

**Women
Under
Fascism
and
Communism**

HILDA BROWNING

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Women's position—the position of half the human race—has changed vitally under Fascism. Equally vitally, though in the opposite direction, their position has changed under Communism.

WOMEN UNDER FASCISM AND COMMUNISM provides in full detail the facts about these conditions.

This is a powerful battery of quotations and description of what is actually happening.

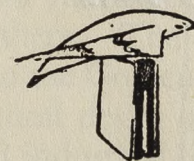
THE MATERIAL FOR THE SECTION ON
WOMEN UNDER FASCISM HAS BEEN
GIVEN BY A GERMAN WOMAN OF
POLITICAL EXPERIENCE BOTH BEFORE
AND AFTER THE NAZI REVOLUTION.

Women Under Fascism and Communism

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Part I—Women Under Fascism

CHAPTER I

THE FASCIST CREED AND WOMEN

WHEN in April, 1932, a delegation of National Women's Organisations, anxious to ascertain what would be the position of women under the Third Reich approached Adolf Hitler, with a view to being assured that the future State did not intend to abrogate the legal equality which under the Constitution of 1918 had been granted to them, the reply they got was: "What has the Revolution of 1918 actually done for women? All it has done is to turn 50,000 of them into blue stockings and party officials. Under the Third Reich they might as well whistle for such things. Every woman then will get a husband for herself."

This promise was of course utterly unrealisable, for apart from all other considerations, the number of surplus women in Germany is well over two millions. Nevertheless it had an enormous effect, touching deeply as it did the innermost feelings and desires of millions of women, for whom "equality of rights" had till then meant merely the right to be exploited on an equal or even greater scale than men. Naturally, the idea of a husband seemed equivalent to a promise of security, family-life, and exemption from all economic care. Realising by bitter experience that under Capitalism equality had not in any way alleviated the lot of the middle-class and proletarian women, they longed backwards for the inequality of past times. It was for this reason that the Fascist philosophy, roughly summarised in Hitler's reply, fascinated so many of the women who, whether consciously or not, felt they were being victimised by the Capitalist system. Obviously, the prospect of security and being cared for, must appeal to all unmarried women whose cheerless lives are spent in workshops and offices, bound to jobs which by no stretch of the imagination, can satisfy them; as well as married women engaged in professions in addition to filling the role of housekeepers, wives and mothers. The Nazi philosophy which holds up as its ideal, a return to the Golden Age of family life, fitted in well therefore with the natural desire of these women to escape the burden of professional and industrial life, but in their eagerness they ignored the fact that to turn the clock back in this way spells also a return to the servitude and subordination of the past, which in practice proved so intolerable.

The Nazi philosophy, such as it is, turns out towards the past. It

is to the past that it looks for guidance, and so it turns to antiquity to find its ideal type of womanhood. In the Germanic myths and ancient Nordic sagas they find their ideal to which the German woman of to-day is expected to conform. (In passing, it may be as well to note that the Nazis have invented their own interpretations of history, which are hotly opposed by historians and scientists, even in Germany.)

The imagined heroic spirit of the ancient Nordic race is intensely fostered by the Nazis. To-day Kriemhild's revenge, which brought bloody catastrophe upon two nations, is praised as a noble example, and held up to the nation as the most exemplary virtue.

"The Germanic woman never rested until the outrages inflicted on her kinsfolk were avenged. She seemed to have raised above herself so that she might live only for the idea of revenge. In this new epoch of resurrection in which we are living, heroism has its own particular application in that it shows the way to purposeful and patriotic action. In our veins, too, there still runs that stream of blood which our Germanic ancestors transferred to us. The spirit which fired the men and women of Nordic antiquity, and which spurred them on to high and mighty deeds is revived anew."

So wrote Dr. Lydia Kath in "Die Frau im altnordischen Volksleben."

To-day the spirit of revenge is regarded as the heritage which is to be transmitted to the younger generation by the women of the nation. Dr. Krummacher, leader of the "National Socialist Womanhood Association," for instance, at the conference of the "Deutsche Frauenwerk" (German Women's Work League) on the 13th of January, 1934, made the following statement:—

"The men have to sacrifice their very heart's blood on the battlefield, and the German woman has to stake it too for Germany's future. Our German women have always helped to make good the defeats of the past, and their function is to implant heroism in the hearts of the rising generation."

Again, Paul Silber von Groote, in her book "Die Frauenfrage und ihre Lösung durch den Nationalsozialismus" summarises the philosophical basis of the National Socialist Women's Movement in the following words:—

"The most powerful, although originally unconscious impulse that underlies the new National Socialist women's movement is undoubtedly the tremendous experience that was lived through in the World War of 1914. Because of the desire of an attacked people for a place in the sun, and the right to a free existence, our soldiers in this war, standing for Germany against the united destructive will of the whole world, were the means of revealing the fateful ties of blood and race that bind a

community together. And like the soldier, who with every bullet was prepared to bear witness with his life for Germany, the same revelation was vouchsafed to the German woman by the profoundest human ties. For each of these heroes, battered and torn by the murderous will of the world, each of these unrepining and adamant sacrifices of life and health, issued in the first place from the blood of a German woman, so that every slaughtered warrior died at home innumerable times in the heart of his mother and the heart of the woman of his heart. And yet the truly German woman of those years, apart from individual cases of weakness, in silence, without a word of complaint, faced by the overwhelming fate of war which the word 'Germany' stood for her, again and again suffered the birth pangs anew whenever her husband or her son left for the front again."

But there is another virtue besides that of heroism which the Nazis have taken over from antiquity, that is the virtue of the slave, unquestioning obedience. According to the Nazi leader Gottfried Feder:—

"The Jew has stolen woman as a wife from us, by sexual Democracy. We, the young generations, have to march off to slay the dragon, in order that we may win back the holiest thing in the world: the wife who is both servant and slave."

Again:—

"Our Lord created woman for love and housekeeping," a Bavarian Nazi Member of Parliament once stated, and what the Nazis mean by love the Minister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, Dr. Josef Goebbels, in his book "Michael," has clearly defined:—

"It is the woman's task to be charming and to give birth to children. That is not so coarse and old-fashioned as it seems. The female bird smartens herself up for the male and hatches the eggs for him. In return he is her safeguard and resists the enemy."

Before Hitler rose to power (we shall show later how the situation completely changed when it came to the point of putting these theories into practice) Nazi women were entirely willing to accept the function which their leaders sought to impose on them; indeed, they attached great importance to them and responded nobly, as the following words will show:—

"No, our part is not to be in the front line with the men. Let us admit it sincerely, in spite of all the modern theories as to the equality of the sexes, in spite of all our striving for independence. We women are happy that National Socialism is a purely male movement."

Thus wrote a woman in the "Angriff" of January 28th, 1931.

Only too willingly they were prepared to humble themselves. A

women's Nazi paper, "Der Opferdienst der Deutschen Frau," pointed out in 1932, for instance, that the urge to politics is always a mental thing, so that in this respect the woman does indeed fail, and must be reckoned superfluous. We German girls do not want equality with men."

Such women of course take very seriously the Nazi ideology as to the importance and sanctity of marriage, referred to in so many statements by the Nazi leaders. In his book, "My Struggle" (p. 158), Hitler himself says:—

"It is the first duty of a national State to raise marriage from being a perpetual disgrace of the race, and to consecrate it as an institution, which is called to produce the Lord's image, and not monstrous beings, half man, half monkey."

Marriage is, by his own statement, the only proper realm for a woman; in his address to the Nazi Womanhood Organisation, at the party conference at Nuremberg on the 8th of September, 1934, he said:—

"If it is accepted that the world of man is the State, his struggle, and his readiness to sacrifice himself for the community, one may assume that the part played by the woman is of less importance. For her world is her husband, her family, her children and her home."

One of the regulations of the National Socialist Womanhood Organisation states categorically that "The German people expects that first and foremost its women shall serve the family, and gather therein all the constructive strength they can, for its members and the State."

Marriage, however, is only sacred in so far as it produces children. That is its one and only criterion. The central doctrine of the Nazi race philosophy is that the greatest possible number of children shall be produced.

At the annual meeting of German scientists on September 20th, 1934, Prof. Ruedin pointed out that "the number of children will not decrease, but increase, if only such women marry as are really fond of children."

"History teaches that in the end the people which wins in the struggle for life is not that which succeeds in the economic realm, but that which has available the greatest number of children. The original racially pure Nordic Greeks and Romans died out, because they adopted the morally bad practice of birth control,"

according to Kuhn-Kranz, author of "Von deutschen Ahnen für deutsche Enkel." The aim of marriage, however, is not merely to produce any kind of child but to produce thoroughbred children.

"One of the most important demands of the National Socialist State is that any prospective tenant of a peasant farm must give the most careful consideration to his choice of a marriage partner, in order that sound and healthy descendants shall be guaranteed. Consequently the bride-to-be has to conform to certain minimum requirements, both physical and moral, and has to prove herself as of absolutely unobjectionable stock." (Dr. Lydia Kath.)

The demand for posterity takes precedence over all others, and thus the sanctity of marriage is imperilled so soon as any conflict arises between the demands of the individual and the State. Then away fly all precepts as to the sanctity of the marriage-bond. In Rosenberg's book (*Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*), for instance, we find the words:—

"A future German Reich will never accept a woman without children—it does not matter whether she be married or not—as a full member of the community of people. Consequently, adultery on the part of the man, in so far as offspring results therefrom, should not be made subject to legal prosecution."

Dr. Willibald Hentschel, however (*Der Hammer* No. 640), has made the following suggestion for a large-scale stud-farm:—

"Round up a thousand German girls of the purest stock. Isolate them in a camp. Then let them be joint by a hundred German men equally of purest stock. If a hundred such camps were set up, you would have a hundred thousand thoroughbred children at one stroke," concludes this Nazi race-politician.

Unlike the "Leader," Dr. Hentschel does take into consideration that the number of surplus women presents a certain problem. This problem is a subject of acute embarrassment, and attempts to solve it led to the strangest suggestions. In her book, "Frauenfreiheit und Volksfreiheit," Carola Struve states that unmarried women, too, should be entitled to the happiness of motherhood. The function of the State should be to provide for the children of unmarried mothers, but only in so far as they are love-children, and not conceived haphazard. To distinguish between the two kinds, she suggests that every woman who desires to give birth to a love-child shall register herself at the appropriate bureau six weeks before the day on which conception is scheduled to take place!

Regarding the bearing of children as woman's chief task, Nazi philosophy consequently disapproves of all kinds of feminine activity in public, professional or intellectual spheres. It demands that the activity of men and women shall be strongly divided off from each other.

"If men aspire once more towards a new male ideal, then for true

women there will no longer be any reason for competing with men in the sphere of male work, for they will set a new feminine ideal beside the man's ideal. Woman's proper sphere is the family. There she is a sovereign queen. If we eliminate woman from every realm of public life, we do not do it in order to dishonour her, but in order that her honour may be restored to her."

Thus Dr. Goebbels, at a conference of Nazi women leaders, held on February 12th, 1934.

"The influence of women on public life is the beginning of apparent decadence," says Rosenberg in his 'Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts.' . . . "The preparation for public life, for learning and education, prevents women from fulfilling their natural task, and therefore they should not be encouraged to follow intellectual pursuits."

The logical consequence of this attitude is the total elimination of women from industry and the professions. As far as they are allowed to take up any occupation at all, the especially female occupations will have to be left to them, such as housekeeping, nursing and, above all, agricultural work. Heavy manual labour, though particularly unsuited for the female physiology, is as an integral part of the Nazi philosophy, emphasised as women's task. The ancient Germanic races, of whom the Roman writer Tacitus wrote "their laziness is proverbial, the men leaving agriculture to the slaves and the women," are the Nazi model for good reasons. In those days women were approximated to slaves, and their forced unpaid labour was used to carry out the meanest domestic and agricultural tasks. Capitalism, in its progressive stages, searching for ever cheaper labour, has forced women into industry, and now, as it decays and finds itself unable to provide employment for all its industrial workers, it seeks refuge in refurbishing an outworn creed and reveals its utterly reactionary character, by undisguisedly admitting, that the only solution to the crisis it can find, is to push women back once more into the slavery of the past.

This philosophy, which so long as it remained merely theoretical, seemed enormously attractive to millions of exploited women, has, after Hitler's accession to power, revealed its true character.

The results in practice have taught the blind to see. No empty praises from above, no dictatorship, and no muzzling of the press, are able to gag the desperate cries of millions of women groaning and suffering under the yoke of German Fascism.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN IN INDUSTRY AND SOCIAL LIFE

"For hundreds of thousands of women and girls nothing is left but suicide or prostitution."

(A National Socialist woman in "Die Deutsche Kämpferin," July, 1934.)

AS a result of the Nazi point of view that the proper sphere of women is the family, the kitchen, and the bearing of children, the Nazis are now turning women out of employment wherever they possibly can. This is done not only in order to increase the birth-rate, that is to say the number of future soldiers, but also in order to create employment for the millions of unemployed men. One of the chief Nazi propaganda slogans is to the effect that in the course of one year they succeeded in lowering the unemployment figure from 5 to 2.5 millions. But what is stated far less vociferously is that this miracle has been performed by decreasing the number of women in employment considerably more, i.e., from 11.5 to 6 millions. That, however, still appears to be insufficient, for the State Secretary of the Board of Finance, Reinhardt, declared in May, 1934, that the figure of 6 millions must be lowered as speedily as possible to 3 millions.

MARRIAGE LOANS

One way of doing this is the institution of the so-called marriage loans. A young couple wishing to marry is able to procure a loan from the government on condition that the woman binds herself to retire from employment and any kind of wage-earning life. Women of other countries may well be inclined to regard this institution as a reasonable and social measure, since it facilitates marriage for young people who would otherwise not be in a position to set up house together. The revenue of this "gift," however, is raised by a special tax imposed on all workers, even those with wages as low as 75 marks a month. Nazi papers report that the demand for these loans is considerably in excess of the Government's ability to meet them, and statistics of the manner in which they are distributed reveal the interesting fact that while in Berlin the average sum lent amounts to 800-1,000 marks in the fashionable western suburbs, in the proletarian districts it amounts to only 200-300 marks. (This, of course, is but one more proof of the fact that all class discriminations in Germany have now disappeared.) The practical uses to which these loans are to be put may be gathered from an article in the "Angriff" (July 30th, 1934), which reads as follows:—

"It does not appear to be generally known that this money is not a

gift, but only a loan on very favourable terms. Those who are not likely to repay the money do not receive it. Also so far as those unemployed are concerned, it is necessary to exercise great care in making the loan since the money is not intended for living expenses, but only for the purchase of furniture. If the livelihood of the future family is not assured, it is to be presumed that the money will be used for other purposes."

It is thus sufficiently obvious that working class women are not likely to benefit from this loan, which thus turns out to be a gift specially intended for the upper and paid by the proletarian class. The manner in which the loans are administered appears from another example in the same paper. The loans are only granted subject to an examination carried out by the Beratungsstelle für Erb-und Rassenpflege (Bureau for Heredity and Race Culture). In the report issued by this bureau it is pointed out that in many cases "in order to obtain the marriage loan, in spite of diseases that would affect fertility, and so disqualify the applicants, men and women frequently send their friends instead for examination, paying them a commission on the deal."

Not only the Government, but certain factories also have adopted this "social measure." Several large cigarette factories, for instance, have arranged to provide such of their female workers as have been in their employ for more than a year with a gift of 600 marks, on condition that they marry and give up their work. At the same time, these factories made it a necessary condition that all married women shall be replaced by their unemployed husbands and all betrothed girls by their unemployed bridegrooms. 600 marks is, of course, a large sum, and the offer seems a generous one. Indeed, the German factory owners appear to have but one pre-occupation, viz, that their workers and employees shall enjoy every happiness in their future married life. This is not quite so disinterested, however, for since the women's wages are considerably lower than those of the men, the newly-employed men have had "voluntarily" to renounce the difference, and thus the owners are able to save considerable sums in wages yearly, and the resulting profits amount to much more than these generous gifts. The conditions under which these promises are fulfilled, moreover, are left entirely to the employer. In August, 1934, for instance, a shop assistant, who had given up her employment in order to qualify for the bonus, which it had been agreed would be paid in March, found it necessary to take the case to court in an attempt to ensure payment of the promised sum, but the judge non-suited her on the ground that there was no question of a "promise," since no legal agreement could be produced. Thus,

the net result was that she had lost her employment and was left penniless after all.

As far as marriage is no way out, the question arises what will become of the women once they have been turned out of their employment or when they are no longer admitted to it. The solution is simple in the extreme. *Since they are not permitted to work for wages they must work without.* This unpaid female labour is divided into three main groups: (1) domestic work, (2) farm work, and (3) the labour camps.

DOMESTIC SERVICE

As a consequence of the Nazi attitude to women, it follows that the best preparation for their vocation as future housewives and mothers is domestic service. Hence the decree issued in 1934 by the Ministry of Labour, which runs as follows:—

"At Easter, 1934, 600,000 girls left the elementary schools. A considerable number will be unable to find occupations or apprenticeships. In order to prevent these girls beginning their lives in the community in the status of unemployment, an effort must be made to provide places for them in German homes. The 'household year' is there to help them. The Ministry hopes that very many housewives will be prepared to take a girl on for a year as an apprentice."

The obvious consequence of compulsory work of this nature is that upper-class housewives, placed thus in a position to acquire unpaid hands to do their domestic work, will dismiss the maid-servants they already employ, or compel them to do unpaid work like the others. As a result, domestic work as a career for girls will completely cease to exist, and such girls as enter it, having lost their legal status as wage earners, will be considered, according to the hypocritical German expression, as in a "patriarchal" relation to the household; put more crudely this means in a condition of virtual slavery. They will thus lose even that minimum of rights left to the mass of the workers by the new labour laws. Since legally they are no longer counted as workers or employees, the protective laws against dismissals, regulations of conditions and hours of work, etc., cannot apply to them so that they will be left entirely at the mercy of the mistresses' whims, and may be turned out on the street from one day to another. The official "German Labour Front," in its report dated June, 1934, had to admit in fact that more than 25 per cent. of these girls get no holidays at all.

FARM WORK

The women have no say as to whether or not they desire to submit

to this form of labour. In April, 1934, the Central Office of the Labour Exchanges in Germany made the following statement:—

“Women’s unemployment must disappear. On the 31st of March, 1934, there were still 575,074 women on the unemployment lists. The Board of Finance insists that during the course of 1934 unemployment among women must completely disappear. Such as still remain unemployed must be absorbed by marriage, the household, and agriculture. Cases of employers in towns taking on women in positions which might be filled by males will no longer be permitted.”

The official statements themselves reveal how much women dislike farm work, and try to avoid it. In March, 1934, the Central Office of the Labour Exchanges threatened as follows:—

“We have frequently observed that women fail to report to the Labour Exchanges in order not to be drafted for agricultural work. Such behaviour will in future be prosecuted by the competent authorities.”

In this connection it must be remembered that persons who do not report to the Labour Exchanges lose their dole, that is to say, in most cases the only income they have. The women to whom the above-mentioned decree alludes evidently prefer to starve rather than be drafted into this kind of slave labour.

Nevertheless, the tendency to transfer girls from towns to farm-work continues. In June, 1934, the President of the Central Office of the Labour Exchanges issued the following decree in connection with the re-training of girls:—

“In a number of districts short and rapid courses for the re-training of girls will be instituted. Their purpose is to prepare town girls to take up agricultural work, and especially to give instruction in milking. In addition to these courses it is necessary that special branch instruction in the aspirations of National Socialism be given to the girls, so that in their subsequent farming activities their knowledge and character shall be adequate to all demands. In agreement with the Youth Leadership of the Reich, I therefore appoint the Union of German girls to take charge of these girls in said re-training camps.”

LABOUR CAMPS

The most direct measure introduced by the National Socialists for dealing with women’s problems has been the institution of the Women’s Labour Service organisation. The regulations of this official body, issued on the 16th February, 1934, start off as follows:—

“The German Women’s Labour Service Organisation has for its function the education of the German girl and adolescent, with a view

to fitting them both for the task of becoming future housewives and mothers.”

This form of wording seems to indicate that purely educational measures are envisaged. But that this is not the case appears clearly from Section V, 2, of the same regulations, which provide that “in enrolling girls in the German Female Labour Service Organisation precedence must be given to those who, due to conditions in the female labour market, have lost or left their employment, or have not been able to find occupation or apprenticeship within two years of leaving school.” This qualification denotes clearly that the Labour Service Organisation is not intended merely for educational purposes but also as an economic measure devised as a palliative for unemployment. That object could, however, have been achieved in other ways; as, for instance, by the introduction of the so-called *Frauendienstjahr* (Women’s Service Year), a scheme frequently advocated by many women’s groups. According to this plan the Service Year would be spent either in public household schools, or in the households of the girl’s parents, or in the households of others. But though the Government claims that Labour Service is merely a substitute for the Service Year, nothing has been done to organise it, whereas the Labour Service Organisation is being continually extended. By January, 1934, there were as many as 242 Labour Camps for women in existence. The following statement, made by Dr. F. Hiller in his semi-official book “*Der Frauenarbeitsdienst im Kampfe um die Erneuerung Deutschlands*,” would provide some explanation for the change of attitude:—

“It stands to reason that such a ‘Service Year’ can in no wise meet the requirements of National Socialism . . . for the attitude to female education continues in many cases to be infected by strong leanings towards individualism and isolation, and the theory and dogmatism current in liberal epochs, which in any case are entirely inadequate to the political requirements of this period. In opposition to these views, it should be most emphatically stressed that the task which has been undertaken of regenerating our German womanhood after it has passed through the preparatory schools can only be brought to a successful conclusion by the way of our National Socialist Labour Service.”

Such a statement enables one to gauge the *political* objects behind this Labour Service. Clearly it is intended to prevent independent thinking on the part of women, or any consciousness of the personal and social situation, and at the same time it attempts to discourage unprejudiced attitudes of mind. Just as with regard to men these results are achieved by concentration on all forms of war-like exercise, women are wanted to be kept out of social life and herded together under the strong fist of a reliable leader.

In her booklet, "Aufbau des Deutschen Frauenarbeitsdienstes," the leader of the Women's Labour Service Organisation, Gertrud Scholtz-Klinck has admitted that "uniformity" must be the ultimate purpose of the mental and moral education postulated by the Labour Service. To ensure such uniformity she applied a scheme throughout the Reich.

"According to the general regulations of the Reich leadership, those enrolled for Labour Service are made familiar with ethnology and hereditary doctrine, in so far as that is necessary for their understanding of the National Socialist population policy and their vocation of future mothers of the people."

Very characteristic is the fact that this "voluntary" Labour Service—as the official title has it—is compulsory for all students, i.e., that admission to the universities is made contingent on the possession of a certificate, declaring that a period of at least 26 weeks has been spent in a labour camp. A great advantage claimed for this measure by the Nazi propagandists purports to be the disappearance of all class distinctions among those attending the camps. The individual, they point out, relinquishes his personal interests and prejudices, and learns to live only for the community. We are in a position, however, to check the practical results of this camp life by reports from girl matriculates who have taken part in it. These reports (though, of course, having had to pass the censor) offer an excellent illustration as to how those enrolled in the organisation have reacted to it. (Berichte von Deutschen Abiturientinnen über ihre Erfahrungen im freiwilligen Arbeitsdienst. Aus "Deutsche Frauenbildung" 10. Jahrgang, Heft 2.) A few quotations will suffice. For instance, in connection with the sense of "unity" experienced by those attending the camps, we read:—

"We also had many unpleasant experiences. Robberies and bickering and biting took place. It was also necessary to change leaders, owing to the manner in which the work leader and the camp leader constantly defied each other, thus creating serious quarrels among the members of the group."

In regard to the actual work done, we read:—

"We had to do all the preparatory work that was necessary by ourselves to get the ground ready for our future gardening. First there was the pine forest to be felled and the stumps uprooted, then we had to break the soil up a yard deep. The felling and road building was certainly no work for girls, and ought to have been left to boys. For most of us the work was much too exhausting to get any pleasure out of it at all. Besides we had to undertake the strangest tasks, some not at all fit for girls, as for instance ploughing the fallow land, laying drains

in the church yard, digging trenches, levelling roads, helping when necessary on municipal jobs, and sewing for the boys' camp."

Still more damning are the statements with regard to the nature and amount of mental work done.

"Our afternoons were devoted to intellectual training. Lectures on sport, farming and the theory of food made up the curriculum, followed by lectures on Race Culture, the Development of Socialism, etc. These lectures bored some of the students very much, for nothing new was taught in them, whilst the rest were bored because they did not understand them. We had some lectures that were popular, but in those cases the truth was generally distorted. Whenever a lecture by some outsider was announced the general feeling was antagonistic to it. Lectures dealt with various themes, but without some rational arrangement they were worse than useless. It is hopeless to expect girls to get any instruction out of being read to about dipsomania in men, followed immediately by a reading on poultry breeding. The class cannot help becoming inattentive."

In connection with discipline in the camps, the following report is highly instructive:—

"There was one aspect I disliked very much, namely, the free intercourse with the male groups which was favoured rather than discouraged by the leaders. The older girls boast a great deal of their intimate experiences to the younger, who, naturally, are thus stimulated to desire the same pleasures and are awakened to a consciousness of these things at a too early age. Not everyone has the strength of character needed to remain unaffected. . . . Unless the position of leader is occupied by really capable and conscientious individuals much harm may be done."

Almost all the reports give evidence of the military training of the girls.

"The necessary discipline was enforced among the 120 girls by severe semi-military rules, which we were compelled unconditionally to obey. We had to form up in two ranks, dress in line, and then in goose step walk into the dining hall for meals or singing, proceed to our work, carrying spades or axes on our shoulders. Suddenly an almost military precision had come into our everyday life. If anyone had told me that some day I should be stopping and starting to a command I should have burst out laughing at him. At times short walks would be arranged, in which we had to practice marching in goose step to the rhythm of storm troopers' songs. Frankly, we would rather have sung folk songs and ballads, for indeed we could hardly be said to be storm troopers."

DISSATISFACTION AND DESPAIR

Here you have in reality the highly-praised enthusiasm of the girls in the labour camps. As to other aspects of the camps, much strong

criticism has been expressed by women, and this is particularly significant in view of the fact that criticism is energetically repressed by the government.

Since we must perforce confine ourselves to only a few examples, special prominence should be given to the severe objections raised by the women in regard to the campaign against unemployment started by the Berlin County Council during the summer of 1934. For many weeks the German women were mocked by posters on every Berlin hoarding, which bore the following doggerel verses:—

“3. TO THE GERMAN GIRL:

“Get hold of pots and pans and broom
And you'll the sooner get a groom.

“Recognise your natural vocation—act up to it. Don't reckon the pleasure of workshop and office life higher than the training for your future profession as housewife. Moreover, housework will keep you healthier, brisker and more charming.

“4. TO THE WORKING WOMAN.

“Not for you the business life,
Rather learn to be a wife.

“Don't let the man stay at home, but take charge of the housekeeping again; relinquish your job to a man who otherwise will indirectly be maintained by the work of your hands. Money and old age insurance are useless unless your life has got a real meaning; without that your mind and body will be ruined.

“7. TO OUR HOUSEWIVES.

“Don't steal the time your child and husband want,
A servant take to do the things you can't.”

A German women's paper, “Die Deutsche Kämpferin, July, 1934, has the following comment on these suggestions:—

“To acquire a husband is not every girl's goal; just any man will not satisfy a girl who is a really valuable member of the community of our people. Such girls would refuse to play the part of breeding cattle. . . . If and when saucepan, shovel and broom mean the same as finding a man prepared for marriage and fatherhood, in a sufficiently well-paid position to provide house and home for his wife, then Paradise will have begun for the commonalty of the German people. . . . Nowhere do we find a divine or natural law allowing one of the sexes to claim all the pleasant, honourable, well-paid and leading positions for itself, and leaving the menial, hard and badly-paid jobs to the other.

“Only the individual himself is able to decide whether or not he or she can be happy in professional life. Only when the capitalist profit system is definitely overcome will the majority of men find the 'home' round which their activities may centre. While such a state of things

remains unachieved for hundreds and thousands of girls and women, by force deprived of the chance of making an honest living, nothing but suicide or prostitution is left.”

To-day dissatisfaction has grown so strong among women that a body of National Socialist women sent an official address to the Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, containing the following menacing words:—

“Since women are challenged to devote all their strength to the State and to pay their taxes like men, it is unjust that women are not allowed to take their seat among those whose business it is to decide in what manner the taxes shall be administered. For decades now women have been waking to a new consciousness, and the process will continue irresistibly, whatever obstacles may be put in the way. The younger generation of thinking women has begun to feel deeply concerned at the realisation that advantage has been taken of them, that they are being sacrificed to the irresponsibility of the men, after having, owing to deepest patriotic feeling, allowed the active supporters of Germany's freedom to become the unlimited masters not only of their own fate, but of the whole people's fate. We have not advanced one step forward towards a really impartial appreciation of the role of women, but, on the contrary, have retreated very many steps backwards.”

The elimination of women from industry has met with the same strong criticism as their elimination from public work. The most shameful outrage—as it appears to them—was inflicted on them when they were not allowed to attend the funeral of the Reichs-President Hindenburg. Thousands of German women had sent a telegram to the Minister for Home Affairs to the effect that “Germany's women desire and demand that they be represented at the national funeral at Tannenberg. Because of ‘lack of room’ this request was ignored. “Die Deutsche Kämpferin” comments as follows:—

“This funeral was a national observance on which the attention of the whole world was concentrated, one which concerned the whole mass of the German people. That here again the mothers of the nation were publicly excluded from the community of the people, in the very hour when the last honours were being rendered the defunct head of the State, has affected all passionately German-feeling women with painful surprise and the depressing feelings of violated honour. We have not forgotten that the Reichs President, who on the 30th of January, 1933, opened the doors of the German future to National Socialism, was first and foremost indebted for his victorious election to the vote of the women of all parties. Innumerable representatives of foreign Governments, each of which, if it likes, can push us over into the abyss of war to-morrow, attended the funeral of the ‘father of the fatherland,’ but for the mothers of the fatherland was ‘no room.’”

FAMILY LIFE

The argument appealed to, to justify the elimination of women from public activity, is that to devote themselves adequately to the cares of the family all their strength is needed. German family life under Fascism, however, is a somewhat one-sided affair. Again and again we hear complaints that owing to service with Storm Troops and other military training, demonstrations, the "Kraft durch Freude" (League Strength through Joy), which organises holiday groups, etc., no time is left to the men for family life at all. Even the time of the children is so taken up by the "Hitler-Jugend," military training in schools, camping, etc., that the "mothers of the nation" have found it necessary to make a formal protest. As a result, a new regulation has been issued to the effect that for one afternoon a week children must be allowed to remain at home.

Another gross interference with family life has been brought about by the "Landhilfe," which men and women are compelled to join whenever the State so orders. A number of men took a complaint to the Law Courts challenging the restoration of married life, and thus placed the State in a somewhat awkward position.

At a Labour Exchange a woman who at a day's notice was told that she was required to leave for the "Landhilfe," asking what would become of her children, got the reply she should not bother about that, for there were plenty of orphan asylums to take care of them.

Two American women, on a visit to Germany, asked a middle-class woman whom they met in a train between Berlin and Königsberg what her opinion was concerning the Third Reich. "We are sick of Hitler," the woman replied in a low voice, "our family life has been ruined, our husbands and sons have been turned into puppets, who have to exercise at marching goose-step all the time. Never do we have a moment's rest or comfort for ourselves. All the time they are worrying them with some military alarm or other in the name of the Government or the fatherland."

The dissolution of family life, begun originally by capitalism, is being completed by National Socialism. Nevertheless, that does not prevent German women writers from stating that it is Communism that is destroying the family. Thus Carola Struve, in her book "Frauenfreiheit und Volksfreiheit" quotes the Russian novel "Cement" as proof that all emotional ties are destroyed in the most cruel way in Russia. "Love of parents, love of children, love of spouses, friendship, all are destroyed in favour of the mass. The Communist belief is that a community of the people can be arrived at by the destruction of all emotional ties. What madness!" she exclaims.

A main propaganda plank in the Nazi programme is the "Frühehe" (early marriage). Yet the Government issued a decree that young men and women under 25 (in many factories the age limit is 30) must be eliminated from employment and drafted into the "Landhilfe." But how can early marriage be possible when young men and women are drafted to work on the land without pay, and forced to live under the most primitive conditions, without even the slightest chance of making a living, which would help them to establish a family, after their return, when women's wages of 8 to 12 marks a week are common? Then, too, the "Landhilfe" is the worst possible preparation for marriage. The conditions are terrible, boys and girls being herded together in stables for sleeping quarters. According to reliable reports, an enormous percentage, up to 50 per cent., of the girls return from the country pregnant.

MOTHER AND CHILD RELIEF

Where mere propaganda is concerned things have a different aspect, and the Government embarked upon a great campaign under the slogan "Hilfswerk für Mutter und Kind" (Mother and Child Relief Organisation). According to the official statement its objects are (*Völkischer Beobachter*, 28.2.34) as follows:—

"This 'Hilfswerk' has steadily continued to apply such measures of education and enlightenment with regard to population policy, taking as a necessary principle the importance of a sound posterity, making it incumbent on us to acknowledge publicly the heroism of the mother. This undertaking, the possibilities of which are enormous, may well bear as its device the motto invented by Minister Goebbels, 'Mother and Child are the pledge of the immortality of the people.' National Socialism has already interrupted the steady decline of the birth-rate, the necessary measures having been taken immediately after its accession to power."

The regulations governing this organisation, which is intended to deal with pregnant women, widows, unmarried mothers, and divorced women, read further:—

"The most important necessity for keeping mother and child in good health is a house in sound condition. Therefore, unwholesome and unhygienic flats are to be abolished and slums cleared."

This propaganda was issued in April, 1934. In September of the same year the German newspapers printed statements that in a certain city in South Germany large numbers of tenants were not paying their rents:—

"Since apparently the will to pay is lacking, the Municipality has decided to provide old railway carriages for such tenants as are to be turned out of their dwellings."

Accommodation of this kind is not only in many cases the frame-

work in which the rising German family is expected to develop, but, apparently, also a suitable place for confinements. In the same month the Official Prussian Press Service published a decree that in future confinements were to take place in hospitals and clinics only in abnormal cases and generally in the homes of the women, the great expense to which the State was being put, in having to meet the cost of the expensive general use of hospitals, having to be cut down at any rate.

REVIVAL OF PROSTITUTION

One of the consequences of eliminating women, especially young women, from industry and other forms of wage-earning life is, naturally, an enormous increase in prostitution and venereal diseases. Obviously, reliable figures are not available. That particularly invidious law against women, prescribing official control, and re-establishing brothels under the protection of the State, which were abolished in Germany in 1927, though in England they were done away with as early as 1886, has been re-introduced into Germany. "Brothels are the protection of family life" was the message broadcast during Easter, 1934. Consequently, attempts have been made in a number of cities to concentrate prostitutes in certain streets and houses, and to make compulsory a system of "yellow tickets." Thus it has become a legally sanctioned institution. The mediæval practice of segregation and registration is being revived in full force. "High wall and winding alleys," we read, "mask the new districts in order to divert the attention and curiosity of the children, who were always eager to see what occurred in these streets." Thus men are freed from all control, while the prostitute once again becomes a pariah. The real facts as to the "moral regeneration of the German people" clearly appear from the challenge issued by the National Socialist women, urging "that measures be taken against the growing barbarism of the male sex." ("Die Deutsche Kämpferin," September, 1934.) In connection with the new law the comment of this paper is:—

"How can a community of people be brought about when the law allows one half of the community to treat the other half as a marketable commodity, and when the female portion alone is under control, and may eventually be punished, as a result of outrages against decency committed by both of them. The male section of the community, however, is permitted to indulge in immoral behaviour without any check. Such an altogether un-Nordic moral attitude does not scruple to eliminate the female portion of the population from the community of people, a thing deeply degrading to female dignity, instead of protecting it, by providing work and moral education, thereby converting these women into valuable members of the community. The prospects for the future

are depressing, for the army of those eliminated so cold-bloodedly must continue to grow in proportion as women are cut off from all possibility of finding work and supporting themselves. It was proved long ago in Germany that only a very small number of female prostitutes had adopted this occupation from natural inclination."

In the same issue a doctor says:—

"As long as the State needs brothels for its men, and is even compelled to protect such institutions legally, 'Bureaus for Race Improvement' and 'Mother and Child Campaigns' are Utopian."

The official acknowledgment by the State of what the law itself calls "indecent" and "outrages against morals" is altogether incompatible with theories of racial regeneration, in regard to which the "Bund Deutscher Mädel" (Union of German Girls) issued the following credo:—

"As a German girl, I take care to avoid all indecent temptations, since I know that premature use of my sexual forces destroys my nerves and diminishes the hereditary strength of my body. I shall work at educating and enlightening my comrades and the young girls entrusted to me."

Since, according to innumerable statements made by leading Nazis, all German women are National Socialists, it is difficult to gather what women exactly are intended to occupy the newly-established brothels. The practical attitude of the Government is still more remarkable as it is in striking contrast to the previous statement made by the Leader in his book "My Struggle," where he says:—

"The struggle against syphilis and its champion, prostitution, is one of the most immense tasks of mankind; it is immense because what is at stake is not only the solution of an individual question, but the removal of a whole series of evils which, as a consequence, are liable to cause this plague. For disease of the body is, in this case, only the result of disease of the moral, social, and racial instincts. If, owing to indolence or cowardice, this struggle is not carried through, consider what may be the state of the people 500 years ahead." (German edition, 1930, p. 280.)

And with a startling anticipation of future developments he goes on to say:—

"Whoever is inclined to make light of all this may study the statistics of this plague, may compare its increase during the last hundred years, may think over its future development—and he would possess the stupidity of an ass if he did not feel cold shivers down his back." (German edition, 1930, p. 282.)

ABORTION

Though prostitution is legally fostered, yet abortion is strictly

prosecuted and made practically impossible. Before the National Socialist seizure of power the Nazi party had brought a Bill into the Reichstag, to abolish both abortion and birth control, which ran as follows:—

“Whoever undertakes to prevent the natural fertility of the German people, or by word of mouth, writing, printing, or by means of pictures, assists such efforts, or who helps or co-operates in the deterioration of the race, or the disintegration of the German people by cross-breeding with members of the Jewish blood-community, is liable to be punished with hard labour for treason to the race.”

The “Hilfswerk für Mutter und Kind” regulations point out that

“the main object of the relief granted to pregnant women is to help in the struggle against abortion in all groups of the female population. This can only be carried through by full enlightenment as to the danger of abortion to health and by education for maternity.”

Both abortion and birth control are now therefore misdemeanours. Doctors prepared to help unhappy women are faced with hard labour and the destruction of their livelihoods. Midwives performing operations have been placed under the so-called Sicherheitsverwahrung, i.e., imprisonment for an unspecified term.

The large family that every German woman is encouraged to have does not, of course, go entirely without reward. In the province of Hessen, for instance, the Minister for Education has decreed that every mother of more than three children shall be entitled to one free visit to the theatre a month.

A FAMILY BUDGET

Yet while the problem of sustaining these large families remains unsolved, it is difficult to believe that such rewards can be taken seriously. An example of the way in which the National Socialists treat this problem is revealed by the following quotation from the “NS Frauenwarte,” the official women’s paper, for August, 1934. Under the heading “The Wife of the Unemployed Man as Arithmetician” the article states:—

“Some time ago, under the heading of ‘The Housewife as Arithmetician,’ I saw the budget for lunch and dinner of a family of five. An amount of 15 marks a week was reckoned. This amount is much too high for the household of unemployed people. I should like you therefore to take a look at my own housekeeping books. My husband gets a dole of 12.80 marks in respect to himself, myself and our child, aged two. Since rent alone costs us five marks a week, my husband can only give me seven marks for our housekeeping. The remaining 80 pfennigs have to pay for light, coal and leather for repairing our boots. In order

to shame those who even in these days complain how bad times are, I want to show how I have managed to feed three persons over a period of two years. The food we find necessary per week is as follows:—

7 pints of milk	1.40 marks
2 loaves	1.10 „
2 lbs. margarine	76 „
½-lb. bacon	50 „
1 lb. sugar	40 „
1 lb. semolina	20 „
1 lb. baked beans... ..	20 „
½-lb. malt coffee	11 „
½-lb. meat	40 „
½-lb. cheese	19 „
Vegetables	50 „
Eggs	24 „
	<hr/>
	6.00

which leaves one mark for odds and ends that are not needed every week. . . . The question ‘What am I to cook daily?’ is not so difficult as it may seem. Here are some examples:—

“Monday: Mashed potatoes and fried onions. This makes a very good meal if prepared with a spot of milk and fat, and much love and care. The two latter condiments are free of charge, and can be made to enter into every dish. Moreover, everyone in imagination can conjure a nice joint in addition. Tuesday: Milk soup and fried potatoes. Wednesday: Bean soup with bacon and a marvellous imaginary sausage.

“Thus, half a week is amply arranged for. For the other days a clever housewife will manage equally well. A beaming child’s face, a few flowers, or a pine branch are beautiful table decorations.”

WELFARE POLICY

Suggestions of this kind are the necessary complement of the welfare policy. A German paper (“Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten”) on the 12th September, 1934, stated that a family of three could live very well on 43 pfennigs a day (60 pfennigs a day are being spent for feeding one police dog). This is in entire accordance with the National Socialist economic policy. As early as December, 1931, the Nazi leader, Gregor Strasser, addressing a body of students, pointed out the necessity for eliminating women from productive work, and stated that under the Third Reich she would be taught how to manage on the money brought home by her husband. “Sausage and white bread will disappear, and instead of them the good old German pea-soup will be set again in the place of honour.” On this point the programme has, indeed, been amply fulfilled. Throughout the winter every family is bound to cook once a month on a Sunday the so-called Eintopfgericht (single dish meal) which is

to cost not more than 50 pfennigs (about 6d.), the extra money which would have been spent on the meal in better times being handed over to the State.

Whereas the "mother and child campaign" continues to be emphasised, social welfare schemes recede more and more into the background as a relic of an obsolete liberal epoch. At the inauguration of the "Academy for the Education of Doctors" in Munich on October 1st, 1934, the President of the Bavarian Board of Health said that "Social Insurance had become an instrument of the class struggle, and consequently medical science had been degraded to mass work." "Die Deutsche Kämpferin" (September, 1934) quotes the statement of a specialist in Eugenics to the effect that no doctor should touch a newly-born babe earlier than its second or third year, thus leaving to nature the carrying out of the principles of natural selection.

Even those women who, in official speeches, cannot be praised highly enough—the widows of the men killed in the war—have been bereft of the poor allowance which the former regime had bestowed on them. In September, 1934, the Minister of Labour promulgated a law which deprived the majority of the 700,000 war widows living in Germany to-day of the dole which had been granted them. The preamble to this Bill states that, since it is a well-known fact that a large number of these dependents were not entitled to the dole for moral and financial reasons, it was a condition of things that could no longer be maintained. The competent authorities were therefore to be entitled to revise all grants made by earlier bodies. The leader of the "Kriegsopferversorgung" comments on this law in the "Völkischer Beobachter" (17.9.34) as follows:—

"Nothing was more natural than the belief held by German soldiers and their wives, after their years of disappointment, that a National Socialist Germany would at one stroke repair the wrongs they had suffered in the past. But they forget that any service to the individual must have been preceded by the individual's service to the community. For that reason only new duties and obligations have been laid on their shoulders. In the years that lie behind us, it was intentionally that we refrained from mentioning doles or the other material desires of the victims of the war. Our one thought was how to awake again the German soldier's sense of honour and his pride in the mighty deeds of the warrior."

The 700,000 widows of the warriors whose doles have been taken from them or reduced are far more concerned to win a decent life for themselves and their children than with the "awakening of the German soldier's honour," just as millions of German women of all

classes would prefer to "whistle" for the Leader's promises if they would only find release from the combination of prison and slavery into which the National Socialist State has thrust them. Thus another anonymous woman who, answering a question asked by the two American women mentioned earlier, pointed to her marriage ring and began to cry, spoke for millions of her fellow sufferers when she said:—

"Nothing would ever make me give birth to a child under this Government. I have been married for three years, but I cannot load my conscience with the guilt of giving birth to one more man for war and Fascism."

CHAPTER III

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

"In the case of female education the main stress should be laid on physical training; and after that, on development of character; and—last of all—of the intellect. But the one absolute aim of female education must be with a view to the future mother." (Hitler, "My Struggle," p. 163.)

RULING classes or groups in the past made it a practice to allow just so much education among the masses as seemed necessary for them adequately to fulfil the part they were ordained to play in the life of the community, and took good care to see these limits were not overstepped. For this reason, under Nazism, education in general stands at a very low level, and female education on a particularly low one.

The Nazi attitude is well revealed by the following figures: In 1932 there were 98,000 students, of whom 18,000 were women, studying at the German Universities. To-day, as the result of a decree issued at Easter, 1934, the maximum number of students permitted to enter the Universities is 15,000, only 10 per cent. of whom may be women; although 10,000 women matriculated at Easter, 1934, 1,500 was the maximum number permitted to proceed to the Universities.

Official bodies have been particularly active in their effort to deprive women of the advantage of the Higher Education. When in May, 1934, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the admission of women to the Prussian Universities was "celebrated," the "Rheinisch Westfälische Zeitung" pointed out that:—

"To-day, a quarter of a century having passed since women won the rights to a higher education, women stand once more at the beginning of a new epoch, which, first and foremost, is endeavouring to win them

away from University study. This must by no means be considered a backward step."

Where women are now admitted to University the curriculum is identical with that of the men. The main emphasis is on physical training, instruction in problems of race, heredity and ethnology, all of which leaves but little time for the actual course for which the student is enrolled. The girls, like the boys, must do their 26 weeks Labour Service before they can enter upon their studies; they must also attend certain compulsory lectures and physical training courses and must pass examination in these subjects, as must the men.

The result of banning women from the Universities is that women are necessarily excluded from all those professions which presuppose certain intellectual equipment. To-day there is not a single woman in the German Reichstag: there are no women employed in any municipal service. They are, however, permitted to enter the Civil Service on attaining the age of 35. Women teachers who marry must resign their posts. A woman sitting as a judge would be "a travesty of justice than which no worse could be imagined," says the "Angriff." As for the study of medicine, special restrictions hedge it round. There are not, however, likely to be too many women desiring to study medicine in the future, for the prospects are most meagre. In "Die Aerztin" (September, 1934) a woman doctor says:—

"All of us have had experience of this incessant running from hospital to hospital, from one head doctor to another, again and again getting the sometimes politely disguised, sometimes bald reply that women doctors were not wanted. The head doctor in a hospital here said of a female colleague who had been warmly recommended to him: 'I should very much like to employ the lady on account of her excellent work which I know well. But do realise that there would be the devil to pay were I to take a woman on to my department! Many advertisements notifying vacancies on hospital staffs always begin with the words 'No woman doctor,' which occurs as often as the words 'No Jews!'"

"Such vacancies as do occur, therefore, are filled by newly-qualified men, most of whom are neither experienced, nor have they a personal interest in their work, nor have they adequate training, but they enjoy the priceless advantage of having been born men."

The identical educational principles are also applied where elementary and secondary schools are concerned. In the official Nazi periodical "Deutsches Frauenwerk" (January, 1934), Ella Schubert, head mistress of a girls' school, says:—

"We want to make it clear what a girls' school to-day has to achieve. The subjects dealing with race and family, heredity, Germanism abroad and protection from air raids stand in the foreground of our whole instruction. In addition, swimming, cooking, the encouragement of music

at home, domestic economy, and the whole of German history, have all to be mastered."

The military character of the education of girls appears more clearly still from an article which appeared in the "Deutsche Studentenzeitung" for May, 1934:—

"From the history and traditions of our people we have a sufficiency of knowledge about women teachers and fighters and women who bear weapons. . . . The national socialist ideology puts no obstacles of any kind in the way of establishing military sport camps for girls."

It is made compulsory for school girls to join the Hitler-Jugend, as it is for boys. They must wear uniforms and take part in military games. What may happen is seen from the following note which appeared in the Dortmund Nazi paper, under date 19.9.34:—

"Last Sunday a group of school children, members of the Hitler-Jugend, were having target practice with air-guns. A ten-year-old boy, jostled while shooting by a comrade, missed his aim, and the pellet entered the left eye of a girl of five. The unfortunate child has lost an eye."

Generally, the Nazi attitude is that the child can have no better educator than its mother. Guida Diehl, like so many others, therefore, makes the following demands in her book "Die Deutsche Frau und der Nationalsozialismus":—

"No creche, no kindergarten, no play centres should be allowed to take over this task, which can only be fulfilled by the mother and the home."

It was an ideal, however, that the Nazis themselves realised was nonsensical when put into practice. Nevertheless, the only remedy that suggested itself to them was a further recourse to compulsion. Such women as are incapable of educating their children shall be compelled to learn to become so. In a significant article on female education the "Völkischer Beobachter" (3.7.34) draws attention to the fact that there are numbers of mothers "too silly, too lazy, too thoughtless, or with too little self-control to educate their children. Women's organisations, meetings, the press, wireless, etc., were constantly to address and instruct such women."

"But where such methods fail," the article goes on, "compulsory education should be inaugurated. Since maternity is sacred and children are a blessing sent from heaven, and since the future of our people depends on the education of its children, according to Divine Command, and the necessities of the State, the mother is responsible for the development of her child. Should she fail, the State has every right to educate her for maternity compulsorily."

A method of carrying out these compulsory measures was suggested by the prying into one's neighbour's personal affairs, since the article goes on to say:—

"In many cases no doubt sufficient grounds for stating official investigations would be ascertaining whether houses are kept clean, children duly fed and cared for. . . ."

In addition it had been suggested that women who have committed the crime of not fitting into the Nazi scheme of womanhood, but, misled, have devoted themselves to other interests and the development of gifts and capacities other than motherhood, should be punished in some way:—

"Just as children cannot be educated by verbal instruction alone, but as they have to be guided by the fear of punishment, so the same means may have to be applied, where necessary, to educate the mothers."

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN IN GAOL

ON its accession to power the Hitler Government made a solemn promise that women should never be confined in concentration camps and that only prisons were to be used for them. Before long, however, the women's prisons having become overcrowded, women began to be thrust into concentration camps under conditions exactly similar to those of the men and subject to the same brutalities. Various reports by fellow prisoners released from the same camps have come to us. Among others, we choose the following statement:—

"Women were beaten in the face with fists or rubber truncheons, or with steel rods, and hide whips on their bare bodies. They were pushed about and dragged round by the hair in order to force them to give evidence against their husbands or friends who had escaped, and thus betray them to the torturers."

The Secret State Police have never shrunk from conveying even sick and pregnant women and women with new-born babies to the camps. In addition all medical attentions have been withheld from them.

Storm Troopers have been known to swear at the women in the following terms: "You Marxist whore," "You syphilitic sow," "Stinking hole," "Perverted sow."

HOHENSTEIN

In the Hohenstein concentration camp—established in an old castle in Saxony—there have never been less than 25 women interned, and at times 40. The men in it have grown accustomed to every kind of insult. What they feared most was the physical torture, but it is beyond all description what moral sufferings the women had to endure.

When the women found it necessary to go to the upper courtyard of the castle the Storm Troopers would trip them up and roar with laughter as they fell. On many occasions the Storm Troopers thought it excellent fun to tie the women's skirts over their heads and drive them round the yard. Storm Troopers Putzler and Stachowsky held up a woman's skirt, made water over her legs, and jibed at her, saying, "You swine, what a filthy mess you have made of yourself."

On April 2nd or 3rd, 1934, a prisoners' transport arrived from Bautzen in Saxony with two women amongst the men. One of them seemed to have been arrested quite casually in the street, for she had nothing with her but an empty market bag and a gramophone record. The other was an old, grey-haired, motherly-looking being. When evening came the old woman was sent for to the Commandant's office. After she had left Storm Trooper Lehmann tied her skirt over her leg. Then he fastened a dog's lead round her neck and forced her to walk round the lime tree in the castle courtyard, a proceeding which gave enormous pleasure to the assembled Storm Troopers.

Women are guarded by the Storm Troopers in exactly the same way as the men. There are no female guards for the women. Storm Troopers even accompany them to the privies. At night young men enter their cells to check them up. No regulations or possibilities of redress, as in the women's prisons, apply to these places.

The youngest woman prisoner was only 16, the oldest 60. One, formerly a National Socialist, had turned Communist after a visit to Russia. She was far gone in tuberculosis, which kept her bedridden, and she was left to her fellow prisoners to get her out into the air. No medical attention was ever given her.

All the women, even the oldest, were forced to work at the wash-tubs, and in their thin clothes, in icy weather, to hang the washing out to dry. One of the women, after her release, reported that she had been pushed into the wash-house by one of the Storm Troopers with the words "This one will have to go on washing till she gives up the ghost."

From the wash-house windows the women could see what went on outside the office. This was where the Storm Troopers tortured the prisoners in order to frighten the women.

Another woman, aged 35, made a report as to the treatment meted out to her at Hohenstein, to which she had been conveyed in the autumn of 1933. She was alleged to have been an official representative of the Communist Party. For a whole fortnight, every time she fell asleep in her cell, she was immediately awakened for cross-examination, carried out under the supervision of an important

official, who once said to her: "We do not need to beat you up; we have other ways of breaking your spirit and physically destroying you."*

The women prisoners were allowed one room only; there they lived in day and night; the beds were arranged on two levels, one above the other. When the room was fully occupied only half of them could sit down or move. A special device invented by the Nazis is the confining of political prisoners in the same cells as habitual criminals, prostitutes, etc.; this the author herself experienced in the Berlin police prison.

WOMEN AS HOSTAGES

The whole civilised world was moved to indignation by the case of Frau Seger and her 18 months' old baby, both of whom the Nazis seized as hostages. The pressure of public opinion ultimately forced their release, but many women still remain in gaol as hostages, as, for instance, the wife of the Communist member of the Bavarian Diet, Beimler, who refused to disclose her husband's whereabouts. In prison she is treated as a criminal and is condemned to hard labour in company of other non-political women prisoners. Neither her parents nor her children are allowed to visit her. Her 14 years old daughter has disappeared and she can get no news of her; her 13 years old son was seized by the police and removed to a notorious school reserved in former times exclusively for mentally deficient children. The police are now educating this boy after their own well-known brutal fashion. Her sister, too, was taken to preventive custody by the Secret Prussian State Police. Those who met her in the women's prison in Berlin have reported that she will break down completely if not released soon.

Frau Schwalbach, wife of a newspaper seller, who escaped from prison and fled to Paris, went to see her husband. On returning to Germany in August, 1933, she was arrested. For more than a year now she has been confined in various concentration camps or prisons, and her family is totally unable to get any news of her.

Frau Steinfurth, the wife of a member of the Prussian Diet and official of the Red Aid Fund, was taken into custody immediately after the Reichstag fire and removed to the Sonnenburg concentration camp. After her husband had been shot, together with John Scheer,

* Most of the material on Hohenstein is taken from the book "Konzentrationslager," Verlag Graphia, Karlsbad. See "Murder in Camp Hohenstein" (Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 1s.) and "Letters from German Concentration Camps" (ditto, 6d.). For treatment of Italian women by Fascists see "Fascist War on Women" (ditto, 3d.). For examples nearer home see "Fascists at Olympia" (Gollancz, 6d.).

Eugen Schönhaar, and Rudolf Schwartz, the police conveyed Frau Steinfurth to a churchyard, pushed her in front of an open grave, and said: "Your husband is going to be buried here. You are permitted to be present at the funeral." In spite of her entreaties to have the coffin opened so that she might take a last look at her dead husband, her appeal was refused, no doubt, in order that she should not see the horrible mutilations that had been inflicted on him. She is still incarcerated in the women's prison in Berlin.

The wife of a former Socialist Mayor in Thüringen, Frau Worch, was with her daughter seized as a hostage in the early days of the Hitler Government. When after 18 months' imprisonment, even the companionship of her daughter, removed to another cell, was taken from her, she hanged herself.

The wives of the murdered anti-Fascists, Dressel, Götz and Hausmann, are now under arrest for the sole reason that the Fascists are afraid the widows may testify to the bestial outrages inflicted on their husbands at Dachau. The walls of the concentration camp have reduced them to silence.

The time *will* come when the mighty force of the Socialist proletariat, united in the workers' fight for a free and Socialist Germany, will release these women and thousands of other nameless martyrs still suffering with them.

Part II—Women Under Communism

EVERY COOK MUST LEARN TO RULE THE STATE.

—LENIN.

However terrible and disgusting the dissolution under the capitalist system of the old family ties may appear, nevertheless, modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons and to children of both sexes, creates a new economical foundation for a higher form of family and of the relation between the sexes.—MARX.

The emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible, and remain so as long as women are excluded from social production and restricted to domestic labour. The emancipation of women becomes feasible only then when women are enabled to take part extensively in social production.—ENGELS.

The Soviet Union is the first State in the world in which the Government authorities and the whole public are consciously working at the solution of the women's question.—CLARA ZETKIN.

Without the millions of women we cannot realise the dictatorship of the proletariat and constructive Communism.—LENIN.

A woman's domestic life is one in which she is sacrificed every day amidst a thousand petty details. The ancient right of a man to be lord survives secretly. Our political work among the masses of women involves a considerable effort to educate the men. We must root out the ancient outlook of the lord and master to the last fibre in the Party and among the masses.—LENIN.

Communal dining-rooms, crèches, kindergartens are the simple means which in reality liberate women, diminish and make away with her inequality with man in regard to her part in the social production and in social life.—LENIN.

The Collective Farm Movement has brought to the fore a number of remarkable and capable women, who occupy posts of leadership. Women have long ceased to be backward. In the Collectives women are a great power. It is our duty to place them in the foremost ranks and to utilise their ability.—STALIN. All Union Conference of Collective Farm Workers, 1933.

Communism is not meant to introduce asceticism, but the joy of life and vital vigour, attained partly through the fulfilment of love . . . healthy sport, gymnastics, swimming, tramping, physical exercises of every kind, many-sided intellectual interests, learning, study, research as far as possible in common. . . . The proletariat is a rising class. It does not need intoxication either as a narcotic or a stimulus. No more the intoxication of sexual excesses than of alcohol. . . .—LENIN.

I have a vision of builders at their unceasing work . . . we have to create a new world and a new humanity and new forms of social relations. . . . The land is labouring day and night. All are working, nobody enjoys the privilege of idleness. Altogether we have done away with idlers. . . .—PILNYAK.

I have brought my electric kettle with me to the commune, but they use it carelessly. Why did I bring it. . . . I? Mine? Brrr. . . . The old regime! In our place the clock on the wall is broken. . . . In our place people use the sewing machine carelessly. All eruptions of the past. Slaves formerly ruined the tools that were entrusted to them like that. But it mustn't happen in a commune. Here we must handle common property carefully.—Entry in the day-book of a Commune.

IN November, 1918, the first All-Russian Conference of Proletarian and Peasant women met in Moscow with almost 1,200 delegates, representatives of nearly one million working women. This Conference demanded social, economic and legal equality, the reform of the marriage laws and the legislation of abortion. In the resolution on the functions of working women the Conference stressed that the conditions for their liberation were exactly the same as those required by all workers, and that they had no specific feminist questions to solve. But at the same time the Conference recognised that the Party must have special groups of women workers whose duty it would be to rouse the mass of working women by every possible method of propaganda. According to the principles outlined in the preceding quotations, all the demands of the women were granted—with the statement by Lenin:

“It was a matter of course that men and women should receive equal treatment in legislation, social life, and in administration and government.”

In order to fulfil the demands of the Women's Congress it was necessary to create organisations whereby the domestic and educational functions of the individual family were transferred to the community. This meant the planning of communal kitchens, public dining-rooms and wash-houses; crèches, kindergartens and children's homes; birth-control and abortion clinics; maternity institutes; judicial and medical consultation centres. In fact the re-creation of social life in order that a woman could be both a worker and a mother.

EMPLOYMENT

ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Every industry and profession were therefore thrown open to women on exactly the same conditions as those obtaining for men.

Qualification now no longer rests on sex but on physical and mental ability. Every worker, man and woman, is examined by the doctor of the factory, mill or mine, in order to find out whether the physical health of the applicant is good enough for the post. Women are thus working in the mines and the foundries, on the railways and boats, on road-mending and house-building, and in every factory and workshop through the Soviet Union. During the period of the first Five-Year Plan the number of women working in different branches of the national economy more than doubled. The increase in the number of women workers in four and a quarter years was 3.5 million. In January, 1932, the percentage of women workers engaged in non-agricultural work was 31.5 per cent.; in industry alone 32.3 per cent.; in building 12.5 per cent. There has been a special drive in the U.S.S.R. to draw greater numbers of women into highly-skilled work as can be seen by the following tables which show the great progress that has been made in the five years between 1926 and 1931:—

	1926	1931
Metal Workers	4,800	68,700
Wood Workers	800	6,000
Printers	5,200	12,900
Building Workers	700	17,000
Machinists at Power Stations	600	12,500

These results have been achieved by persuading girls to attend the factory schools, industrial technical colleges and industrial colleges. In large plants one-third of the women workers are engaged in some form of technical study. In the steel wire works in Moscow, where in 1928 no women were employed, 31 per cent. of the workers are now women. In the Hammer and Sickle Works in Moscow nearly 60 per cent. of the workers are women. In factories where there is a majority of women employed, of the three heads of the factory (the Secretary of the Political Committee, the Director, and the Secretary of the Trade Union or Factory Committee), two of the triumvirate are usually women.

The actual figures for the increase in the number of women workers during the course of the Five-Year Plan have been given. In the struggle to fulfil the Plan, which absorbed the energy and enthusiasm of all workers, the women played a more stable and reliable part than the men. They did not get drunk, they did not shirk their work, they did not swindle, and they were capable of a greater depth of enthusiasm than men. Finally, they took greater care of the machines. It is interesting to note that while about half of the men engaged in industry belong to shock brigades, 60 per

cent. of the women are udarnitsas. In the Putilov Works, famous for its part in the Revolution, the udarnitsas are in greater number than the udarniks.

“Whereas in Tsarist days,” writes M. Denissova, “women thought themselves lucky if they could occupy themselves with housework and escape taking up factory work that made havoc with their lives, at the present time women regard productive work that is of service to the community as the essential aim of their existence.”

POLITICAL

The main road whereby a woman may progress towards important work in the State is through being elected as a delegate of her group. Every 25 women factory workers and every 50 women peasants elect a delegate, who represents them on a great variety of committees, whose work it is to further production or to improve social conditions. In 1932 there were no less than 2½ million women acting as delegates. As such they learn to carry out social work—to organise crèches, improve the sanitary conditions, arrange classes for illiterate women and, particularly among the national minorities, to combat the superstitions arising from religious beliefs. Their struggle for the enlightenment of women and for the community has been carried on not only against tradition and ignorance but against their own husbands who have often been the greatest obstacles to their progress.

This work of the delegates has resulted in over 75 per cent. of the women taking part in the elections of the Soviets. There are 273,000 women members of town and village Soviets or 28.8 per cent. of the total membership. There are 5,000 women chairmen of town and village Soviets, and over 500,000 women working in the various Soviet departments. Even in the affairs of the Central Government women play an important part; in 1931 there were 89 women members of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R., and 137 members of the Executive of the R.S.F.S.R. (European Russia).

Women have been very successful in the legal profession, particularly as judges. In 1932 there were 93,486 women judges of People's Courts (corresponding to our magistrates courts) throughout the Soviet Union. They have also attained eight of the highest legal posts in the U.S.S.R.—as Chairman of the Court of one of the National Minorities, as Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Court, and as Assistant Prosecutors of Regional Courts.

Their success in the People's Court is due to the patience and maternal kindness in examining defendants. Many of the cases

deal with disputes concerning the maintenance of children and the experience of women is invaluable in finding out the truth of the case.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

The first Working Women's Congress in 1918 demanded the reform of the marriage laws. In Czarist days the position of women was one of slavery. A wife could have no separate passport without the permission of her husband, and it must be remembered that passports were necessary even if one wished to move from one town to another.

If a wife, for any reason, left her home she could be hunted down and brought back by the police like an escaped convict.

Divorce could only be obtained after a lengthy and humiliating legal procedure, and only then if an act of infidelity had been confirmed by eye-witnesses.

The opportunity for women to become wage earners except in agricultural work was severely limited, for only 3 per cent. of all women in Czarist Russia were literate. Those who attained positions as teachers, nurses or telephone operators and the like were immediately discharged on marriage. The servitude of women before the Revolution may be indicated by the following extracts from the Civil Code:—

“A wife is bound to obey her husband in all things and in nowise to be insubordinate to his authority.” “Wives cannot be hired for work without their husband's permission.”

The codes of pre-Revolution days (which have so much in common with the pronouncements of present-day Fascist Germany) were abolished and the humiliating inequalities which existed between men and women were swept away. After a referendum of all workers in the Soviet Union it was agreed that only two principles should be safeguarded in marriage—the health of the man and woman concerned and the welfare of the children.

Before being married in a registry office it is necessary for the man and woman to be informed of the state of each other's health to make certain that neither has tuberculosis or venereal disease. Secondly, it is necessary for them to state whether they have been married before and, if so, whether there were any children of the marriage. Whatever new marriage may be contracted does not release a worker from the responsibility of maintaining children of a previous marriage, nor from the support of a sick or disabled wife or husband. It is also necessary for both the man and the woman to be over eighteen.

Divorce is equally simple and, like marriage, involves a payment of only two roubles. It may be obtained by the request of either the husband or the wife, but the Registrar must be satisfied that any children of the marriage will be properly cared for. The maintenance allowance for children is up to one-third of a man's or woman's wages. If there is any difference of opinion concerning this the matter is taken to the People's Court. If the judge considers neither parent to be trustworthy the child is taken into a children's home and both parents have to contribute. Maintenance as a right belongs to all children, whether the marriage is registered or not, and no distinction is made between a legitimate and an illegitimate child. The rights of a child do not depend on the form of the marriage, and so the stigma of illegitimacy has been abolished. The principle on which these laws is devised is a very simple one—the State is not concerned with the personal relationships of men and women and does not presume to interfere with them, but the State is concerned with the care of the child, and as the child's supreme guardian, will interfere when necessary to protect its interests.

JUDICIAL CONSULTATION POINTS

In order that women may fully understand their new legal position, Judicial Consultation Centres have been established where women can obtain advice and assistance. Newspapers, popular literature, films and posters all assist in this enlightenment and cooperate by regularly explaining the work of the judicial centres. The personnel of the centres act as intercessors at court, negotiate with institutions, write applications and forward complaints on behalf of the women who appeal to them. They also function as a section of the Institute for the Protection of Mother and Child.

PROTECTION OF THE MOTHER

The position of the working mother can best be illustrated by the following extracts from the Code of Labour Laws:—

“The woman working in the factory who is engaged in physical labour is released from all work and is paid full wages for a period of eight weeks before and eight weeks after her confinement. If she is an employee or working in a non-manual profession her leave is six weeks before and six weeks after confinement.”

“A woman cannot be discharged from her work during her leave for pregnancy. She must be reinstated at the end of her leave.”

“The nursing mother, in addition to the usual intervals of rest during work, is entitled to no less than half an hour after every three and a half hours of work. These periods of interruption which are necessitated for the feeding of her baby are counted as working times.”

Apart from these safeguards, the mother is also given help through the State Social Insurance organisation. She receives free medical care, she is able to fetch the baby's food from the Institute of Mother and Child in her district if she is unable to feed her baby, and she receives whatever assistance may be necessary in case of the child's illness. This is without any contribution to the Social Insurance Fund. It is therefore made possible for a woman to be both worker and mother. She leaves her work two months before the baby is born (earlier if her physical condition makes it necessary) and she can be certain of financial independence and medical care during labour and for two months after child-birth.

Through pregnancy the mother is urged to visit the Ante-Natal Clinic in order that she may receive medical care. She is also persuaded to visit the Museum of Mother and Child in order that she may be instructed in physiology, in the care of her diet, and may be advised concerning clothing and exercise.

The aim of the Institute for the Protection of Mother and Child is to enable every mother to have her child in a maternity hospital. This has been only partially accomplished, but every year new hospitals are built and the number of beds increased. A mother usually stays 8 days in the Institute; longer if there are complications. Then every effort is made through her trade union to secure her a holiday in a rest home, where she can recuperate without expense or for a very small sum. After the period of two months the mother returns to her work. The crèche now plays an important role and helps to solve the difficult problem of the nursing mother who is a worker.

The crèche is essential in the Soviets for two main reasons. Firstly, the baby must be given skilled attention so that it may develop as a healthy citizen. Secondly, it must be trained from infancy to take its future place in a Socialist community. These purposes are fulfilled far more effectively through the crèche than would ever have been possible if the working mother had to look after her baby and her home. As women have been drawn more and more into production and into the collective farms, the number of crèches has grown:—

	1928	1930	1932
In towns and industrial centres	31,935	59,949	206,491
In villages (Permanent Crèches)	1,640	27,973	304,370
Seasonal Crèches	12,972	459,900	3,146,000

In 1933 the Plan provided for the establishment of crèches throughout the Union to take care of 6,886,000 children under 4 years of age.

The Crèche Department has its own budget. The main finances are contributed by the Government. Allowances are made by the various Trusts and Institutions responsible for the erection of factories and offices; in the case of blocks of flats a contribution is made from the building funds. Since 1927 one-quarter of one per cent. of the total amount of the wages bill must be contributed by every plant or factory, while the trade unions donate ten per cent. from their funds. Certain social organisations such as the Red Cross also contribute.

Only a small amount of the expense is covered by the parents. The sum paid is graded according to the budget of the particular family. If a father's wages are between 100-150 roubles a month he pays from five to ten roubles a month to the crèche. If the wages are low the service is free.

The child usually spends from 10-11 hours a day in the crèche. If the mother is on night duty, then the crèche is organised to care for the child both night and day, and only on her day of rest (every sixth day) does the mother take her child home. There is no intention in the Soviet system to separate the parents from the child for the relationship of parent and child is regarded as an important factor in the education of the child.

Crèches are usually built to accommodate from 60-100 cots. Small groups are formed, each containing from twelve to fifteen children. Each group lives in a flat, which can be isolated in case there is a danger of infection.

Each flat has a separate entrance, a reception-room with a cloak-room for mothers, a lavatory for the staff, a play-room with a verandah, a bedroom, and the children's baths and lavatories. Each group has its own playground. Each flat is connected with the kitchen, laundry and household departments. The large crèches have a section which is isolated and used for light infectious diseases. In serious cases of infection the child is sent home or to hospital and the remainder of the children in his group are segregated.

Each child has his own plates, cup, and special clothes for the crèche. He is received by a nurse, who examines him and takes off his ordinary clothes. According to his age he either has a bath or a shower and is then dressed. This is a typical daily programme for a crèche:—

FOR CHILDREN FROM ONE TO TWO YEARS

- 7. 0 a.m.- 7.30 a.m. Children's arrival, w.c., bath, shower-bath, washing.
- 7.30 a.m.- 8.30 a.m. Unorganised play.
- 8.30 a.m.- 9. 0 a.m. Washing of hands and breakfast.
- 9. 0 a.m.- 9.10 a.m. Organised occupations

9.10 a.m.-10.40 a.m.	W.c., dressing for a walk and a walk.
10.40 a.m.-11.30 a.m.	Children's undressing (from the walk), w.c., washing of hands, dinner.
11.30 a.m.- 2.30 p.m.	Children's undressing, preparation for sleep, sleep.
2.30 p.m.- 3.15 p.m.	Children's waking-up, dressing, w.c., unorganised play.
3.15 p.m.- 3.45 p.m.	Washing of hands, afternoon meal.
3.45 p.m.- 4.30 p.m.	Unorganised play, w.c.
4.30 p.m.- 5.45 p.m.	Play and organised occupations.
5.45 p.m.- 6.45 p.m.	Children taken home.

The crèches aim to bring up active, independent children accustomed to work and to respect the work of adults. To develop this attitude the children are encouraged to do everything possible for themselves and, where necessary, to give each other assistance. A slogan that is often seen in the reception-room of a crèche reads: "Never do for a child what he can do for himself."

The crèches also emphasise the importance of a collective or social education. To work together, to play together, to act as a group and not as individuals. A child may take a toy during the period of unorganised play and retire to the corner of a play-room to have the toy to himself, but at the end of the period he must return the toy to the group.

Every effort is made to assist the child to understand the life that is going on around him. A Chair of Toys has been established at Kharkov University, and very interesting research is being done in the production of toys which will enable the child to understand the relation of the collective farm and the factory, the function of the transport system which connects them, and of the co-operative that sells the produce.

For the early lessons in hygienic habits the crèche is invaluable. The children are taught to clean their teeth, to wash their hands before meals, to use the lavatory regularly and so on.

Finally, the crèche keeps a close contact with the home, so that if home conditions are unsatisfactory the crèche can assist. The nurse from the crèche visits the home, studies the child's environment and persuades the mother to attend the meetings for parents held at the crèches. The parents also elect representatives to the Council which is responsible for the organisation of the crèches. Other representatives on the Council are nominated from the factory or offices to which the crèche is attached.

The development of the crèches on the collective farms has been extraordinarily rapid. Usually the best house is given up and the garden cleared. The crèche functions according to the work on the farm. In the summer the crèche opens at dawn and closes at sun-

set. Field crèches have also been organised in the last few years. These permit nursing mothers to work away from the village for several days at a time in the weeding and harvest periods. During the hot summer months a baby is most in need of his mother's milk, and she cannot nurse him unless he is brought to her in the fields. Only babies that are being nursed are admitted to the travelling crèches. The nurses also assist with the improvement of the food and general conditions for nursing mothers working in the fields, and take advantage of the opportunity to educate the mothers in the care of themselves and of the baby.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

After the age of four the child leaves the crèches and is promoted to the kindergarten. After the Revolution Russia needed kindergartens for the same reason that she needed crèches, to bring up the child as a socialist and to set free the mother. A very great deal has been accomplished and in progressive districts in the Soviet Union nearly all the children under eight have been enrolled in the kindergartens.

1928	...	308,000 kindergartens
1931	...	2,755,000 "
1932	...	5,231,000 "
1933	...	6 million in the R.S.F.S.R. only. (The figures for the national minorities are not known yet.)

In 1932 70,000 kindergarten teachers were given short courses, and in 1933 80,000 were trained in Soviet Russia alone. Pre-school institutions or kindergartens vary. There are:—

1. Kindergartens without boarders.
2. Kindergartens with a section for boarders.
3. The Children's Departments of the Workers' Clubs.
4. The Children's Departments of the Institutions where their mothers are studying.
5. Children's Playgrounds in the Parks of Culture and Rest.
6. Children's homes for orphans.

The following regulations are given by the Commissariat of Education and the Commissariat of Health for kindergartens:—

"The time for the children to arrive and leave the kindergarten should correspond to the hours of work of the mother. The length of time for organised occupation should depend on the nature of the work:—

6-7 year children	...	...	30-35 minutes
5-6 "	"	...	20-25 "
4-5 "	"	...	15-20 "

Conversation periods, unorganised and organised play should be regulated to 10-15 minutes periods. The intervals between meals should not

exceed 3-4 hours. One and a half to two hours should be allowed for sleep after the mid-day meal."

BIRTH CONTROL AND ABORTION IN THE U.S.S.R.

At the First Congress of Working Women in 1918 the third demand was for the legalisation of abortion. The emphasis was placed on abortion because birth control in the sense that Western nations understand it was scarcely known in Czarist Russia. The decree of the Government was given in October, 1920. It is printed here in its complete form so that women may clearly understand the reason for this action in the Soviet Union:—

"During the past decades the number of women resorting to artificial termination of pregnancy has grown both in the West and in this country. The laws in all countries combat this evil by punishing the woman who chooses to have an abortion and the doctor who operates. This method of combating abortions has not been successful, but has driven the operation underground and made the woman a victim of mercenary and often ignorant quacks who make a profession of secret operations. As a result, up to 50 per cent. of such women are infected in the course of operation, and up to 4 per cent. of them die. The Workers' and Peasants' Government is conscious of this serious evil to the community. It combats this evil by propaganda against abortions to working women, by working for socialism, and by introducing the protection of maternity and infancy on an extensive scale. By these methods it feels assured of achieving the gradual disappearance of this evil. But as the moral survivals of the past and the difficult economic conditions of the present still compel many women to resort to this operation, the People's Commissariat of Health and Justice, anxious to protect the health of women and considering that the method of repression in this field fails entirely to achieve this aim, have decided:—

"1. To permit such operations to be made freely and without any charge in Soviet hospitals, where conditions are assured of minimising the harm of the operation.

"2. Absolutely to forbid anyone but a doctor to carry out this operation.

"3. Any nurse or midwife found guilty of making such an operation will be deprived of the right to practise and tried by the People's Court.

"4. A doctor carrying out an abortion in his private practice with mercenary aims will be called to account by a People's Court."

The legalisation of abortions has resulted in a considerable diminution in the practice of secret abortions which in all capitalist countries contributes so largely to maternal mortality. The proportion of women who have abortions outside of hospitals has fallen from 56.9 per cent. in 1923 to 10 per cent. in 1932. The number of deaths resulting from after birth ailments is also instructive. In

Leningrad it dropped from 3.9 deaths per 1,000 births in 1922 to 2.4 in 1925. In Berlin deaths from these causes were 13 per 1,000 in 1922 and 11 in 1924.

In the U.S.S.R. there is one case of death for every 20,000 abortions; in Moscow, where the statistics are carefully kept, the proportion is one death for every 23,000 abortions. The legalisation of abortion has not affected the birth rate, which is rising at the rate of three millions a year, whereas in practically all European countries the birth rate is declining.

At the same time active work is carried on to teach women the use of contraceptives in order to save them from the necessity for abortion. Films are widely shown, pamphlets published, conferences held, all for the education of women in this matter. Every woman who comes to the Birth Control and Abortion Clinic in Moscow is met by the slogan "Let this abortion be your last," and while she is there she is carefully instructed in the use of the suitable contraceptive for her particular need. That this work has had a considerable measure of success is realised from the fact that in 1929 there were 8.2 abortions per 1,000 people in the U.S.S.R., whereas in Germany, where abortion is illegal and there are consequently many unregistered abortions, the figure was 15.4 per 1,000.

Unless the abortion is carried out on medical grounds the fee is eight roubles (women's wages average for unskilled and semi-skilled work 100-200 roubles a month) and the woman remains in the Clinic from 2 to 2½ days. At the end of this time if she is fit she leaves the Clinic and takes a short holiday, leave of absence from work having been granted for 10 days. A Health Visitor from the Clinic sees her a short time after the abortion to make sure that no unsound symptoms have developed.

The chief reason for abortion in the Soviet Union is lack of housing accommodation. There may be reasons in connection with a woman's work or study which make it inconvenient to take off three or four months in order to have a child, but the most important factor is lack of room. There is reason to believe that the abortion figures will diminish as the housing plans progress.

COMMUNAL SERVICES

It has been shown how it is possible for a woman to be both a worker and a mother. Let us now examine her housekeeping methods. It has been necessary to develop the use of public dining-rooms in offices, universities and factories, and of communal kitchens and dining-rooms attached to the new housing blocks. Instead of each woman cooking the mid-day meal for herself, her husband and the children, the mother and father have their meals

in the dining-rooms attached to the institution in which they work, and the children have their meals in the crèche, kindergarten or school, according to their age. Meals are also sent out from kitchen factories. This is not only a healthier and more economical method of eating, but it also releases a woman from the kitchen to take her share in social production. In 1931 5 million workers and 3.5 million office workers and peasants took their meals regularly in public dining-rooms, and 3 million children received hot lunches at school. The number of public dining-rooms increased to 13,400 with 44 kitchen factories (mechanised kitchens). In 1932 communal meals were served to 42.8 per cent. of all workers, 80 per cent. of all university students and 25 per cent. of office workers.

This means that a mother has to consider breakfast and supper. She uses her ration cards at the Co-operative at which she and her family are registered and receives her rations of bread, butter, sugar, meat, tea and so on. To this is added whatever non-ration foods she can afford to buy in the State shops or in the collective farm markets. It may be mentioned here that though the woman is generally responsible for preparing breakfast and supper, a great deal of propaganda has been carried on to educate men into taking their fair share of the household work and not to consider it beneath their dignity to assist in the preparation and clearing away of meals. If both husband and wife are earning good wages then they can afford to have their evening meal in the dining-room of the Workers' Club, in the Park of Culture and Rest, or in the ordinary restaurants. In the dining-rooms of the Workers' Club, of which every worker is a member by right of his trade union membership, the meals are served at a very low cost and in comfortable surroundings. In summer in open air or balcony dining-rooms, in winter indoors in warm and spacious rooms.

A further problem arises in keeping the home clean and much remains to be done in the provision of labour-saving machinery. Each block of flats is in the control of a Housing Committee. It is their duty to order the coal for the central heating, to hire labour for the cleaning of the stairs, bath-rooms, lavatories, kitchens, or whatever communal services that exist. Although the woman is thus given considerable assistance in her housekeeping, she still carries a heavy responsibility. For the most part she is working outside her home for seven hours a day, and though there is a likelihood that these hours will gradually be reduced, the addition of household work to her outside work places a double burden upon her.

More and better labour-saving machinery is needed, but the main drive of Soviet production is at present directed towards the production of prime necessities and household equipment must take

a second place. When the problem of the production of essentials becomes less urgent more attention can be given to easing the work of the household and a mother can then deal with her domestic affairs without overworking herself or neglecting her children.

PROSTITUTION AND VENEREAL DISEASE

The Soviet Union believes that the cause of prostitution is mainly economic and therefore that prostitution can be abolished by giving every woman a job and re-educating existing prostitutes.

A Joint Council for the Suppression of Prostitutes was organised shortly after the November Revolution. The Councils stated that their work was to combat the spread of venereal disease by fighting prostitution, and to accomplish this they proposed to re-educate those women who did not wish to engage in socially useful work.

Two types of Institutes were established—the prophylactorium and the correctional institute. Women found on the streets are brought to the prophylactorium. The prostitute is trained to do useful work and she is paid wages while she is training, out of which she pays for her food and clothing. She also receives free medical attention. During this period, if she is illiterate, and this is often the case, she is taught to read and write and to interest herself in music, literature or the theatre. Every effort is made to give her interests in life outside of her work and to give her back her self-respect. There is no compulsion for a girl to remain in the prophylactorium, but though very often she does leave for a short time she generally returns. There are two main reasons for this—it is very difficult to get a room unless a woman can convince the housing committee that she is doing a socially useful job and without a ration card she must shop outside the co-operatives and pay the uncontrolled prices for food and other necessities. In Russia prostitution is by no means “the easy way.”

For the 5 per cent. who really prefer prostitution to work, labour correction institutes have been organised. These prostitutes are regarded as an anti-social element in the community and are treated as labour deserters. They are compelled to remain in the Institutes of Correction and to submit to a firm labour régime until they are reformed.

The People's Commissariat of Justice has also endeavoured to deal with men by means of the following enactments:—

“Inciting a woman to have relations with a person she is materially dependent upon or subordinate to is punishable by a term of imprisonment of not less than three years.

“Persons knowingly placing others in danger of venereal infection, either directly or indirectly, are liable to compulsory labour or imprisonment for terms up to six months.”

In addition to such legal detriments all the forces of propaganda are employed to fight prostitution, and Soviet citizens are taught to regard it as a personal degradation of both man and woman and a serious menace to the community. The result is the creation of a social pressure which is most effective.

Results have been rapid both in the reduction of the number of prostitutes and the lowering of the figures for venereal disease. In 1914 in Moscow 56.9 per cent. of venereal disease cases were due to intercourse with prostitutes, in 1924 the percentage was 31.7 and in 1931 7 per cent. The reduction in venereal disease from all causes is also remarkable:—

Moscow, per 10,000 inhabitants:					
1926	...	...	...	...	168
1929	...	...	...	...	107.9
1931	...	...	...	...	78.9
1932	...	...	...	...	63.0

In Moscow in 1931 in the census of street prostitutes there were found to be 400. Compare this with the figures of Czarist Russia. In 1913 there were 20,000 prostitutes in Moscow. In the same year there were 40,000 in St. Petersburg, the capital.

This success has been brought about first by making women economically independent, secondly by the fight against illiteracy, and thirdly by the establishment of prophylatoria for prostitutes and venerological dispensaries.

There is an interesting comment on the work that has been done in the Soviet Union on this question in "The Shield," published by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene in Great Britain. Mrs. Margaret Noble states in the issue of July, 1932:—

"Unless and until Christian principles direct and inform economics the Marxists would appear to have the last word in so far as the elimination of prostitution is concerned, for they have apparently realised that state of society of which Josephine Butler said: 'The humane society towards which it is our duty to strive will have within it no human dregs.'"

EDUCATION

"We must learn in the first place and learn in the second place and learn in the third place—and then see to it that learning does not remain a dead letter with us or a modern phrase, but becomes flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, and really is transformed into a fundamental part of the new life.

"It is impossible to build up a socialist society in an illiterate country."
(LENIN.)

In the struggle to overcome illiteracy compulsory education for everyone throughout the Soviet Union was enforced. Age gives no

privilege, and parents and children sit side by side learning to read and to write. Every year sees an increase in educational facilities and in the workers' faculties, in the technical schools and in the universities, the number of students rapidly mounts.

The women have made full use of their opportunities, as is shown by the increasing percentage of women students who have reached the university standard. In 1930, of all the students admitted to universities, 27.6 per cent. were women, in 1931 the figure had risen to 40.9 per cent.

No artificial barriers are erected against women in their choice of a profession, but it is interesting to note the direction in which their choice lies. The following table shows the main subjects of study and what proportion women students represent of the total body of University students taking a particular subject:—

Medicine	...	...	...	74 per cent.
Teaching	...	...	...	59 " "
Economics	...	...	...	38 " "
Agriculture	...	...	...	29 " "
Mining	...	...	...	19 " "
Technology	...	...	...	18 " "

In the class of Technical Specialists women are also represented, and here again it will be seen that her special abilities are reflected by the varying percentages. The following table shows the proportion of women in the total number of specialists of various types:—

Zoologists	...	...	...	19.5 per cent.
Agricultural Engineers	...	...	...	17.7 " "
Chemists	...	...	...	13.5 " "
Fuel Specialists...	...	...	...	4 " "
Metallurgists	...	...	...	1.6 " "
Technologists	...	...	...	1.1 " "

It would appear from the foregoing tables that the woman student is attracted more by the humanities than by the machine. Nevertheless, women have made a very considerable contribution to mechanical progress through inventions. There are 30,000 women members of the Society of Inventors and of these nine have been awarded distinctions.

It is not only in the university, the college and the technicum that women are taking an increasingly active part. They belong to the study groups which are attached to every workers' club—they pursue their studies through correspondence courses. Wherever the formation of a new study group is announced, the women no less than the men overwhelm the organisers with their applications.

This great release of women has opened up many new and splendid avenues of endeavour. Not least among its contributions

to a richer and a fuller life is the opportunity it has created whereby every woman, whether in factory or farm, whether endowed with great mental gifts or not, can satisfy her desire for knowledge and can express herself not only in words, but in deeds.

The Russian woman has become articulate. In her special women's papers, "The Working Woman," "The Peasant Woman," "The Delegate," she is encouraged to recount her experiences and to give expression to her needs and desires. These papers are full of letters of worker correspondents from all over the Soviet Union. If a woman cannot write adequately, she will find a fellow-worker to help her: the need is urgent in her to take her place in the Soviet scheme—to help in the building of the Socialist Commonwealth. The debt of woman to the Revolution is great. There is no reason to fear that she will ever default.

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