

English Edition

Unpublished Manuscripts — Please reprint

INTERNATIONAL

PRESS



26th Febr. 1932

Vol. 12 No. 9

CORRESPONDENCE

Editorial Offices and Central Despatching Department: Berlin SW 68, Lindenstraße 71-72. Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered post: International Press Correspondence, Berlin SW 68, Lindenstraße 71-72. Telegraphic Address: Inprekorr, Berlin. Telephone: Dönhoff 2856 and 2867.

International Women's Day.

CONTENTS

| | | | |
|--|-----|---|-----|
| N. Krupskaya: International Communist Women's Day in 1932 | 159 | S. Efremova: Unemployment among Women in Capitalist Countries | 165 |
| Z. Boyarskaya: Women Labour in Industry in the Capitalist Countries | 160 | Goodin: Women in the Class Struggle in Great Britain | 166 |
| M. Globig: The Second International—the Worst Enemy of the Working Women | 161 | Caroline Drew: U.S.A. Women in the Class Struggle | 167 |
| Martha Arendsee: Monstrous Reduction of Social Welfare in Capitalist Countries | 162 | N. Z.: The Offensive of the Polish Capitalists and Women's Struggle | 168 |
| Else Himmelheber: The Situation and Struggle of the Working Women in Germany | 164 | B. Marcheva: Women Labour in the U.S.S.R. | 169 |
| | | S. M. Smidovich: The C.P.S.U. and the Women Workers | 170 |
| | | Myra Page: Women Heroes of Socialist Construction | 172 |

International Communist Women's Day.

By M. Bulle.

This year International Women's Day will take place under exceptional circumstances. The greatest world economic crisis in history which has developed on the basis of the general crisis of capitalism, has drawn in all capitalist countries and all branches of industry. Never in previous crises was there such tremendous unemployment and impoverishment of the working class and never were the peasants being ruined on such a mass scale. At a time when the entire capitalist world is in the throes of a most severe crisis, the Soviet Union, under the Leninist leadership of the C.P.S.U., has achieved overwhelming success in the building of socialism, having completed the foundations of socialist economy. The most important and most difficult task of the proletarian revolution, a task of world wide historical significance has been solved, namely, the transformation of the Soviet Union from a country of small-scale agriculture into the greatest agricultural country in the world, based on collectivisation and mechanisation. Capitalism has been finally uprooted also in the villages, thus ensuring the liquidation of capitalist elements and the complete abolition of classes. Unemployment has been abolished. The prosperity and cultural level of the working and peasants are growing uninterruptedly. The splendid success of socialist construction, the revolutionary activity, the creative initiative and energy of the millions of workers and peasants of the Soviet Union,

the huge wave of socialist competition and shock brigade work and the Bolshevik application of the 6 conditions of Comrade Stalin, which are the key to the new victories on the front of socialist construction, as well as merciless struggle on two fronts—against the Right and "left" deviations from the general Party line and all forms of conciliation with these deviations, the struggle against the agents of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism and rotten Liberalism—all these factors indisputably guarantee the successful fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan in four years and of the carrying out of the gigantic tasks set forth by the 17th Conference of the C.P.S.U. for the second Bolshevik Five Year Plan.

The tremendous economic crisis throughout the capitalist world and the gigantic growth of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, clearly shows to the working masses of the whole world the advantages of a planned socialist system as compared with the capitalist system. The contradictions between these two systems are growing continually sharper. **The danger of new imperialist wars and intervention against the Soviet Union has become extremely acute.** A new imperialist war has actually begun in the Far East. The Japanese imperialists occupied Manchuria and have started to seize the basic political and economic centres of China. The war is being carried on under the auspices of the II. International and the League of Nations for a robbers' partitioning of

China, for the throttling of the Soviet movement in China, for the establishment of a military base in Manchuria and for an attack on the Soviet country. The events in the Far East show perfectly clearly the lies and demagogy of the bourgeoisie and the social fascists with regard to the role of the League of Nations "disarmament" conference. While the Japanese imperialists are demolishing Chinese towns with their bombardment and killing thousands of peaceful inhabitants, including women and children with impunity, the disarmament conference solemnly meets to seek new arguments for "disarmament" and for the deception of millions of workers.

The international proletariat protests with more and more force and insistence against the imperialist war in the Far East, declares its solidarity with the workers of China, and comes out for defence of the Soviet Union and Soviet districts of China. Imposing demonstrations of workers, meetings and demonstrations in many cities of Europe and America and decisions adopted at workers' meetings to take action against the production of explosives and war materials and their shipment to the Far East for the imperialists—all these factors are a stern warning to those engaged in kindling an imperialist war. Under the leadership of the Comintern, the world proletariat will know how to convert the imperialist war into civil war. In the struggle against the danger of another imperialist war, and for the defence of the U.S.S.R. and the Soviet districts of China, the women workers and peasant women, in fact all the working women of the capitalist countries must be in the forefront.

Capitalism is trying to transfer the burden of the crisis and economic disintegration to the shoulders of the working class and peasantry. There is throughout the world a frenzied attack on the standard of living of the working class—wage cuts, mass discharges and lockouts, reduction or complete abolishment of social insurance, introduction of the longer working day and excessive intensification of man and woman labour. The agrarian crisis has worsened considerably the economic position of the rural working population. Monstrous unemployment, growing taxation, deterioration of housing conditions, unprecedented political terror, the fascist offensive,—all this is a heavy burden on the workers of town and country, and hits particularly hard women workers and all working women who, more than the men, suffer from capitalist exploitation socially and in the process of production. In no single capitalist country do women get equal pay for equal work regardless of sex. During the crisis period the difference between men's and women's pay has considerably increased—it invariably happens that at a general wage cut, women workers' pay is cut down more than men's. On the strength of the emergency decrees, married women workers are deprived of social insurance benefit. Capitalist laws regarding the protection of woman labour and protection of motherhood, even in the few countries where they exist, are not observed by the employers. The working day is lengthened and condensed in the first instance in those branches of industry where woman labour predominates—the textile, garment making, food and tobacco industries. Women workers, burdened as they are with family cares, are still the most economically dependent, backward and unorganised section of the working class, and are therefore the greatest sufferers from exploitation.

In connection with the crisis, the process of replacing man labour by the cheaper woman and child labour has been accelerated in all the capitalist countries. This is one of the forms of the capitalist offensive against the standard of living of the working class, in the attempt to find a capitalist way out of the crisis. Therefore, the struggle against excessive exploitation of woman labour, and for equal pay for equal work is now, as never before, one of the main and foremost tasks of the whole working class. On March 8th, not only the women workers, but all workers must demonstrate against women workers' low wage rates. On March 8th, all workers must demand protection of woman and child labour, protection of motherhood and childhood, and better conditions of labour.

But in the country of the conquering proletariat working women's position is utterly different.

The success of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. has guaranteed a further improvement in the material and cultural standard of the workers and working peasants: it

has created new premises for the further emancipation of working women from dulling household drudgery. The all round reconstruction of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. on the basis of modern technique and science, the growth of new works, factories, mines, power stations, Soviet and collective farms create new possibilities for the utilisation of woman labour, and the increase in their qualifications make in the U.S.S.R. women's role more important in the building of a socialist society, and convert the working women of the U.S.S.R. into class conscious fighters for a classless society and for Communism.

In the capitalist countries, inhuman exploitation, oppression, unbearable conditions of life, misery, starvation and destitution of employed and unemployed women workers and wives of the working men are a powerful incentive to women workers and all working women to join the struggle against the employers and the capitalist state. Systematic betrayal of men and women workers on the part of the social fascists, ever growing fascist terror, and the intensification of the crisis, compel women workers to pay more and more heed to the Communist Party, the only Party that leads the working class into the struggle for a revolutionary way out of the crisis.

In the past, employed and unemployed women workers, wives of the working men and the peasant working women took an active part in all the struggles of the working class. More and more frequently women become skirmishers in strikes, active participants in workers' demonstrations, in political campaigns, in the unemployed movement, in the struggle against strike-breakers and police. Women participate in strike committees and in pickets, they march at the head of processions, participate in barricade fighting, protect Communist speakers, release the arrested and organise fraternisation with the troops. Among the victims of collisions with the police and gendarmes, and among the killed, wounded and arrested there are always many women revolutionists.

In Germany, during the miners' strikes in the Ruhr and in Upper Silesia, during the textile workers' strike in Leipzig and Augsburg, during the metal workers' strikes in the Saar district, and in Poland in the numerous textile workers' strikes in Lodz, Belsk, West White Russia, in the strike of the workers of the Lodz knitted fabric factory, and in the unemployed demonstrations in Warsaw, Borislavl, in Upper Silesia, women displayed exceptional energy and heroism. In France, the women workers of Cours and Rose-Varenne, the women textile workers in the north—the women workers in Roubaix, Tourcoing and Halluin, boldly fought the police and gendarmerie and made a splendid stand for their demands. In Great Britain, the women workers and the wives of the workmen, showed great courage and perseverance during the miners' strike in South Wales, as well as during the wool operatives' strike in July, 1931, and in the garment makers strike. During the mass demonstrations of the unemployed in October, 1931, women workers and workmen's wives participated in large numbers in the demonstrations, fought the police and released the arrested. In Italy and Spain, in Austria and Czechoslovakia, in Sweden, Norway, Holland, Denmark, in the U.S.A., in China, Japan, India and Indo-China—everywhere women workers join the general ranks of the proletariat, enter into the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against wage cuts and for wage rises, against mass discharges, for social insurance at the expense of the employers, for help for the unemployed. Together with the whole working class they strengthen the united front in the struggle against bourgeois dictatorship, fascism and social fascism, against terror and political reaction. They carry on a struggle against imperialist wars and a war of intervention in the U.S.S.R.

March 8th, 1932, is a fighting day, the day for the mobilisation of all proletarian women and all exploited people throughout the world for struggle against the offensive of the capitalists, against the danger of war and against intervention in the U.S.S.R., for a revolutionary way out of the crisis.

The gigantic success of socialist construction, the consolidation of the U.S.S.R.—the shock brigade of the world proletariat—are a guarantee of the victory of the world October.

On March 8th, the working women of the whole world will demonstrate their international class solidarity and readiness to fight for the triumph of Socialism throughout the world!

International Communist Women's Day in 1932.

By N. Krupskaya.

The 8th of March is International Roll Call Day for millions of working women. It is a day for checking up to see what has been done, and in what countries, for the liberation of women. What has been done in the past year in the Soviet Union?

It is impossible to take up the question of the change in the position of women, of their liberation, apart from the life of the country as a whole.

In 1931 we had a tremendous growth of industry, with a tremendous demand for labour power. In 1931 again over a million women were drawn into industry. This means that a million more women were torn from their narrow home circle and thrown into the whirlpool of productive life.

These women are going to work not merely in factories they are going to work in Socialist factories. A Socialist factory is not only a place where there is no exploitation; it is also the centre for a very busy social life. There are so-called "factory triangles" in the factories. "Triangle" organisation includes a representative from the management, one from the trade union and one from the Party organisation. The administration works to have every worker familiar with the tasks which face the factory. The struggle to fulfil the plan has already become part of our life just as shock brigade work and socialist competition has become a part of it. Not in words but in deeds are the workers becoming masters of production. But masters not in the old sense of the word. Not business men, but collective builders concerned with production as a whole, with heart and soul in every achievement of the factory, every failure to keep up with the plan. People are coming to have a new attitude towards labour, towards collective ownership, towards the factory. At the same time the trade unions are dealing with questions of labour protection, of the health, education and social life of the workers, deciding questions relating to vacations, who should be sent to a sanatorium, who should be released for study and what provisions should be made for the children. In the factory there are wall newspapers, Red corners, cultural groups, groups for the abolishment of illiteracy, perambulating libraries and exhibitions, promotion groups, elementary courses in production, evening courses for workers and technical institutions. Party organisations are working in the factories which teach the workers how to understand everything that goes on, to dot the i's, and link up the work in the factories with important political questions. And this is how it happens that every working woman who goes into the factory becomes a part of the seething socialist life and undergoes a rapid change in her whole psychology.

The collectivisation of agriculture is going ahead at a rapid pace, but this collectivisation is not only the change over from small farms to big farms. It is a change in the whole way of living. On the small farms the peasants were bound by economic and social chains to their homes and their thought very rarely went beyond the walls of their homes, the fence of the vegetable garden, the precincts of the cornfield or meadow. Collective farm life changes everything. If you go to a meeting of the women shock brigaders on a collective farm, you might find at first their deliberations rather primitive: No talk about women's lot and women's rights. The talk is all about calves. A young woman from a village in the Northern region is speaking. She no longer wears village garb, but is dressed like the women in the towns, she wears a simple navy blue frock a little open at the neck with a knot of red ribbon. Her business is to look after the calves of the collective farm, she speaks about the details of her work, what one has to do to make the calf increase in weight every day by such and such a part of a unit. They are not her calves, they are the calves of the collective farm, but with what pride this young woman who has sent in an application to join the Party, tells her audience that not a single calf in her charge has perished, and that all the calves are gaining in weight. She also speaks about the means to be used "to rouse enthusiasm" among the new women members of the collective farm. She speaks of the work of the Y.C.L. and Party nucleus on the farm. Every word she says bears witness of the new social order.

But here is a meeting of members of Soviet farms—women Party members, women's organisers who have come together from all parts of the Soviet farm. The discussion is

about the new method of organising agricultural labour, about forming and instructing brigades. The women's organiser speaks about work among women on an enormous Soviet farm which supplies the nearest sugar factory with sugar-beet. The women's organiser is an expert regarding sugar-beet, the number of hectares under beet, the number of hundred weights of sugar beet gathered on the fields take first place in her speech, and it is only by the way that she tells her audience how she called to order the instructor who thought he could shout at the women as of yore. She tells by the way about the hundreds of women farm labourers who have been taught lately to read and write, how wireless listening in is organised on the Soviet farm. As one listens to her one feels that a colossal change is taking place in the whole mode of life. No specialist would be able to hoax such a woman organiser. The obedient slave who a few years ago pulled off submissively her tipsy husband's boots, and dared not address him otherwise than using the pronoun "you", and his name and father's name, has grown into a woman who knows how to behave and maintain her dignity with anyone. This is felt at every step. On the collective and Soviet farms there is a new mode of life full of social activities, general economic and social questions are constantly discussed in common. And the collective farm women do not even notice how their habits and views are changing. Going through the process of boiling in the collective farm cauldron is just as important as being boiled in the factory cauldron.

In the struggle with the relics of the past, in our endeavour to overcome the difficulties we meet in our constructive work, we frequently do not notice the social progress, and yet it is enormous.

There isn't a harder lot than that of a domestic servant. I have before me the letter of a young girl. It is a remarkable letter that I read again and again, I will give some excerpts from it:

"Much Honoured Nadezhda Konstantinova, I sit a long time silent over this letter, thinking, thinking deeply. It is pleasant to think of you, of us both together, of the sunny Union and our stormy life, of the interesting and important things that go on in the wide, wide world. I will tell you about myself, I am an orphan, I lost my father and mother fourteen years ago. Since I can remember I have been living with strangers as a children's nurse. I am 16 years old. I was born in Kzyl-Orda, Kazakstan, and live at present in the Moscow province, 23 klm. from Moscow, in a place where one meets no one, but where the air is beautiful. I serve as a children's nurse, there are two children, their parents, an old woman with paralyzed hands and myself, altogether 6 people. My mistress' brother, who lives 2½ klm. from here, teaches me literature and German, for which I pay out of my small wages. Believe me, I want to learn, to study properly. I already begin to speak German. I understand Russian well, and understand literature. I am very fond of German. Is it really impossible for me to get to Moscow and study there? This cannot be. We get the "Moscow Journal" every five days; through it I know about young Communists, young Pioneers, especially, Harry Eiseman, an American Pioneer. Can't I become a young Communist, a member of the L.Y.C.L.S.U.? For I love the Y.C.L., and want to participate in its work . . . Not so long ago I saw your short article, or rather your slogan. It is before me now. I read it over again with pleasure and excitement, I can imagine at what pressure you work over there, in Moscow. For are not these the last months of the third year, of the decisive break."

One reads this passionate letter of a 16 year old girl—a domestic servant, a non-Party orphan, who has spent all her life among strangers, who spends her small earnings on study, and one feels that Socialism is being built in our country, that a new culture is rising from below, and is growing. This letter is in full harmony with the prospect of our Five-year Plan. It isn't just casual. It is a song harmonizing with the stage of our constructive work through which we are going now.

I must say something about women's social work. Women's participation in Soviets, in all forms of social work is growing, women workers and the women on the collective farms put a great deal of enthusiasm into this work. There comes to me a woman worker—member of the Moscow Soviet and tells me about her work. I know her well. She is an elderly textile worker, a participant in the revolution of 1905, a Party member who has learned to read and write only in the last couple of years. She is a wonderful agitator, has enormous influence in the mill. Everyone knows that she will never give in. She works in the Moscow Soviet, in the Municipal section, and is attached to the slaughter houses. She has inspected them, and was indignant at the state of affairs there. Cows with calf are driven to the slaughter houses. As she was speaking about it, the tears were streaming from her eyes. With us many things are not as they should be, and the slaughter houses are badly organised.

But as these shortcomings have been noticed by a woman worker who has been for decades at her loom, has taken an active part in the struggle of the working class, she will not rest until a change for the better takes place in the organisation of the slaughter houses, she will worry and agitate, and knock at all the doors. No wonder Lenin attached such enormous importance to workers' control. The masses of working women in our U.S.S.R., together with their husbands and brothers, are building Socialism and a new social order. They grow themselves in the course of this work, they study strenuously, they learn to read and write, mathematics, technique, literature and history, they also study Marxism and Leninism, and lead the masses who are steadily growing in number and strength.

This is what I wanted to tell the foreign comrades, the working women of the other countries on the International Women's Day—March 8th.

Woman Labour in Industry in the Capitalist Countries.

By Z. Boyarskaya.

Rationalisation, the progress of technique, simplification and division of modes of labour are an incentive to make use in industry of considerable numbers of "trained" workers of whom no special skill is expected, but just ordinary ability, acquired in a few weeks, and sometimes days, to pick up the necessary manipulations. This has created in the rationalised enterprises favourable conditions for mass application of unskilled and cheaper woman and child labour.

Rapid growth of the application of woman labour is noticeable not only in branches of industry where women have been always employed—the clothing, textile and tobacco industries—but also in the heavy industries: the metal, chemical, and electro-technical industries.

In Germany, the percentage of women in industry has gone up from 32 percent in 1917 to 37 percent in 1930. Between 1907 and 1925 the percentage of woman labour in the chemical industry has gone up 79 percent, in the optical and electro-technical 497 percent, and in the engineering industry 477 percent.

The German chemical industry employs now 215,000 women workers, the French chemical industry 180,000, and the French metal industry 150,000. The Citroen Motor Works did not employ any woman labour prior to 1914, but in 1930, women workers constituted already 18 percent of the total number of workers employed by the Citroen firm. In Great Britain, women workers constitute 22.28 percent in the production of electrical machinery, and 30 percent of the total number of workers in the manufacture of explosives.

Women workers are drawn on a large scale into the war industry.

The capitalists are anxious to have strong cadres of women workers capable of replacing men in the event of war, and are doing their utmost to prepare such cadres.

There is no equal pay for equal work in the capitalist world. For the same work as that done by men, women are paid only part of men's wages.

At a time when the world crisis sharpens and deepens, when the capitalists try to transfer all the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of the workers, women workers, as the worst organised and least skilled part of the proletariat, are the first victims of the ruthless capitalist offensive. The discrepancy between women's and men's wages increases all the time.

For instance, in Germany the average earnings of a skilled woman worker, compared with the earnings of a skilled workman, have been steadily declining lately. In 1925, these earnings constituted 80% of the man's earnings, in 1926/27—79%, in 1928—94%, and in 1929/30—only 73%.

The earnings of an unskilled woman worker constituted in 1924/27 74% of the earnings of an unskilled workman, but between 1927 and 1930, these earnings went down to 70% of the unskilled workman's earnings.

If one takes into consideration that in August 1931 the average weekly earnings of a male textile worker was 18.15 marks or 43% of the official existence minimum, which the

German workers justly call a starvation minimum, the miserable earnings of a woman worker—employed in most cases only 2 to 3 days a week owing to the industrial crisis—constitute only 70—73 percent of the workman's earnings, and condemn her to a life full of misery and privation.

In Great Britain and the United States, we see the same picture: systematic wage cuts, first and foremost in branches of industry where woman labour predominates.

Thus, in Great Britain, in the textile industry, the actual average weekly earnings were:

| | October 1924 | October 1929 | January 1930 | October 1930 | January 1931 | Sept. 1931 |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Cotton Industry | 37s. 6d. | 35s. 2d. | 33s. 6d. | 31s. 3d. | 29s. 2d. | |
| Wool Industry | 40s. 8d. | 39s. 2d. | 37s. 7d. | 36s. 11d. | 33s. 10d. | 32s. 9d. |

In the United States, in 1929, the average weekly wage of a skilled workman was 33 dollars, and that of an unskilled workman 26 dollars, a woman worker's wage being 18 dollars. But in 1930, their earnings went down respectively to 30, 27 and 16 dollars.

In the textile industry of New York State in 1929, the average weekly workman's wage was 26 dollars, and that of a woman worker, 18 dollars. But in 1931, the weekly earnings of a workman in the textile industry in the other states, deducting losses owing to unemployment, were 12 dollars, and those of a woman worker only 9 dollars.

In France, where the crisis set in later than in the other countries, a ruthless attack is being made now on the standard of living of men and women workers, first and foremost on their wages. Thus, during the last year, the wages of women textile workers in Cours and Troye were reduced by 6 percent. Women textile workers in the North, despite their long and heroic struggle, had also to accept a wage cut of 10% and abolishment of premiums, which constituted three percent of their earnings, owing to the treachery of the social fascists.

In countries of avowed fascism, the conditions of woman labour are harder still. Thus, in Italy, women workers' wages are usually 50% less than the extremely low men's wages.

We read the following statement in a letter written by a woman worker employed in a match factory in Italy:

"Ours is the most harmful and hardest work imaginable. Nevertheless, a woman worker earns only 5 lire in an 11 hour day, while the existence minimum of a working class family is 250 lire a week according to the calculation of the fascist commissions."

In Rumania, skilled workmen earn on an average 700 lei a week, and a skilled woman worker only 240—280 lei.

In the "Balkan" factory the employers deduct from the miserable pay of women workers (40 lei a day) 25—30 percent, alleged to be voluntary savings of the women workers. When women workers demand their full pay, the employer knocks them about. Out of their starvation wage which is much less

than the existence minimum, a woman worker must contribute to the social insurance fund, as a provision for unemployment, sickness, invalidity, old age, etc.

In all capitalist countries where social insurance has been introduced, the contributions paid by the employers and the bourgeois state have been considerably reduced, whereas the contributions of the workers are steadily growing. Thus, the contributions of men and women workers in Germany, which formerly amounted to 3½% of their earnings, have reached now 5½%.

A considerable part of a working woman's miserable pay goes into the pockets of the capitalists by means of a complicated system of fines.

In the Pillot firm in France, if a woman worker goes to the W.C. without permission, she is fined 2 francs. On repetition of such a "crime" she is discharged. If on account of illness, a woman worker stays away half a day without notifying the management, she is fined 10 francs. For being late one minute, the fine is 2 francs, and 4 francs for 15 minutes.

The chronometer, the conveyer and piece rates have made woman labour very strenuous, as shown by a letter from a woman worker in the Bata factory (Czechoslovakia).

"The fixed weekly wage of 100 to 250 kronen for men, and 150 kronen for women is paid to very few workers. The piece rate system predominates, and under this system, division of labour has reached the highest limit. The application of the conveyer and modern machinery has condensed working hours beyond measure. The frantic tempo of labour uses up rapidly the physical strength of the workers. The Bata factories engage preferably young workers who constitute 70 percent of the total number of workers. The old workers are discharged, and no workers over the age of 50 are engaged. Whoever cannot keep pace with the frantic tempo of the work is thrown out."

In 1924, the task of one worker per day was 1.2 pairs of boots or shoes, in 1928—4.6, in 1930—5.9, and 1931—6.5.

Girls work from 6 a. m. to 8 p. m., otherwise they could not accomplish their task and earn their 150 kronen. Frequently, they are compelled to work all night, starting again at the same time next morning.

Although in connection with the smaller demand, most of the factories are introducing a shorter working week with a corresponding wage cut, in a whole series of factories, especially during the season, women workers are made to work overtime for which they are usually paid the ordinary rate.

Thus, the canning factories in France, where women workers are employed, have a 10 to 12 hours day, from

7 a. m. to 10 p. m. with 2 half hour intervals. Overtime begins only after 10 p. m., and is usual during the season. The fishing boats begin to arrive from 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening, and the women workers are not allowed to leave even after 20 hours work, until all the fish has been prepared. It frequently happens that they are compelled to work till 3, 4 and even 6 a. m. During the season there are no Sundays or holidays. The employers try to get a double supply of fish on Saturday, so as not to leave the women workers without work on Sunday. It frequently happens that women workers, after working day and night without rest, continue to work also the next day.

The capitalists are intent on replacing the labour of adult women workers by the still cheaper and more docile labour of youngsters.

When mass discharges take place, married women are the first to suffer, against their labour the reformist trade union bureaucrats and social fascists carry on an infamous demagogic struggle, allegedly for the alleviation of unemployment.

The absence of precautionary measures and the speeding up system are the cause of a growing number of accidents. Statistics show a steady growth from year to year.

Laws regarding the protection of woman labour, motherhood and childhood, even in countries where they are in force, remain a dead letter, and are hardly ever applied. It is quite usual to see pregnant women working in the factory up to their confinement, because they are afraid to lose their job, and also because of the miserable benefit they receive during leave.

This is how a miner's wife describes protection of motherhood in Great Britain:

"Pregnant women workers, like the rest, pay insurance contributions for the case of sickness or unemployment. But pregnancy in itself does not give the right to benefit. Aid is given to a pregnant woman only in the case of sickness. At the same time, she is discharged six weeks before her confinement, but even a woman who receives benefit owing to illness certified by a medical man, can be deprived of it. For this it is sufficient for the visiting doctor to find her at the wash tub or employed in some other more or less hard domestic work. I have seen new born babies lying quite naked, because their mothers did not even have an old rag to wrap them in."

The women workers of the capitalist countries begin to understand that a revolutionary way out of the crisis, organised resistance to the capitalist onslaught, common struggle shoulder to shoulder with the whole working class for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, is the only way out of misery and crisis.

The Second International — The Worst Enemy of the Working Women.

By M. Globig.

The extreme sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism makes the situation of the proletarian and unemployed women unbearable. Therefore, International Women's Day on March 8, 1932, more than any Women's Day of the past, will be marked by uncompromising and bitter struggle of the working women against capitalism and its bourgeois and social-democratic agents. International Women's Day must be a day for settling up accounts with all social-democratic leaders with regard to their disgraceful betrayal of the proletarian masses by putting up progressive and radical sounding slogans in order to deceive them.

The International Women's Committee of the Second International also wants to come before the women of the working class with an international women's day. In its resolution on Women's Day, it states frankly the reason why it appears desirable to "celebrate" this day. It declares that:

„International Women's Day has proved to be one of the most effective means of propaganda", and that consequently the preparations for Women's Day must be made with "particular care and devotion".

Let us examine a little more closely some of the basic agitational slogans of the women leaders in the Second International. At the Fourth International Women's Conference in 1931, they described as the "greatest achievement" of social-democratic agitation among women since 1928, the winning of equal suffrage in England. There women from 24 to 30 years of age, for the first time received the right to vote. From then on, they were entitled not only to be elected, but to go the polls themselves. Here the social-fascists are repeating their well known trick of 1918. They are attempting to represent equal suffrage as the decisive step towards the real liberation of proletarian women (and also of the proletariat). By this manoeuvre they are attempting to cherish the illusion that a decisive change in the social position of women is possible by formal democratic means.

This same demagogy is shown by the International Women's Conference of the Second International in putting up the slogan: "Equal pay for equal work." Social-democratic practice shows that for example in Germany, where the Social-Democracy was for years the government party, and still is in

Prussia, there is not a single free trade union wage agreement providing for equal pay for equal work. On the contrary, a questionnaire submitted to the German government by the reformist textile workers' union shows that even in such a predominantly women's industry as textiles, the differentiation in wages has increased still more at the expense of the women.

What is the attitude of the social-democratic women leaders towards the problem of capitalist rationalisation? It is true they condescended to make a special report at the International Women's Conference at Vienna on the detrimental effects of capitalist rationalisation on women. They "forgot" to add however that the parties of the Second International have deliberately defended this rationalisation ever since 1924, and are assisting in its practical application. At the same time, they slandered the Communists, who combated capitalist rationalisation, of being machine wreckers, who "set themselves against technical progress in an un-Marxian manner".

Everything that the Communists predicted has come true. Even the social-democratic trade union bureaucracy had to admit in the Spring of 1931 that continued rationalisation helped only capitalism, and that one of the detrimental effects of this rationalisation on the proletariat was that millions more unemployed workers were permanently thrown out of the process of production, and that women and young workers were exploited in place of men and skilled workers for lower wages.

The social-democratic leaders proclaimed to be the doctors of dying capitalism. Free trade union and social-democratic functionaries in the enterprises bring forward proposals for dismissal or wage cuts for women. They are concerned with "relieving the labour market", cutting women off from unemployment relief and "double subsistence", in order to "distribute equally the burdens of the serious crisis of capitalism".

And what is the attitude of the women of the Second International towards the old demand of Women's Day "Protection for motherhood and childhood"? It is mentioned in every resolution or in every social-democratic report for Women's Day. It is an integral part of social-democratic tradition, just as previously they extolled the socialist state of the future. In practice, however, the same social-democratic leaders in all capitalist countries vote for the abolishment

of social services, specially for the abolishment of measures for the protection of pregnant women and women in child birth. The most striking example of this double game we find in Germany. Here a bitter struggle has been going on for years against the so-called abortion paragraph 218, which threatens anyone with years of imprisonment for attempting to bring about abortion. Some of the Social-democratic leaders have already openly rejected the proposal to have paragraph 218 repealed, and thus find themselves in the same camp with the national socialists and other reactionaries, who are also in favour of maintaining this monstrous paragraph.

The International Women's Committee of the social-fascists deliberately denies the tremendous and unprecedented achievements in the Soviet Union in the field of actual liberation of women and protection of mothers and children. There is not a single Women's Day demand which has not been carried out in the Soviet Union. This is true of political, economic and cultural demands. But the social fascists' women leaders have nothing to say about this. They repeat lies which have been long since disproved about the dictatorship of the Communist Party over the proletariat, and about the muzzling of all freedom of expression. They declare that women are worse off in the Soviet Union than anywhere else. They repeat the atrocious stories about G.P.U. terror.

Thus, they place themselves at the head of the enemies of the Soviet Union, attempting to carry on ideological war preparations against the Soviet Union, even among the proletarian women. If they speak of disarmament in this connection, they mean the disarmament of the Soviet Union. Their desire for peace is exactly as sincere as the assurances of peace made by MacDonald, Vandervelde, Boncour, and Breitscheid, who considered their chief task to be to drench in blood at the dictates of the big imperialist powers, all efforts of the nationally oppressed and colonial peoples towards liberation, to start armed intervention against the Soviet Union, and to provoke a new mass murder.

The masses of women of the proletariat and all working class elements will not follow the slogans of the Second International, but, under the banner of Lenin and under Communist leadership will help to put through the time-long demands of the women in the class struggle.

Monstrous Reduction of Social Welfare in Capitalist Countries.

By Martha A r e n d s e e (Berlin).

The ruling class which has hitherto tried to use its social policy as a cloak for the capitalist system of exploitation, is compelled now, when mass impoverishment is spreading more and more owing to the world economic crisis, to liquidate everything that has hitherto existed by way of social insurance or social welfare, in the hope of giving hereby another lease of life to the capitalist system. In this connection, the main attacks are directed against the proletarian women.

The Reduction of Unemployment Insurance.

In Germany, through the emergency decrees, unemployment benefit was reduced by 30-40% compared with the preceding year. Under the system of wage categories, the hardest hit are women with low wages. Furthermore, whole groups of occupations, such as women employed in their homes, charwomen etc., were completely excluded from unemployment benefit. Married women, though they pay the required contribution, are given benefit only if they are "indigent". If husband and wife are unemployed, whoever is entitled to the lowest benefit, the wife as a rule, gets it. Among the unemployed who have been cut off benefit for a period up to 12 weeks for refusal to do strike-breaking work or unsuitable work, or for dismissal through their own fault, women constitute 40 to 50%. Among the unemployed without dependents and with a waiting period of three weeks, women constitute two thirds.

The effect of all these measures is that, for instance, in the middle of November the percentage of women among

the unemployed was 19.3%, whereas their percentage among the recipients of benefit (unemployment and crisis) was only 17.6, and with regard to welfare benefit only 13%. The general monstrous reduction measures have had hitherto the effect that only 25% of the unemployed draw their benefit from the unemployment insurance fund. Among men, 1,823,030 or 44.4% of the unemployed, and among women, 492,098 or 50.9% were entirely dependent on the welfare benefit in the middle of November. 270,542 or 30% of the women registered as unemployed received no benefit whatever.

In Great Britain, Social Reaction is following the German example. The "experts" have declared that of 8 million married women only 800,000 are insured against unemployment, that it is therefore an exception for a married woman to be a wage-earner. Therefore, the means and needs test must be strictly applied with regard to women. The "National" Government has carried out the reduction according to the proposals of the Labour Government.

Women's unemployment benefit which has always been lower than men's, has been also reduced by 10%.

| Age: | Men: | | Women: | |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Previously: | Now: | Previously: | Now: |
| 21-65 years | 17 sh | 15 3 sh | 15 sh | 13.6 sh |
| 18-21 years | 14 " | 12.6 " | 12 " | 10.9 " |
| 17-18 years | 9 " | 8 " | 7.6 " | 6.9 " |
| under 17 years | 6 " | 5 " | 5 " | 4.6 " |
| Family grants | Wife: 9 " | 8 " | | |
| | Child: 2 " | 2 " | | |

The contributions, however, were raised on an average from 2.5 to 3.25 per cent of the total wage. The benefit period, which was hitherto 74 weeks in 2 years, has been limited to 26 weeks. Then the needs test sets in through the Public Assistance Committees, which generally leads to elimination, especially in the case of women. There are furthermore, as in Germany, the special regulations for seasonal workers and married women. A wife who has paid less than 15 contributions since her marriage, or if she has been married longer than three months, less than 8 contributions within the last three months, is entitled to benefit only "if her occupation is subject to insurance, if she intends to earn her living in such an occupation also in future, and can reasonably expect to find employment in her district". With such a provision one can refuse to pay unemployment benefit to any married woman, though she has paid her contributions. An exception is made only in the case of wives whose husbands are either incapacitated, or unemployed and without a dole.

In Austria, the German example has also been followed with regard to reduction of unemployment benefit. Women are entitled to a very small dole also in the Austrian crisis welfare. In countries with the Ghent system, Belgium, Norway and Czechoslovakia, where unemployment benefit is paid only to members of trade unions, very few women are entitled to it.

In America, where no state unemployment benefit exists, where the unemployed depend on the soup kitchens and private charity, the position of the working class, of the women especially, is becoming more and more appalling.

In Australia, the unemployed are given food tickets, women being entitled only to half the men's ration. Although unemployment insurance exists in fascist Italy, most of the unemployed have to depend only on the soup kitchens where the fascist party dispenses soup to the starving.

Reduction of Sickness Insurance.

Starvation affects everywhere the state of health of the masses. Where sickness insurance exists, it is being reduced. In Germany, the emergency decree of December 9, 1931, has gone farther than any of the former economy measures, especially, through the abolishment of special provisions with regard to sickness insurance. The sickness benefit has been reduced to 50% of the reduced wages; additional family benefit which amounted hitherto to 75% of the basic wage, has been abolished. The reduction of sickness fund contributions from 50 to 25 Pfennig for the four lowest wage categories has been abolished, and women workers are of course the greatest sufferers. Medical attendance for members of the family of the insured person is now limited to 13 weeks. Moreover, the insured person bears in every case half the cost of the medicine and medical appliances, whereas hitherto the sickness fund was responsible for 70% of the cost with regard to the members of the family. Payment made in case of death for members of the family has also been abolished. If hospital treatment is required, the family of the sick person receives only half of the reduced sickness benefit.

Moreover, the mass of the unemployed who no longer receive any benefit from the unemployed and crisis fund, are also excluded from sickness insurance. Welfare provision and medical attendance through the municipalities are also constantly reduced. The unemployed fathers and mothers who have to let their children starve, are driven to despair by the fact that they cannot even procure help for their sick children.

The French government, when it introduced sickness insurance in 1930, made a start at the point where the German Government now stands after the reduction. Sickness benefit amounts also only to 50% of the basic wage, the cost of medical attendance and medicine is borne by the sick person, and only part of it is subsequently returned.

In Italy, the conditions in the collective sickness funds are such that the workers have to pay contributions, but have seldom the right to demand anything in return. Prior to sickness, contributions must have been paid for 18 weeks. The sickness must not have been "engineered", etc. Quite exempt from sickness benefit are people suffering from sexual complaints, or women whose illness has been caused by artificial abortion. To make the workers believe that something is being done for them, the sickness funds put up so-called rest

homes for children; which are in reality fascist educational establishments.

Reduction of Confinement Benefit.

Almost in all countries where confinement benefit exists, it forms part of the sickness benefit, and is therefore subject to reduction.

In Germany, through the reduction of the surplus benefits for sickness insurance, the surplus benefits for confinement have disappeared. To this belongs: the increase of the weekly payments from 50 to 75% of the basic wage. Extension of the benefit period from 10 to 13 weeks—for nursing mothers from 12 to 26 weeks. Increase of the confinement benefit which is paid but once from 10 to 25 Marks. The mass of the women with unemployment benefit lose, at the same time, all their claims for sickness insurance and in that way also lose the confinement benefits. But, at the same time, the confinement benefits of the municipalities are everywhere being reduced.

In France, through the introduction of sickness insurance, the women were indeed promised a confinement benefit of 50% of their basic wage for a period of six weeks before and six weeks after confinement; but the conditions are such that even with the present unemployment there is hardly a woman worker who can get access to this benefit. She must have made contributions for 60 days within a period of three months within the year previous to the beginning of her pregnancy. Besides that she must refrain from doing any sort of paid work during these twelve weeks. It is clear, that a pregnant woman cannot get along during her pregnancy with the half of her already previously reduced wages.

Italy obliges pregnant women to have a rest period of four weeks before and four weeks after confinement. They have, as in Germany, the "right" to give up work six weeks before confinement and they are supposed to have their place of work secured for them. But the confinement benefit which they receive but once has within a short time been reduced from 200 to 150 and then to 100 Lire. If the pregnant woman observed her right to rest, she could starve.

In Australia, a bonus of £5. was paid at the birth of each child up till now, but now it has been reduced to £4. From the second child onwards, five shillings per week was paid for each child. Here also a similar reduction has taken place with the general reduction of incomes by 20%.

Reductions in benefits for dependents—in- valids—old age—and accident insurance.

Germany which has the oldest social insurance system now also takes the lead in reductions. Through the Emergency Decree of December 9th 1931, the period of waiting before payments are made for invalidity insurance were considerably lengthened. Married women who in their own right have a claim for invalidity or old-age pensions no longer receive any widow's pension. Wherever there is also a claim for an invalidity pension along with an accident pension, the accident pension ceases; the same applies to those who are dependents of those who have been killed in accidents. For example, the widow of a worker who was killed in an accident, who has three children, and who up until now had a monthly pension of 140 Marks had this pension reduced by 65 Marks, which is more than 46%. Pensions for less than 20% are altogether not paid now. Besides that additional payments for children or orphans' pensions for children over 15 years of age are likewise no longer paid, whereas formerly in such cases, where the children are still being trained for some profession, the orphans' pensions or additional payments for children were paid up till 21 years of age. Up until now the pensions for disabled and crippled children had to be paid without any age limit.

International Women's Day places the task before us of organising the resistance of the masses of women against the reductions of social insurance and for the struggle for the social demands of the working class, especially for mothers and children in all countries. We must remove whatever illusions may possibly still be cherished as to the alleviation of misery and want through social reforms in capitalist society. We must win the masses of proletarian women for the social revolution.

The Situation and Struggle of the Working Women in Germany.

By Else Himmelheber (Berlin).

During the past few years the situation of the working women has grown increasingly worse. The burdens of the crisis are falling particularly heavily on the working women. At all times they have been a special source of profit for the capitalists, but today they are forced to sell their labour power to capitalism more cheaply than ever. Through the "emergency decree dictatorship" of the Brüning government, the wages of working women have now fallen to a level far below the subsistence minimum for the working class. A striking example of exploitation is provided by the situation of the women who work in the Pensberg Mine (southern Bavaria). For an 8-hour shift the wages of these working women are as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| 16 years of age | 1.48 Mk. |
| 17 " " " | 1.71 " |
| 18 " " " | 2.16 " |
| 19 " " " | 2.38 " |
| 20 " " " | 2.52 " |

The situation of the working women in the Berlin metal hells today is not much better. With the system part-time work, with wage-cuts of 10—15% and up to 50% on piece work, the working women at Siemens and the A. E. G. go home after pay day with 3—5 Marks for their week's work. The women textile workers in Silesia, Saxony and the Lower Rhine, and the women working in the chemical plants of Leverkusen and Piesteritz slave under inhuman conditions. The number of suicides among working women is taking on more alarming proportions. In one month, in Berlin alone, 4 women metal workers committed suicide because of the miserable pay and the threat of unemployment. About 3 million working women are now employed in the enterprises, while more than a million and a half women have joined the army of the unemployed. Between November 1920 and November 1931, the number of unemployed women covered by insurance rose by 258,671. At the present time hardly 50% of the unemployed women receive relief, so that approximately 750,000 women are excluded from any form of support. In various parts of the country the government or the labour exchanges are proceeding to introduce compulsory Labour for women. In Duesseldorf, a sewing room was opened for unemployed women. There, the women sit around in unheated quarters with concrete walls, and are forced to wrap up their feet in cloth to keep them from freezing. In place of wages, they get their unemployment relief.

As a result of the unprecedented wage cuts, the situation of the millions of proletarian housewives is the worst imaginable. With the miserable pay that is brought in, they hardly know how to feed the family and buy the most urgent daily necessities. The miners' wives in the Ruhr, in central Germany and in Upper Silesia live with their families in wretched barracks. While there are mountains of coal piled up around the coal mines, and their husbands are getting out the coal by the sweat of their brow, they sit at home with their children in the cold. The price cut announced by the government was just another manoeuvre to betray the working population. Prices for wheat and rye, as well as for butter and margarine have again gone up recently. The tariff on butter was raised from 50 marks to 170—200 marks.

In spite of this desperate situation of the working women and wives of workers, the government continues to force the proletarian women to bear children as before. Paragraph 218 on abortions brings in new victims almost every day. On January 15th in Brandenburg, a great trial was opened against 200 proletarian women, 2 of whom were charged with violation of paragraph 218. The class court sentenced these two working women to 75 and 30 Marks fine. Hundreds of women gathered in the court and demanded the release of the women from payment of fines and the annulment of paragraph 218. Two women and one man were brought before a Stuttgart court. The man was sentenced to imprisonment and the women were fined 40 marks.

As a result of the great exploitation of the working women and wives of the workers, their militancy is continually growing. The C.P.G. and Red Trade Union Opposition are

organising and leading the struggle of the working women and wives of workers against the capitalist offensive. In January 1932 there were more than 30 strikes against wage-cuts as a result of the decree, in which the working women played the most outstanding part.

The women working in the Schaap fish concern in Dortmund were the first to set up a strike front under the leadership of the Party and the R.T.U.O. against the attack of the employers during the "industrial peace". By their determined stand they succeeded in obtaining a hundred percent increase in their miserable wages. There were 15 women on the strike committee.

In defiance of police terror, the wives of miners in the Ruhr went out onto the streets in the most difficult situations and, armed with agitational material, forced their way to the pit heads to distribute leaflets, strike newspapers, etc.

In the Treptow A.E.G., in Siemens in Berlin, and in Siemens-Schuckert-Nuernberg the working women gathered during working hours, deserting the conveyor, and sang workers' songs.

Since the middle of January 200 working women have been on strike in the Germania incandescent lamp factory in Eisenach (Thuringen), after successfully averting a wage cut which was planned for December.

On January 22nd, the working women in the brush-wheel department of the Miag-Works in Brunswick went on strike against a wage-cut which was contemplated. Apart from the general wage cut, the working women were to receive a further cut of 50%. After two hours' strike, during which the working women remained at their places in the plant, the 50% wage-cut was withdrawn.

In Tingen (Baden), 400 women tobacco workers went on strike on January 21st against a 20—27% wage-cut.

In the Alexander Works at Remscheid, the working women succeeded by a solid strike in forcing the withdrawal of a 15% wage-cut.

All the 150 working women employed in the Basart Razor-blade Factory in Solingen went solidly out on strike against a wage-cut. The working women elected their strike committee and are still struggling to win their demands.

The König Department of the Siemens-Werner works, where the bulk of the workers are women, successfully carried out passive resistance under the leadership of a Red factory-council member, and obtained the withdrawal of the 10% wage-cut. Thereupon, the Red Factory-council member was dismissed.

The rural districts have recently been flooded by a wave of strikes of women land workers. On the Rudbarzen estate in East Prussia, the women land workers were on strike for three weeks against a wage-cut. They were wholly successful. In Naukirch, an agricultural worker was dismissed because he offered resistance to the nazis. Solidly the women marched before the home of the landowner and demanded his immediate reinstatement. It was obtained.

In the militant actions of the unemployed, the women through their active cooperation have successfully warded off the measures of the government and the authorities. Thus, in Halle and in a number of other towns evictions of the unemployed were prevented through the active participation of the women.

The desperate condition of the peasant women also forces these sections to self-help in an ever stronger and more elementary manner. A great number of forced auction sales were prevented through the actions of the peasants and the peasant women.

The working and toiling women in town and country are organising themselves in the revolutionary fighting front to an ever greater extent and are marching along at the side of their men class comrades against the murderous capitalist system.

International Women's Day in Germany this year is marked by the sharpened struggle against the menacing war danger, against the emergency decree dictatorship of Brüning and Severing, against fascism.

International Women's Day should be carried through in accordance with the example of the women textile workers of Saxony and Wuerttemberg who took up a stand on the militant factory demands at the general factory meeting and unanimously decided to demonstrate for the demands of the women workers on International Women's Day and to take up the struggle in the factory. International Women's Day committees will be elected at the general factory meetings by all the workers to make all preparations for the carrying through of International Women's Day and to mobilise all the workers in the factory for it. The election of delegates for the III. National Congress of working women is being taken up in the department and general factory meetings, in the

unemployed and block meetings and in indoor meetings in the towns and villages. One of the important tasks is the development of the women delegate groups in the factories, the election of working women commissions of the R.T.U.O., the strengthening of the ranks of the Communist Party, the leader of the working class. International Women's Day must become a mass summons of the most progressive working women and workers' wives to the Communist Party. On this day the working class marches under the banner of the Comintern for the demands of the working women which are the demands of the entire working class, and for their liberation from the yoke of capitalism and for Socialism.

Unemployment Among Women in Capitalist Countries.

By S. Efremova.

A considerable part of the huge army of unemployed, destined to slow starvation and misery, is made up of working women. In Germany, the army of totally unemployed women is now estimated at over a million and a half officially registered. In America, this number is estimated at 2 million, and in Great Britain, about 800,000, while in France, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria the unemployed women make up one third of all the unemployed.

After throwing tens of millions of working men and women on to the streets, the bourgeoisie, directly supported by the social fascists and the reformist trade union bureaucrats, is conducting an intensified offensive against unemployment insurance. Unemployment relief is being systematically reduced, the number of those entitled to receive these miserable benefits is being cut down, the period during which a worker is entitled to receive relief is being shortened, etc. In Germany, in the course of two months alone, the relief has been reduced twice—in July, 15% and in September 22%. In Austria, during 1931, the relief has been cut down by 45%, and in Great Britain by 10–15%. The same thing is happening in all other countries, where officially there are laws on unemployment insurance, such as Poland, Italy, Austria, etc. This offensive of the bourgeoisie against social insurance hits the unemployed women particularly hard. Their relief benefits are 30–40% lower than the relief granted to men, in accordance with the difference in pay for working men and working women, regardless of the performance of equal work. But even for the receipt of these miserable relief benefits the bourgeoisie has introduced into its unemployment insurance law a number of conditions which make it difficult for working men and women to receive relief. For example, relief is not granted immediately upon dismissal, but only two to three weeks afterwards; the laws provides that relief can be granted only during a limited period, for example: 12 weeks in Austria, 26 weeks per year in Germany, Great Britain, etc. Moreover, there are a number of occupations which are not covered by unemployment insurance—agricultural workers, domestic servants, shop assistants, etc.

But the bourgeoisie is not content with putting these obstacles in the way of relief, and is seeking a way out of the crisis through the sweat and blood of the working men and women. With the help of its lackeys—the social-fascists and reformist bureaucrats—it is constantly passing new legislation and issuing emergency decrees, by which it not only restricts the scope of the relief, but completely deprives hundreds and thousands of working men and women of relief. It is introducing forced labour for the unemployed, etc. On the basis of the emergency decree issued by Brüning (Germany in July 1931), the following categories of unemployed were deprived of relief: working women under 21 years of age, and married women with a husband or son working. The decree states: "Married women may receive unemployment relief only in case they are in need." Up to the time this decree came into force (July 1, 1931), out of 1,178,693 unemployed women, only 524,884 received relief. After the decree, the number of women not receiving relief grew to 750,000.

The British government is not lagging behind Brüning. In 1930, the British Ministry of Labour, the minister of which was Margaret Bondfield, a member of the Labour Party, issued

the decree regarding obligatory labour for unemployed workers—whereby the labour exchanges send skilled working women out as domestic servants, waitresses, etc. Since these occupations are not covered by insurance, such workers are deprived of relief. They are deprived of this relief also if they refuse to perform such labour. As a result of this decree, 90,000 women were removed from the registers during 1931. Moreover, there is the Anomalies Bill, which deprives all married women of relief. Such methods are now being adopted in a number of other countries where insurance legislation exists—Italy, Poland, etc.

Still worse is the position of working women in countries where there is no social insurance at all—America, France, Belgium, China, Japan, etc., where the unemployed and their families are forced to resort to municipal relief and to charity. How insignificant such relief is, is shown by the sum of 3 million dollars granted to the unemployed by the municipal government of New York, where there are over one million out of work.

With such a situation in all capitalist countries, the revolutionary movement of the unemployed is continually growing. The working women and wives of workers are participating more and more actively in this movement, and are frequently found in the front ranks.

This active participation of the women was shown by demonstrations of the unemployed in 1931 in Poland, England, America, Czechoslovakia, etc. A striking case was the demonstration in Minsk-Mazov (Poland), in which several hundred women with babies in arms participated. The police attempted to find out from the women they arrested who were the Bolsheviks who had incited them to demonstrate, and one of them pointing to her hungry children, said: "These are the Bolsheviks that brought me out to the demonstration." According to police reports, there were street battles in Glasgow and other cities of Great Britain during October 1931, in which a large number of working women and wives of workers participated together with their families, actively assisting the workers' groups, fighting with the police, throwing stones at them and various household goods—bottles, pottery, jars and even trunks. The same thing happened during the preparations and carrying out of the hunger march in America. There were even special "pots and pans" demonstrations. Such a women's demonstration was held on November 28th in Cleveland, when that prosperous community refused relief to women with children, and only as a result of that demonstration was relief granted.

But in spite of the role of unemployed women in the general movement of the unemployed, and in spite of their revolutionary activity, our Communist Party and revolutionary trade union opposition do not pay nearly sufficient attention to the leadership of the movement, to the work of linking it up with the struggles of the workers and vice versa, and systematic work among the unemployed. The importance of winning over the masses of unemployed women makes it incumbent on the Communist Parties, the women's departments and the revolutionary trade union oppositions to organise daily work among these masses by forming special women's commissions in all councils of unemployed, by organising delegates' meetings of unemployed and working women and by drawing up a program of demands for unemployed women, which will serve as a basis for mobilising not only the unemployed, but also the men and women who are working in the enterprises.

Women in the Class Struggle in Great Britain.

By Goodin.

With the deepening of the crisis of British Capitalism, new burdens are placed on the shoulders of the working class. The offensive against the standard of living of workers, men and women alike, follows the line of reductions in wages and lengthening of hours. The offensive against the unemployed follows the line of reductions in unemployment benefit and the Means and Needs Test. The fall of the Labour Government in August, 1931, which arose out of the credit crisis, resulted in the formation of the conservative National Government. This was but another way of preparing the attack on the working class on the part of the bourgeoisie. But it was the Labour Government that adopted the proposal that economies were necessary. This meant that the unemployed would be the first to be attacked.

To carry through these economies, the capitalists used the Labour government, who could be relied on to attack still further the standards of the workers. Ever since the formation of the Labour Government, unemployment steadily continued to increase and every section of the working class was attacked. Was it not the Labour Government through the Graham Report, who reduced the wages of the textile workers in Lancashire after nine weeks of the most bitter and splendid struggle? Was it not the same government, who lengthened the hours of Welsh miners? And it was the very same government, who attacked the unemployed through a woman Cabinet minister's, Margaret Bondfield's "Anomalies Bill".

The workers fought bitterly against these attacks. They gradually turned away from the Labour Party, losing confidence in it. The Conservatives came into power.

Since the formation of the National Government, the crisis has not decreased, but increased. The working men and women were once more told that in order to save the British Empire they must tighten their belts, their children must eat less and themselves must pay more for their food. Are the great masses of workers taking this laying-down? No, they are not!

The mass demonstrations such as we witnessed in all the great cities at the end of 1931, were the greatest and most militant since the General Strike in 1926. The working class met the attacks of the capitalists with their most fierce resistance. This mass resistance compelled the capitalists to mobilise all their forces. During the workers demonstrations, collisions between the workers and the police took place almost everywhere. How has this general offensive affected the working woman and what role does she play in this struggle?

The majority of industrial women are in the textile, clothing and tobacco industries. At the same time, during the last year in connection with the crisis, woman labour as the worst paid is being applied more and more almost in every branch of industry. In the engineering industry, the women are 50 per cent. of the total employed, and they are entirely unorganised. In the war industries, the women form a third of those employed; in a number of factories, in the chemical industry, more than half of the male workers have been replaced by women with sharp reductions in wages. In the clothing industry, the women form 85% of those employed. They are subjected to the most sweated conditions and earn half of the amount that men do. There are in the vast army of unemployed in Britain over a half million (707,244) unemployed women.

Under the "Anomalies Act", which is mainly an attack on married women, over 134,000 women workers have already been cut off from benefit. In industrial centres like Birmingham and Bradford, there are between 70 to 72 per cent. married women registered at the Labour Exchanges.

In almost every class struggle of the past period, the women have displayed the most splendid militancy and activity. During the miners' strike in South Wales, December 1930, the wives of the miners played a big part in the struggle, by doing the relief work and raising the funds for the strikers.

The women in the mining district live under the most awful conditions; their children are underfed and badly clothed. With the help of the trade union bureaucrats, the miners' wages are being cut every year and their hours lengthened; so that the lot of a miner's wife becomes harder year by year. On top of all this, the National Government introduces new taxes

and tariffs which mean that the prices of food will be increased by 25%. The miners are again faced with a reduction in wages. In the textile industries, the workers, 64% of whom are women, are subjected to the most cruel attacks of the employers and Government. In 1930 the Labour Government's Macmillan commission made it possible for the woollen employers to carry through a wage reduction of 9½% for 204,000 wool operatives. The Graham commission carried out in practice a programme of capitalist rationalisation which introduced the more-loom system from 4 to 8 looms per weaver in the cotton industry. The trade union bureaucrats, in the beginning of 1931, accepted the proposal of the employers for a reduction in wages of the dyers in the cotton mills. In 1931 an attempt was made to introduce the 8-loom system in all factories of the cotton industry, but this attempt failed, owing to the mass strike of all the workers engaged in the cotton mills. At the same time, a displacement of workers in the cotton mills, members of the trade union, was carried out by the introduction of workers from the villages. The more than two loom system has already been introduced in Nelson and Burnley.

In July 1931, a further 11% wage cut was announced for 20,000 woollen workers, who answered this attack by a spontaneous strike. This strike lasted for 7 days and with a defeat for the workers. The women now work on 8 looms in the woollen industry, instead of on 4. The women now work 128 ends at the weaving mills instead of 64 ends as in the recent past. In the jute industry, where in May 1930 a 4% cut was carried out and a further 4% cut in 1931, two spindles with simultaneous increase in the number of looms commenced to be applied. The most recent methods of capitalist rationalisation and the closing down of small factories, threw into the ranks of the unemployed tens of thousands of textile women workers, among whom were many married women. These women workers, during a number of years, paid contributions to the unemployment fund, and now on the basis of the "Anomalies Bill" they are being deprived of unemployment relief.

During the strike of the woollen operatives (in July 1931), 70% of the strikers were women and they displayed an exceptional fighting activity. Many women who have never before been on the picket line, proved to be the best fighters in the strike. A number of young girls from 18 to 21 were brought right to the forefront of the struggle. They showed the most militant spirit ever shown by women. Four women strikers were arrested and sent to jail for 1 and 2 months each. Not only did the women strikers show this fighting spirit, but the wives of the strikers did splendid work. They worked in the relief kitchen opened by the W.I.R. and collected funds for the strikers. They took part in all the demonstrations that were led by the strikers. In the recent strike in Burnley, at the Spencer Mill, the women were the first to strike against the more loom system: in this strike 4 women and 1 man were arrested.

In the clothing industry too, the women have always been the leaders in the struggle. One has only to look back to the history of the "Rego" strike and the "Poliakoff" strike to see the part women play in the class struggles of the clothing industry. In both these strikes, the women not only did the work, that is necessary in the time of strikes, but collected all the funds for strike pay. In the Rego factory, the officials of the reformist union did not support the strike; they declared that the strike was unofficial. The Poliakoff strike was led by the new Red Union, that was formed only 3-4 months before the strike, and it did not have the necessary funds, but the women through their activity collected the necessary funds to carry on the struggle. In the clothing industry too, through capitalist rationalisation, wage cuts have been imposed upon the workers and in the beginning of 1932, the employers are demanding a reduction in the already low trade board rate, which is 28/- for time work and 32/- piece work for women. For men the rate is £ 3-5-0. The women do the same work and work the very same machines.

In the engineering industry women constitute 33 per cent of the workers employed. In this industry the women are not

allowed in the trade union. The employers take advantage of this by introducing women labour because it is cheaper. In many factories it has been known for women to get less than one pound a week. In the metal industry young girl labour is chiefly exploited. In Sheffield, in the cutlery factories, the girls work under sweat conditions. The girls earn 12/- a week and many times as little as 5/- a week.

In the recent General Elections, the employed and unemployed women played a splendid role. There were in the forefront of the struggle against the National Government. They were the most militant in all the demonstrations. They

fought with the police, many women being arrested. With the deepening of the capitalist crisis, the process of replacing man labour by woman labour and the labour of young girls is spreading in industry, because woman labour is cheaper.

But the deepening of the crisis also brings more and more women into the working-class struggle against the capitalist decaying system. The working women must be mobilised for the proletarian ranks by the Communist Party of Great Britain for the final overthrow of the rotten system that makes slaves of working men and women for the benefit of the capitalists.

U.S.A. Women in the Class Struggle.

By Caroline Drews.

The United States is going through the third winter of crisis. Millions of working men, women and workers' children, weakened by two winters of wage cuts, stagger plans, unemployment, capitalist charity, soup lines, are suffering untold misery and starvation. Wage cut follows wage cut in one branch of industry after another. Despite unemployment, additional hundreds of thousands of women, housewives, mothers, are drawn into industry. They are engaged in place of the discharged men, as the capitalists pay less for woman than man labour.

Of the 2,229,283 women who have entered the ranks of the wage earners during the last ten years, many have been recruited in the last two crisis years. First of all we find that a larger percentage of women (26% increase making a total of 10,053,792) than men (15% increase) have become wage slaves. We find that the greatest increase is among the **Negro women** who now total 2,000,000.

Many of the women in industry are young girls. The intense speed-up makes a woman "old at 30". Capitalist rationalisation throws the working man "on the scrap heap at 40". But besides the young girls and women, a considerable percentage of whom are married, we find the old employed by the thousands in large and small buildings, on their hands and knees scrubbing floors, dusting, polishing. Over 200,000 women over 65 years old are working for wages in the rich U.S.

Of the 12,000,000 unemployed in the U.S. to-day, it can safely be said that close to 3,000,000 are women workers. This does not of course include the housewives and wives of unemployed workers. How do these millions of unemployed together with their wives and children live? They get no unemployment insurance, their wages when they worked were usually so small that they could not save. Thousands of workers who had money in the banks found their hard earned savings wiped away over night through bank crashes. Others have long ago eaten up their meagre savings in the first months of the crisis. U. S. Capitalism has an answer... **Charity.**

With the increase of the crisis the capitalists find new ways of getting the workers to pay for the crisis. Civil service employees and workers have to "volunteer" to give a certain percentage of their wages for charity unemployment relief. Big industrial institutions donate to some fund, the "donations" being taken from the pay envelopes of those still on the job.

What does the unemployed worker find when he applies to the "benefactors"? Recently at a public meeting of the Unemployed Councils affiliated with the Red International of Labour Unions, men and women reported how the charity inspectors, well paid from the funds solicited for relief, put them through the third degree. The worker lays bare his whole life history, and that of his ancestors, then the "lady" or "gentleman" inquires whether there is anyone who is employed in the family, not only the immediate family, but cousins, aunts, etc. If some relative should have a job, then the worker is told that he cannot get help, but must get his relative to support them.

A tremendous amount of corruption exists in connection with the dispensation of charity. Recent disclosures in the city of Philadelphia showed that approximately 60-70 cents out of each dollar went for salaries of officials and overhead charges while the unemployed starved. These facts are typical of what exists all over the U.S.

When a family is "fortunate" enough to get help it usually consists of three or four dollars a week for a family of five or six. Families with older children have been cut off even from these miserable sums and told to go to soup kitchens. There, usually after prayers, they are given a watery, stinking bowl of soup, and a crust of hard bread. Thousands of unemployed workers have developed diarrhoea from this watery diet. Disease has increased. The children of the unemployed are suffering from malnutrition.

Women are not often seen on the bread lines. Unemployment forces them into prostitution. Many girls are placed in "opportunity houses" by the Young Women's Christian Association, Young Women's Hebrew Association, and other welfare agencies. In these "opportunity houses" government employment agencies, they must act as servants, wash dishes, attend the children, clean, scrub, in return for bed and board.

Forced labour is being demanded from the unemployed in return for semi-starvation. The capitalists want to utilize all the energies of the workers so they cannot resist, fight for unemployment insurance, and the other demands of the Unemployed Councils and the Communist Party.

The rate of suicides have jumped considerably in the last few years. However, the vast majority of the workers realize the way out of their sufferings is not by killing themselves, but through struggle against the system which enslaves them. Under the leadership of the **Unemployed Councils** and the **Communist Party**, the unemployed workers together with the employed workers, have held tremendous demonstrations in many large and small cities all over the U.S. City and state hunger marches have been held for immediate relief. Marches of women and children have taken place to local boards with demands for free hot lunches, fares, clothes and shoes for the children of the unemployed and part time workers.

On the opening of the United States Senate and Congress, in Washington D.C., on December 7th, 1,650 elected unemployed delegates marched on to the capital grounds from all over the U.S. Twenty-five per cent. of the marchers were Negro and white women. Thirty per cent were Negroes who are suffering most as a result of the crisis and who are most subject to all the capitalist attacks.

The militancy of the hunger marchers, and the tens of thousands who turned out to greet them in every large and small city, town, farm village, forced concessions of food and shelter in many centres including the Mellon owned town of Pittsburgh, industrial centres like Cleveland, Baltimore, and at Washington, D.C. The demands of the marchers were, "Not Hoover's Charity—But Unemployment Insurance", and immediate cash winter relief for the unemployed and part-time employed workers.

The employed workers are backing the unemployed in their struggles. The men and women who find jobs are offered starvation wages. In every branch of industry wages have been cut. Speed-up devices were introduced. Hours were lengthened. Within the last few months the United States Steel Company set the standard for a general wage cut, when it announced a 10% cut in all of its mills affecting every one of its employees.

The workers have not kept quiet while their wages were being attacked. Numerous spontaneous **strikes** broke out. Although many workers are organised in the fascist led American Federation of Labour, many strikes took place in

spite of the wishes of the leadership. For instance, where the officialdom of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers Union signed an agreement for a 35% to 50% wage cut in Philadelphia, we find the workers coming out on strike over the heads of their officials. The most outstanding militant strikes, involving the largest number of workers, were led by **Trade Union Unity League**.

In **Lawrence**, Massachusetts, in February 1931, 10,000 workers, the majority of them women, came out on strike against the "fish men" (efficiency experts) plan to introduce the speed-up, wage cut, and for extra pay for overtime. This strike had been prepared and was led by the revolutionary National Needle Trades Workers Union and developed very rapidly but within ten days the bosses had their police swoop down upon the strike committee, arrest all the leaders, and then get the workers back under a partial victory.

In September there was another announcement of a 10 per cent. wage cut affecting every mill in Lawrence. 25,000 workers came out on strike, and every mill in the city was closed down. Although the strike was started by the N.T.U.W. department committee in one of the mills, the union showed its inability of taking advantage of the situation, to elect a broad rank and file united front strike committee, and lead these workers in militant struggle. As a result of our weakness, the reactionary United Textile Workers Union, which had been called in by the bosses in order to betray the workers, was followed by a greater number of workers than our union. The police and the bosses gave these fakers every assistance.

The strike of the silk workers in **Allentown** led by the

Muste (left wing of the American Federation of Labour) group, involved many women workers. This was a militant strike in spite of the misleaders.

The strike of the 40,000 miners in **Pennsylvania**, Ohio, West Virginia, led by the National Miners Union, affiliated with the R.L.L.U. involved an enormous number of workers. This was the most important strike of 1931. The miners wives and their daughters played a militant role on the picket lines, on the strike committee, and in relief work. This was the first time that women to a large extent had been involved in a miners strike.

There were also a number of smaller strikes in 1931 in which large numbers of women were involved. The housewives in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Brooklyn and Bronx, New York, under the leadership of the United Council for Working Class Women and the Trade Union Unity League, led successful strikes against the high cost of bread, meat, rents. These strikes involved thousands of women who were active on the picket lines and in strike committee work.

The Communist Party has not yet learned to approach concretely the women's needs and demands, it has not yet learned to adequately expose the reformists in its everyday work. We have not yet been able to prove to the working class women that they can best serve their children as militant fighters in the class struggles. Women are still infected with capitalist illusions.

A self critical attitude towards our work, and the inspiring example of the Soviet Union will help us to overcome our shortcomings.

The Offensive of the Polish Capitalists and the Women's Struggle.

By N. Z.

The results of the crisis and the war preparations are a heavy burden on the shoulders of millions of women who are even harder hit than men. Women, as the lower paid and worse organised part of the proletariat, are the greatest sufferers in the present situation.

But all the attempts to keep down millions of working women are defeated, for they meet with revolutionary resistance on their part. Throughout Poland proletarian women participate in the strike movement of their class. As a protest against cuts in the already miserable wages and dismissal of scores and hundreds of women, the women workers in the "Rygavar" factory (Warsaw), the "Geier" and "Pszogorski Brothers" factories in (Lodz), the "Schlosser" factory (Ozorkovo—3,000 workers), and in the "Pepegue" factory (Grudziondze) and others came out on strike.

In their recent strikes the women workers have displayed exceptional bravery and stamina. Being in many cases the initiators of the strike, as for instance, in the "Geier" and "Rygavar" factories, women risked their lives in order to come to the assistance of their striking husbands. In "Skolema" (West Ukraine), during the strike in the brick works, women threw themselves on the rails and stopped the wagons.

In the heroic miners' strike in Yavozhno women removed the strike breakers together with their husbands. Among the seven workers who were killed during the demonstration were two women. During the June strike of the Warsaw tramway men, 300 women were present at a meeting attended by 5,000 people. One of them spoke and urged the people who had come to the demonstration, to defend the strike committee all the members of which had been arrested. In another strike, they offered energetic resistance to the police attack, and pulled several policemen from their horses.

Fascist Poland tries to transfer the whole burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the employed and unemployed workers. Apart from raising the price of articles of primary necessity (a kilo bread costs now 50 gr. instead of 46) the manufacturers supported by the government, are constantly reducing workers' wages in various ways. For instance, in Lodz the weavers get the numbers of the yarn substituted, and when pay day comes, three to eight gr. are deducted for every meter, which means a reduction of 30% in the women workers' pay. A woman weaver used to earn 35 zloty a week, and earns now only 20—25 zl. If she is a part-time

worker—and most of the Lodz mills work only 3 to 4 days a week—she earns 12 to 15 zl. with a ten hour day. And in the small textile industry the pay is even lower—ten to twelve zl. a week with a 12 to 14 hour day. In the chemical industry women workers' wages have been reduced by 50 per cent and more. Before the introduction of piece rates, women in the "Rygavar" rubber works in Warsaw used to earn from 22 to 40 zl. a week. Now that piece rates are established the maximum earnings of a woman worker is 2 zl. 50 gr. and the average daily earnings 1.20. In the small industry women earn 3 zl. a day with a 12 hour day. Furthermore, the capitalists have quite abolished leave with full pay.

One of the largest mills in Lodz, the "Vidzevsk" mill, which usually employed 7,000 workers, including 5,000 women, employs now 1,500 workers, 1,000 of them women. According to the latest official statistics of April 1, 1931, there were in Poland 65,000 women to 307,000 unemployed.

Taking into consideration the number of unregistered unemployed in Poland, the total number is about 1,000,000, and one fifth, namely, 200,000 are women. The newly issued fascist decree regarding struggle against unemployment provides for the dismissal of more hundreds of thousands of married women and young workers. Driven by hunger and privations of all kind, women are taking a more and more active part in the demonstrations of the unemployed, placing themselves sometimes at their head. Fearlessly, they get hold of the bridles of the mounted police, and in the villages they drive away the tax collectors with flails and pitchforks. In Mazovetz Minsk women headed the demonstration of 400 unemployed workers and peasants, and when the police attacked the demonstrators, the women rushed forward shouting: "Fire on us, for we have no food for our children". After the dispersal of the demonstration, several people were arrested, including one woman. During her examination the Commissar shouted: "You Bolshevik, you Communist, tell me this minute who told you to go to the demonstration?" The unemployed woman answered: "If you wish, I will bring here those who sent me to the demonstration." What was his astonishment when the woman, accompanied by a policeman, brought four emaciated, ragged young children. "Here are the Bolsheviks who sent me into the street, to the demonstration."

Polish women workers, shoulder to shoulder with their male fellow-workers, express their will to fight the fascist dictatorship for a Polish Soviet Republic.

Woman Labour in the U.S.S.R.

By B. Marcheva.

While the capitalist world finds itself in the grip of a grave economic crisis, and sends adrift tens of millions of men and women workers, condemning them and their families to misery and death by starvation, the country of proletarian dictatorship where the Socialist offensive is in full swing, draws millions of women into social work and productive labour. The proletarian cadres in all the branches of national economy are growing, and in these cadres the proportional weight of women labour is increasing from year to year, from quarter to quarter. Only in the half year from 1/1/31 to 1/7/31 the proportional weight of woman labour increased in all the branches of the national economy:

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|--|----------------|
| In industry from | 30.7% to 31.7% |
| In transport from | 9.1% „ 10.1% |
| In public instruction from | 52.3% „ 54.4% |
| In trade institutions from | 22.1% „ 24.6% |
| Throughout the national economy from | 25.7% „ 28.3% |

A marked increase is noticeable in the heavy industry—from 17.9% to 21.9%, including: engineering from 13.6% by 1/1/31 to 17.8% by 1/7/31; the Electro-Technical Industry—from 10.5% to 13.7%; the chemical industry from 11.3% to 14.4% etc. This growth becomes more significant when compared with the exponents of 1929:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| In engineering | 6.8% |
| In the electrical industry | 18.8% |
| In the coal industry | 8.4% |
| In the chemical industry | 6.5% |

The division of professions and occupations into "male" and "female", not arising out of the specific peculiarities of the female organism, but inherited from pre-revolutionary Russia, was an obstacle to the entrenchment of woman labour in scores, and hundreds of skilled labour occupations and professions, in which non-application of woman labour cannot be justified. Taking into consideration the great possibilities in the utilisation of woman labour in the metal and mining industries, in the building trade, in transport, etc., the control figures for 1931 provided for the inclusion of 1,600,000 women into the national economy, a task which according to the estimate for 1/1/32 has been more than fulfilled, the fixed figure having been exceeded by 200,000.

To ensure successful fulfilment of the task set, the forces of the Soviet, Party and trade union organisations had to be mobilised, in order to solve the problem of rational utilisation of woman labour in accord with the physical and physiological peculiarities of the female organism and its maternity functions. For this purpose, the U.S.S.R. People's Labour Commissariat—by means of conferences of experts who took into consideration the already available data of scientific research and based themselves on previous experience—prepared a list of occupations in which woman labour can not only be applied, but should predominate. This list has been sent to all the enterprises where it is studied and worked up by the workers and the technical and medical staff, commensurate with the industrial conditions of the given enterprise, due consideration being given to prospective measures for the rationalisation and reconstruction of the process of production.

To ensure the more rapid progress of this question, the committee for the improvement of women's labour and social conditions, attached to the C.E.C. of the Union, the Supreme Economic Council, the State Planning Committee, the People's Labour Commissariat and the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, organised brigades for the inspection of a series of enterprises. The aims of the brigades were: verification of the fulfilment of the instructions given by the government, bringing to light cases of incorrect utilisation of woman labour, of an old fashioned attitude towards it, and making concrete proposals regarding this question.

Simultaneously, scientific research work is carried on on a large scale by the various Institutes, a special fund having been established for this purpose. In connection with industry these institutes are: the Scientific Research Institute of Labour Economics and the Labour Protection Institute, and in connection with the People's Labour Commissariat, the Institute for the Protection of Motherhood and Childhood, the Scientific Transport Institutes, etc.

The object of scientific research work is, on the one hand, selection of professions and occupations in which the utilisation of woman labour from the point of view of protection of the female organism and economic efficaciousness of woman labour, and, on the other hand, application of rationalising measures that make utilisation of woman labour more easy. Thus, the Labour Protection Institute has introduced a new type of hand barrows for women employed in the peat districts. This new type of hand barrows increases the productivity of labour by 20-25 percent, and makes at the same time labour less exhaustive. Tractor seats are being rationalised, to lessen vibration. A whole series of agricultural implements are also being adapted to the application of woman labour (threshing, mowing, sowing machines, etc.), as well as various machines in the metal industry.

The scientific research work is carried on in works that are typical of the given branch of industry. Thus, the State Izhorsk Works in Leningrad, owing to the great variety of machines and benches there—from the oldest to the newest construction—is of particular interest, because it offers splendid opportunities to study the possibility of applying woman labour in the heavy industry.

It is common knowledge that hitherto application of woman labour in the engineering industry is very limited—8 to 10 percent. Labour in hot departments, manipulation of large and heavy details, inadequate functional division of labour processes and a whole series of other matters in the process of production limit to a considerable extent the possibility of applying woman labour. All the more important is therefore full utilisation of all actual possibilities to apply woman labour, and also introduction of rationalising measures that widen these possibilities. The investigation was carried out by the state scientific institutes for the protection of labour, motherhood and childhood, and by the Leningrad institute of labour hygiene and safety technique, with the participation of the management of the departments, the trade union and party organisations, the industrial workers (men and women) and the medical forces (the physiological laboratory, the industrial medical staff, etc). The investigation has shown that despite the existence of a series of matters that limit the possibility of applying woman labour in the engineering industry, it can be much more widely applied than has been hitherto the case—the number of skilled women workers can be increased one and a half times by 1/1/32 (the investigation took place in July).

Twenty four occupations, the specific harmfulness of which is taken into account by the existing legislation (lifting and carrying weights, working in hot departments, etc.) have been included into the list of occupations in which woman labour is inadmissible. Into another list occupations were included in which women can work conditionally, with appropriate selection and under definite conditions, as for instance, cutting thin metal sheets with an immovable oxy-acetelene apparatus, so as to avoid carrying gas cylinders from place to place etc., and finally a list of occupations in which application of woman labour is possible, with indication to what extent. When these lists were drawn up due consideration was given to already tested and prospective rationalisation measures, the rationalisation measures deemed necessary being indicated in many cases. Thus, women have not been hitherto employed as pattern makers, whereas at present functional subdivision of labour offers great possibilities for the application of woman labour in this branch of industry. The work of a patternmaker consists of a series of simple operations: getting material ready, sawing it up, etc. Then again, in steel-rolling shops, provided assembling and carrying loads is performed by repairing brigades, and with the necessary qualification, women can be put in charge of steam engines, etc.

Similar investigations are carried out also in other enterprises in the other branches of industry.

In the social conditions of pre-revolutionary Russia women were condemned to household drudgery and heavy unskilled labour in factories and works. Consequently, as a mass, they represented unskilled labour power. Although energetic work has been carried on for a series of years to raise the qualification of woman labour, the main mass of the women workers

have not risen above labour processes in which little or average skill is required. Therefore, preparing cadres of skilled women workers continues to be the central task in the problem of women labour. At the third session of the C.E.C. of the Union the directive was issued that women should constitute fifty percent of the scholars in the factory apprenticeship schools, and the apprenticeship schools of the mass occupations, the main educational establishments for the preparation of skilled workers. This resulted in 270,000 women being trained in such institutions in 1931. Hundreds of thousands of women, including housewives, are taken away from the kitchen and washtub and go through their apprenticeship from the lowest rung of the ladder—the apprenticeship school—to the highest—the university. By January 1st, 1931, women constituted 30% of the university students. Simultaneously, there is systematic promotion of women already employed in industry to more skilled work, with a view of promoting the mass of women workers employed in unskilled and semi-skilled labour processes, to the higher grades.

This broad inclusion of woman labour into the process of production is accompanied by the rapid growth of their social and political development and productive activity. Women do not lag behind either in the shock brigade movement or in socialist competition. An investigation which embraced one and a half million men and women workers, has shown that in the shock brigade movement women constitute 55 and men 54 percent.

In a series of factories women constitute 90 to 100 percent in the shock brigade movement. The women's shock brigades have enormous achievements to their credit: exceeding the norm of the output, overfulfilment of the industrial and financial plan, reduction of absenteeism and fluctuation of labour power. And not only the women in the factories, but also the wives of working men organise brigades for the liquidation of breaks on the industrial front, and give evidence of real labour heroism.

The application of woman labour in a series of skilled occupations has been so successful that all doubts regarding the economic expediency of woman labour have been dispelled. Woman labour has proved to be as productive as man labour. Thus, in the "Krasny Putilovetz" Works the output of the women turners exceeded that of the men turners by 25%, the status of the men and women turners being the same, also the lathes they used and the details on which they were employed. In the "Izhorsk" works in Leningrad, in the mechanic-

al workshop, a third grade turner produces 280 details, whereas a woman turner produces 364 details in the same number of hours. The same works has only lately begun to employ women for the manufacture of knobs, but their productivity of labour is double that of men's labour.

The high quality of woman labour, women's great desire to be industrial workers, as this work guarantees them a higher material and cultural standard of living, the rapid growth of the political development of the women, which leads to their active participation in the great work of socialist construction, give every reason to believe—taking into consideration the economic perspectives of 1932—that it will be possible to draw over one and a half million women into the national economy in 1932. This will constitute 44.4% of the general requirement of labour power, and 46.1% of the number of workers newly drawn into the national economy, including over half a million, or 45.3% of the general requirement in industry. Moreover, the main reserve force drawn into industry are 400,000 housewives. Women can be definitely drawn into the process of production, provided they be freed from household drudgery. Therefore, the control figures for 1932 provide for a further expansion of institutions that set free female labour power for participation in productive labour. According to the plans of the R.S.F.S.R. Peoples' Labour Commissariat, the network of creches in the factories is to cater for 75% of workers' children, compared with 38% in 1931. In the building trade and in the transport services, this percentage will be 70 compared with 35% in 1931, and throughout the national economy 58.7% compared with 28%.

In industry, special institutions will be provided for children under school age to the extent of 100%, and to the extent of 85% throughout the national economy, compared with respectively 70% and 95% in 1931.

The measures pointed out above (raising the qualification of woman labour, extending the cultural and social services), and side by side with it, the reconstruction of the national economy, the mechanisation of the most labour absorbing branches of industry, differentiated labour, correct organisation of labour and a series of rationalising measures based on the findings of scientific research work,—all this combined broadens the perspectives of the application of woman labour, and gives reason to believe that the plans for drawing woman labour into the process of production will be fully carried out, and that the tempo set for this will be exceeded.

The C.P.S.U. and the Women Workers.

S. M. Smidovich.

One of the fundamental tasks of the C.P.S.U. after the October revolution was the emancipation of working women in the U.S.S.R. from the state of slavery that was their lot in the former Russia. The U.S.S.R. alone carries out a whole series of measures for the actual emancipation of working women from unproductive household drudgery, described by Comrade Lenin as the most preposterous and hard work done by women.

According to Soviet laws, women enjoy the same rights as men. Full sex equality has been established by the Soviet constitution.

One of the main demands in the programme of the C.P.S.U. is not only full equality of rights for women, but also their emancipation from the material burdens of the obsolete household, through its substitution by house communes, public kitchens, central laundries, crèches etc. This programme of demands of the C.P.S.U. is fully carried out by the Soviet Government. Though it was at times difficult to get the necessary material resources for this, the curve of our quantitative and qualitative achievements in regard to its social construction is steadily moving upwards.

In connection with the gigantic growth of the socialist industry, hundreds of thousands of women are drawn into the process of production. This new factor in the life of the working women of the U.S.S.R. shows that a revolution has taken place in their progress towards rapid emancipation from age-long slavery, from the position of a household drudge.

In the U.S.S.R. women together with men participate in the new forms of work by socialist methods. Women workers take an equal share with men in socialist competition and

shock brigade work. Many of them are awarded premiums for the high quality of their work, and there are also women workers who, for labour heroism, are rewarded by the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. with the Lenin Order, i. e., the highest reward a U.S.S.R. worker can dream of.

When the workmen heroically fight any breaks in the plan, in factories, works and on building sites, shock brigade women workers display exceptional enthusiasm. An example of this is the work done by girls in the Stalingradstroi, where they worked in severe frost, exceeding the task set them by far, or in the Kharkow tractor works, where great persuasion had to be used to prevent them laying concrete 24 hours at a stretch.

There are cases when women shock-brigaders in the factories and Soviet farms are an inspiration to the other workers by their remarkable labour enthusiasm. Workingmen's wives set also frequently a splendid example by their heroic participation in the struggle for tempo and for the general line of the Party. In the Taguil works, for instance, at the suggestion of a workmen's wife, a voluntary brigade of 200 housewives was organised. This brigade did a big piece of work regarding the equipment of the foundry.

The fact that hundreds of thousands of women are drawn into industry in town, and that collectivisation has taken place in the countryside gives a new aspect to the question of development of the social institutions. This is now no longer a question of changing the social conditions of the working women, relieving them of household drudgery, it is rather an essential condition for the accomplishment of the economic socialist plan of construction. If industry is to be provided with the necessary cadres, if women are to be drawn into industry on a large

scale, the network of crèches, public kitchens, nursery schools, cooking centres and catering centres on a large scale, municipal laundries, will have to be considerably extended.

In 1931, for instance, accommodation in the town crèches increased from 26,333 places in 1926-27, to 170,000.

In the Socialist sector of agriculture, the network of crèches increased 2.5 times.

We had 1,400,000 places in the seasonal crèches in 1931,

61 millions roubles were spent in 1931 for the construction and organisation of crèches.

We have also considerable attainments to our credit lately in regard to public feeding. Thus, the number of courses supplied by the co-operative restaurants in 1929-30 showed a considerable increase compared with 1928-29. Throughout the network of public feeding centres 17 million courses were provided in 1930, whereas in 1931 the number of courses reached 37 millions, 70 million roubles were spent in 1930-31 on restaurants and large cooking centres. Of course, all this is not enough to satisfy the requirements of the millions of women in our National Economy, but what has been done in this direction is a considerable relief from household cares, as far as the women employed in our main industries are concerned. It should also be pointed out that workers' self-activity is widely encouraged and developed under Soviet conditions. For instance, we can give examples of such self-activity in the Urals, Donbas and other industrial districts, where the wives of the workmen organise without outside help public kitchens in which 2 to 3 women are on duty while the others are set free for factory work. This is a means of saving thousands of working days in the interest of the State. The workers themselves, by participating in the drawing up of plans for workers' dwellings, make sure of suitable sights and premises for large public kitchens, public laundries, etc.

Women workers, women in the Soviet and collective farms display remarkable self-activity and initiative—and what is very significant—in the development of the network of institutions for children under school age (nursery school, playgrounds, etc.). In 1930, under the leadership of the Party organisations, a regular campaign was held in the interest of children under school age, and the whole of Soviet society was drawn into this campaign. Here it became manifest what millions of working women can do in the struggle for a new social life. These women were skirmishers, organisers and inspirers of the campaign. Through this campaign hundreds of thousands of children gained access to children's institutions suitable for young children. In the Moscow province, for instance, the number of children in nursery schools increased from 11,075 to 91,000, and on the playgrounds, from 41,000 to 150,000.

The Party and trade unions did a great deal for the promotion of working women to all kinds of Party, Soviet, Economic, Trade Union, Co-operative and other work. In this connection, the Party's special attention to work among the women in the national republics and regions was particularly evident. In the S.U., many Turk, Uzbek and Turkoman women occupy leading Soviet, trade union, Economic and other posts.

On July 1st 1931, there were 383,149 working women in the ranks of our Party, including 181,651 women workers. At present there are over 400,000 women in the Party.

Among the women workers in the Party there are many examples of great devotion to the Communist cause. There are women workers who joined the Party a long time before the October revolution, and devoted the best years of their lives to struggle against autocracy and capitalism.

The women workers in the Party do an important piece of work in the factories; they educate broad masses of non-Party women workers and draw them into the Party. Delegate meetings are to the women workers the preparatory school of Communism.

It is very significant that women delegates take an active part in Socialist Construction, overcome all the difficulties which the working class that is building up Socialism has to overcome, and learn to appreciate the colossal work done by the Party and the Soviet power in all the domains of construction. That is why the Party looks upon delegate meetings as the driving belt between the Party and the broad masses of workers. About a million women workers have already been drawn into the delegate meetings.

The main work of the women workers' delegate meetings is re-education of new cadres of proletarian women who in some cases have just come from the village, housewives and others. The Party has reorganised the work of the women workers'

delegate meetings; it has concentrated it on the factories, it has directed the attention and activity of the women workers to the accomplishment of the industrial and financial plan, making them one of the means of enforcing the general line of the Party.

There have been cases when women delegates infected with their labour enthusiasm the men and women workers of a given factory, and attained not only fulfilment, but even overfulfilment of the industrial and financial plan. Here is an interesting example of their activity. The women delegates in the Magnitogorsk Works presented a banner made of rough matting (as a sign of disapproval) to the pseudo shock-brigaders of the open-hearth furnace number 5, and in order to show to the laggards how to work properly, they removed by their own efforts 40 waggonettes of bricks. Having been taught a lesson, the workers of the furnace number 5 started to work with a will like genuine shock brigaders. There have been a good many cases when women delegates have exposed kulak elements and sabotaging in the factories and works.

The rapid development of socialist forms of economy in the U.S.S.R., in town and country alike, the consolidation of socialist relations in industry that drive out the capitalist, are disastrous to the old mode of life. A new socialist mode of life is being created, which produces the new man. This process is particularly noticeable among women who from day to day abandon more and more the old capitalist forms of family life, and become full-fledged members of the socialist society.

There is no longer a force capable of turning back the triumphant progress of socialism that guarantees to working women full emancipation from age-long slavery. The eastern countries that form part of our great Socialist Union, move steadily towards full realisation of socialism. What was the social position of women there? They were bought like chattels. They were given into marriage in their childhood. Their faces were covered with a thick net made of horsehair—the purdah. They were kept prisoners in zenanas. Women were men's slaves in the full sense of the word. But can we say that all the old traditions are already relegated to the past, that the women of the Soviet East are as free, for instance, as in the central industrial districts? Certainly not. However, the progress and attainments in the life of the women of the Soviet East are colossal. With our revolution a radical change has taken place in their position.

All this has been done by the proletarian revolution, by the Party and the proletarian dictatorship.

In the Soviet East women workers and peasant women in the collective farms, the wives of working men and poor peasants are taught to read and write, and to carry on social work, they gradually learn the work of government and administration. Hundreds of women in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakstan are members of Soviets who help enthusiastically to build up socialism. Thousands of Eastern women have joined the Party. They are prepared to bear anything, persecution on the part of Mullahs and "Bais" (members of the ruling class); there are cases when they are foully murdered by kulaks, but this does not shake their determination to attain emancipation from the thralldom of the hateful old world that desperately resists the onward march of socialism.

The enormous attainments we have to our credit regarding the position of working women, the radical change in their social conditions, the fact that they are drawn on a large scale into industry and collective farming, as well as into administrative social and Party work, give a vivid idea of the colossal difference that exists between working women's position in our country and their position in the capitalist countries. Even the women of the Soviet East who have not yet emancipated themselves entirely from slavish dependence, from the thralldom of the old social life, even they who have borne the brutal age-long oppression that was their fate under Eastern social conditions, have the feeling of being mistresses of the country of growing up socialism. Their juridical position and social opportunities can truly be the envy of any working women in the most cultured capitalist country.

The C.P.S.U. has called into conscious life millions of workers, including hundreds of thousands of women. Colossal are the merits of the C.P.S.U.—Lenin's great Party—in regard to the millions strong army of the workers of the world, incomparable are its merits in regard to the working women.

Women Heroes of Socialist Construction.

By Myra Page.

The Soviet Union has developed a new type of hero. You find their pictures and stories on the front pages of the daily papers. Magazines devote illustrated articles to them, their faces flash across the movie screen. In workers' clubs, entrance rooms to skating rinks, moviés, theatres, and on collective farms, in factories, and museums, you come upon galleries of life-size drawings and busts of these "heroes of socialist construction".

There are literally many thousands of them—workers whose valiant efforts and noteworthy deeds their fellows have been quick to honour. Among them are many women. Resourceful, independent, and with minds largely freed from all those petty household cares that hampered them in the past, these women devote their energies to building the new life, in factory, club, and community.

Recently I attended a small conference of working women in the Moscow Region who had received the Order of Lenin, (the highest honour awarded by the Soviet Government to those of outstanding achievement). They had been called together by the Communist Party, which has been reviewing in this fourth, decisive year of the first Five-Year Plan, the work of industry's best shock brigaders.

One after another the women were asked to tell their story, "and why you got the Order of Lenin". First came Proletarskaya. Dressed in Khaki blouse and skirt, with short, strong figure and her hair cropped close like a boy's, she related her experiences in a brief, terse manner. "From early childhood I had to work in a factory. When the revolution came, and the Civil War, I went to the front. Later, when we had driven out the last of the enemy, I changed my gun for a machine. Since then I have been fighting on the economic front."

The monster Electric Works in Moscow, where Proletarskaya has worked for over ten years, completed its part of the Five-Year Plan in two-and-a-half years. The entire plant was awarded the Order of Lenin, and twelve workers, among them Proletarskaya, were singled out for special honour. Her record included more than ten valuable suggestions for rationalising production, as a result of which the factory saved 800,000 roubles.

"Tell us more about yourself", the other women asked Proletarskaya.

"I don't know how to talk about myself", she answered simply. "All I know is that I understand the masses, and how to lead them to do their best."

This woman Communist has been assistant director since 1930 of one of the plant's largest departments. In the evenings she has attended technical and political courses, for, she told us, "socialist construction demands trained leaders".

Anna Komisarova, a woman of perhaps fifty, told us her story with difficulty. Her companions listened intently, —especially the girls and younger women who had never known the terrors and hardships of the old regime.

On Komisarova's sweater there was pinned the highest military award, the Order of the Red Banner. "Together with my husband I fought on the barricades in 1905. After our defeat, he was exiled to Siberia. With my small children, I was turned out of our rooms, and hunted by the police. I had to hide, and had no place to go. Finally we found an old abandoned hut, and lived there. But the children were hungry—I had no work." As she dashed her hands across her eyes, many faces twisted in sympathy. "Oh, well. It is long ago now... Yes, I fought again in 1917. Later, they gave me this." She pointed to the medal. "For twenty-three years I've worked in the factory... Things have changed... Every year it gets better."

As a honoured shock brigader, Comrade Komisarova was chosen as one of the workers who last year made a trip to Europe. "How did you find it?" the others asked her. "Just like our papers say—they sure tell the truth. In Germany, think of it, rich people living in the biggest houses, and workers crowded together in the slums... We Soviet workers

when we saw all this, said among ourselves, 'That's the way it was once with us. Soon the German workers will put an end to this'."

Comrade Lunina, leader of a brigade in Moscow's caoutchouc Rubber factory, protested, "I don't think I can speak here. In our factory meetings, I'm used to it, but here..."

"Oh, go on," the others urged, "we're all plain working women, like yourself."

Flushed with effort, she began. "My father was a door-keeper, my mother a laundress. I never went to school. At twelve I began work, and since sixteen I've been in this same factory. After the revolution, I got to learn to read and write... My brigade has raised our productivity many times, and made suggestions. That's all." Quickly she took her seat, smiling shyly around her. By questioning her, we found that several of her suggestions could well be counted as inventions. For example, her last suggestion gave an economy of 3,000 roubles.

At the close she added. "The new life in the factory has helped me personally... Formerly I had trouble with my husband. I worried a lot. Then, I became active, and forgot my troubles. Now it's good to live, and work."

There were many others, such as Comrade Andurin, sixty-year old enthusiast of a railroad repairing shop near Moscow, who could have had a pension but preferred to stay on the job. "I'm hale and hearty as the youngest of you." And she shook her grey head at us, around which was wound a red scarf. For this energetic little grandmother has recently become a candidate to the Party. Her son being a Party man, and her grandson a Komsomol, why should she lag behind?

When asked, "Are you a shock brigader?" "Of course," she replied. "Today it's not possible not to be!" Her department entered into competition with another, and succeeded in lowering the cost of production six percent, increasing output by ten percent, and making a record of no absentees from work. Many times she has won prizes, by her suggestions. "Once the factory gave me a Lenin bust," she told us, "another time a kerosine stove, and lately a new suit of clothes that cost eighty-eight roubles."

Comrade Fedorova, a bright-eyed girl from the Lapse metal factory, related in a brisk, lively manner the story of the twenty-six young Communist girls, who organized four years ago the first brigade in the factory. Some of the older workers scoffed, "What're you kids up to? Just a bunch of girls!" But the twenty-six kept on, determined to prove that working collectively brought better results than working singly. For their numerous successes in reducing waste, improving methods of work, over-fulfilling their programme, as well as for their social work, the entire brigade was awarded the Order of Lenin. "Since we got the Order," Fedorova said, "we have to live up to it, — every one."

The girls worked in the winding sector of the transformer department.

Some of the young brigade members have now been sent to regional courses, and two to the University to study.

"We have our own wall paper," one of Fedorova's companions added, "and we go to movies collectively, and pool our earnings, and do everything in common. It's lots of fun. Oh, yes, we've gotten prizes many times. A hundred roubles last June to each girl, another time, a sports outfit a-piece. And we've our own author—Levina. She's written a book about our experiences—called 'The Will of the Twenty-Six.' Now she's on her second book, about what our brigade saw on the trip to Europe."

When celebrating International Woman's Day on March Eighth, working women of America, England, and other capitalist countries can remember that Fedorova, Lunina, and Komisarova and millions of their happy, industrious sisters are also celebrating in the one country where to be a worker means not to be a slave but ruler of a thriving socialist land.