

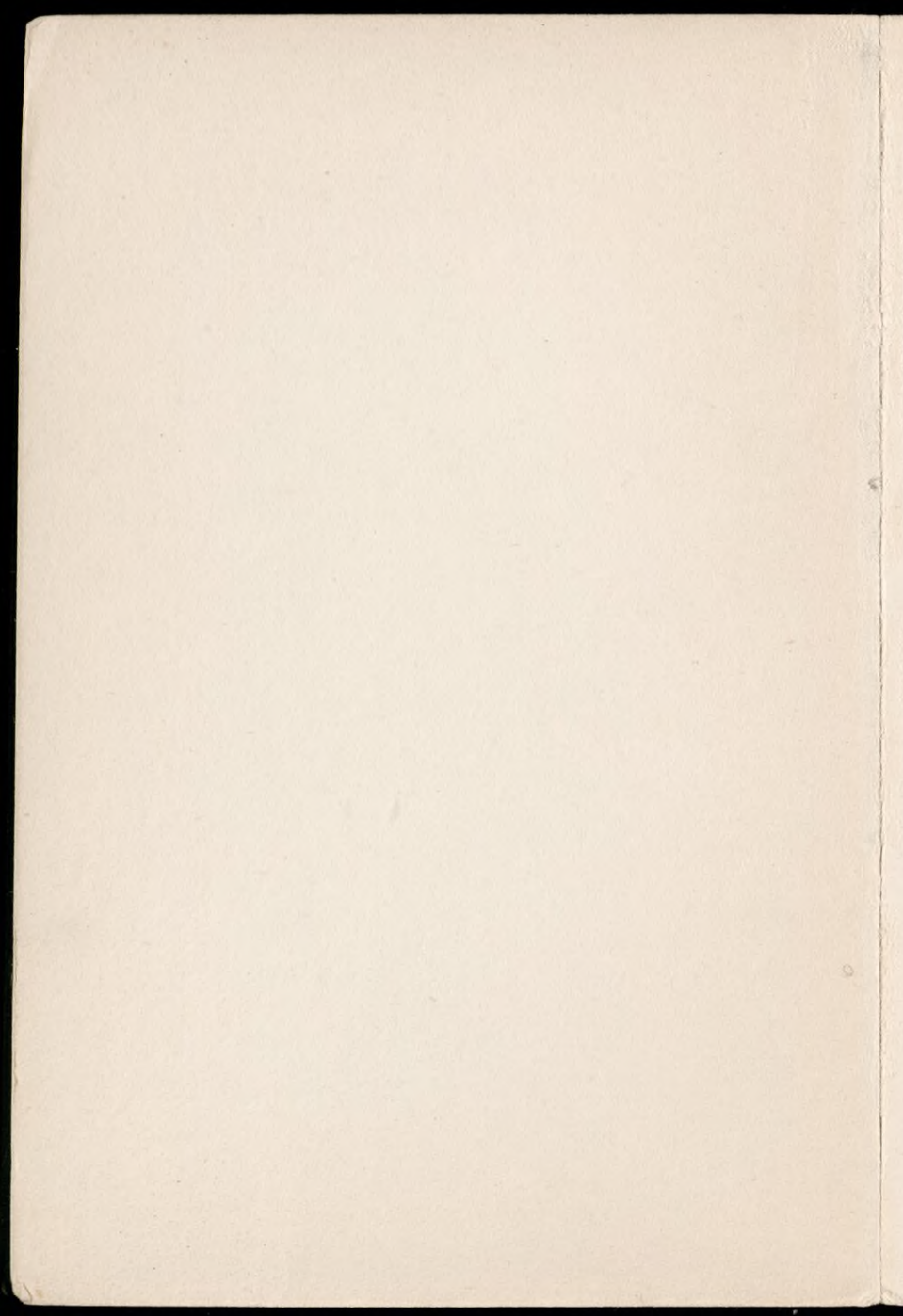
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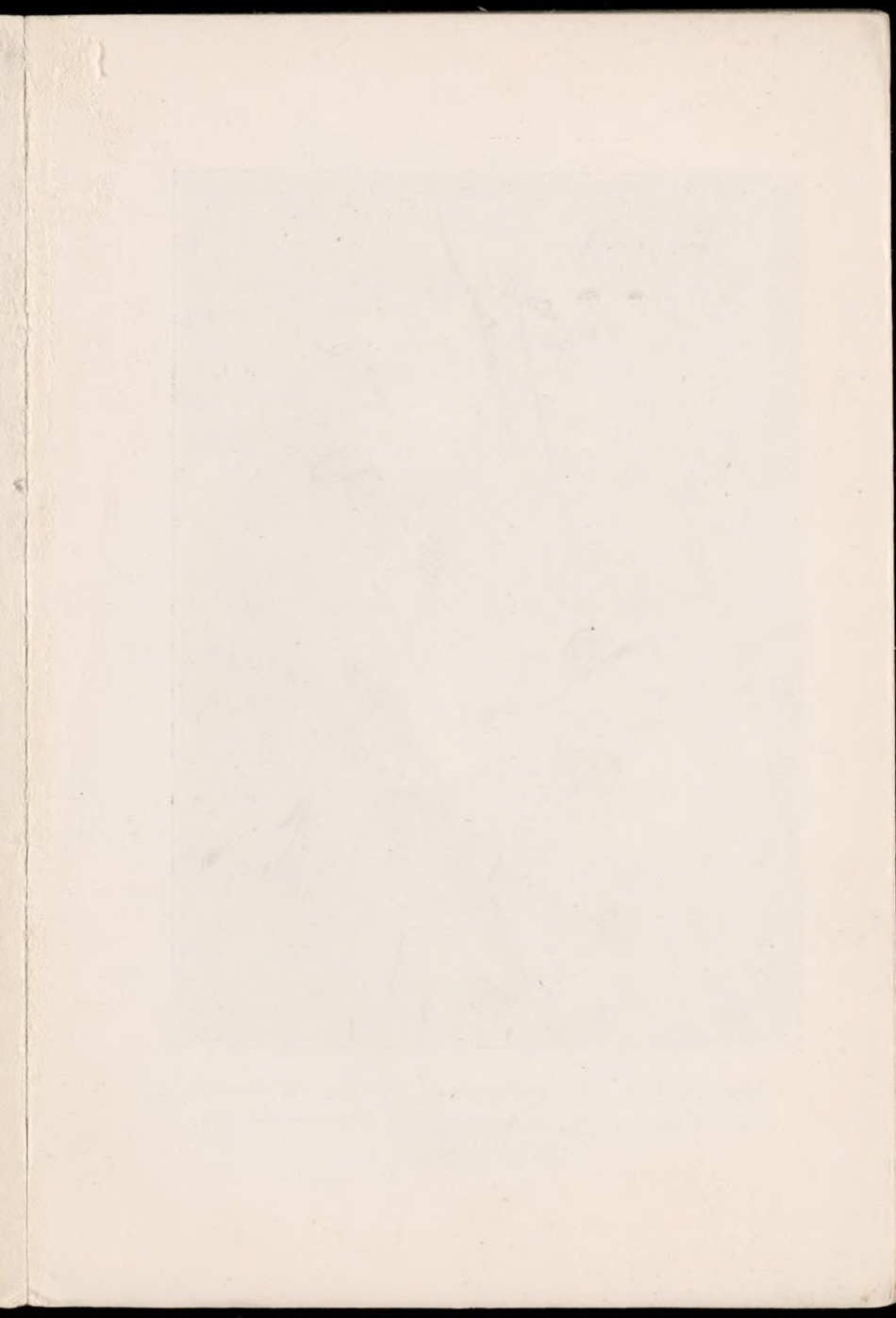
WOMEN IN THE SOVIET UNION

With Impressions by
G. G. L. Alexander
and F. Niurina



WOMEN IN THE
SOVIET UNION







Clara Zetkin and Krupskaya at the Women's
Conference of the Congress of Friends of the
Soviet Union

WOMEN IN THE SOVIET UNION

TWO impressions of the All-Russian Congress of Worker & Peasant Women with an account of the Conference of Women members of the Delegations to Russia at the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Revolution.



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INTRODUCTION

November 7th, 1927, which, as an anniversary of world historical importance, found an echo over the whole world, united, upon the soil of the workers' State, numerous friends of the Soviet Union from all countries, and particularly workers' delegations, in the desire to share in the joy of the workers and peasants of the Soviet State celebrating the first great victory of the proletarian revolution.

There were many women delegates among the workers' delegations and the "Friends of the Soviet Union." A women's delegation consisting of 21 delegates from 5 countries had already arrived at the Congress of Women Workers and Peasants of the Soviet Union which met as part of the October celebrations, and a great number of women workers came as members of almost all the other delegations. In some instances, for example the Czecho-Slovakian delegation, there were a great many women.

These women represented many different sections of their countries, and not only European countries. There were women delegates from the U.S.A., Mexico, Argentine, India, China and Mongolia. There were Communists, social democrats, non-party women, and "intellectuals," women from factories, representatives of the Women's Co-operative Guilds of England and other countries, numerous delegates from Women's sections of the Labour Party and various British Trade Unions, members

of the Red Women's and Girls' Union of Germany. There were also women members among the delegations from the International Class War Prisoners' Aid, the Workers' International Relief and the International League of War Victims, the International League for Peace and Freedom, including Helène Duchène from the French Section, Helene Stoecker and Käthe Kollwitz from Germany, and Helen Crawford from England.

For the less developed among these women, observation of the new life in the Workers' State meant a real awakening, a realisation of their own position and their own tasks. But all learnt a great deal from their visit.

It is of particular importance that all these women delegates were unanimous on the question of imperialist war and defence of the Soviet Union. This was apparent in articles and verbal reports, and was expressed with unanimity and force at a Women's Conference which took place the evening before the Congress of the Friends of Soviet Russia in Moscow, presided over by Clara Zetkin and Krupskaya. At the time of the Congress all these delegations had already spent some weeks in the Soviet Union, had, in different Groups, visited the most varied districts of the U.S.S.R., had investigated factories of all kinds, had visited villages and mines, the innumerable new institutions of the State and Communes, Co-operatives and Trade Unions, institutions for the care of mothers and children, children's homes, hospitals, prisons, schools, clubs, theatres, in fact, they had seen as much as was possible of whatever was interesting and gave a picture of the new forms of life in the Socialist State.

So they all met together at the Women's Conference, following one strong impulse, full of new impressions, filled with the need to give expression to their experiences. Time and place afforded an opportunity for an exchange of opinion on all that had been seen, on the impressions and questions, which the journey in and study of the Workers' State had aroused in them, and in connection with that there came the attitude towards the menace to the Soviet Union by the imperialist powers.

In this small volume we wish to describe, not only this Conference of women from all countries, a conference of an unusually lively and interesting composition, but nevertheless of complete unanimity, but also the Soviet Congress of women workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. Not only because this great Congress of 1,000 Soviet women greatly impressed the foreign delegates, but also because two other factors in these two assemblies of women made the event one of international, indeed of world historical importance. Firstly, because these two meetings were living, tangible expressions of the position of women in the free state of workers and peasants, in a society founded on a new, on a socialist basis, and of the position of women in the old order of society based on capitalist exploitation.

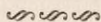
The realisation of the two situations, the recognition of the vast differences between those two worlds forms the bridge to span the gulf between them. On one side those in whom this recognition was immediately translated into a desire to help to build the new forms which their sisters are creating; on the other side those for whom freedom for

women in the Soviet Union is a fact, "a torch illuminating the oppressed women of the whole world."

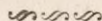
The second factor connecting these two assemblies, uniting the small international congress of working women from the old bourgeois countries with the all Russian Congress of a thousand soviet women, a thousand rulers assembled in the coronation hall of the Kremlin, creators of a new, proletarian, socialist order of society, is that from every mouth on either side came the vow to help in defending the new society, in defending the Soviet State against all threats and hostilities from the imperialist exploiters.

It is hoped that this booklet will be evidence of the readiness of all those in the world working class front of revolutionary women fighting against capitalist rule, to defend the Soviet State, and of the promise of those women to do their part in making the gigantic Russian revolution, the results of which after ten years, were expressed in that living, creative congress of free women, unique in the whole world, into the world revolution.

WOMEN IN THE SOVIET UNION



An Impression



A HALL, brilliant with white marble and gold, lit by a thousand lamps reflected from high windows and mirrors, its walls hung with damask, a hall that was once the coronation hall of the Tsars, was occupied by a thousand simple women, row on row of them; women workers and women peasants, come as Soviet delegates from the farthest corners of the Union to Moscow, in order to review the results of the year's work, to exchange experiences, discuss new tasks. From far and near they came, from the highlands and the plains, from the far north and the hot south. The hall seemed a living, moving picture for the study of ethnology. It gave an indication of the immense extent of the Union, of the varied types of its people. You could feel the warm atmosphere of the villages, the fields and steppes, the raw wind of the mountains and the chill of the north as, one after the other, the peasants of the Ukraine, the women from the heights of the Altai range and from Turkestan, from Archangel and the northern coasts, from the dark barren plains of the Polar region, mounted the tribune and reported—ambassadors from the heart of society, a society deeply ploughed by the revolution, responsible for millions. The naturalness with which these simple women

accept the place assigned them by historical events is scarcely credible. Their faces reflect confident peace and security, fitness for their work. There is the peasant woman from Nizhni-Novgorod. Tall and broad, with angular face, a handkerchief knotted round her head and wearing a broad jacket, she stands behind the speaker's dais like a colossal figure, arms and hands expressing the passionate speech of her heart. "You must not think," she cries, "that this hall, filled with marble and gold, makes a great impression on us, or awes us in the least. We, the working people, built this palace for the Tsars with our hands and in the sweat of our brows—it does not impress us. We shall not build such castles for ourselves, we are building for ourselves the socialist State, our State of workers and peasants."

The impression made on these women and their consciousness of the mighty, varied unity which they represented was expressed by a peasant woman from Samara in the following simple words: "The greatest thing which the Congress means to me," she said, "is that I know now for the first time what a great country ours is—so many peoples, so many languages, so many colours and costumes. I had no idea at all until now, I only knew my little village—but we are such a grand Union!"—an Eastern International in itself—that is the Union of Soviet Republics: that impression is instantly given by the sight of these hundred peoples, brimming with strength, creating with firm hands, directing and urging fresh impulses along new roads. Peoples, here represented by women, whose thoughts have been set in motion and can never again be held back.

Keep quiet. Attentive silence reigns in the hall while Kalinin, the "village elder," beloved by all, makes his speech.

An old Samoyed woman mounted the dais holding a fine clothed doll, the sign of her trade, which, with a solemn bow, she presented to Kalinin. It seems that the joyful clapping will never end—they all seem to be presenting this doll, borne by a thousand hands, to their government representative. As though it were part of their heart—their heart seems to be in it so much—speaking from a thousand eyes, heard in a thousand shouts. And all this although he, their Soviet elder, representative of the government of which they themselves are a part, a living member, has just described the grave political situation. The economic tasks confronting the country, the State which they have forged, and has put before the Congress the serious question of defending that country; he asked for the opinion and advice of these thousand women who made their pilgrimage to Moscow from all parts, from the uttermost ends of the Union—many of them journeying for weeks, using the railway for the first time in their lives. And all of them, wearing different costumes, speaking different languages, unknown to each other until that moment, speak with but one voice—we stand by our government, we approve their policy of peace. Those are the words of the Volga peasant woman, speaking in a hard voice, moving her workworn hands, comparing the past and the present—the "wooden hand plough and the tractor, increasing the harvest a hundredfold. We have our State, the fruit of hard work for ten years, so dearly bought with the blood of our sons and brothers! How could we forget it! To-day one life

is too precious for us to sacrifice lightly a thousand lives in a new war. The 60 million which the French capitalists demand from us is not too dear a price to pay for peace." And the woman worker from White Russia, having described the poverty of her land and the work still to be done in supporting the government, declares: "Let us throw the 60 millions down their throats—they want to disturb our peaceful work of construction by this demand. Peace is necessary for us to complete our work, we are only at the beginning. But we women are preparing for the enemy's attack, and we are teaching our husbands and sons."

However great and resolute their determination to support the government—their government—however proudly they report of their work and their successes, one gets the impression that the very achievements of these ten years cause them to look further, to realise what is still lacking. As a gaily dressed woman from the Dagestan mountains declared: "Freedom and equality are not everything: we must learn, we need more schools, many more schools. It is dark on the mountains, and the way is difficult. . . . and the men are less enlightened than we women who threw aside the veil."

How close to the soil, how warm are these women who have left their daily work on the soil to come here. From the life-giving earth itself, from the "Kingdom of the great mother," they have come here as to their real home, filled with the great creative, historical task of building a new society. Bringing not only their thoughts to help the work of construction, but the materials of their diligence too. The picture of that first day is unforgettable,

like a fairy tale from the thousand and one nights. In gaily coloured, hand-woven and hand-sewn shawls and costumes, they bring the products of their labour, the increasing fruits of their toil: carpets and silks from the proudly graceful women of Turkestan and Bokhara, embroideries—the beautiful handwork of the Ukrainian peasant women; robes of grey and white material from the textile workers of Moscow and Ivanova Voznessensk for the Red Army, “so that our Red soldiers may have shirts and clothing”; mirrors and glassware, porcelain, sugar—all the products of women’s labour. But what aroused the greatest applause was the gift of the women metal workers, a mortar “to stamp out the capitalist class.” And they all understood the significance of this tool, the usefulness of this gift—just as they understood the significance of the speeches of greeting from the German and British women delegates, who were received with great applause.

Rarely have participants in such a great and varied congress followed the proceedings with such undivided attention, still more rarely perhaps have they all taken such a lively part in them. Corridors and ante-rooms empty, the refreshment rooms occupied only at meal times, and an unceasing stream of question papers in the appropriate boxes.

This congress of women workers and peasants is witness of the pulsating life streaming from fresh sources. We have never seen a congress in which so many took part, so many questions asked. 200 took part in the discussion on the report of Yenukidze (Secretary of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union) dealing with “Women

in the Soviet Union." Kalinin was asked 200 questions, of which, of course, only the most important and urgent could be answered in his summing up. But in order to satisfy the numerous questioners, two hours during the midday break were set aside on two days for discussion, at which Smirnov, People's Commissar for Agriculture, was present, and in the end all those anxious for information had their curiosity satisfied.

Who that saw it can ever forget that picture of a thousand women, white, brown and yellow, young and old, faces moulded sharply by life itself? Who can ever forget "Batrachka," the insignificant looking peasant woman from the Ukraine, a little, limping old woman with young face tied around with a yellow handkerchief, in a printed calico dress, who mounted the tribune in that huge ornate hall and spoke, without stopping, of what her sisters had asked her to speak, and of what filled her heart and mind?

G. G. L. ALEXANDER.

All-Russian Congress of Workers and Peasant Women

ON the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary celebrations of the victory of the October revolution, the Soviet Government convened at Moscow a Union Congress of women workers and peasants active in the Soviets.

The revolution which established the Soviet power as the form of the proletarian dictatorship, drew broad masses of workers into active participation in the administration and government of the State. Not only the vanguard of the workers, the revolutionary proletariat, but also the most oppressed sections, women workers and peasants, the toiling women of the east shared in the construction of the Soviet State.

The Soviet Power established equality for women not merely on paper, but took a series of special measures in order to give working women the opportunity of making practical use of that equality. The first thing to be done was to rouse in the women themselves confidence in their own strength, they had to be taught the most elementary knowledge, their cultural and political level raised in order to make them not merely equal, but useful, capable and necessary members of socialist society. They had to be assured leisure to take part in public activities. Nurseries and kindergartens had to be established to free the mother from worry about her children and to assure correct care and upbringing

for the children themselves. These institutions were reinforced by communal eating houses and laundries, which liberated women from the manifold burdens of housework which had handicapped them, and prevented their participation in public work.

In the difficult conditions following the world war and the serious economic ruin, all these changes could not proceed so quickly as was demanded by the masses, shaken by the October revolution. But in spite of all difficulties, large numbers of women workers and peasants were drawn into the work of building up socialism and shared in the administration and government of the State.

The main task of the Union Congress of Soviet women delegates was to determine the extent to which the work had been accomplished, the extent to which women workers and peasants shared in practical Soviet work, the work which they did in the Soviets and to what degree they had improved in that work. In addition the Congress had to discuss the demands of women workers and peasants on the Soviets and, by so doing, draw up plans for facilitating Soviet work.

The Government also expected practical advice from them on the chief aspects of government activity, particularly with reference to popular education, protection of health and participation of women in Soviet and other public work.

One thousand and fifty-two persons were present at the congress, of whom 800 were empowered to vote. Of these 800, there were 403 peasant women engaged on their own farms, 226 women

factory workers, 25 women workers in Soviet offices, 20 housewives and 62 employees. 97.5 per cent of the 800 were members of Soviets; 73 per cent. of those attending the congress were non-Party, and 23 per cent. were Communists (C.P. and Y.C.L.).

The composition of the congress as regards nationality presented an extraordinary picture. Only 58 per cent. were Russians, the remaining 42 per cent. representing the various peoples in the Union. About 200 delegates came from the Eastern Soviet Republic.

The Congress showed that tens of thousands of women workers and peasants are learning the difficult task of administration and government in that splendid university of the Soviet Power—"practical work in the Soviets." Among the 146,000 peasant women in the village Soviets and the 21,000 working women in the town Soviets, there are hundreds and thousands carrying out responsible, directive work, and many who are presidents of Soviets and Executive Committees.

During the first year of their participation in the State apparatus, women workers and peasants limited their activities almost exclusively to those spheres most closely associated with their talents, customs and interests; health protection and popular education. But to-day they are doing their share of work in the economic sphere; the rationalisation of industry, economy measures, lowering prices and improving the administration of the Soviets, etc. It is true that the majority of women still concern themselves principally with questions directly connected with the upbringing of children,

and with their daily life ; but the number of women working in other spheres is steadily growing.

The Government paid great attention and took a lively interest in the work of the congress. All the chief persons in our Government took part in one way or another in the Congress. Comrades Kalinin, Rykov, Voroshilov and Bukharin, in spite of their many duties, found time to visit the Congress, to listen to the women workers and peasants, and to tell them what the Government expected of active women workers and the women masses generally. The principal People's Commissars addressed the Congress, dealing thoroughly and very seriously with questions most important to women. They paid great attention to the practical proposals of the congress delegates.

This Congress of Soviet women was particularly characterised by the confident appearance of the delegates who, in full consciousness of their rights, and of their responsibility as rulers of the State, spoke there. The Union Congress was composed of women worker and peasant delegates of provincial, district and local Soviets. Hence the Congress delegates could speak, not only of their own practical experiences, but also of those of many thousands of Soviet workers.

What was discussed at the Congress? The delegates did not complain of the difficulty of their work, nor of the many untrained and inexperienced workers. They said that women workers and peasants needed greater support in their Soviet work ; that in their practical work they had learnt to realise the need for increasing their capacity and

raising their cultural and political level if their work were to improve. Peasant women, acting as presidents of village Soviets, said that the work of the Soviets was continually increasing, their importance in economic life continually growing, and that consequently peasant women must work hard to educate themselves and thus fit themselves for carrying out the tasks ahead of them.

The delegates stated that the Soviets must deal more thoroughly than previously with the daily and cultural needs of women. They demanded greater attention to the organisation of institutions which would ensure to women more freedom and opportunity to take part in public life. The greatest interest was displayed in questions of popular education. The widespread illiteracy and semi-illiteracy among the adult section of the population—a legacy of capitalist society and absolutism—was a source of great sorrow to the women masses of the Union. The legal obligation to wipe out illiteracy, is valid for persons up to the age of 35. Unfortunately the Congress was not in a position to state that the majority of women up to that age had overcome illiteracy. Moreover, the Congress was bound to declare that a great number of women above that age were considerably hindered in their work by illiteracy or semi-illiteracy (some of them can read but not write). Great attention was also devoted by the Congress to the question of preparatory training for young girls. In many peasant families, and fairly often in workers' families, too, the prejudice still exists that a girl does not need to know reading and writing, that she will "get along" anyhow. The Congress decided to combat this and similar prejudices with all possible

means and to insist upon equal training for girls and boys in the work of the Soviets. The delegates made many practical proposals on this question which will be thoroughly examined by the People's Commissariat for Education. They are a valuable contribution to the work of raising the cultural level of the growing generation and the training of young persons.

As was to be expected, much time was given to questions of health. In Tsarist times rural areas were almost completely deprived of any medical or sanitary assistance; but during the 10 years' existence of the Soviet Union progress in this direction has been extraordinarily great. The peasant woman does not only want hospitals or maternity homes, she wants advisory clinics on child welfare, children's homes, sanitary and hygienic knowledge. Even the villages in the Eastern Soviet have learnt from practical experience the importance of institutions for mother and child welfare in the development of a healthy generation. A great number of proposals were made at the Congress dealing with the improvement of medical services in the country, and what steps should be taken to arouse the activities of women in this matter.

A number of suggestions were also made on the question of supporting women's activities on the Soviets and of drawing in larger numbers of women into the work of the Soviets and other public political activities. These proposals are being used as a basis from which to draw up special Soviet directions.

The work of the Congress lasted seven days. As the new masters of the Soviet land, drawn from

the very heart of the working masses of the Union, the Congress delegates met in the brilliant coronation hall of the Tsarist palace. From the factories and villages they came, they who had for centuries been enslaved and exploited. These new masters spoke a new language, spoke of new work. Not in their words, but in their deeds they refuted that corrupt bourgeois morality which assigns to women a place among the exploited and oppressed, which maintains that politics "aren't for women."

The International Women's delegation which accompanied the Union Congress afforded a brilliant opportunity for seeing and hearing from the mouths of a thousand women, that the Soviet Power, fulfilling Lenin's bequest and drawing working women into the work of socialist construction, has obtained great practical results.

Nine years ago, on the first anniversary of the October revolution, there was also a congress of women workers and peasants. At that time there was but little possibility for women Soviet workers to meet together. It was a grave time. When young Russia was shedding its blood on all fronts in the struggle against the superior forces of the enemy.

Nevertheless, despite the difficulties of transport, despite hunger and need, hundreds of delegates came to Moscow from the workshops and villages. at the call of the Communist Party, came to learn what were their duties and what they, women, could do to defend the Soviet Power. There, at that Congress, the foundation-stone was laid for the work of drawing the women masses into the activities of the Soviets. The nine years show tremendous progress.

At the second Congress, the women workers and peasants did not merely await instructions from their Government and from the Party as to their further tasks. They made their own suggestions, they brought the results of their own experiences and reflections to a consideration of future work.

This Congress is a memorable page in the history of the socialist construction of the U.S.S.R.

F. NUIRINA.

Conference of Delegations for the Celebration of the Revolution

Clara Zetkin Welcomes the Delegates

IN the name of the October Committee for greeting foreign delegates, I extend a most cordial welcome to all those present.

Dear friends, or rather, speaking as my heart dictates, dear comrades! I am well aware, when I use that word, that it is not meant in its political party meaning. The great majority of you are not united in a political party, and very few of you are members of that party of which it is my pride to be a member. But in a broad sense, all the women here are comrades. We are comrades in our social lot, women of the working people, and that means that we are comrades in the hope, in the willingness to win our complete social equality by work and by struggle. Complete social equality in citizenship, in the possibility for the toiling women masses to develop fully and harmoniously. But not with the object of vain self-congratulation and self-sufficiency. We want to develop fully as human beings in the consciousness of our responsibility for social life to-day, and what will be the social life of to-morrow, what should be that life if we work for our goal with all the ardour of our hearts, the entire clarity of our knowledge, the whole strength of our will.

What has united us here, in spite of our individual differences of opinion? The desire to share

the great joy of celebrating the mighty victory won by many millions on the soil of the Soviet Union, a victory which they are using to build up a new and higher order of society, the socialist society. Let us rejoice in that victory and that construction, for both were partly the work of women.

And it is for that very reason, dear comrades, that we are assembled here; not merely in a thoroughly justified feeling of solidarity, of joy and pride in the tremendous achievements of our sisters who, shoulder to shoulder with their men, have changed the one-time Tsarist empire, the most reactionary State, into the freest community of the whole world. We are also here to learn from the labours and struggles of our sisters in the Soviet Union, and to use the knowledge thus gained in the active struggle, in the work which you here are all determined to carry out in your own countries.

Our conference should serve to unify and reinforce, by a mutual exchange of opinion, the knowledge which each of you has gained by your visit to the land of the proletarian revolution, and which you will carry with you to your own homes.

We are on the eve of the International Congress of Workers, the friends of new Russia. There will speak the representatives of all nationalities, all social classes which have an account to settle with the capitalist world order, whose debt to the world's workers is so great, and can only be wiped out by revolution.

Dear comrades, we women must also be present at that Congress. On the basis of our discussion to-day we shall be united and resolute at the Con-

gress. That should be expressed in unified representation on the presidium, in the conduct of the Congress and in a woman speaker who will speak for us all. We must come to an agreement on our attitude towards the different resolutions, and ourselves draw up one dealing with the various tasks before us. That is our chief work at the moment.

Comrades, we shall now discuss freely the objects of our meeting representatives from as many delegations as possible taking part.

I hereby open our meeting, and call upon comrade Narina to declare the elections to the presidium and to announce the agenda.

* * *

The following were elected to the Presidium :

Clara Zetkin, N. K. Krupskaya, A. V. Artyukhina, A. Kollontai, A. Tikhomirova; Russia. M. Hahne, Germany; B. Turner, England; I. Shirin, Austria; M. Derumeau, France; M. Kalina, Poland; Dlugashova, Eastern Soviet; Endyina, Mongolia; Markov, America; Käthe Kollowitz, Helen Stoecker, Germany.

§

Krupskaya's Speech

Allow me to greet you. You have come here to share our joy and to celebrate with us the tenth anniversary of the October revolution.

Comrades, a month before the October revolution, the bourgeoisie wrote in their newspapers: "the Bolsheviks are only boasting of seizing power. The

day of their victory will be the day of their defeat, for, even on the first day, they won't know what to do." That is what the capitalist paper "Rech" wrote. But the Bolshevik Party, at the head of the workers, guiding their struggles, knew what the masses wanted, knew what their vital interests demanded. The Bolshevik Party knew that, once at the helm, it could go on fighting for the demands of the world working class. The demands of the international proletariat were everywhere to the forefront in the October days, and lightened us in our struggles.

In the first years after the October revolution, our land was engaged in bitter civil war. The memory of those events is beginning to pale, but those years, the years of civil war, will never fade from the memory of the working masses of our Union.

In 1919, I was travelling by steamer on the Volga and Kama, in districts where but a short while before, the fight against the Whites was raging. We were told a great deal about the fighting. Mothers told us how children joined their parents in the struggle against the Whites. There was a meeting in a large factory, and someone told how the Whites, on entering the town, had shot all young persons found in the club. And as the funeral march was sung, everybody present was crying, for there was not one mother whose child had not fallen a victim to the Whites.

The cruelty of the bourgeoisie, the landlords and the capitalists, in their fight against the Reds, the cruelty with which buildings, factories, crops were

destroyed and human beings murdered by the Whites, the memory of all that horror will never disappear from the minds of the working masses of our Union.

When we look back upon those years we know that the working class and the peasantry regard the Soviet Government as their government. They have fought for it, they shed their blood for it and finally achieved it.

After the civil war ended and the struggle began, the struggle for a new social order, the building up of a new life; and with the same enthusiasm which the workers and peasants devoted to fighting, they now carried out the work of construction. It has not been possible to achieve all that we desired in one blow. The demands of the October revolution could only be fulfilled step by step; but we have witnessed the heroism of the workers and peasants in face of the hunger and suffering they bore in order to lay the foundations of the new society, new relations between man and man.

In the first days after the October revolution, comrade Lenin once said that organisation is the keynote of socialism; the workers and peasants must organise in every direction according to the manifold tasks confronting them. In the ten years' existence of the Soviet Union we have seen the development of persistent organisational work. We have the Party and trade union organisations, we see how the masses of the rural population rally round the village Soviets. There lies the source of our strength.

Comrade Lenin said: if the masses are divided, they are nothing; but if they are organised, they are an unconquerable force. If we consider the position of our Union to-day from that standpoint, we can say that the masses in our country are organised as in no other. We have the Communist Party, a powerful organisation with tremendous influence which is constantly increasing. We have the Soviet Power, power of a peculiar kind; there has never been a Soviet Power in any other country and its particular importance, as comrade Lenin showed us so clearly, lies in the fact that it organises the masses.

During the civil war, during the years of armed struggle, the organisational functions of the Soviet Power were directed chiefly to the organisation of defence. Their machinery was still weak. But, from year to year, larger and larger masses were drawn into the work. To-day, one and a half million persons are doing Soviet work, and around these 1,500,000 there is a still larger circle of helpers who are gradually, and to an increasing extent, being drawn into the common creative work. The whole is a tremendous organisation. It is the basis of our strength.

Comrade Lenin taught us: The great slogans of the October revolution, all our achievements, must penetrate into the most outlying villages. To-day we are justified in saying that what we desire to realise is not the work of a small handful, but of the masses themselves. The October slogans have penetrated the uttermost depths of the masses. Our struggle is one which the masses themselves are conducting. Because the masses have entered into

this struggle, because they are themselves creating the new life, they value the Soviet Union so highly.

When there were rumours of war, when the international situation became tense and the danger of war threatened, the feeling of the masses was unanimous. Nobody in our country wants war, for everybody knows what an atrocious waste of human life, human strength, wealth and culture war is. There is nobody in our country who desires war, but everybody, great and small, is well aware that, in the event of war, all would rise as one man to defend the Socialist Soviet Union.

This organisation of the masses, this political consciousness growing from year to year, arouses in every worker in our union the firm belief that, however great may be the technical progress of the imperialist States, we have a mighty force with which to oppose them: the strength of the organised masses.

When, in 1919, I was travelling on the S.S. "Red Star," there was a meeting of Red soldiers and one of them, a peasant, said: Our republic is unconquerable because of its size. Of course, that statement as it stands is clumsy, but the underlying idea is correct. The extent, the growth, the qualities of our country are tremendous. But we must add, our country is unconquerable because it is fighting for a great cause, a cause dear to the heart of the world working class. Every worker in every country realises that we have common aims, great tasks which can only be accomplished by the concentration and organisation of all our forces.

I want to say that we look upon our achievements not as something for which we have to thank ourselves alone. Our Party grew strong by learning from the international proletariat, from the German, British, French, working class. We, who had to work among the proletariat of a backward country, studied the international movement carefully. We learnt from it, and only after we had understood those experiences could we organise ourselves in such a way as to make possible our victory over the landlords and capitalists, the seizure of power by the workers. Only because our working class learnt from the international working class, could the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics be established. In our Union, working shoulder to shoulder, there are strong and weak peoples who were oppressed by capitalist society. There are a large number of small tribes belonging to our Union. Under capitalism they were oppressed and enslaved. But to-day they are growing ever more conscious of the new life, co-operating with us in creating a new culture which is a sure guarantee that our country, in which all peoples work together in fraternal unity, is unconquerable.

We do not separate the cause of our country from the cause of the international proletariat. We know that if the capitalists of other countries dare to wage a mad war against us, it will be the beginning of the end for them, for that war will, in its course, change into a civil war, and its end will be world revolution.

That is all that I wanted to say to you here.

Artyukhin's Speech

Comrades, it is a great pleasure to me to be able to welcome the working women who have come to us in the U.S.S.R.

The question of our success in the matter of liberating the working woman is a very wide one, and I am only going to refer to the chief things which we have accomplished.

In order to estimate correctly what has been done, it is necessary to consider the position of women under Tsarism, under capitalism. Under Tsarism working women had no political rights whatever. Although, after the 1905 revolution, the Government consented to establish the State Duma and to grant the franchise to some sections of workers, still women workers and peasants were excluded.

The position of women in the east was particularly bad. In accordance with the Mohammedan religious code, which moulded the entire life of the eastern peoples, women were deprived of all rights. They were not to learn, speak, teach, etc.

Peasant women could not be elected to any village office. Conditions of labour for women were extraordinarily difficult. The working day for women in the factories was 10½ to 11 hours. There was no kind of labour protection whatever. As a rule, women received less pay than men for the same amount of work. There are many women present at this conference who worked in a factory in Tsarist times. I am one of them. We worked in

exactly the same conditions as the men, and got lower wages. The first steps in labour protection were taken in 1912, when hospitals were established. But these measures were so inadequate that in general one could rightly say that there was no protection whatever for mother or child, or for female labour. The position of peasant women was not much better. The peasant woman had no right in the sharing out of the land, except in cases where she herself managed a farm, and even then only with the consent of the parish. If consent was, for any reason whatever, refused, the peasant woman received no land and trustees were appointed on her behalf. It often happened that adult peasant women were placed under the guardianship of perfect strangers.

The legal position of working women was one of peculiar oppression. The married woman was at the absolute disposal of the husband. She was even deprived of her freedom of movement. If she left her husband, she was liable to be brought back by the police. Children born out of wedlock were "illegitimate," could make no claim on their parents, and were, of course, deprived of all legal protection. Women of the east were in an even more wretched plight. According to the Mohammedan religious laws, children of 11 and 12 years were married, on payment of a "Kalym." A woman was not allowed to appear before strange men unless veiled. This position of complete lack of legal rights and social suppression naturally affected the cultural and political level of the women. Under Tsarism only a few women could read or write. Illiteracy was particularly prevalent among peasant and eastern women. But even in the towns,

among women factory workers and housewives, reading and writing was not a widespread art. If working women had been fortunate enough in their childhood to learn for a year or two, the knowledge was soon lost because of the difficulties of their natural position, which afforded no opportunity of using the knowledge learnt in childhood. Such, in short, was the position of working women in Russia before the October revolution.

Ten years ago, in October, 1917, the rule of capitalism was overthrown by the working class of our country. The very first law of the new State power abolished the political and legal disabilities of the working woman. According to our Constitution, "All workers, men and women, have equal rights to elect, and be elected to, the Soviets." But our Soviet legislation is not limited to proclaiming legal equality for women. It bestows particular attention on the care of women and children, and creates all the conditions necessary for the actual realisation of the law.

The family and marriage laws of 1918 put an end to the old enslaved position of the woman. The woman was assigned the same rights in regard to marriage and the family as the man; she and her children were placed under legal protection. The 1926 law which is valid to-day, contains a number of new regulations which protect the interests of mother and child to an even greater extent than formerly.

The Soviet Power from the first days of its existence, promulgated laws for the protection of workers. Working women were assured of the

possibility of combining work with motherhood in a way which involved no harm to the life and health of mother and child. Besides the usual annual holiday, which all workers and employees enjoy, besides sick leave, working women receive eight weeks' holiday both before and after childbirth, and employees six weeks, during which their full wages are paid. A nursing mother is given half-an-hour's rest every three and a half hours during working time for a period of nine months. The mother receives assistance from the sick fund for her child both at its birth and during the first nine months of its life.

In laws relating to property, women, of the town and country, have the same rights as men. A number of special laws (dealing with labour, the land and forests) give special advantages to women, to a large extent because they were for so many centuries deprived of all rights.

There is also complete equality for men and women in agrarian laws. A number of clauses in these laws contain special references to the rights of women in using the land. In local decisions on all questions relating to the land the peasant woman is equally entitled with the man to speak and vote. If land is to be divided, men and women members of families have equal claims.

But in drawing up and carrying out all these laws which assure full equality to women, the Soviet Power was well aware that good laws alone do nothing. Much work had to be done to help women workers and peasants make practical use of that equality, to teach them to take advantage of the

legislation. The working population, particularly the male section, had to be made to understand that in Soviet law the woman possesses the same rights as the man. The work of the Soviet Power in these past ten years has been in these two directions—supporting women workers and peasants in the exercise of their rights, and spreading the idea of equality among the working masses.

What has been accomplished in those ten years?

A year after the establishment of the Soviet Power, there was the first congress of women workers and peasants, organised by comrade Kollontai, who is here to-day. The most important task of that Congress was to awaken the women masses, to tell them what the October revolution meant to women workers and peasants, to teach them to make use of the new laws. All the delegates to that Congress made the best propagandists for the Soviet Power in the country, among working women. In addition the Congress dealt with the defence of the Soviet State. You, who are delegates from abroad, must not forget that the first years of the Soviet Power were also years of bitter civil warfare. For the first four years of its existence, our Soviet Union was surrounded by foes. The working class, led by the Communist Party and in alliance with the peasantry, had to give their lives and possessions for the defence of October. The first Congress of women workers and peasants helped to mobilise large numbers of working women for the struggle, helped to make them active defenders and warriors for the cause of the proletarian revolution.

Nor must it be forgotten that as a result of the imperialist and civil wars, our national economy was ruined. Innumerable factories and works were at a standstill, the railways were almost completely out of action. And so while the men were fighting at the front, the working women had to set about restoring our national economy. They made really heroic efforts, expended all their strength to keep factories going, for the general disorder made it impossible to keep the towns regularly supplied with food, fuel, etc. Our women workers were hungry, dressed in rags, But in spite of hunger and suffering, in spite of serious epidemics, the working women gave themselves up completely to defending the achievements of October.

Peaceful, constructive work of the Soviet Government only began about five years ago. But when peace came to the country, women workers and peasants became the object of special care on the part of the Soviet State. Everything possible was done to give them the possibility of sharing in the work of socialist construction. Nurseries were organised, attached to factories, so that the working mother could carry on her work without worrying. Kindergartens, communal kitchens and laundries liberated women from the burdens of the house and enabled them to take active part in public and political life. Great attention was also devoted to raising the political and cultural level of the masses. For this purpose delegate meetings of women workers and peasants were organised whose special duty it was to train women in public work and guide them when they first took up such work. Special schools, study circles and lectures were organised to abolish illiteracy.

A few days ago, on the eve of the ten years' celebration of the October revolution, there was a Union Congress of women workers and peasants active in the Soviets. That Congress gave us an indication of what has been done to free working women, of the extent to which women have realised the rights won in the October revolution. The best evidence of our success is the fact that about 200,000 women workers and peasants are working in the Soviets. There are women in leading positions in the Soviets, even in the highest Soviet bodies. More than a hundred women workers and peasants are members of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union. Housewives are also being drawn into Soviet work. Over 80,000 of them took part in this year's Soviet election, and a great many of them share in the practical daily work of the Soviets.

We have also succeeded in improving the position of women in industry. I have already referred to some of the laws which protect the interests and health of women workers and mothers in industry. We have at the moment about three million women in industry, of whom 743,000 are in large factories. That is 199,000 more than in 1912. 2,600,000 of these women workers are organised in their trade unions.

There are a great number of institutions which set women free for productive labour: 631 factory nurseries for 24,609 children; and more than 1,200 kindergartens and children's clinics; 3,000 summer homes in the country for 150,000 children and 4,000 nurseries for 61,000 children. The result of all these measures is a sharp decline in the infant

mortality rate. It is true that it is still rather high, but it has fallen from 26.5 per cent. to 19 per cent. since the October revolution.

There are more than 1,000 restaurants for men and women workers, and during the last two or three years large central kitchens have been organised in Ivanova Voznessensk and Nizhni Novgorod and will shortly be opened in many other towns.

As for illiteracy, about three million women have learnt to read and write during the ten years. The number of women in the various schools is continually growing. The desire to learn is great and increases from year to year.

The Union Congress did not only draw up a balance sheet of our ten years' work. It also drew up a number of practical proposals supporting those activities of the Soviet Government directed towards the concrete realisation of freedom for working women. The Congress did not fail to mention the tremendous difficulties still confronting us. There is still widespread illiteracy among women. The number of institutions for helping women is much too small. There are not enough women workers and peasants occupying leading positions in the Soviets, trade unions and co-operatives. There is still a huge field of work to be done among the working women of the East, who have not all discarded the veil, and who are on the lowest level culturally.

But the indisputable achievements of the ten years the increasing number of women workers and peasants taking an active part in our constructive work, give us the firm belief that we shall overcome all

difficulties, accomplish all our tasks. We are convinced that the liberation of women will make much more rapid progress when the Soviet Union will be able to devote all its forces to the work of socialist construction, without having to think of the danger of war. But should the international bourgeoisie dare attack the Soviet Union, our working women will rise as one to protect the Soviet country. This feeling, this readiness to defend to the utmost the gains of the revolution was apparent at our Union Congress.

Comrades, the achievements of our working women do not belong exclusively to us, they are also your property. We believe, and we know, comrades, that when you return, you will help us to continue our work of social construction, of liberating women, and that you will help to create those forces which will defeat all efforts to overthrow the Soviet Union.

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Clara Zetkin's Speech

Comrades, from the remarks of comrades Artyukhin and Krupskaya you will have learnt a great deal that will help you in your struggles for the emancipation of women, for the emancipation of the working masses—a struggle in which we must share, for it is our own. Both speeches contain great detailed knowledge which illuminates the road that women of all countries will have to tread if they wish to win what their sisters in the Soviet Union already possess—complete social equality, and a full right to develop all their capacities and talents and take part freely in every aspect of social life.

I only want to refer to a few general aspects of the tremendous events we are now remembering, because the general, basic knowledge won thereby can in my opinion, show the way to women to all countries.

The effects of Red October were tremendous, over the whole world. To estimate those effects fully, we should remember the world situation when the revolution appeared in world history, in the history of mankind. We should not forget that particularly in reference to the position and the demands of women.

The imperialist world war had shattered the belief held so firmly by us women who desire freedom so greatly, the belief that only international socialism, only the victory of the proletariat in all countries would ensure full rights to women as human beings. Socialism seemed annihilated by the treachery of the Second International. During the world war women appeared as canvassers and promoters of mass murder and mass destruction. Only in so far as they furthered the interests of the mass murder, of the imperialist world war, did they receive social recognition. Their activity in really constructive, creative cultural work, their struggle for a higher, freer order of society was for a long time thrust far into the background. Red October gave back to millions of women, whose attitude had become uncertain, whose beliefs had been shaken, who had lost courage and grown weak, the conviction that socialism is no empty dream, that the proletariat is historically more than the mere wage slave of the bourgeoisie, that the workers as a class are the creators of a new order of society; Red October

clearly illuminated the historical work of the proletariat as the revolutionary, the most advanced class, and in so doing pointed out the revolutionary, culturally creative work of women. The development of the proletarian revolution in the socialist construction of the Soviet Union confirms the great social role played by the women of the working class.

One of the first acts of the young Soviet Power was to declare full equality for nationalities and for women. Not merely in constitutional law, not merely in family law, but in all spheres of social life. The legal rights accorded to women were accompanied by equal duties in the work of rebuilding the national economy, the State and culture; by complete equality in the estimation of women as a force in the revolutionary struggle and as a creative, constructive power in the transition to socialism. Complete equality for women in law and in fact was no gracious gift conferred by the victorious proletariat, conscious of its historical tasks and cognisant of its practical interests. In truth, the victorious proletariat, the dictating proletariat, returned loyalty for loyalty. For in the years of preparation before the revolution, there were no more heroic, no more resolute and selfless "soldiers of the revolution" than women. And later, when the first working class State was engaged in a life and death conflict with the counter-revolutionaries, both within and without Russia, when the achievements of October had to be defended by arms, when the very existence of the young Soviet Republic was at stake, the women bore their full share of the burdens. Without their co-operation, without their help in the struggle, the workers' State would never have come out victorious from the conflict with

imperialist intervention, with the civil war and the blockade. It was the women who kept the wheels of economy and administration running. They worked in the trenches of industry and agriculture, and great numbers of them fought together with the revolutionary Red Army on all the fronts. Unseen, unheard, in uncounted hundreds and thousands, women fought with the heroes of the Red Army in the battle to maintain the Soviet Power.

And, comrades, what an example they gave! In this period of socialist construction, women are everywhere urging forward that great work, on the economic front, on the political, the cultural fronts. I shall not enter here into the details of this creative work. I only want to make one point, and that is the extraordinarily important and successful participation of women of the Soviet Union in the co-operative system. This sphere of work, more perhaps than any other, is suitable for establishing contact between the proletarian working women in the town and the working peasant women in the villages. The extension of the co-operative system, its permeation with the true Leninist spirit is of fundamental importance for the development towards socialism. Let us remember what Lenin said, that the carrying out of the principle of co-operation, the solidarity of communal work in all spheres of activity, means the realisation of socialism. The energetic co-operation of women in carrying out the co-operative principle is of great importance, for we must remember that an essential condition for the carrying out of that principle is a revolution in feeling, in thought, in will and action, in short, in the whole attitude of individuals to mankind and to nature.

Comrades, I think it is necessary to emphasise one great fact which underlies all others, that we have observed and welcomed in the Soviet Union. It is not complete equality between men and women in law, on paper—the greatest, the most far-reaching effect of the proletarian revolution is the awakening, the independent activity, the urge towards a new life of thousands, yes, of millions of women in the Soviet Union. Countless women, once dormant, or bearing their lot with dull-witted resignation, are now socially active, inspired with the will to socialism. For women, the greatest result of October is that it has cleared the way for their all-round activity in every sphere of industry, of administration, of education, of the whole State and cultural system of the Soviet Union. There is here an awakening of women's forces which rouses the enthusiastic cry on all lips: "Souls have awakened, there is joy in life." We see ever greater numbers of women working actively, realising the truth of Faust's words: "Only he attains freedom and life who must win them daily." The women of the Soviet Union are winning liberty, are winning a life in the sunshine of a higher, wider culture by struggling daily with courageous, unselfish labour in the sphere of industry, politics and culture, to build up the socialist, the Communist society. And this effect of the proletarian revolution, rousing new strength, animating strength, calling up strength for endurance, is particularly great there where women suffered most under the slavery imposed on them because of their sex, and where they still to some extent suffer, in the lands of the East. We in the West feel the world transforming, world animating strength resulting from the Russian proletarian revolution and the creation of a new social

life for women. But the women of the East are particularly affected by this radiation of creative strength. There the proletarian revolution accomplished within the frontiers of the Soviet Union, and developing day by day, means a revolution in the deepest, the most comprehensive sense of the word, a revolution which, shattering the ideas, the prejudices, the institutions of many centuries, deeply influences every individual life. There, until the outbreak of the revolution, women suffered not only under religious laws, but also under century-old ideas which had their roots in the economic, social and cultural forms reaching far back into the grey past of society. The change taking place among the women of the East in the Soviet Union and making them day by day more energetic, more resolute co-operators in the work of socialist construction. This change is extending beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union. It is affecting all the peoples of the East, it influences the farthest Orient, destroying the old, awaking new life. Under the influence of Red October, of the revolutionised position of women in the Soviet Union, revolutionary women forces are beginning to grow active all over the East.

But comrades, besides these mighty facts, besides the Soviet Union building up socialism, there is another fact of equal world importance. That is the development of imperialism, growing out of the world economic and world political forces of capitalism. Let us not deceive ourselves; in the long run two such fundamentally opposite forms of historical development as capitalist imperialism and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics cannot exist side by side. Imperialism of one, or of many States

means the concentrated, ruthless domination of men by men, the exploitation of men by men; the Soviet Union, building up socialism, means the destruction, the shattering of old relations and forces which strengthen the power of ownership, which make possible and maintain the exploitation and enslavement of man by man, the Soviet Union, giving social security, well being, freedom and culture to the workers. The parallel existence of two such utterly opposite powers is, in the long run, an impossibility. Sooner or later these two powers must come into conflict. What can we see now? While all forces in the Soviet Union are directed towards building the Soviet State into a socialist, a Communist society, all forces in the capitalist countries are concentrated on the further suppression and exploitation of peoples, on new wars, and particularly on the annihilation of the Soviet Republic. That can be easily understood. Firstly, world capitalism cannot for long endure such a large area being removed from its sphere of exploitation and slavery, an area rich in natural resources and natural forces, inhabited by millions of workers. It must desire the defeat, the overthrow of the Soviet Union. Further, the mere existence of the Soviet Union, its peaceful, socialist work of construction, is a continual appeal to the exploited and oppressed of all other countries. Arise, learn, act, destroy capitalism, put an end to this patient endurance of the class rule of the bourgeoisie! The Soviet Union is threatened with war. We women have every cause to exert all our strength against the encirclement of the Soviet Union, against the war which threatens it. It is our duty to prevent by all the means at our disposal an imperialist attack on the land of the proletarian revolution.

Why is it our duty? Because we think that the Soviet Union is not strong, not great enough to defend itself against the imperialists? Oh, no! Whoever has seen the mighty forces displayed a few years ago against the imperialist powers, whoever has learnt of the glorious heroism with which the workers and peasants, and the women workers and peasants met the enemy at that time, does not for one moment doubt the outcome of new struggles. And, dear comrades, which ever of you has seen the overwhelming demonstration in the Great Theatre, which ever of you yesterday witnessed the magnificent parade of the Red Army, and realised the great power, the strong, resolute power behind the heroes of the Red Army, the proletarian masses, marching with the same enthusiasm as in the past, the cry upon their lips—"Always ready!"—you are convinced that the Soviet will come out victorious from any struggle with their enemies. The fight will be carried on in the knowledge, the will, the incomparable courage not only of men, but of all the women who achieved freedom and equal rights because of Red October, and who know that they are assured of freedom and equality only in the State of proletarian dictatorship.

But we are not concerned with that. We are not only concerned with the working masses outside the Soviet Union, including the women, fulfilling their natural and elementary duty of international solidarity. The working women must realise that they are protecting their own interests, their own freedom, by averting the war danger from the Soviet Union. In defending the Soviet Union, in preventing imperialist attacks on it, they are protecting the motherland of their own equality, their own

right to freedom and culture. The longer the breathing space in which the Soviet Union can carry on its work of construction, without being compelled to devote its forces to measures of war and defence instead of to the great work of building up socialism, the richer is the harvest of knowledge, of example, for the women of East and West in the struggle for freedom. By working to assure peace to the Soviet Union, peacefully building up socialism, we are carrying our struggle for emancipation further and defeating the attacks of the worst enemies who enslave our humanity, prevent our free development.

We must realise this fact: any triumph of the imperialists over the first workers' State will stimulate the bourgeoisie of all capitalist countries to intensify the exploitation and enslavement of the worker. Women will suffer the most under this, will bear the heaviest burdens. The enemies of the Soviet Union are our enemies, are the enemies of the human rights, the humanity of woman. Any injury to and disturbance of the work of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, injures and disturbs the work in our struggle for liberty. That is why we should not and cannot limit ourselves to pious hopes of peace in regard to the imperialists' threat on the Soviet Union. No! we must arm ourselves for the struggle, we must meet it resolutely. We must avert the danger of war on the Soviet Union. That can best be done by each of us working willingly and energetically in our so-called fatherlands, to follow the glorious example of Red October, to break the class rule of the bourgeoisie, to destroy capitalism utterly. The establishment of the proletarian dictatorship clears the

way for the freedom of all human beings, for the freedom, therefore, of women. We women must get this fact clearly in our heads, that only the advance of the proletarian revolution, only the victory of the proletarian revolution over the capitalist world order will make possible the realisation of world socialism.

Therefore, comrades, we must sum up all the impressions and lessons gained here, and by untiring activity and unceasing struggle against all the forces of reaction and counter-revolution, we must make them into a mass knowledge, a mass will which will become mass action. This is the knowledge, that it is only when the proletarian revolution sheds its rays over the whole earth will the time have come for us women to win complete equality. I end my remarks with an appeal to all the women delegates here present to spread among the women masses the promise which we, with our eyes on the achievements of Red October, make to our brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union;

Your peace is our peace!

Your struggles are our struggles!

Your victory will be our victory!

Discussion

Comrade Smith (C.P.G.B.): When one has visited Russia, and when one comes from an imperialist country like Great Britain, one is bound to make comparisons. I am a member of the delegation which was present at the All Russian Congress, and the Congress has given us a picture—which we have also actually seen—of what comrade Artyukhin said at the beginning of the meeting, a picture which corresponds to the truth. Whether we wished to, or not, we had to draw comparisons with the position of women in our own country.

During our visit we have seen that everything is being done to improve the conditions of the workers, and particularly of the women. We see that particular attention is devoted to the health of children and women. We see that the educational system and factory conditions receive particular attention, and we see that in Soviet Russia there is being built the Socialism of which we women workers in England have dreamed so long.

Looking at Soviet Russia, our thoughts go back to the European war. Women are specially interested in the question of war. We think of the ten million who died, of the promises made by our Government that after the war we would get homes fit to live in, that we would get the protection of which we workers dreamed so long. Ten million dead, and thousands of men in every country of the world vegetating in lunatic asylums or hospitals. That is what the workers got from the war.

[Comrade Smith went on to describe the lower standard of life of the British workers, accompanied by increased production, the measures of ruthless economy taken against the unemployed and in regard to all schools and institutions benefiting the worker, saying that poverty had greatly increased. About six million British workers had recently suffered wage reductions, and since the war the worker's standard of life has been constantly on the downgrade. She pointed out that Soviet Russia was the first country to effect stabilisation after the war without external assistance and the only country where the conditions of the workers were improving from day to day.]

I felt ashamed to-day when we met the Indian women comrades who reported how their country women were being exploited by British imperialists; for since we have been in Russia I have come to realise that Soviet Russia means freedom not only for the women workers of Russia, but also for the small nations and the eastern peoples in the Soviet Union.

What is happening in Great Britain is also happening in the rest of the capitalist world. We know in England that it is "our" imperialists, with Chamberlain at the head, who are responsible for the lowered standard of life of the worker; that it is the imperialists who are now trying to draw Soviet Russia into war; the imperialists of Great Britain who are responsible for all that. Just a short while ago Chamberlain said that the time would soon come when the governments of all countries would have to unite to stamp out what he

called Bolshevism, but what we call the solidarity of the workers.

But it is not only in England that war is being prepared. Other imperialists are also exerting pressure in that direction. You have your "friends" Briand and Boncour in France, playing the same game as Baldwin and Chamberlain, and I believe that the time has come for the workers of all countries to understand at last that we have one common foe—imperialism. When war is spoken of, we know whom it is hoped to provoke into war. We can see that Soviet Russia is the principal question at the League of Nations. The principal question there is how to defeat socialism, which is spreading over the whole world and receives new strength, new impulses from the awakening of the proletariat and the experiences of the Soviet Union.

I think all delegates will agree with me that our common enemy is imperialism. The workers of Great Britain particularly remember the help given by the Russian workers to the miners during the general strike and the lock-out. We believe that the British miners will again be the victors. The workers of England stopped the war against Soviet Russia in 1920, and we believe that the British workers understand the game being played and that when the hour of danger arrives the women of England will throw their whole weight against an imperialist war.

Comrade Krause (Germany), non-party, member of the Metal Workers Union, elected by the members of a Berlin factory committee: In the name of the whole German delegation of women workers I greet our Russian sisters. I should like to tell

you, in a few words, what I have seen and learnt during my five weeks' stay in Russia. The October revolution freed women from the capitalist yoke, and they realised that the equality which the revolution gave them, gives them also a part to play and duties to perform in political and social life. Women workers and peasants have to thank their own persistent, harmonious work for what they have won.

It gave us great joy to see this equality for women realised in practice in the factories we visited, to hear from the women themselves that they get equal pay for equal work, which will never be possible in the capitalist economic system. We were also impressed by the institution which freed women from the burdens of the household. One of the best of these is the nursery. How happily a woman can work here, for she has constantly before her eyes the fruits of her labour. She need not be afraid of deprivation during pregnancy, but can look calmly into the future, sure that both she and her child will be well cared for.

[Comrade Krause described the inadequacy of the provision made for mother and child welfare in Germany, and of what she had observed in this connection in the Soviet Union. There the institutions not only help the mother and child, but by their influence also raise the cultural level of the working masses. Women particularly capable in these matters work in the Commissariats for health and popular education. The Commissariat for Health pays particular attention to the welfare of mother and child and to sanitary provisions in factories.

Comrade Krause also referred to the educational work being done, both among children and adult workers and peasants, and said that one of the strongest impressions was made by the fact that women workers and peasants received practical training in the Red Army.]

When we sum up all these achievements we are confronted by something great, something almost unrealisable, we know that this great work is continually threatened by new and bitter attacks from the enemies of the workers' State, from the capitalist world. The Red Front Fighters, men and women, have made it their sacred duty to form a united red front with the class conscious proletariat for the defence of the Soviet Union, and to strive, true to Lenin's word, to change the threatening imperialist war, under the pressure and the will of the revolutionary masses, into a civil war for the overthrow of the capitalists and the emancipation of the working class.

[Comrade Krause spoke of the efforts of the Red Front Fighters to win over the working women masses, and of the great impression made on the delegation by the Soviet Union's manifesto on November 7th proclaiming the seven-hour day and the reduction in peasant taxation.]

Everything which we have seen, she said, makes us realise that the Russian woman's level of life has been raised. We all expressed that realisation and our admiration to our Russian sisters. With iron will and untiring strength they fought to break their century-old fetters, they helped to build up the workers' and peasants' State, to build up

Socialism. Let them be an example to us, until we too have won our Red October and thereby our Freedom.

Long live our Russian sisters!

Long live the emancipation of the world working class!

Long live Red October!

Helene Stoecker (Germany), President of the League for Maternity Welfare, and member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: Dear comrades, the lateness of the hour will not let me speak long. I only want to tell you of the attitude of our Friends of the New Russia, and of the League for Maternity Welfare to which I belong towards the principal questions with which we are concerned here to-day. I need not tell you of the great joy it gives us to see all that has been done since the October revolution in the emancipation and education of women, in mother and child welfare, in the abolition of punishment for abortion—for which we in Germany have been fighting for more than twenty years. But the chief question to-night is not so much our joy at these achievements, but more, how we can help to maintain and to extend what has been achieved. I am of the opinion that it is our duty to do what we can to ensure the harmonious development of this constructive work.

We in Western Europe cannot be blind to the fact that the forces of capitalism and imperialism are really threatening a new war. And we think we

owe it to Russia, to the Russian people who accomplished that deed which was, to me, the greatest event in the war—who, to a certain extent, gave the signal for the conclusion of the war by saying: we shall not go on with it any longer—we owe it to the Russian people to do all in our power to prevent a new war being forced on them, on a people who are earnestly anxious for peace and who were compelled to conduct such a bitter struggle for the retransformation of society.

I must tell you that we radical pacifists in Germany at our last Congress in Erfurt discussed the question: "Germany, Russia and world peace." I had an opportunity of speaking there, and I said that it was the duty of all who are opposed to war to make every effort to prevent this war against Russia and to rally all their forces against those who would make the attack. And when we return home, with renewed strength for the struggle, we hope—and if we succeed it will be one of the greatest victories ever won by the oppressed of the earth—by vigilant energy and determination to frustrate the efforts of the imperialists. We had a happy example in 1920 when the British workers and other working class forces brought about the end of the war of intervention. I believe that women must take their place in the ranks of those who are struggling to create the possibility for a new and fruitful construction and human liberty.

Hermine Biron (Austria), member of the C.P.A. and of the Metal Workers' Union, elected by the workers in a Viennese factory: Comrades! In the name of the working women of Austria I greet all those present. At the Congress of women

workers and peasants in Moscow, and on our journey through Soviet Russia we were convinced that during these last ten years the Soviet Union has overcome the greatest obstacles. In spite of the boycott and sabotage of the whole capitalist world, the workers' State has succeeded in carrying out its work of socialist construction.

Comrades, the capitalists of the whole world are uniting to launch a great offensive against the Soviet Union. But we can assure them that the workers in the capitalist countries will not allow the least interference with the constructive work of the Soviets. I promise to do my share in refuting and combatting the shameless lies spread about Soviet Russia by the capitalists and their assistants, and to give all my energy to spreading among the masses at home the wonderful impressions I received here.

Long live the work of socialist construction in the Soviet Union!

Long live the working class women's movement!

Comrade Schreiber (Czecho-Slovakia): Dear Comrades! We women of the Czecho-Slovakian delegation extend our heartiest greetings to the women assembled here. We welcome this conference. We have come across many socialist institutions, we have admired the achievements of the Soviet Union, and we must say that the corresponding institutions in our country are considerably behind those here. But the imperialist powers are threatening the work of socialist construction. We have discussed the war danger with women workers

in the factories, in the streets, wherever we met them, but we should never tire of discussing this question.

[The speaker went on to describe the wretched conditions of women in Czecho-Slovakia under the growing economic, social and political oppression and continued]:

We have not met only to express our joy at the achievements of the Soviet Union; we have met to discuss how we can parry the attacks of the imperialist powers on the Soviet Union. And we want to make the following suggestion. We should like to propose to the International Congress of the Friends of New Russia to draw up an appeal to the working women of the world, pointing out the danger of an imperialist attack on the Soviet Union and the difficulties under which the Soviet workers carried out their work of construction; the appeal should also point out to women that if the Soviet Union is not allowed to carry on this work peacefully and is forced to take up arms in defence, the workers of the whole world will lose all that they have gained by bitter struggles in the past. The women of the whole world would be roused by such an appeal to enter the ranks in defence of the Soviet Union. Only by putting all our strength into the revolutionary struggle can a new socialist order of society be created, and with that, and only with that, the new, free woman will be born.

Comrade Shurskaya (Poland): In the name of the Polish women workers I greet you, comrades, with the call: "Long live the international solidarity of working women!"

[Comrade Shurskaya first of all described the wretched position of women workers in Poland where the Fascist Government has, bit by bit, robbed the workers of all their gains. In many industries, such as textiles, confectionery and chemicals, women form from 60 to 85 per cent. of the personnel, and on the average 35 per cent. of workers in industry in Poland are women.]

So, she said, women workers are not a force to be underestimated, they can throw their weight in the scale when it comes to a question of whether the majority of Polish workers are prepared to fight against Fascism or against the Workers' and Peasants' State. The speaker went on to state that Fascism, and its servant clericalism, is doing everything in its power to keep the women away from the class struggle, and that the majority of women in Poland are still in the church. But the growing poverty of the Polish workers, and particularly of the women, are forcing these backward elements further and further into the camp of revolution, into the open struggle for an improved standard of life.

During the bloody unemployed demonstrations of 1925-26, the women were in the front ranks, and many found death in this struggle for daily bread.

The organisation of women workers under the revolutionary banner is of the greatest importance; for the thunderclouds of war against the Soviet Union are gathering ever more threateningly.

Poland will play a great part in that war. The Polish country, bordering on the Soviet Union, will

be the base for the imperialists. The Polish workers have not yet forgotten 1914. The tears of the widows and orphans of the fallen have not yet been dried.

The anti-militarist feeling among Polish women workers will be strengthened by the fact that it is a war against the U.S.S.R., against the one proletarian country where women have equal rights, where there is no longer exploitation or misery.

In that decisive moment, when war is declared, the revolutionary women of Poland will rally all proletarian women to change the imperialist war, through revolutionary struggle, into civil war for the establishment of a Polish Soviet Republic.

Fight the imperialist war! Long live the U.S.S.R.!

Hélène Duchène (France), Member of the General Confederation of Labour and of the Women's International League for Peace and Liberty, member of the French women workers' delegation to the Union Congress of women workers and peasants: Comrade Duchène stated that everything which she had seen in the Soviet Union contradicted all the lies spread about the Soviet Union by the capitalists and social-democrats, by all the enemies of the Soviet Union and the working class. The All Russian Congress of Women had greatly impressed her with the capacities for development slumbering in the women masses. She was one of those eager and willing to work with all their strength against an imperialist attack on Soviet Russia, against a new war. She would report on all that she had

seen and experienced in Russia and would help to spread the truth about the workers' State.

Comrade Cowl (U.S.A.), Member of the American C.P. and women's organiser for New York: Comrades! We American women workers have come from a country that during the world war appealed to all workers to "carry on the war to put an end to the war," and told us that we were "fighting for democracy." But when the war ended, where was the democracy of which they talked to the American workers. The possessing class, the Morgans and Rockfellers, got more than half of the world's gold from that democracy, but the workers of America got lower wages and longer hours. That democracy gave continually worsening conditions to the nine million women employed in American industry.

[Comrade Cowl gave a comprehensive description of the position of women workers in America. In the textile industry they still work 60-70 hours a week, and many cases have occurred of women giving birth to children while working at their machines.]

She continued: We have no government as exists in Soviet Russia. We have not yet succeeded in overthrowing the capitalist government and establishing the proletarian dictatorship as in Soviet Russia. Comrades, when I heard that within a year the seven-hour day will be introduced in Soviet Russia, I said that the workers in the Soviet Union have built a mighty fortress of which the imperialists of the whole world are afraid. Hear! hear! This decision on the seven-hour day gives the

workers of all countries a weapon which will help them to improve their own conditions and defend the Soviet State.

It is to the interest of the workers of all countries, should they be called upon to make war on the Soviet State, on proletarian Russia, to teach their children that the weapons which they are given must not be used against the workers in the Soviet Union, but should be turned against the imperialists of their own country, to change the war into a civil war. Let us learn from our Russian comrades. It is to our own interests to defend the Russian workers' State, not only out of sympathy, but because the proletarian dictatorship in Russia is a burning torch lighting up the way for the world proletariat on its road to freedom, that freedom towards which we must direct the eyes of those workers who are not yet class conscious, and carry them with us. To support the Soviet Union means to hasten the day of our own liberty.

When we return to our own countries, when we report back to our organisations, when we put forward the programme of struggle for immediate demands, it is our duty to emphasise and place in the forefront the achievements of the Russian workers. The fetters which bound the working women of Russia have been broken, and these working women to-day are free and can develop their capacities. Comrades, this is the message we must take home with us. The slogan of all workers must now be "Down with world imperialism! No war against the Soviet Union! There is only one war for the workers, and that is the class war!"

Comrade Kintelia (Finland), Member of the Finnish Workers' Delegation: In the name of the working women of Finland I greet the working women of Russia and the foreign delegates here present.

Like everybody else here, I have had the opportunity of examining the position of working women in Russia. I will not speak of that any further, because I entirely agree with all that comrades have said on the matter. But I should like to add that what I have seen convinces me that Socialism is really being established here and that women are economically and politically free only in Soviet Russia..

Mention has been made of the fact that it is necessary to spread this knowledge in other countries and that, should the imperialists attack the Soviet Union, all those here present will do everything in their power to defend the Soviet State. I hope that these promises will not remain mere words. Finland is geographically very close to Soviet Russia. In 1918 the Finnish workers fought together with their Russian brothers, although the Finnish revolution was defeated, while the Russian triumphed. That is why Finnish workers, men and women, follow the work in Russia so closely and wish to follow its example a second time.

Long live the Soviet Republic!

Long live the proletarian world revolution.

Comrade Fenn (Germany): Comrades! As a member of the Third German Workers' Delegation I bring the heartiest greeting to our Russian and to

all foreign comrades. Hundreds of thousands of men and women workers in Germany are eagerly awaiting our return, to learn what is really happening in Russia. We have been here three weeks, and have seen much. We have been shown everything, good and bad. Beside the old, the remains of Tsarist times we see the new being built up by the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia. We have seen old factories built in Tsarist days where the workers were herded like cattle, where no regard was had for their lives, but only profit was the goal. The workers lived in wretched, damp huts so that the rich might live. But we have also seen the factories built by the Soviets. Fine and airy, with the most modern machinery. I do not know whether such factories exist in Germany; anyhow I have never seen any in the part where I come from.

Many German women believe that Russians are stupid. But we have seen the very opposite. We were received everywhere warmly and with open arms. Russian women asked us about affairs in Germany. They showed such enthusiasm, greeting us like sisters, thirsting for knowledge, they were so anxious to learn something of the state of affairs in the capitalist world that we could not but wonder. We could see what real educational work has been done among Russian women. In Lenin-grad a woman called to us: We have the powder here—when you go home, set it alight! And I want to promise the women of Russia that when we return home we shall work our hardest among the men and women of our country to set it alight.

Long live free Russia!

Long live the world revolution !

Signe Sillen (Sweden), Member of the Swedish C.P., read the following declaration on behalf of the Scandinavian delegation: As representatives of working class women's organisations in Scandinavia, we take this opportunity of conveying to you our warmest greetings.

We working women of Scandinavia fully understand the danger which threatens the Soviet Union. And we too shall do everything in our power to make our class comrades conscious of the fact that the overthrow of the Soviet Union would remove any possibility of women in other countries attaining full equality.

The existence of the Soviet Union is of the greatest advantage to the international proletariat, for so long as we can point to what the working women of Russia have achieved by their own strength, can we spur on the will to struggle and the enthusiasm of our own women comrades in an energetic fight for the same objects can we lead working women into the fighting ranks and act in the same spirit as our Russian sisters.

But should the imperialists succeed in their intentions, it would not only mean that our sons and brothers would risk their lives, it would mean that we should be compelled to fight against our Russian brothers and sisters, against those who fought for us. That must not happen! Therefore, in our own countries, we shall oppose the war-mongers and expose the lies of the bourgeois press by spreading the truth about the socialist construction we have witnessed in the Soviet Union.

— Fight for the Soviet Union !

Fight the war-mongers and their lackeys ! This must be our slogan.

In the coming war the weapons must not be turned against our class comrades in the Soviet Union, but against the enemies of the working class, against the imperialists.

In answer to the hostile encirclement of the Soviet Union, we must create a strong ring of friendship, consisting of the men and women of the working class.

Down with imperialism !

Long live the Soviet Union !

Signe Nielsen, Norway ; Cornelia Hohn, Denmark ; Gerda Linderst, Vera Fengberg, Sweden.

Comrades Endyina (Mongolia), Charpentier (France), and de Mon (Belgium), also took part in the discussion.

Beth Turner (England), Member of C.P.G.B., put forward the following suggestion in the name of the British delegation : It is known that representatives of women workers of the whole world will be present at the Congress of the Friends of Soviet Russia. We are therefore suggesting that Fanny Deakin, from England, should be recommended for the Presidium of the Congress. Comrade Deakin is a miner's wife, a member of the Trades Council. She has done excellent work in England in the struggle against the imperialists, and particularly

in support of the miners and their womenfolk. We therefore think that it is most suitable for comrade Deakin to be elected to the Presidium.

In addition we suggest that comrade Pass, from Germany, a textile worker delegated by 2,000 women textile workers, should speak at the Congress, not only in the name of the International Women's delegation, but on behalf of this conference. We ask you to give her an opportunity of learning your wishes, so that she may have a mandate to speak at the Congress in the name of all the delegates at this conference.

The Congress opens to-morrow evening at 7, and the voice of women must be heard there. We ask you to elect Fanny Deakin as our representative on the Presidium and Hermine Pass as our speaker at the Congress.

These suggestions were ratified by the Conference.

Resolution

This meeting of international women's delegations at the Soviet Congress of Women Workers and Peasants, together with all women members of the delegations to the ten years' celebration of the October Revolution declares:

"From our own observation and experience, we are convinced that complete economic, political and social equality between men and women has been a part of the great and continuing achievements of the October revolution. The laws of the Soviet Union dealing with this matter are becoming increasingly a matter of actual social fact with the progress of socialist construction.

In putting into practice the complete social and human emancipation of women, the first country of proletarian dictatorship is far in advance of all other states of the world.

The natural fulfilment of our duty of international solidarity, and the protection of our right to freedom demand therefore, that we should fearlessly combat and prevent, by all the means at our disposal, any attempt of world imperialism to threaten and destroy the Soviet Union.

Encirclement of the first workers' State, by economic and political measures, by warmongering and military attacks, as well as by lies and slanders, will be met by the utmost resistance on our part.

There must be, therefore, a relentless struggle against any war on the Soviet Union, the one state

in the world which is truly anxious for peace in order to carry out that socialist transformation of society which alone can ensure real freedom to women. There must be, therefore, ruthless and tireless struggle against the war-mongers, against class domination in all the capitalist countries.

The fight against the imperialist enemies of the Soviet Union is at the same time the fight against all the reactionary forces which burden the lives and hinder the development of women.

In appealing to the working women masses to fight with us, we are defending the exploited and oppressed of the whole world, the fatherland of full human development for women, the land in which women not only enjoy freedom and culture, but consciously and actively share in the creation of well being, freedom and culture for all.

Therefore we declare to our sisters in the Soviet Union :

Your peace is our peace !

Your struggles are our struggles !

Your victory will be our victory !

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Reply by Clara Zetkin

Comrades! please allow me to make a short reply.

Our proceedings showed overwhelming unanimity in recognising the fact that the proletarian revolution, the Soviet order, has established a position for women as human beings, as workers, as mothers, as citizens, such as exists in no other country. The women in the Soviet Union are not only free, not only do they enjoy culture in the fullest meaning of that word—no! the institutions established show us that the women themselves have become a force creating freedom, creating culture. Unanimity was also shown in this, that we working women are only protecting our own interest in a free and happy future by defending the Soviet Union with all our strength against the danger of war, against warmongering and warlike invasions.

I believe that what has been so unanimously expressed here should be a sacred duty for each one of us. None of us here should hide behind the thought—my individual strength is too small to fulfil the promise which I made. Are we not creatures of our social environment, and bound thereby? Of course, the social sciences and modern natural science have given us that knowledge. But we must not forget that knowledge of the influence, the power of social environment and heredity on all of us should make us hesitate to give a premature judgement on weakness and mistakes: this knowledge helps to save us from discouragement. But it must never set the standard for our personal will

and action. We ourselves are responsible for our personal efforts, for the strength, the passion, the resoluteness and will we put into the work for our objects. We must not appeal to our powerlessness as creatures of environment. That idea should never be the excuse for cowardice and laziness. Our conviction and will are also forces moulding our life and action. We women do not want to be accused of cowardice and idleness in the historical process of mankind's development. Our duty at the present is to follow the example given by the ancient German women. The historians of Rome tell us that the old German people, driven by frightful hunger, invaded the fields of France and Italy. When they came into conflict with the Roman troops it was the women who drove the retreating men back into the fight and themselves fought to the very last, choosing death rather than being taken prisoner.

Let us look around us! Are there not millions and millions, in every capitalist country, marching towards the new land, millions driven by hunger—and not only physical hunger, but the still more painful hunger of the heart? And in their march they came into conflict with all the forces of bourgeois society, forces trying to prevent them from entering into the fruitful fields of socialism, of communism.

Comrades! Women of all countries! Let us follow their glorious example. It is an example set for us by our sisters in the Soviet Union. Let us stand first in the ranks of those fighting to defend Soviet Russia in its work of socialist construction. And if the men are sometimes weak, if they should

hesitate and falter, let us women drive them forward into the struggle, and show them by our resolute action that we prefer death to slavery.

Forward to the fight for the emancipation of women, forward to the struggle in defence of the Soviet Union, the country of socialist construction! (Long applause and the "Internationale.")

Comrades, our Conference is over. I will close with the words:

Women of all nations, forward to the fight, forward to work, forward to victory!

Speech of Comrade Hermine Pass, German Textile Worker,

On behalf of the Women Delegates to the International Congress of the Friends of Soviet Russia, 12th November, 1927.

The women from five countries, elected as delegates to the Union Congress of Women Workers and Peasants, invited all women members of the international delegations to a Conference at which their attitude towards this Congress was discussed. I have been requested to give the report of the unanimous attitude of all the women delegates at the Conference.

The Women's Congress, and everything that we saw and heard in Russia, has convinced us that in Russia women are free not only in law, but in fact. Women play an important part in the Soviets and their creative work promotes socialist construction. The women take their part in the government and administration of the country.

We have all seen the wonderful institutions concerned with mother and child welfare. Women are protected not only as workers, but as mothers, in which respect they have advantages such as exist

in no other country. We visited many factories, and saw that men and women get equal pay for equal work. There is no difference in wages and no difference in training for qualified work. Women hold important positions in factories and are helping to build up Soviet industry. Important cultural work has been done by abolishing illiteracy and by popular education in general. The number of schools is increasing from year to year.

Another important matter into which we enquired was that of nationalities. On this point, too, we were convinced that only the dictatorship of the proletariat is capable of giving national freedom to peoples, while the imperialist countries are doing everything to suppress the Eastern peoples and national minorities. By what difficulties, what endurance, what sacrifice, did the Soviet Government at last succeed in making a breach in the century-old slavery of woman! We found so many free and happy women in the Turkish women's clubs in Baku who told us of their difficult work in past years, and whose eyes lighted as they showed us the fruits of their labour.

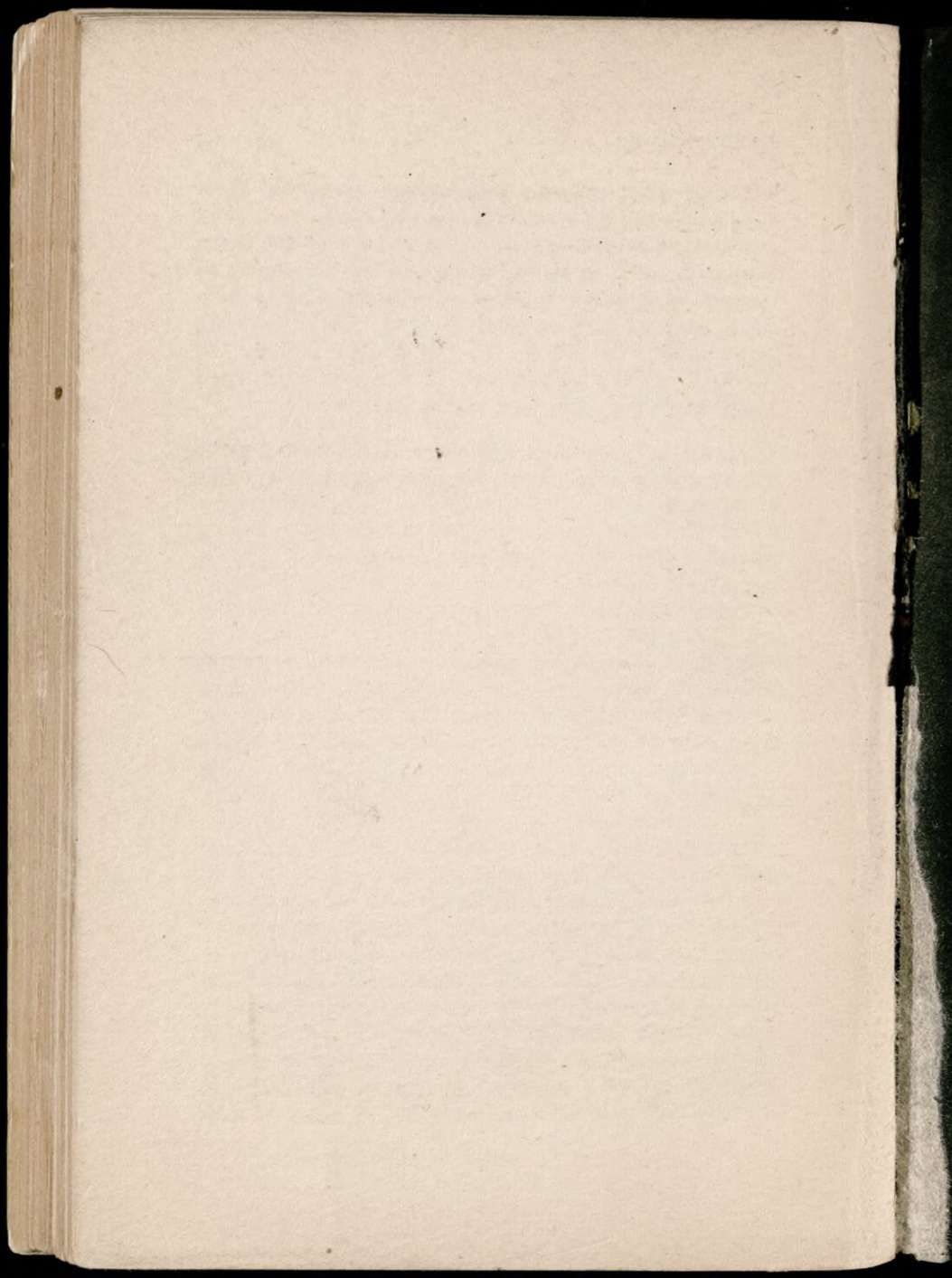
The Soviet Government is rooted, firm and unshakeable, in the masses. Nothing could bring that fact home to us more clearly than what we have witnessed at the Tenth Anniversary celebrations. The parade of the Red Army, who not only defended their workers' and peasants' State during the civil war, in the struggle against the Whites when they sacrificed so much, but which is daily and hourly training the sons of the people to be brave working class fighters, the tremendous demonstration of the Moscow proletariat, leaves no doubt as

to the strength of the Soviet Government. And the Manifesto issued by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, which, as we ourselves witnessed, aroused the greatest joy in all sections of the population, is another link in the chain of socialist construction.

After what we have seen here with our own eyes, we are convinced that Russia is the only country which has trod the road of emancipation for women, and that the same road is the only one which we will have to follow. Soviet Russia is for us the Fatherland of freedom for women, and we consider it our most sacred duty to spread the truth about Soviet Russia among the working masses when we return home. War threatens the Soviet Union and the imperialists pay particular attention to influencing women. All over the world the bourgeoisie are mobilising women; they are establishing nationalist and fascist organisations of a militarist character, preparing them for war against Soviet Russia. Besides these, there are numerous organisations exercising great influence over large numbers of women, whose members talk in such a way as to suggest that pious wishes can prevent war. The intention there is to weaken the vigilance of women in face of the burning danger of war. The bourgeoisie realise that no war can be conducted without the support of proletarian women. We delegates will use all our strength to take working women away from these bourgeois, anti-Soviet organisations and draw them into the ranks of the fighting proletariat. But we shall not only awaken sympathy for Soviet Russia among women, we shall instil into them the knowledge that we working women must also be armed for the war, that we must

not wait until the war has become an actual fact. The women of all countries must be ready to defend the victorious revolution. The victory of the Russian proletariat is our victory, and the liberation of women from every form of oppression will be possible, and can only be possible, if the world working class stands in defence of the Soviet Union, the bulwark of the revolution, if the working class overthrows the class rule of the bourgeoisie.

Comrade Pass then read the Resolution passed unanimously by the Conference of Women Delegates.





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