions in this branch of industry (weavers, spinners and others) have the right to retire five years before the general retirement age, i.e. at the age of 50. Comprehensive plans for improving working conditions and labour protection have been elaborated and are being carried out with the direct participation of trade unions in the textile and light industries, as well as at enterprises of other branches of industry.

For instance, the Tiraspol Garment Factory in Moldavia with over 5,000 women employees. Every workshop has its own lounge with modern furniture. The roof of one of the four-storey buildings with an area of 1,600 square metres has been turned into a solarium. There is also a winter garden in the passage-way of the main wing. The factory has its own swimming pool, aquariums, bird enclosures and a sea of flowers. Women have ample rest facilities during work breaks. However, that is not all. The factory operates an extensive service centre including a hairdresser, dry cleaners, shoe repairs, a wellstocked food store, and a canteen. A polyclinic on the factory grounds is staffed with doctors of different specialities. It has a dentistry, X-ray, otolaryngological, gynecological, and physiotherapeutical facilities, a laboratory with the newest equipment. A balneological clinic was recently com-

missioned. All this provides the women employees with excellent working conditions.

All the work in our country aimed at improving working conditions and labour protection, including for women employees, is conducted on a scientific basis.

Scientific-technical progress, accelerated significantly during the current Five-Year period, makes work easier and labour conditions healthier for all employees, including women. As production processes are mechanized and automated, certain enterprises are taking measures to ensure such working conditions as lessen nervous and physical stress. More rational working and resting regimes are introduced, working operations are altered and so on. However, the growing number of machines in production, the higher speeds of machines and different devices and the use of new types of materials sometimes leads to undesirable consequences—local vibration, operation monotony, toxicity and so on.

In view of this, more attention is being given not only to qualitatively new machines and equipment that comply with the safety engineering requirements, but also to a profound scientific study in the influence of mechanization and automation, as well as of new materials on the female organism.

431 scientific research institutions are working on labour protection problems resulting from the further scientific-technical progress. It is of note, that some 50 scientific bodies are conducting research for improving the health of working women. Their labour conditions are investigated in various fields of industry and methods to prevent harmful influence of industrial factors. More rational work and rest regimes are suggested.

Trade unions of the USSR, as was already pointed out, have six labour protection institutes. One of them, situated in Ivanovo—a major textile city—specializes in research of working conditions of women employees. In the past few years alone the institute has proposed a number of comprehensive measures for creating sanitary-hygiene working conditions of more comfort for women in the textile, garment and linen industries; it has also developed new branch standards for scientific organization of labour at work-benches, rational illumina-

nation, maximum permissible noise levels, and standard requirements for design of machines and equipment.

The AUCCTU sponsors national scientific-practical conference dealing with protection of women's labour, which aim to expand scientific research and to extend into production the achievements of science and engineering. For instance, such a conference in 1972 heard more than 75 papers. Its recommendations were examined and commissioned in those branches of economy where women work.

HEALTH AND RECREATION OF WORKING WOMEN

One of the most important tasks of the Soviet state is to protect the health of the people. The Fundamental Public Health legislation of the USSR and the constituent republics, endorsed by the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1969, is based on the Leninist principles of Soviet public health as a nation wide cause.

The USSR has organized a broad system of social-economic and medical measures geared to bettering health protection; qualified medical aid has been made accessible to all. What is more, it is free of charge. Physical training and sports have become a truly "grass roots" movement. The socialist society focuses special attention on health protection of mother and child. Morbidity indices have been slashed tremendously during the years of Soviet government. A number of previously widespread infections have been stamped out altogether. General and infant mortality have been sharply reduced. Average life expectancy in the country is steadily increasing.

The concern of the Communist Party and the Soviet government for the health of the working people is evident from the rapid growth of the network of medical establishments, the training of more medical personnel and the development of medical science. The USSR today has 733,000 doctors. This is more than 25% of the total number of physicians in all the countries

of the world. In 1975 this number is expected to increase to 839 000.

Women employees, like all industrial workers, receive therapeutical-preventive aid from the medico-sanitary units directly at the enterprises, or policlinics and health resorts. Trade unions play an important role in this. If a woman is susceptible to certain diseases caused by the specific quality of her job, then following a doctor's recommendations, she is transferred to another job, after training her in the new profession.

Annual health building plans are drawn up by the management together with the trade union committee and medical workers. Such plans are based on the results of medical examinations and the analysis of actual morbidity indices of the employees. Usually, such plans provide for better sanitary-hygienic conditions in the workshops and at the workbench, improved therapeutical-preventive aid including the dispensary method of medical service, providing diet meals, and directing employees who require treatment and rest to health resorts, and so on.

Trade unions attach paramount importance to a special type of therapeutical-preventive establishment called sanitarium-prophylactorium. They are usually located close to the industrial enterprise and residence of the workers. Their main difference from ordinary resort sanitariums is that the employees rest and receive treatment here without interrupting their day-to-day work.

For example, the Krasnoyarsk Shipyards have built a sanitarium-prophylactorium in a picturesque spot on the bank of the Yenisei River in Siberia.

A 24 day accommodation voucher is provided by the trade union organisation either free of charge or for a token fee to an employee who comes there for rest and treatment every day after work. It has the latest medical equipment and is staffed with skilled doctors. It provides curative mud baths and mineral water treatment, paraffin baths; it has a gym for curative PT exercises, a swimming pool, premises for sun and air bathing. The workers receive four meals a day. Those needing it receive special-diet meals. To make it more convenient for working mothers, they are provided

with accommodations and treatment at the sanitarium during the summer when their children are at summer pioneer camps or with the countryside kindergarten.

The network of sanitarium-prophylactoria in our country is expanding from year to year. Their number grew from 496 in 1945 to 1,840 in 1972. Trade unions have set as their goal to have at least two million employees, half of them women, resting and receiving treatment at such sanitarium-prophylactoria by the end of 1975.

Trade unions devote much attention to the arrangement of special diets as a vital element for preventing and treating diseases. Vouchers for special diets are bought by the trade unions on social insurance funds and are given to employees on the basis of doctor's recommendations, either free of charge or for a token fee. Some half a million women employees have received such diet vouchers this year.

The organisation of rest and recreation, services at health resorts, which are operated by trade unions, is also geared to protect the health of women and all workers in the Soviet Union.

Trade unions operate approximately a thousand sanitariums, vacation hotels and rest homes, where almost four million women employees rest and receive treatment every year. It is noteworthy that the absolute majority of them are provided with accommodations (including meals and treatment) either free of charge or at a great discount (up to 70%). All the expenditures are covered from state social insurance funds.

Many working women and their children receive treatment and undergo health-building measures at health and holiday resorts, run by public health and other agencies. Many industrial ministries and agencies have their own resorts. More and more collective farms are building their own sanitariums and rest homes.

Now that industrial enterprises are switching to a new system of planning and economic incentive, many factories and plants have been able to open up countryside rest and recreation centres for their employees and members of their families during vacation periods and weekends. Such centres have become quite popular because they are located in picturesque places not

far from their place of occupation and residence. Some three million women and children visit these centres every year.

It is understandable that every working mother would like to spend her annual leave together with her child and family. Hence, trade unions have organized special sanitariums and rest homes for mothers and their children. These are modern well-equipped establishments, staffed with skilled instructors and pediatricians.

In accordance with the Directives of the 24th Congress of the CPSU, the AUCCTU has endorsed the long-range plan for the development of trade union health and holiday resorts for 1971-1975. More than a billion roubles have been appropriated for the construction of health and holiday resorts and tourist facilities during the current five year period. As a result, trade unions will be able to organise health and holiday services for at least another 240 million workers and members of their families, which is double the number for the past five year period.

Special attention is to be given to organising health and holiday services for workers in the industrial regions of the Urals, Siberia, the Far East and Kazakhstan.

Tourism and hiking are becoming more and more popular with women lately. Trade union tourist bases, hotels and camping centres cater for millions of such enthusiasts.

So-called "health train" trips have become quite popular in recent years. In practically all the big cities, every Friday, thousands of families take such trains to the countryside for rest and recreation, skiing, gathering berries, mushrooms etc.

The state social insurance budget provides the material basis for trade union activity in the sphere of improving labour protection and health building.

Social insurance in the USSR vividly reflects the genuine rights of the working people for rest and recreation, therapeutical and preventive aid, security in old age, in case of illness and disability.

Social insurance is totally financed by the state, it embraces all workers without exception and is based

on truly democratic foundations. Social insurance is supervised by trade unions with the active participation of the working masses at large. Contributions to the social insurance budget are made by enterprises, establishments and organizations without deductions from the earnings of employees.

Such social insurance funds are used for providing women employees' grants during temporary disability, during maternity leaves, on the birth of a child, for looking after sick children, retirement pensions, invalidity pensions, survival benefits, as well as for providing vouchers to sanitariums, rest homes, and vouchers to pioneer camps and so on. As for the temporary disability grants mentioned above, they are paid out to all employees irrespective of length of service right from the first day of illness until total recovery, or until the patient is classified as an invalid, whereupon an invalid's pension is appointed and paid out to him. In case of an industrial accident or occupational disease, an employee receives 100% of his actual earnings.

Women are entitled to retirement pensions at the age of 55 (men—60 years) after an over-all working term 20 years for women and 25 for men. Women have special privileges for age and length of service because besides their actual work on the job, they spend considerably more time looking after their children and the household. Soviet legislation makes special provision for this: women who have given birth to five and more children and who have raised them to the age of eight years are eligible for a pension at the age of 50 after an overall working term of 15 years.

Depending on the nature of production and working conditions, the retirement age for many professions has been reduced by 5-10 years. For example, women textile workers and telephone switchboard operators can retire five years earlier, while doctors of certain specialties and operators in the chemical and other industries—10 years earlier.

A lower retirement age is established not only on the basis of the working conditions. Women employees of the Far North regions, invalids of the Second World War and others can retire five years earlier.

Women pensioners who are still in good health have the right to continue working. All workers, junior service personnel and certain categories of workers employed in the service industry, in education and public health are entitled to their retirement pension even if they continue to keep on working, i. e., they receive both their wages and their pension.

Some important improvements have been introduced in the pension system in the past few years. For a considerable cross-section of the population, its significance has increased as a source of raising the standard of living. The minimum retirement pension was raised in 1971. Invalid pensions and survival benefits were raised for workers, employees and collective farmers. Their pensions and grants are now the same as for industrial workers and employees. A social insurance system for collective farmers was introduced in 1970 following a request of the National Council of Collective Farmers. It is managed by the trade unions.

The work of trade unions in the sphere of social insurance is steadily growing in scope. In 1971-1972 alone the state social insurance budget increased 15% and in 1973 came to 21.4 billion roubles.

The Leninist social insurance programme, implemented in our country can be viewed as an achievement of the working class and of all the Soviet people.

MOTHER AND CHILD CARE BY THE STATE AND TRADE UNIONS

Millions of women in the Soviet Union are employed in all branches of economy. This poses before the state, and society the problem of combining their work with their family duties, which stems from the very essence of the special position which a woman occupies in society.

Giving due consideration to a woman's social functions, our socialist state does everything it possibly can to create the necessary conditions that will allow her to combine labour in social production without harm to her maternal functions, her family duties.

V. I. Lenin was greatly interested in all questions connected with mother and child care, with bringing up and educating children. Right after the Great October Socialist Revolution, V. I. Lenin issued an order to hand over all the best buildings—palaces, mansions, apartment buildings and country estates to childrens' establishments. The Decree on establishing a Motherhood and Childhood Department, signed by Lenin, was one of the first of decrees of Soviet power. It meant that the protection of mother and child health became an integral function of the state. Motherhood was recognized as the civic duty of Soviet women.

Lenin's ideas concerning mother and child care have been reflected most vividly and developed in decisions of Party Congresses, important Party documents and the CPSU Programme.

"The Party considers it a most important task, declares the CPSU Programme, to ensure the education from early childhood of a sound young generation harmoniously developed physically and spiritually." Furthermore, it notes: "A happy childhood for every child is one of the most important and noble aspects of communist construction." These Programme requirements represent the watchword for all our work in the protection of motherhood and childhood.

Concern for mother and child is reflected in state laws. It has become a part of the way of life in our country.

"Motherhood in the USSR is protected and encouraged by the State." This is emphasized by the Fundamental Public Health Legislation of the USSR and the constituent republics.

Our country has built, a broad network of women's consultation centres, maternity homes, sanitariums and rest homes for expectant mothers, nurseries, kindergartens and other day-care centres to protect the health of mothers and their children.

According to Soviet law, a woman has the right to decide the question of motherhood herself in order to protect her health.

Motherhood in the USSR is protected by a state system of special institutions such as maternity homes and women's consultations.

Mothers, like all people in our country, receive medical care free of charge. In 1972 maternity homes and maternity wards at hospitals had more than 224,000 therapeutical and obstetrical beds for pregnant women and parturients, there were 22,000 women's consultation centres, children policlinics and out-patient units in the country, regularly checking upon the health of women and children.

Pregnant women working a 112 day maternity leave (56 days—before delivery and 56 after) with pay from state social insurance funds. In case of birth of two or more children, and in a number of other instances, the post-delivery leave is extended to 70 days.

All pregnant women are entitled to maternity leaves whether they are members of trade unions or not, irrespective of the length of service or nature of work before going on leave.

Over the past five years the appropriations for payment for maternity leaves and birth grants from the state social insurance funds have increased by more than 50% and now stand at over one billion roubles a year.

Soviet law gives a woman the right to be exempt from work and to receive grants from the state social insurance funds not only during maternity leave, but also when it is necessary to look after a sick child (in this case, the mother or father is entitled to a paid leave). Soviet legislation protects a woman's labour rights during the period of pregnancy, delivery and care for the infant. Criminal proceedings may be launched against an executive who refuses to hire a woman or discharges her on motives of pregnancy or nursing. Women who are pregnant, nursing or who have children under one may not be dismissed, unless the enterprise they are working for ceases operating. In that case they are provided with employment. Expectant mothers (from the moment pregnancy has been established), breast feeding mothers and women having children under one are not permitted to work night shifts, overtime; they are not allowed to work on off-days, nor may they be sent on business assignments to other localities. Women having children from the age

of 1 to 8 years cannot be made to work overtime or sent on business assignments to other localities without their consent.

If a pregnant woman is unable to cope with her usual job, then according to a doctor's medical conclusion, she is transferred to an easier job. Breast feeding mothers and women having children under one are also transferred to other jobs if they are unable to cope with the current ones. Moreover, they receive the average wage of their former job during the entire period.

Expectant mothers are granted their annual or additional leaves as they wish, either directly before going on maternity leave or immediately after it, irrespective of the length of service at the given enterprise.

Mothers or women who have adopted a newborn child directly from a maternity home are entitled to an additional leave (without pay) until the child is one year old. In such cases, the management must keep the job (post) for such a woman; what is more, this period is added to her general service record.

Breast feeding mothers and women having children under one year of age are entitled, besides the usual lunch and rest breaks for all employees, to an additional break of 30 minutes every three hours for feeding their children. These breaks are considered as part of the working day and are paid for at an average rate.

All these measures, aimed at improving mother and child health have made it possible to almost totally eliminate mortality of women during delivery and to sharply reduce infant mortality.

As a token of respect, mothers who have given birth to many children are awarded the title "Heroine Mother" and are decorated with orders such as "Heroine Mother", "Motherhood Glory" and "Motherhood Medal". The state provides material assistance for women with low salaries for bringing up their children. Women employees who give birth to a child are entitled to a grant for purchasing the items necessary for infant care and nourishment.

A mother having two children is given a one-time government grant for the birth of her third and each subsequent child, and a mother having three children

is entitled on top of that to a monthly state grant for her fourth and each subsequent child.

As of December 1, 1973 the period during which a mother receives her salary or wages while looking after a sick child will be extended. Maternity leaves in all cases will be 100% of a woman's earnings irrespective of length of service.

An increase in grants is contemplated for women with three or more children. The grants are to equal their salaries irrespective of the length of service. Additional grants are introduced for children in families with an overall income (all forms of income included), not exceeding 50 roubles a month per member of the household.

We have always taken pride in what the state is doing for our children. The Soviet state which is engaged in the noble cause of building a communist society has as one of its goals to bring up a younger generation that is healthy, industrious, honest and loyal to the common cause.

V. I. Lenin regarded the first nurseries and kindergartens in our country as "the shoots of communism". During the years of Soviet government these "shoots" have grown into a broad and powerful network of children's day-care centres which form the initial stage in the system of public education.

In practice, every woman employee has the opportunity of placing her child in a children's establishment beginning from the age of 3-4 months. Trade unions help mothers to choose the most convenient type of nursery or kindergarten: day-care centre, round-the-clock and sanatorium type establishments. In 1972 there were 9,900,000 children in the all-year-round kindergartens and nurseries.

In rural areas, besides the permanent children's pre-school establishments, during the period of field work, seasonal nurseries and kindergartens are organized. They are attended by five million children. True, in view of the turbulent development of the national economy and the appearance of new cities and towns, especially in newly developing areas in Siberia and the Far East, where most of the population is made up of young people, the development of the network of pre-

school establishments still lags somewhat behind demand. No doubt, this is due to rapid growth and will, in time, be rectified. Every year new kindergartens and nurseries catering to hundreds of thousands of children are being commissioned. The Communist Party has set as one of its immediate goals to meet the nation-wide demand for children's pre-school establishments, giving due consideration to the increasing contingent of children of pre-school age.

Such children's pre-school establishments help the family budget, besides being significant in bringing up children. It costs from 400 to 500 roubles a year to keep one child in a nursery or a kindergarten. But parents pay according to family income. The pay, however, never exceeds 12 roubles 50 kopecks a month for a child in kindergartens and 10 roubles a month in nurseries. Some families, especially those with many children are totally exempt from payment. On the average parents paid only 15 to 25% of the actual cost during 1972, the rest being covered by the state.

Our pre-school education network evokes worldwide admiration not only because it takes many cares off a mother's shoulders and gives her more free time.

As stated in the Fundamentals of Legislation on education of the USSR and Union Republics, the children's pre-school establishments are instrumental in helping parents to bring up their children with an all-round development. Here they are prepared for school and brought up in the spirit of respect for their parents and love for their Homeland. On the basis of scientific recommendations, work at these establishments is aimed at developing a child's talents. They are taught music, singing and foreign languages.

When a child grows up and goes to school, the concern of the government and trade unions for his welfare and education continue to play a significant role.

Our secondary schools offer extended-day classes where the children remain after school under the tutorship of instructors until their parents return from work. At such schools, they have their meals, do their homework, play and participate in sports. Such teachers are paid by the state. More than seven

million boys and girls attended such schools and groups of extended-day classes.

Children who have no parents or lack the proper conditions at home get an education at boarding schools or children's homes. Children who require long-term treatment attend general sanitarium schools located in the countryside.

The average cost of teaching one pupil at a secondary school is 117 roubles a year, at schools offering extended-day classes—about 180 roubles, at boarding schools—more than 700 roubles. All these expenditures are provided for by the state.

The period of childhood is the happiest period in one's life, and also the most important in the shaping of an individual's character. This is where the government, trade union, collective farm and Young Communist League organisations step in. They build and organise Young Pioneer Palaces and Houses, all kinds of hobby groups, sports clubs and other extra-curricular undertakings to help develop the talents and abilities of the young people, and to provide them with the proper facilities for rest and recreation.

The trade unions alone have 6,457 children's sectors at clubs, Palaces and Houses of Culture, 1,334 junior technician clubs, 7,814 hobby groups, 1,470 children's sports schools, two riverboat sailing lines, two junior seamen's flotillas, and 21 clubs for young sailors. Trade union clubs and recreational centres regularly hold matinees, previews, book displays and meetings with outstanding personalities. Every year the trade unions sponsor New Year parties, attended by more than 20 million schoolchildren. More than three million boys and girls take part in amateur talent activities and technical hobbies. All these activities are conducted on a free-of-charge basis.

The Soviet Union has 149 theatres especially for children, including theatres for middle-graders, puppet theatres and the only children's musical theatre in the world. Almost a third of all the Soviet Union's theatres are for children.

However, the development of public forms of bringing up and educating children does not in the least diminish the most important role of the family and

the woman in moulding the younger generation along the right lines. In the family a husband and wife have equal rights. A wife has the right to choose her own profession, place of residence, surname, and also equal property rights with her husband.

The Fundamentals on Marital and Family Legislation of the USSR and constituent republics points out that equality of family rights is based on the Constitution of the USSR, which guarantees equal rights for men and women in all spheres of state, social-political, economic and cultural activities of the country. The law prohibits any direct or indirect restriction of rights; likewise it forbids any direct or indirect advantages or privileges upon marriage and in family relations depending on national, racial or religious grounds.

The Fundamentals on Marital and Family Legislation of the USSR outline the principles of building family relations on a voluntary marital union between man and woman, free from any material motives, on the basis of mutual love, friendship and respect by all members of the family. The law also sets down the rights and duties of parents in bringing up their children. They are responsible for their physical development, education and training for socially beneficial activity.

Soviet mothers always strive to bring up their children educated, cultured, industrious and true to the ideals of communism, worthy successors who will continue the great achievements of the older generation.

A. S. Makarenko, a prominent Soviet teacher, wrote that only a mother who herself lives a full life as a human being and a citizen will be able to consider herself a real mother bringing up her children, setting an example, instilling love, admiration and a desire to imitate. A mother who narrows down her duties to simply serving her children is a slave of her children, not a mother in the true sense of the word.

Our every day life is in itself a vivid proof of the tremendous impact of the personality of the Soviet woman, free and enjoying equal rights with men, upon the shaping of character and behavior of members of the family and the moulding of features in the new man, capable of heroism for the sake of his Motherland. It

is the younger generation who set out to develop new areas of our country, to cultivate previously fallow lands, to build modern towns and cities. And in all these undertakings, we see the guiding hand of the mothers of these young people.

Trade unions give families and women great assistance in bringing up children. All factory, plant and local trade union committees have a voluntary commission that deals specifically with children and adolescents. There are more than a million trade union activists in such commissions.

Every school is under the patronage of some plant, factory or organization which provides them with youth counsellors, instructors of various hobby groups and coaches.

Informal meetings are often organised at which veteran workers pass on their experience in life and work to the younger generation. Problems of education are often taken up at trade union and general workers' meetings. School children are brought on tours to sponsoring plants and factories. This helps develop patriotism, industriousness and also affords vocational guidance.

Trade unions pay special attention to providing the children with healthy vacationing conditions. Many schoolchildren spend their summer and winter vacations at young pioneer camps in the countryside. Such camps are built in the most favourable climatic conditions on the seacoast, on river banks and in forests. Trade unions today operate 18,102 pioneer camps which in 1972 alone catered to 8,6 million children. Altogether, during that year more than 19 million children of workers and employees spent their holidays at pioneer camps, children's sanitariums and excursion-tourist lodges. And this number will grow from year to year as more rest and recreational facilities are built for the younger generation. The annual increase in accommodation capacity at these summer establishments is 80,000 places. Children of Siberia, the Far East and the Far North will soon be able to spend their vacations at a modern pioneer camp that will be built in a sea resort zone. And for children, for some reason unable to go to the countryside camps, pioneer camps

are organised directly in the city—at stadiums, palaces of culture, boarding schools and parks. Last summer trade unions operated more than 4,000 such pioneer camps right in the cities and towns.

There are also sanitarium-type camps for sick children. They are sited in the best resort areas. Several more such camps have been planned for construction during the current Five-Year Plan period in different parts of the Soviet Union, including the cities of Anapa and Yevpatoria on the Black Sea Coast.

All these forms of bringing up children will be improved and they will grow up strong, healthy and harmoniously developed young builders of communism.

ERADICATING VESTIGES OF WOMAN'S UNEQUALITY IN THE HOME

The process of involving women on a mass scale in the sphere of working for society has upset the traditional division of labour between man and woman. Previously, man was the main breadwinner in a family, and the main duty of the woman was to run the household and bring up the children. Today, a woman is on an equal footing with man in socially beneficial labour and in social activities.

In such circumstances, what is the best way of combining a woman's duties—bringing up children and running the household—with her new role in society?

The extensive role which women play in social production has brought forth the necessity of eradicating the still existing inequalities of women at home. This is by no means an easy problem. It is characteristic of all women in the world to take great pains in caring for the members of the family and maintaining a cosy home. Hence, the task is to make a woman's household chores easier—this concerns the cooking of meals, doing the washing, cleaning up and so on. This is a task of paramount social significance.

The problem of combining a woman's duties as a mother and housekeeper with her job in some branch



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of economy is being solved on a national scale, first of all, by further raising the well-being of all Soviet people.

The 24th Congress of the CPSU set as one of the main tasks of the Five Year Plan a substantial rise in the material and cultural level of the people's life on the basis of the high rate of development of socialist production, by raising its efficiency, scientific-technical progress and accelerating the growth of labour productivity.

The results of the period after the Party Congress, show that the development of the economy and the rise in the people's living standards are closely linked to each other, and that the planned measures are steadfastly being implemented.

Besides raising the wages and salaries for many categories of workers (as was mentioned above), there has been a substantial increase in the payment of grants and other benefits from the public consumption funds, pensions have been raised for industrial workers, employees and collective farmers, and stipends have been increased for students in higher educational establishments, special secondary schools, and vocational training schools. To-day the payment of grants and other benefits to the working people from the public consumption funds accounts for about 30% of their overall incomes.

Public consumption funds represent one of the most important gains of socialism. They are a manifestation of the society's concern for the bringing up and development of the growing generation, the aged and disabled, the education, culture, professional training of people, and protecting and improving their health. It is taken for granted in our country that children attend school free of charge, and that everyone can receive free medical aid. The population in 1972 received about 73 billion roubles in payments and free services from the public consumption funds, i.e., more than 295 roubles on the average for every man, woman and child in the country.

By 1975 the public consumption funds will increase to 90 billion roubles, which is an increase of 1.4 times as compared to 1970.

The construction of modern housing plays a substantial role in improving the life of Soviet people, and consequently making housekeeping easier for women. In the past two years alone, about 23 million people moved into new apartments. A total of 580 million square metres of floorspace are to be built during the period from 1971 to 1975. Rents which come to 4 or 5% of a family's total budget (communal services included) on the average remain the lowest in the world.

The broad programme that was drawn up by the Communist Party for improving the people's material well-being aims, to make housework easier for women by further expanding the catering facilities improving public service facilities and mechanizing household chores.

During the years of Soviet government public food catering facilities in our country have become part of the way of our life. They have become a vast and important branch of the national economy, directly catering to the daily needs of Soviet families. Properly functioning cafeterias not only help to remould life to socialist foundations, but relieve Soviet women from unproductive work in the kitchen.

Workers cafeterias at plants and factories (there are more than 140,000 of them in the country) play a very important role in this respect. The majority of workers, including women employees, have their lunches there. Meals at such workers' cafeterias cost much less than at cafeterias in town, since all the communal services are paid for by the industrial enterprise itself. Quite a number of enterprises have auxiliary farms whose products—meat, vegetables and fruit—are supplied to the workers' cafeterias, to lower the cost of meals still more. Many factories, plants and construction projects today provide meals either free of charge or at great discounts to workers on night shifts.

Workers' cafeterias, especially those at enterprises employing primarily women have lately organised the sale of ready-to-cook products and delicatessen goods; they also take preliminary orders for delivering meals to the workers' homes with an additional discount of 10%. Therefore, besides having lunch at work, a

woman employee can purchase these products to take home with her. Enterprises also organise special food displays and sales of food at which experts provide advice on how to cook and how to set table. No doubt, all these undertakings save the women employees much time.

Trade unions and the management are responsible for keeping the workers' cafeterias in good condition. Special diplomas of the AUCCTU and bonuses are awarded to enterprises with exemplary cafeterias.

One of the major measures aimed at making housework easier for women, put forward by the 24th Congress of the CPSU, is to substantially improve all types of services for the population. The Soviet government views the service industry as an important factor in liberating woman from vestiges of inequality in the household and has made of it a separate branch in the national economy. Each constituent and autonomous republic has its own ministry in this field, with specific service agencies at lower levels. The network of establishments providing all types of services to the population is steadily expanding. Almost 740 million roubles were spent during 1971 and 1972 for developing these services.

Plants, factories and organisations set up laundries, dry cleaning establishments and repair shops directly on their premises to help the population and women workers in particular.

There are also service bureaus providing assistance in a wide range of jobs—house repairs, window washing, floor polishing, delivery of gifts, baby sitting.

Such bureaus provide more than 600 different types of services at low cost, fitting any family's budget. However, these agencies are still unable to cope with all the populations demands. Hence, the service industry is to develop in the current Five-Year plan period at an especially brisk pace. On a countrywide scale, the volume of these services during 1971-1975 is to grow twofold, while in rural areas—threefold.

Besides all this, much is being done to mechanise household chores. The output of refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, ventilators and other appliances is growing from year to year. And in

subsequent years their number will increase even more.

The implementation of the social programme of raising the standard of living, as outlined by the 24th Congress of the CPSU, will provide Soviet women with even better conditions for combining their jobs with housekeeping and raising children. This is a profound comprehensive programme because the Party's policy is aimed at providing Soviet women with new possibilities for bringing up children, for participating on a broader scale in social life, rest and studies, and for making greater use of the benefits of culture.

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The constant concern of the Party, the Government and trade unions provide women with actual opportunities for an all-round and harmonious development, full access to the cultural heritage and the blossoming of all talents.

There are more than 553 professional theatres, 157.000 cinemas, 820 recreation parks sponsored by the government and 2.230 by trade unions. Books, which are released by the millions, play a tremendous role in a person's cultural development.

About half the Soviet population, are members of state-run libraries. Statistics indicate that the number of museum-goers in the country is steadily growing (there are 1173 museums in the USSR). The Soviet people are fond of the performing arts which is evident in the great numbers attending theatres, concert halls and cinemas.

The Soviet press, specifically the women's press, plays a vital role in the education of working women. The USSR publishes 10 magazines for women with a total edition of about 20 million copies. Besides the central magazines "Rabotnitsa", "Krestyanka" and "Sovietskaya zhenshchina", women's journals are published in all the constituent and three autonomous republics. The magazine of the Soviet Women's Committee and the AUCCTU "Sovietskaya Zhenschhina" is

published in many foreign languages and is widely circulated in a number of countries.

The trade unions actively help the Communist Party to form in all the working people, including women, a Marxist-Leninist world outlook and an uncompromising attitude toward bourgeois ideology, to instill in them lofty ideological-political and moral qualities, such as socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism and devotion to combat and working traditions of the working class. The trade unions help to organise political education raise the general educational culture of women; they organise clubs, libraries, promote amateur talent activities, creative folk art, mass physical training and sports.

These are the aims of the trade union and cultural bodies, club rooms, film halls and libraries.

More than one million seven hundred attend various people's universities organised by the trade unions a good half of them are women. These clubs, houses and palaces of culture offer women lecture courses on questions of health and parenthood and sponsor different kinds of hobby groups.

In our socialist society, each person has every opportunity to develop his talents and abilities, to appreciate culture and the arts, to participate in amateur talent activities. Trade unions today sponsor hundreds of thousands amateur talent groups involving more than 12 million men and women of all ages and professions. The many amateur talent drama theatres, opera and ballet theatres, philharmonic and symphony orchestras, choirs and conservatoires. This movement brings out new talents, quite often rising to the ranks of professional masters vividly testify to the blossoming of peoples talent in our country.

The government and trade unions do a great deal to promote the physical development of working women. There are 15,600,000 sportswomen in the country. Some 37,700 women work as PT instructors, coaches and sports organizers.

We are proud of such outstanding sportswomen who excelled at the 11th Winter Olympic Games in Sapporo—skiers Galina Kulakova, Alevtina Olyulina, Lydia Mukhacheva, figure skaters Irina Rodnina, Ludmilla

Smirnova. At the 20th Olympic Games in Munich top honours went to our gymnasts Lyubov Burda, Ludmilla Turishcheva, Olga Korbut, athletes Nadezhda Chizhova, Faina Melnik and Ludmilla Bragina, in the kayak event—Ludmilla Pinayeva and Yulia Ryabchinskaya. Yelena Petushkova who won a gold medal in equestrian sports was voted the most elegant sportswoman at the Olympic Games.

Soviet trade unions have impressive sports facilities and installations: over 2,500 stadiums, about 9,000 gyms, over 200,000 sports grounds, where women have every opportunity to engage in their favourite sports.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF TRADE UNIONS

Without the active and direct participation of women, all the work of trade unions aimed at solving the problems pertaining to working women is out of question.

In our country, almost all women who are gainfully employed are members of trade unions and are broadly represented in their steering bodies.

Thus, 34.5% of the top trade union body—the AUCCTU—are women, the corresponding figure is 44.8%, in the republican, territorial, regional committees and interbranch bodies—TU councils—46%. Women head the trade union centres of two constituent republics—Azerbaijan and Kirghizia, as well as 7 central committees of branch trade unions: of the textile and light industry, the food industry, local industry and communal services, trade unions of workers in the field education, higher schools and scientific establishments, workers of communications, workers of state commerce and consumer co-operatives, medical workers. In the trade union locals the body determining the success of the entire trade-union activity 58% of the members of the TU committees are women. More than half of the plant, factory and local trade union committees are headed by women.

Trade union activity in the USSR is going over to a voluntary basis more and more. And the forms of such work are more diverse. Almost 95% of the trade union locals and the majority of regional trade union organisations operate on a voluntary basis in other words there the TU workers are not on payroll. TU councils and committees call in non-staff instructors, auditors, authorised physicians, technical inspectors and other activists to perform the routine trade union work. Trade unions literally have tens of thousands of voluntary departments, commissions and councils. Almost every second woman employee participates in such voluntary work.

Women are especially active in commissions that are set up at enterprises, construction projects, collective farms and place of residence conducting social work among the female contingent. Such commissions help in drawing up proposals and render practical assistance to trade union organisations in bettering health protection, improving the working, living conditions for women, and bringing up children.

Much work has been done in this direction, for instance, by one such commission set up by the trade union at the "Krasniy Oktyabr" Metallurgical Mill in Volgograd. The women's commission helps the trade union to carry out a systematic study of the women's working and living conditions, and on the basis of this, the management takes the necessary measures. For example, in the past year alone, many women were transferred to easier jobs. Machines have been introduced in many of the places where women work. This commission initiated the organising of sanitarium groups for children with a weak health at the children's establishments of the mill. The sanitarium pioneer camps have been expanded to cater for more children. The commission is headed by Clavdia Ivanova, a worker of great experience. The author attended the Third World Trade Union Conference of Women Workers in Prague together with her. She is a modest woman, and it was from others the author learned that she volunteered for frontline action when her hometown of Stalingrad was fighting in the last war. And even after the fascist army was defeated at Stalingrad, this valiant

scout remained in the Soviet Army and fought all the way to the Reichstag in Berlin. After the war, she helped to rebuild Stalingrad and went to work at the metallurgical mill. For her sincere work and responsive heart, they elected her deputy chairman of the trade union committee, placing her in charge of the women's commission. Clavdia Ivanova is a model mother and housekeeper. No wonder then that the participants of the conference displayed so much interest towards this courageous and modest woman.

There is also a women's commission under the Presidium of the AUCCTU. It includes front—rank women in the fields of medicine, education and culture. Proceeding from the Statute about the commission, endorsed by the Presidium of the AUCCTU, it was set up for the preliminary examination and preparing questions dealing with the improvement of working, living and resting conditions for women, as well as for actively assisting the implementation of the AUCCTU decisions on women's questions.

The commission participating in drawing up the AUCCTU's conclusions on drafts of current and long term plans for developing the national economy of the USSR and the Russian Federative Republic. It also helps to carry out the decisions of the Communist Party and the Soviet government aimed at further raising the role of women in the life of socialist society.

The trade unions conduct work among women, like all their activities, under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The Central Committee of the CPSU is always interested in the trade union's work to better the living and working conditions of women; it gives due consideration to the AUCCTU proposals along these lines and places stringent requirements before state and economic agencies on these questions, and directs their efforts towards a final and complete elimination of women's inequality in life, and creating all the social conditions to blend a happy motherhood with an ever more active and creative participation of women in Social work and civic activities, science and art, and providing women with relatively light and sufficiently well-paid jobs.

In this work, the AUCCTU has business contacts with other social organisations—Council of Working People's Deputies, the Young Communist League, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR. The AUCCTU closely collaborates with the Soviet Women's Committee; it holds joint undertakings and organises the exchange of experience of social organisations in upholding the interests of working women.

At the dawn of Soviet rule, V. I. Lenin emphasised that among workers and peasants there are more organisers' talents and people able to set practical work underway, than we are aware of. The participation of women in the activity of the most massive workers' body—the trade unions, in dealing with problems concerning millions—is another proof of the wisdom of his words.

THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SOLVING THE WOMAN'S QUESTION IN THE USSR

On March 8, 1921, the newspaper "Pravda" carried V. I. Lenin's article in which he wrote:

"And so on this international working women's day countless meetings of working women in all countries of the world will send greetings to Soviet Russia, which has been the first to tackle this unparalleled and incredibly hard but great task, a task that is universally great and truly liberatory."

The great solicitude for the woman in our country is today world known and celebrated not only on the International Women's Day. Envoys of all the continents salute the Soviet Union for what it has achieved in solving the women's question at various international meetings.

In 1970 Moscow was the site of the International Women's Symposium on the following subject: "V. I. Lenin about the Role of Women in Society and the Experience in Solving the Woman's Question in the USSR".

The participants of the discussion pointed out the broad opportunities socialism opened for women. They

described the achievements of women in socialist countries, and noted their great role in economic, cultural and political life.

Speaking about the revolutionizing force of the example provided by the women of socialist countries, the representatives of international and regional organizations, the representatives from the developing countries noted that the successful solution of the woman's question in the USSR and other socialist countries represents a vital international contribution to the struggle for the social emancipation of women throughout the world, and a significant achievement for the entire international democratic women's movement.

This, of course, places special responsibility on Soviet women. They must always keep in mind that the attractive force of socialism, the road they have covered and their present day achievements help the women of other countries in their noble struggle to occupy a significant position in society.

Soviet women are active in the international trade union and democratic women's movement. They have been elected to the leadership of many international trade union associations; they have been on many Soviet trade union and worker's delegations and participate directly in different international undertakings.

Through the Soviet Women's Committee, they are active in the International Federation of Democratic Women where they work toward its lofty goals.

Soviet women are determined to follow Lenin's behests and to continue building up international solidarity with women in all countries of the world, fighting against imperialism, for peace, social progress, democracy and socialism, the bright future of mankind.

There are more than 132 million women in our country. No matter in which republic they live, no matter what nationality they belong to, they feel they are the true masters of their land, free and equal members of society. Marching shoulder-to-shoulder with the men, our Soviet women are building the majestic edifice of communism, creating the most human and just society on Earth.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

(captions)

COVER:

Hero of Socialist Labor, Deputy to Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation Valentina Pleznyova, the country's best weaver (right) with her apprentice Anna Pereverzeva (Lenin Flax Works in Kostroma).

1. Maksuda Fazylova, a cotton-growing team leader on the Lenin Collective Farm (Ferghana Valley, Uzbekistan). In the field with the dawn.
2. Rasma Brishko Soviet Latvia's best spinner. Pleased with the colour pattern.
3. Raisa Purvina from the Leningrad "Krasnogvardeyets" plant, deputy to the district Soviet. 463 women are deputies to the Supreme Soviet—the highest organ of power in the USSR.
4. Olga Egorova, a senior worker of the information department at the Weather Forecast Center. The first to know about tomorrow's weather (Novosibirsk Region, Siberia).
5. The standing production conference is an important form of the workers' participation in management. (Moscow automatic bread producing plant).
6. Valentina Kirillova, controls train movement in the Leningrad Metro. She was a delegate to the 16th YCL Congress.
7. Larisa Maksimova, technical control worker of a machine-building plant in the Volgograd Region is a delegate at the 15th Trade Union Congress.
8. Professor Larisa Reshotkina. Childrens' doctor for 21 years (Ivano-Frankovsk, the Ukraine).
9. They like it here. Some 10 million children go to kindergartens and creches in the Soviet Union.
10. Irina Anisimova, who has been awarded the Orders of Lenin and the Red Banner of Labour, has a degree in economics and is Chairman of the "Vyatsa Nou" collective farm (Moldavia). She is also a member of the National Collective Farm Council.
11. "Galina Mikhailovna Makarova was our first teacher", these children of the Altai lumberjacks will, say with pride later on.
12. Maya Plisetskaya of the Bolshoi.
13. Amateur performers on the air in Yakutia. TV center in Mirny—the capital of diamondland.
14. Young family welcomed to new life.
15. One of the millions of Soviet mothers.

Photos by Nikolai Rakhmanov, Gennady Koposov, Boris Zadvil, Leo Sherstennikov, Alexander Makarov, Yuri Kaverin and Alexander Stanovov.

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Александра Павловна Бирюкова

ЗАБОТА О ТРУДЯЩЕЙСЯ ЖЕНЩИНЕ В СССР

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