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# Soviet War News

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THE STALIN CONSTITUTION  
by Prof. I. TRAININ  
Foreword by I. MAISKY  
Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain

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## FOREWORD

ON the 7th November, 1917, the first stone was laid of a new State and economic system which transformed the old Russia into the modern Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

On the 5th December, 1936, the democratic Stalin Constitution was adopted. This superseded the former Constitutions of the U.S.S.R. and consolidated the vast achievements of the new State during the first period of its existence. The Constitution is named after the man who, together with Lenin, was the great architect of the tremendous transformation and progress accomplished in the preceding period. An acquaintance with the provisions of the Stalin Constitution is essential to anyone who wishes to understand how the U.S.S.R. has sustained the heaviest of all possible tests, the test of total war against Hitlerite Germany. The Stalin Constitution represents what the Soviet people are fighting for, and gives the clue to why they are fighting in a way which has won them the admiration of the Allies and the entire world.

It is for this reason that I welcome the publication in collected form of the series of articles by Professor I. Trainin, a leading Soviet Jurist, which originally appeared in "Soviet War News."

I. MAISKY.

London, 7th May, 1943.

## THE STALIN CONSTITUTION

By Professor I. Trainin

### 1. HISTORY

THE Soviet State has completed the first quarter century of its existence. Throughout this period, our peoples have had more than once to defend their political independence and social system. From the very first day the Russians have done their utmost to aid the formerly oppressed nationalities now associated with them in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and to inspire them with faith in their creative powers. This fraternal unity of the peoples is the strength of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Constitution is not something drafted at a study desk. It evolved in struggle and labour. It is the legislative embodiment of what has actually been achieved and won. Born of living reality, it developed and changed in harmony with life itself.

The evolution of the Soviet Constitution may be divided into three historical stages.

① The first stage began with the adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic by the fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, on July 10, 1918. That Constitution, summarising eight months' experience of the Soviet system, embodied its indefeasible foundations.

It proclaimed the R.S.F.S.R. a Soviet Republic, in accordance with the will expressed by the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of November 7-8, 1917, which declared all power in the country vested in the Soviets.

In accordance with the "Declaration of rights of the peoples of Russia" (November 15, 1917), the Constitution set forth the principles of organisation of Soviet autonomy. It laid down the rights and duties of citizens: freedom of conscience; freedom of speech and assembly; the right to hold mass meetings and street processions; access to knowledge; political rights for foreigners; right of asylum; equal rights without discrimination for all nations and races; duty of all to work; duty of working peoples to defend the Soviet motherland. Lastly, it consolidated the system of government and administration in line with the principles of Soviet democracy.

This first Constitution, framed by Lenin and Stalin, became the banner under which the emancipated peoples of Russia

fought and won during the Civil War. It served as a model for the Constitutions of other Soviet Republics which were formed later: Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaidjan, Armenia and Georgia.

② The second stage began after the victorious conclusion of the Civil War. The peoples of all the Soviet Republics, emancipated by the Socialist Revolution, realised the necessity of passing from the previous treaty relations to close political union.

On December 30, 1922, the first congress of Soviets of all these republics endorsed the "Declaration of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R." and the "Treaty for the Constitution of the U.S.S.R." The first of these two historic acts, which stressed the necessity of forming a single united State, pointed out that "ruined fields, idle factories, fettered productive forces and exhausted economic resources, the heritage of war, render inadequate the individual efforts of individual republics to build up their economy."

Only the voluntary amalgamation of all human and material resources under a single State leadership made possible the efflorescence of the U.S.S.R. as a whole, and of each individual republic.

The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. was ratified by the second congress of the Soviets on January 21, 1924. According to this Constitution, drafted under Stalin's guidance, each republic in the Union, apart from the obligations voluntarily assumed in accordance with the fundamental State law, exercised an independent governmental authority. The U.S.S.R. guaranteed sovereign rights to the republics.

The highest organ of State authority was the congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. In the interval between congresses, the highest organ of government authority was the Central Executive Committee consisting of two chambers—the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities. The purpose of the latter was to safeguard the indefeasible rights of the nations and to ensure that the laws adopted contributed in the highest degree to the prosperity of the peoples of the Union.

Under the banner of that Constitution our peoples set out to accomplish Stalin's Five-Year Plans, industrialised the country, expanded agriculture and developed their national culture, science and art.

The gigantic achievements of the Soviet nationalities since their amalgamation into one Union welded the workers and peasants still closer together. They changed the social structure of society, completely abolishing the exploitation of man by man.

③ All this led to the third state, beginning with the adoption, on November 25, 1936, of the Stalin Constitution.

## 2. FOUNDATIONS

THE Stalin Constitution which is in force to-day in the Soviet Union is named in honour of its inspirer, the leader of the Soviet people in peace and war.

The democratic character of this Constitution is implied in the history of its conception and adoption. In draft form it was widely circulated among the people, who discussed it in over 150 languages, proposing suggestions and amendments.

A special session of the Soviets of the U.S.S.R.—the 8th—was called to discuss and approve it. Its adoption was preceded by a speech of Stalin, who summed up the circumstances which made it necessary to bring the Constitution up to date, in accordance with changed conditions.

What were these changes?

In the first place they were changes in the economic relations. In former Constitutions the designation "Socialist" as applied to the Soviet Republic, referred to the aspirations of the people, their selfless preparedness to fight for the realisation of Socialism. By the time the new Constitution was adopted, however, Socialism had become an indisputable fact in all spheres of the national economy.

In the second place they were changes in the structure of Soviet society. The exploitation of man by man had ceased. Society was wholly composed of toilers—workers, peasants and intellectuals.

In the third place they were changes in national relations. The former discord and mutual distrust among the nationalities had disappeared. The friendship of the peoples had grown stronger. The interchange of cultural experience increased with the general blossoming of national cultures.

Whoever seeks for the roots of Soviet patriotism, of the moral and political unity of our people and its heroism in the present war, must reflect on the content of the Stalin Constitution.

Every line expresses the pride of Soviet citizens in the results of their labour. The Soviet soldiers fight to defend not only their native land, but also all that has been created on this land, and which has received its legal confirmation in the Stalin Constitution.

The Constitution confirms the Soviet social order. The people appear as sovereign masters of their country and their destiny. "All power in the U.S.S.R.," reads the Constitution, "belongs to the working people of town and country, as represented by the Soviets of working people's deputies."

Socialist property exists in the form either of State pro-

perty, or of co-operative and collective farm property. The Soviet people, as embodied in their government, are masters of all major branches of the country's economy—the land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, railways, water and air transport.

The Constitution, while confirming the principle of voluntary collective and co-operative farm enterprises, points out that the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen based on their personal labour.

The law protects the right of the citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household furniture, utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right to inheritance of personal property.

In declaring work to be the duty of every able-bodied citizen according to his capabilities, the Constitution establishes the principle of remuneration depending on work fulfilled, in accordance with its quantity and quality.

Such are the political and economic foundations of the social structure of the U.S.S.R.

The Constitution also secures the democratic foundations of the multi-national State. It establishes the powers invested in the Union and the rights of the Union Republics. It stresses the principle of voluntary association of the Soviet Republics.

Every Republic of the Union preserves the highest expression of its sovereignty — the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R. This sovereignty is also confirmed by the circumstance that each Republic has its own Constitution, and that its frontiers may not be altered without its consent.

The rights and duties of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. are set out in powerful words. The Constitution not only proclaims the right to work, to rest, to education and to maintenance in old age, but also guarantees the actual realisation of those rights. Equality of women with men, equal rights of all nations and races, freedom of conscience are all guaranteed by law.

Freedom of speech, of the Press and of assembly, the right to hold mass meetings and street processions, and the right to unite in social organisations are guaranteed in accordance with the interests of the toilers and their social order.

The Constitution guarantees the inviolability of the persons and homes of citizens, privacy of correspondence, the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people or for their scientific activities.

The Constitution sets out the following duties: Every citizen of the U.S.S.R. must abide by the Constitution and its laws, maintain labour discipline, honestly perform public duties, safeguard and improve Socialist public property and perform his military duty. The defence of the Motherland is declared a sacred duty.

The Constitution fixes the basis on which are established the organs of State authority, in accordance with the need to protect the Socialist and State structure of the country, and the rights and duties of its citizens.

The highest organ in the country is the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. consisting of two chambers: The Soviet (Council) of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. The Soviet of Nationalities is the expression of Soviet democracy, which legislates not only in the general interests of the wide masses of the people, but also in the specific interests of each nation. Each Union and autonomous Republic has its Supreme Soviet consisting of one house.

Local government is in the hands of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies. All government organs are chosen by an electoral system without any limiting qualifications. The right of suffrage is enjoyed by all citizens of both sexes (including those serving in the Red Army) who have reached the age of 18, with the exception of insane persons and persons sentenced by a Court of Law to be deprived of electoral rights. Any deputy who has not justified the confidence of his electors can be recalled at any time.

The executive bodies are the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. and the Councils of People's Commissars of the Union and Autonomous Republics. The local executive bodies (in the regions, districts, cities and rural localities) are the executive committees of the Soviets.

All executive organs, from the highest to the lowest, are subordinate to the respective elected organs of power. The judicial organs and those supervising the correct carrying out of the laws (the prosecuting organs) are also organised on democratic principles.

This is only a rough sketch of the Constitution of the Soviet multi-national State. The brotherly amity of its peoples has been welded in battles fought in common, in triumphs shared and labour shared.

When Soviet soldiers rush into attack with the cry: "For our native land! For Stalin!" they are expressing their consciousness of their achievements attained under the leadership of Stalin, and inscribed in blazing letters in the Stalin Constitution.

### 3. THE RIGHTS OF NATIONALITIES

**A**T its very inception the Soviet Government categorically denounced the policy of oppression which had been pursued by the Tsarist regime towards numerous non-Russian nationalities who spoke different languages and had different customs and a different economic life. On November 16, 1917, the Soviet Government issued its declaration of rights of the peoples of Russia, which laid down the following principles:—

1. Equality and sovereignty of all the peoples of Russia.
2. Rights of these peoples to free self-determination, including the right to secede and form independent states.
3. Repeal of all national and religious privilege and limitation imposed by the former regime.
4. Free development of all national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.

This declaration was the basis of what is now widely known as the Lenin-Stalin national policy. The Russian people, who had in the past been considered the ruling nation, were the first to extend fraternal aid to the formerly oppressed minorities, inviting them to join in building and defending the new Socialist state system.

This alliance of nations was strengthened during the Civil War. Assisted by the Russian people, the formerly oppressed nations were able to take advantage of their right to self-determination. At representative congresses the overwhelming majority of these nations expressed their firm will to work and fight shoulder to shoulder with the Russian people in defence of their common achievements and independence.

The Tatars and Bashkirs, Kazakhs and Chuvashi, Murii and Kalmyks, Udmurts and Yakuts, Daghestan highlanders and several other nationalities, led and assisted by the Russian people, proceeded to build their own autonomous republics and regions. This gave the essential stimulus for the economic and cultural resurrection of these peoples.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed at the close of 1922, and provided a uniform system for the Soviet State organisation, based on the principle of democratic centralism. This principle combines centralism with the maximum degree of independent, constructive initiative by the various nationalities, with due regard to the heterogeneous customs of various parts of the U.S.S.R.

But the shaping of the national state organisms was only part of the task of building fraternal and amicable collaboration between all nationalities. The next problem was to eliminate

the economic and cultural backwardness of the national minorities. The Stalin Five-Year Plans for economic development achieved this purpose.

The regions whose progress had previously been hamstrung by the Tsarist authorities required relatively greater assistance than the districts where industries already existed. The new industry built after the revolution helped in the development of formerly backward nations. Regions which had been utterly void of economic activity now became important industrial centres with modern factories, mines and collective and State farms.

National cultures developed step by step with industry. Schools, teaching in the language native to each region, sprang up everywhere with astounding speed, as did hospitals, theatres, clubs, cinemas. Books and magazines in native tongues began to pour from the printing presses.

A new intelligentsia was created. The women, who had suffered particular oppression in all the eastern districts, were given a new and fair deal. Constant exchange of cultural experience helped to destroy the old barriers which had divided the nations.

The Stalin Constitution gave legislative expression to this multi-national State system. Today the U.S.S.R. consists of 16 sovereign union republics, which include 20 autonomous republics with full independence within their own frontiers on the basis of their own constitutions.

The main distinction between an autonomous republic and a union republic is that while the latter is guaranteed the right to free secession from the U.S.S.R., this right is not incorporated in the constitution of the autonomous republics.

There are also the national regions, which enjoy the same rights as other regions in the U.S.S.R., but in addition have the right to employ their own native languages in their schools and public institutions, as well as to delegate five members to the Council of Nationalities, the lower chamber of the parliament of the U.S.S.R.

Then come the national districts. Administratively these are smaller than regions, but they, too, have the right to use their native tongues in schools and public institutions, and each delegates one representative to the Council of Nationalities.

This very diversity of forms safeguards national rights, because each form is adjusted to serve the economic and cultural development of the particular people.

The war has subjected the Soviet multi-national state to a grim testing. As Stalin pointed out, one of the enemy's main

aims is the destruction of the national culture and national statehood of the free peoples of the U.S.S.R. And all our nationalities have risen to defend their independence and their achievements. The Russian people stand in the vanguard, as on so many previous historic occasions.

The voice of unity with the Russians rings out ever louder in the temporarily occupied national Republics. In the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Crimea, Moldavia, Latvia, Lithuania, Esthonia and the Karelo-Finnish Republic the guerillas are helping to wear down Hitler's forces. The multi-national Soviet state system has stood its test.

The Hitlerites, with characteristic arrogance, have conferred upon themselves the rank of "superior race." On the strength of this, they assert that all is permitted to them, that the prosperity of their "superior" race must be built on the bones of other nations and races. They have already trampled down many cultural achievements of civilised mankind. They have tried to drown in blood the fundamental principle of equality of the peoples.

What are the Hitlerites after? By bloodshed and force they want to create their own "New Order," under which all nations and races except the Germans will be classed—as Hitler expresses it—as "vanquished foreigners, those whom we coolly describe as modern slaves." The peoples are to forget the historical, cultural and economic conditions that welded them into modern independent nations, and permit the Fascist brigands to dictate them their place in the "New Order."

That is what the Hitlerites want to impose upon the people of the U.S.S.R.

But the achievement of these preposterous designs has been barred by the multi-national Soviet people, which has proclaimed the equality of all nations and races, without exception, as its infeasible law.

In November, 1917, in the very earliest days of its existence, the Soviet Government in a "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia" proclaimed the equality and sovereignty of all peoples. Every nation in the Soviet land was accorded equal rights to a national State in a form corresponding to its requirements. Each Soviet nation has an equal right to employ its native language in government bodies, in courts, in schools, in public life generally.

Representatives of all Soviet nations enjoy equal rights throughout the Soviet Union, wherever they may be. The citizen of ~~one~~ nation moving from his Union Republic to another Union Republic enjoys all the rights recorded in the constitution of the

U.S.S.R. and in the constitution of the Union Republic whither he has moved. He has an equal right with all other citizens of that Republic to vote in elections and to be elected to the Soviets.

Equality of nations and races in the Soviet State is not merely a right, but an actual fact. The realisation of actual equality is only possible when a firm material and cultural basis exists. That is why the Soviet Government was concerned to develop a modern industry and agriculture in formerly backward regions. In all the 25 years of its existence, the Soviet Government has worked tirelessly to educate previously backward peoples, and to develop a new intelligentsia among them. It helped these peoples to establish themselves firmly on the road of independent development, to catch up with the more advanced peoples, and to march forward shoulder to shoulder with them.

The Stalin Constitution, which establishes the equality of all nations and races of the U.S.S.R. without exception, proceeds, in Stalin's words, from the proposition that *all nations and races, irrespective of their past and present position, irrespective of their strength or weakness, should enjoy equal rights in all spheres of economic, social, political and cultural life.*

Such an equality must be based on mutual respect among nations. That is why the Soviet State provides for the punishment of those who in any way attempt to violate the principle of equality of nations. The Stalin Constitution states that *any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of citizens on account of their race or nationality, or conversely any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality is punishable by law, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt.*

Every person in the Soviet Union, even the citizen of formerly most backward races, has the proud knowledge that he is an equal citizen of the great U.S.S.R., that the Soviet commonwealth of nations guarantees his personal dignity.

And it is these people, who have tasted the joy of freedom and equality, whom the Nazis want to Germanise according to Hitler's pattern, on whom they want to impose their bloodthirsty domination, instead of equality of nations and races, reversal to past ignorance, instead of culture and progress.

That is why the heart of every Soviet man and woman boils over with anger and hatred for Nazism. The Soviet soldier, creeping forward with a bunch of grenades to meet Hitler's tanks, knows that for his people, for himself and his family there is no choice but to fight for victory to the last breath.

For only the utter defeat of the Hitlerites will enable the equal Soviet nations, and with them all mankind, to get rid of

the bondage and exploitation of barbarism and savagery, the starvation and extinction to which the beasts in human form wish to condemn humanity.

#### 4. THE SOVIETS

IT was the aim of Lenin and Stalin, the founders of the Soviet State, to establish a democracy which would be safeguarded by definite guarantees. As the state form of such democracy, Lenin pointed to the Soviet, which had been formed spontaneously by the people themselves during the great popular movements of 1905 and 1917. The Soviets, first created by the Russian workers of Petrograd, Moscow and Ivanovo, were fine examples of organisations in which workers and peasants of various nationalities had equal rights.

On November 7, 1917, the Petrograd workers revolted, overthrowing the Provisional Government, which had failed to satisfy the urgent needs of the people. The second All-Russian Congress of Soviets was in session at the time in Petrograd.

It resolved that power should pass to the Soviets and assumed the functions of a legislative body. This same Congress elected the first Soviet Government—The Council of People's Commissars, headed by Lenin. Thus, in November, 1917, the Soviets, rooted in the masses of the people, became the political foundation of the new State.

The form of both the Stalin Constitution—that now in force—and the former constitution is that of a broad democracy. All the Soviets are elected by universal, direct, equal and secret ballot. The right to elect or be elected to the Soviets is enjoyed by all citizens above 18 years of age, without regard to sex, nationality, race, religion, education or property. Any deputy who fails to justify the trust placed in him may at any time be recalled by his electors.

The highest organ of government in the Soviet Union is the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. All citizens of the Soviet Union over 18 years of age participate in the elections to this body. Next come the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics and Autonomous Republics, elected by the citizens of those Republics.

The organs of local government are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which function in each region, district, city and village. In some areas, in accordance with the special needs of national groups, there are Soviets of the autonomous regions and national districts.

Every Soviet of Working People's Deputies is within its

sphere the only governing organ and executive of the law. There are no representatives of federal government, no governors or commissars to influence the local organs of self-government.

Each Soviet is directly responsible to its electors. Each Soviet carries out the decrees of the superior Soviet elected by the people of that region. But the local Soviet carries out these decrees in accordance with local peculiarities—this is especially characteristic of the Soviet of Nationalities.

Each Soviet creates an executive organ according to its authority. The Supreme Soviet selects the Council of People's Commissars, while the local Soviets appoint Executive Committees (local government). All executive organs are subordinate and accountable to their respective Soviets. This secures the sovereignty of the people and democratic control of the executive organs.

The democratic character of the Soviets is especially apparent during election campaigns and the elections themselves. At the last elections to local Soviets, on December 24, 1939, 1,300,000 deputies had to be chosen.

One million five hundred election committees were formed from among representatives of social organisations. The total membership of these committees was 7,000,000. Of 93,547,797 citizens having the right to vote in these elections, 92,812,237, or 99.21 per cent., exercised that right.

The Soviets arouse and encourage the political initiative and energy of the masses. These close relations between the directing organs of society and society itself give the Soviets high authority among the people. That is why the peoples of the U.S.S.R. rightly regard the policy of the Soviet Government as their own policy.

Under the leadership of the Soviets the people of the U.S.S.R. have defended their country against aggressors and foreign interventionists. They have transformed their land, giving it a mighty industry and a great culture. Their attachment to the Soviets is especially obvious now—in wartime.

In spite of merciless Nazi terror, the people of the occupied regions are actively aiding the guerillas. At the first opportunity they overthrow Hitler's agents and revive the Soviets in the rear of the German army.

This Soviet patriotism of the masses is a guarantee of victory over the murderous foe, a guarantee of triumph in the Soviet people's struggle for the highly democratic order they have created.

## 5. THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF CITIZENS

**T**HE rights of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. are the direct fruit of their own creative labour, of their own determined struggle.

They evolved logically from the first declarations of the rights of Soviet peoples—the “Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia” and the “Declaration of the Tilling People,” the essential principles of which were contained in the first Constitution of the Soviet State.

In the Civil War, on innumerable fronts, the Soviet peoples fought to preserve those rights. They were made feasible by the titanic labour of the Russian people, which transformed the country from an economically backward state into a progressive one.

The Soviet people are the complete masters of their State, politically and economically. Therefore the rights of the Soviet citizen are realisable. They are based on material securities.

In the “Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia,” the formerly oppressed national minorities were accorded their freedom and independence. Then for twenty-five years the Soviet Union busied itself with the creation of the material and cultural prerequisites for their practical liberation.

The Soviet Government, having accorded women equal rights with men, set itself to strengthen the economic position of woman, to give her ample opportunity to acquire knowledge and experience, to train herself for all trades and professions, so making her equality practicable.

The material and cultural wealth that has been created during the 25 years of Soviet rule has promoted the well-being of the Soviet people as a whole, and of each separate individual. Private interests do not conflict with the welfare of the community, for each citizen fully realises that by contributing his labour to society, he thereby raises his living standards and maintains his self-respect.

Concern for man's well-being is the keynote of the rights recorded in the Stalin Constitution. All Soviet citizens enjoy equal rights, as far as the individual's demands on the community are concerned. In return, each citizen is expected to contribute his utmost gifts to society, realising that by so doing he profits himself.

Stalin himself has stated that neither property rights nor nationality, nor sex, nor office, but the individual labour of each citizen determines his or her station in society.

So each man is himself master of his social position. Soviet

democracy is vested in man, whose initiative, resourcefulness and labour help to raise the common well-being to new heights. That is why the most highly esteemed people in Soviet society are the Stakhanovites of industry and agriculture, the distinguished personalities in science and art.

So that society may reap full advantage of each citizen's labour and creative powers, adequate material and cultural provision must be made for each citizen. The mind of the citizen must not be harassed by fear for the morrow, or for the future of his children. Stalin has declared that the most valuable capital in the world is—man.

The first right of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. is the right to material security. They are guaranteed the right to work, rest, leisure, education, and to maintenance in old age, in sickness or in case of loss of capacity for work. They are provided with all they need for the free, all-round development of the individual.

The Stalin Constitution guarantees the individual's civil rights. These include the inviolability of the person, the protection of the citizen's home, his right to privacy of correspondence, freedom of conscience and right of assembly.

In one important field the activities of Soviet citizens are restricted: Soviet man may not exploit Soviet man.

The rights of the Soviet citizen are inseparable from his duties. One of his most important duties is to abide by the laws laid down in the Stalin Constitution, to observe the general laws of the country, to maintain labour discipline, to perform his public duties scrupulously, and to respect the feelings of the community.

To safeguard and improve public, Socialist property is the sacred duty of every citizen, for this property, created by the hands of the people, is the source of the country's wealth and might, as well as of the prosperity and cultural amenities of all working people.

Service in the Red Army is one of the citizen's most honourable duties. Active participation in the defence of the motherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet people are now battling mightily to preserve the rights conferred by the Stalin Constitution from destruction by an enemy who is endeavouring to deprive them of all liberty, and to turn them into serfs.

Ask any Red Army man, any guerilla, any factory worker, any collective farmer, any wife, mother or working woman why the Soviet people feel such a boundless detestation, such implacable hatred for the Nazis.

They will tell you their hatred is boundless because they love their Soviet motherland with a boundless love, because of their boundless fidelity to the land that has fostered them.

They will reply that they are spurred on by the consciousness that they, as citizens of the Soviet Union, have rights to defend, their own rights and dignities as Soviet citizens, and the rights and dignities of all outraged humanity.

That consciousness is the seed of heroism. Indeed, it is the very seed of victory.

## 6. THE RIGHT TO WORK

ONE of the Soviet people's greatest achievements was to bestow the right to work on every citizen. It was not possible to proclaim this right immediately on the establishment of the Soviet State, because when the Soviet State was formed, 25 years ago, the nation was afflicted with a destructive war.

It inherited from the former regime a disorganised economic system and a backward industry. The majority of the population were at a low cultural level. The Civil War and blockade made the situation even worse. The economic collapse produced large-scale unemployment.

The Soviet State, while defending the independence of the nation, inspired the people to heroic work for the restoration of the national economy. Having brought the Civil War to a victorious end, the Soviet people by terrific efforts restored the country's economy to the pre-war level and vastly beyond it.

During Stalin's Five-Year Plans the Government enrolled immense new armies of workers in industry. By the end of 1929 unemployment had been completely eradicated in the Soviet Union. From 11½ million in 1928, the number of workers and office employees increased to 25 million in 1935 and to 30½ million in 1940.

Thanks to these achievements, the Soviet people could state in the Stalin Constitution of 1936 that "The citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work." Every citizen of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of sex, nationality, race or creed, is guaranteed a permanent means of livelihood.

The right to work is ensured by the organisation of a Soviet, planned economy, by the steady growth of the country's productive forces, by the elimination of the possibility of economic crises and the abolition of unemployment.

Every citizen works for the community. For its part, the community satisfies the material and cultural needs of each citizen. Only efficient work can secure the progress of society.

That is why the Constitution records that in the U.S.S.R. work is the duty and a matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen.

Everyone possesses an equal right to work. But does it follow from this that everyone has the right to equal compensation for his work? Certainly not. It would be unjust for idlers to receive compensation equal to that received by efficient workers. That is why the Constitution establishes the principle of compensation according to the quantity and quality of the work done.

He who gives most to society receives most for his work. In order to facilitate labour, to make it more productive, the State introduces new machines, makes professional education accessible to everyone, watches over the conditions of work.

The State, in turn, demands of every citizen a conscientious attitude towards work, because the idler and sluggard harms not only himself, but also the community. For this reason the Constitution demands that all working people maintain labour discipline, and honestly perform their public obligations.

In making this demand, the State relies upon the public opinion of the great majority of the working people, who compete to outdo each other in the excellence of their work. Loving their Soviet country, the Soviet people strive to strengthen and glorify it by their labour.

Innovators, or "Stakhanovites," emerge endlessly from the midst of the working masses. By introducing new methods of work they raise the productivity of labour by as much as 1,000 per cent. They teach their fellow-workers the new methods they have evolved. *They transform labour into a "matter of honour, a matter of glory, a matter of valour and heroism,"* as Joseph Stalin has said.

Not only do these innovators receive more pay. They are also regarded with particular respect. Towards the end of 1938 the Soviet State established special titles of honour and signs of merit in recognition of labour achievements. The highest token of merit, the title "Hero of the Soviet Union," is bestowed on those who have performed an extraordinary service to the State by their labour and innovations.

The medal "For Labour and Valour" is bestowed on those who, as the foremost soldiers on the labour front, have employed Stakhanovite methods and whose labour has been highly productive. The medal "For Labour and Merit" is bestowed upon "shock workers" who have struggled to promote a high level of productivity.

The war against Hitlerism demanded a higher tempo of work from all Soviet citizens. Hundreds of thousands of new workers, men and women, entered industry. *"More metal, coal, oil,*

*machines!" "Everything for the front!" "The front requires it. It shall be done!"*—these slogans inspire Soviet citizens to labour heroism.

Factories, departments and individual workers tirelessly emulate each other's best achievements. Soviet people often spend their rest day or other recreation periods in working without pay for the benefit of the front.

The achievements of the Soviet people are the fruits of their own labour. They will never surrender them.

## 7. THE RIGHT TO REST AND LEISURE

**A** LONG with the right to work, the right to rest and leisure is one of the Soviet people's major gains. This right emphasises once more the substance and meaning of Soviet humanism, which draws an unmistakable line between the kind of philanthropy an individual could expect in the past and the genuine solicitude manifested for him by the Soviet State in the 25 years of its existence.

When they recall the pre-Soviet period, old workers tell of ten to fourteen hours daily of exhausting toil without even elementary safety devices or sanitary services; of "leisure" spent amid frightful living conditions; of enforced "rest" in the shape of unemployment and eventual starvation.

From the very inception of the Soviet State, the right to rest and leisure became one of the inalienable rights securing the health and dignity of the Soviet citizen. The Soviet Government began the work of translating the right to rest and leisure into an actuality by regulating the working day. On November 11, 1917, a law was passed introducing the eight-hour day. For brain and office workers a six-hour day was established.

Ten years later, on October 15, 1927, following the successful efforts of the Soviet people to rehabilitate their economy ruined by the war of 1914-18 and the Civil War, the Soviet Government proclaimed a reduction of the working day to seven hours, without any reduction in wages. A six-hour day was established in trades injurious to health.

In the Stalin Constitution it is written that "the right to rest and leisure is ensured for the overwhelming majority of workers by the reduction of the working day to seven hours."

For adolescents from 14 to 16 years of age the law established a four-hour day; for those from 16 to 18, a six-hour day.

These laws regulating labour gave the vast majority of workers the opportunity to study, to perfect their knowledge and improve their qualifications. To meet the cultural and

technical aspirations of the masses, the State opened a large number of schools, day and evening courses, technical training colleges and similar institutions.

The right to rest and leisure implies annual holidays to enable the working people to regain their health and strength. Such holidays were decreed in November, 1917. The Stalin Constitution confirms that the right to rest and leisure is ensured "by the institution of annual holidays with full pay for workers and employees."

The law provides for an annual two-week holiday for all workers. For some categories of working people (adolescents, workers in trades injurious to health, scientific workers and some other groups) the annual holiday term was set at one to two months.

Besides the established annual holiday, women workers and employees receive additional leave of 35 days before and 28 days after childbirth, during which period they receive assistance from the State. Nursing mothers get a half hour off every three and a half hours to feed their babies. No deduction of wages is made for this half hour.

The vacation period for any category of workers is increased if a medical commission considers it expedient.

To enable the working people to receive the maximum benefit from their holidays the State places sanatoria and rest homes at their disposal. As long ago as 1920 the Soviet Government decreed that the Crimea be converted into a national health resort.

"Thanks to the Red Army's liberation of the Crimea from the domination of Wrangel and the Whiteguards," the decree stated, "it has become possible to use the healing facilities of the Crimean coast to cure and restore the working capacity of the workers, peasants, and working people generally of all the Soviet Republics."

In 1921 there followed a decree providing for the extensive organisation of rest homes. After that the building of sanatoria and rest homes proceeded systematically on a wide scale.

The Stalin Constitution states that the right to rest and leisure is ensured "by the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people." Every year before the war at least 10 per cent. of all Soviet workers and office employees, apart from the collective-farmers, spent their holidays in sanatoria.

The State also takes measures to see that the working people are able to spend their rest and leisure in the most cultured and

expedient manner. Basing itself on public initiative and enterprise, the State has assisted in creating many theatres, cinemas, reading rooms, clubs and other cultural institutions where the working people may spend their leisure hours.

The war against Fascism demands an enormous rallying of the Soviet people's labour and energy. Labour valour is manifested on the home front as magnificently as fighting valour in the battle line. To work harder, to produce more, is a task of prime importance, on which victory over the enemy depends.

Everything for the front! That is the motto of the Soviet people. And they have therefore sacrificed their holidays in order that by their work they may create everything necessary to defeat the enemy who has encroached on all they have achieved during the 25 years' existence of their State.

In accordance with the will of the Soviet people, the Soviet Government has abolished all holidays for the duration of the war, substituting for them compensation in money. Leave is granted in cases of sickness and pregnancy just as before.

The right to rest and leisure, which has been of such tremendous importance in improving the people's health and raising their cultural and technical level, must for the duration of the war give way to the duty of every citizen to exert all his efforts in defence of the independence and dignity of the Soviet people and all their rights, including the right to rest and leisure.

## 8. THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL MAINTENANCE

THE Soviet people's respect for the individual is manifest in the provisions of the Stalin Constitution, ensuring each citizen's right to work and leisure. The Red Army man knows that Fascism would spell slavery instead of the right to work: inhuman, intolerable drudgery instead of cultured leisure: slow death from starvation: sterilisation and extermination instead of the right to social maintenance.

This "right to social maintenance," as provided for by the Stalin Constitution, has not the slightest tinge of charity. It expresses the brotherly solidarity which unites all members of Soviet society. It recognises the worker's legitimate right to be recompensed for the contribution he makes to the creation of social wealth.

The right to social maintenance in its broadest form was decreed by the Soviet Government soon after the last shots were fired in the November revolution of 1917. In 1933 the administration of social insurance was transferred from the Government to the all-Soviet Council of Trade Unions and its

branches over the country. Insured persons themselves elect their insurance delegates and govern their affairs on the broadest democratic lines, directing public attention to the needs of the workers and working for the improvement of their cultural and living conditions.

According to the Constitution, workers and employees are insured at the expense of the State. Workers and employees are entitled to free medical service at home, in clinics and hospital and, on the doctor's recommendation, in health resorts. In the event of sickness, disablement or temporary loss of working capacity, Soviet people are in addition entitled to compensation equivalent to 100 per cent. of their earnings if they have been working at one and the same place for over six years, 80 per cent. if the period of service is from three to six years, 60 per cent. if from two to three years, and 50 per cent. if under two years.

Compensation on a similar scale is paid to persons who are released from work in order to tend sick members of their family.

The Stalin Constitution establishes the right to maintenance in old age. Men who have worked for 25 years and women who have worked for 20 years, on reaching the age of 60 in the case of men, and 55 in the case of women, are entitled to State pensions varying between 50 and 60 per cent. of their average earnings at the last place of employment. Pensioners who continue to work receive their pensions in full.

Pensions are also granted to families which have lost their breadwinner. Personal pensions on a higher scale are awarded to persons in recognition of special services to the State. Working women retain full pay during maternity leave, and in addition receive an allowance after childbirth as well as a nursing allowance. The extensive network of nurseries and mother-and-child welfare centres relieves the mother of anxiety for her children during her periods of work and rest. Large bounties of 2,000 roubles per annum and over, varying with the number of children, are paid by the State to mothers with large families.

Unemployment has ceased to be a charge on the social maintenance fund, since unemployment has been abolished in the U.S.S.R. There has been a marked decline in sickness and mortality and a distinct improvement in the health of the population. The aged are guaranteed a well-earned, pleasant rest.

The Soviet collective farmers now fighting in the ranks of the Red Army know that the time of unrelieved want and poverty for the peasantry has passed. Nowadays, on the decision of a general meeting of collective farmers, any member of a collective farm who suffers accident or calamity is maintained out of the

common funds. The same is true of families of superannuated members and members serving with the armed forces.

War invalids and people incapacitated as a result of their work are objects of the particular solicitude of the Soviet State and society. War invalids and families of men killed or missing receive pensions in varying amounts up to 400 roubles per month. Invalids who are capable of some form of work form their own organisations, which are accorded various privileges.

Invalids may work only with the sanction of a medical commission, which determines the kind of work for which they are fit. The State provides courses to teach new professions to war invalids who are unable to pursue their old vocations. Invalids who go to work retain their pensions. Proper living and working conditions are provided for them and they enjoy special privileges in the way of medical service, low rents, etc. Special clubs and other institutions are provided for them. The war invalid does not feel himself a "burden" on society, and may be sure of solicitous treatment from his workmates, his fellow-men and his Government.

This care and solicitude for men and women as working individuals, expressed in the Stalin Constitution and in Soviet legislation, is not the least of the factors which inspire Soviet soldiers to heroism in their just war against Hitlerism.

The Red Army man derives his strength not only from his weapons but also from the consciousness that he is defending his native land, his people and himself from slavery and tyranny, that he is defending the rights which give him dignity as a human being, his rights as a citizen of that great commonwealth of nations—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

## 9. THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

THE Soviet people resist so mightily at the front and work so self-sacrificingly in the rear because they are conscious that they are waging a just war against Fascism. This consciousness has been built into their minds by the Soviet Government, which from the very first day of its existence set itself to develop widespread educational activities among the masses. Had it not done this, it would have been impossible to make these masses the conscious builders of Soviet society.

Would it have been possible, without education, to rally the people to struggle so valiantly for their independence against invaders, to work so arduously for the industrialisation of their country, for the modernisation of their agriculture, for the raising of their living standards, for the strengthening of their country's defence?

To understand the gigantic achievement of the Soviet Government in the sphere of education it is enough to remember that before the Soviet Revolution of 1917, 67 per cent. of the population were illiterate, and that the number of literate women did not exceed 14 or 15 per cent. Only eight million children went to school. There were only 90 higher educational establishments, accommodating 124,000 students. Theatres, cinemas, clubs and other cultural and educational organisations were few in number and hardly available at all for the broad masses of the people.

During the years of Soviet Government the U.S.S.R. has experienced a cultural revolution. Illiteracy has been almost completely eliminated. In 1930 compulsory universal education was introduced. In 1940 schoolgoers numbered 35 million. Within the past six years alone over 21,000 new schools have been built, chiefly in the villages. Hundreds of thousands of teachers have graduated. At the beginning of the war there were 600,000 students studying in 700 higher educational institutions. A large proportion of them were women.

The Stalin Constitution secures every citizen's right to free education. Particularly outstanding students, war invalids and the children of parents who have done valuable service to the State have the right to grants to facilitate their studies.

A new intelligentsia has arisen from the people. A new generation of scientists, writers, composers and artists has come into being. The authors of outstanding works in the field of science, art, military science, and inventors and innovators are awarded Stalin Prizes and honoured as Laureates.

The improvement in the cultural level of the Soviet working people swells the ranks of the Stakhanovites—the most ingenious men and women in industry, people who persistently better their own qualifications and pass their knowledge on to others.

The educational activities of the Red Army and the Red Fleet are infinite. This has done much to increase the cultural level of recruits called up for military service.

Perhaps the most striking cultural achievements of the Soviet power are to be observed in the national regions. Twenty-five years ago the autonomous republic of Kirghizia had no written language of its own. Before the Soviet Revolution there were on its territory only 107 schools with 7,000 pupils, chiefly the children of Russian settlers and government officials. There were no higher schools at all. In 1940-41 Kirghizia's schools numbered 1,645, with 328,700 pupils. The Republic possessed six higher educational institutions attended by 2,500 students. Just before the outbreak of war every third Kirghiz citizen was either at school or attending special technical or other courses of study.

Periodicals are published in 111 languages in the U.S.S.R. The best Russian classics are translated into the languages of the other peoples of the Soviet Union, and the best works of the non-Russian Soviet peoples are translated into Russian. Peoples who in the past had no literature of their own now read the works of Shakespeare, Byron, Cervantes, Goethe, Heine, Victor Hugo, Anatole France, Emile Zola, Upton Sinclair and countless other writers.

Illiteracy among women is now a thing of the past. The ignorant, oppressed woman no longer exists. Woman takes her place nobly at the front and in industry. She has been enabled to do so because the Soviet Government has removed all restraints on her cultural development, and has devotedly fostered her gifts.

Immense changes have taken place in the villages. The collective farmers set themselves to raise the cultural level of the countryside by popularising newspapers, books, the radio and cinema, and by organising clubs, libraries, hospitals. The creator of the Soviet State, Lenin, foreshadowing such cultural development, said that the power of the State resided in the consciousness of the masses. The State was powerful, he said, when the masses of the people could use their own judgment, fully conscious of the significance of their actions.

The truth of that is vividly apparent now. The Soviet State is powerful because of the *consciousness* of the fighters at the front. Every fighter knows that instead of the right to education ensured by the Stalin Constitution, the Nazis want to impose ignorance on him and deprive him of human dignity.

Every fighter at the front sees and knows how the Nazis destroy the cultural achievements of the Soviet people. In the Moscow region alone the Germans plundered and destroyed 112 libraries, four museums and 54 theatres and cinemas during their temporary occupation.

They despoiled the houses and museums of Pushkin, Tolstoy and Chekhov, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, so dear to the heart of every Soviet citizen. They used the Tchaikovsky manuscripts for heating a stove. In the Ukraine they outraged and then destroyed the monument of the great Ukrainian poet Shevchenko. Wherever the Hitlerite steps he leaves destruction, death and the stench of utter barbarity.

What wonder is it that we hate these Germans who so outrage the achievements of 25 years of effort by the Soviet peoples in the sphere of culture? That is why the defenders of Stalingrad, of every mile of the Soviet-German front, declare:—

“We may perish, but we shall not let the enemy pass! The enemy shall be routed, beaten off and driven back!”

## 10. FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

THE enemy who has invaded the U.S.S.R. resorts not only to force of arms, but also to false, demagogic propaganda.

We know that in Germany many thousands of clergymen and religious believers are in concentration camps for refusing to acknowledge Hitler's lunatic race creed. But this does not prevent the Nazis from pretending to be the friends of religion and trying to range religious believers against the Soviet Union.

This is not the first time the enemies of the Soviet people have used religion as a mask. They have always failed to conceal their true face from the world. This is not to suggest that religion has no followers among the masses. But sooner or later they recognise plainly the libellous character of attacks made on the Soviet Union behind the cloak of religion.

The Soviet Government has always exercised extreme delicacy in all questions concerning freedom of conscience. It realised how much harm and evil had been caused in the past because one religion, that of the Orthodox Church, with the support of the State, had persecuted people of other religions and denominations such as the Roman Catholics, the Old Believers, Mohammedans, Buddhists and Jews. These dissensions had in the past been a fruitful source of conflict between the various nationalities of Russia.

One of the first acts of the Soviet Government was to proclaim equality of all nations and races. The “Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia,” of November 15, 1917, abolished all national and religious privileges and disabilities.

Then came the vital measure to ensure real freedom of conscience: the Church was separated from the State, and the schools from the churches. The State recognised the right of every individual to profess any religion he liked or to pass from one religion to another. It also recognised the right of the citizen not to profess any religion at all, and to carry on anti-religious propaganda.

To meet the needs of the religious believers the Government left their churches freely at their disposal for the performance of religious services and ceremonies.

It was inevitable that the immense constructive efforts of the Soviet people should influence the leaders of all religious denominations. The Church could not have maintained its ties with the people unless it had supported the effort and striving of the people to promote the prosperity and well-being of their

country. In the Orthodox Church, those who welcomed the abolition of the old political privileges won the day.

Metropolitan Sergei of Moscow, supreme head of the Russian Orthodox Church, said not long ago: "Members of the Orthodox Church are by no means inclined to view these changes in the light of 'persecution,' but rather as a return to the times of the Apostles, when the Church and its servants followed the true path along which Christ had called them; when they regarded their service not as a worldly profession, bringing them a livelihood, but as obedience to Christ's calling." (See "Soviet War News" of October 19, 1942.)

Church leaders in the Soviet Union expose the hypocrisy of the Nazis' pretended solicitude for religion. The war has revealed the contempt in which the Hitlerites hold all religions. Hundreds of churches have been desecrated and destroyed by them. Thousands of religious people who tried to hinder the vandals have been done to death.

Among the ruined churches are many precious historic relics and specimens of Russian architecture which the Soviet Government had carefully treasured, such as the famous New Jerusalem Monastery at Istra, which had been restored by the Soviet Government, and the 15th century monastery of Joseph of Volokolamsk.

It must be stressed that none of these acts of destruction can be attributed to the unfortunate necessities of war. They are only explicable as an expression of the Hitlerites' savage rage against people who are stubbornly defending their political existence and independence and the civil liberties guaranteed by their Constitution, including liberty of conscience.

In regions temporarily occupied by the Germans many religious believers have joined the guerillas to fight for the Soviet State. The Church has given its blessing to the just war of the Soviet people, and collects gifts for men at the front. Worshipers are exhorted to help the Red Army to free the country from the Fascist invaders. In a special prayer read during the Liturgy the Church prays to God "to rise up in our aid and let our hosts be victorious in Thy name."

## 11. THE SOVIET WOMAN

**R**USSIAN women have a tradition of heroism. Thousands of them distinguished themselves in the struggle against autocracy in 1917, during the Soviet Revolution and the Civil War. When peace came they worked as nobly as they had fought. They laboured side by side with their husbands,

brothers and sons to bring to fruition Stalin's Five-Year Plans, to create a mighty foundation for the national economy. But never before have they worked and fought as they do to-day. They lavish all their strength, all their gifts, as though to repay a hundredfold all that Soviet power has given them.

Twenty-five years ago the Russian woman enjoyed no rights whatever. In the family she was regarded as an inferior. She was barred from most professions. Tsarist law, valid until February, 1917, demanded that "the wife must obey her husband as head of the family, love and respect him with boundless docility, showing the utmost compliance and devotion in the home."

In the eastern provinces of old Russia the woman's position was even more precarious. She was a virtual slave, forbidden even to sit at the same table with the men.

All these survivals of feudalism and a patriarchal society were swept away by the Soviet Revolution. The new Soviet Government immediately gave women equal political rights with man. Then followed radical reforms in laws relating to marriage, guardianship and divorce. These gave reality to the proclaimed equal rights of women in family relationships. New laws were passed safeguarding maternity and regulating conditions of work.

The women of Russia took an active part in the work of the newly established Soviets. More and more of them began to hold government office. Many were elected to the supreme organs of power in the Central Government and to the governments of the Union Republics.

The economic and cultural facilities created by the new Soviet State made it possible for woman to become the full equal of man. The Soviet government gave her every opportunity for education. Countless thousands of women acquired professions, qualified as industrial or office workers. Woman found that she could stand on an equal footing with man in industry, in administration, in the arts, in education, in medicine.

Soviet law punishes any citizen who refuses work to a woman simply because she is a woman, or because she is pregnant. In the oriental Soviet republics, where woman was most rigidly enslaved, there are heavy penalties for forcing under-age girls or boys into marriage, for trading in brides (very prevalent before the Soviet Revolution), and for in any way hindering the entry of women into the schools, agriculture, industry, and social and political life generally.

Woman's ever-increasing participation in public life coincided with the progress of industrialisation and the collectivisation of the land, which gave woman a material basis for her labour. Vast networks of nurseries, kindergartens, maternity hospitals and maternity and child welfare centres, pregnancy allowances, and state benefits for mothers of large families all helped to lighten the burden of the mother and working woman.

The Stalin Constitution not only declares that woman is man's equal. It makes the special provisions which enable her to translate that equality into living reality. It states that the possibility of exercising her equality is ensured to woman by granting her equal rights with men to work, to payment for work, to rest and leisure, to social insurance and education; by State protection of the interests of mother and child before and after childbirth; by maternity leave on full pay; and by the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

In the critical hour when grave danger threatened the Soviet country, many women joined the army as volunteers. Among them there are hundreds of remarkable soldiers, like the sniper Liudmilla Pavlichenko, who visited Britain not long ago.

Millions of women have taken the places of men in industry. They respond untiringly to the Red Army's call for more tanks, planes, rifles, mortars, machine-guns. In October, 1941, 45 per cent. of the total number of industrial workers in industry were women. Since then the percentage of women has greatly increased.

At the front, in industry and science and in the arts Soviet woman, together with man, works self-effacingly to defeat the enemy of her own and her country's freedom.

## 12. PUBLIC PROPERTY

**T**WENTY-FIVE years ago, when the people established Soviet power in our country, they received a backward and half-ruined economy as their heritage from the old regime. The new public economy, the pride of all Soviet citizens, has been created by them, fashioned by their hands, produced by their labour, achieved by their sacrifices.

Stalin told us long ago how necessary it was to make sacrifices and to exercise the most rigorous economy in everything. We had to economise on food, on schools, on textiles, in order to build up our industry. There was no other way of overcoming our technical deficiencies.

The intention of the Soviet people in building their industry, was not only to meet the requirements of the Soviet Union as a whole, but also to help the revival of national republics and regions, formerly backward and oppressed. While developing in the centre, industry at the same time expanded eastward, taking modern technique and a higher culture to remotest Siberia, to Central Asia, to the east of the Volga, to Transcaucasia, and beyond the Arctic Circle.

Modern Soviet industry has transformed the lives of both the Russian people and all the other peoples of the U.S.S.R.

In the Soviet Union millions of people of many nationalities work to a single plan, display unprecedented creative enthusiasm, and emulate each other's achievements. It was on this foundation of creative labour that the friendship uniting the peoples of the U.S.S.R. was built.

Working harmoniously in common, the Soviet peoples built new towns and homes on lands that had been desolate, dug canals to irrigate their fields and to connect the seas, tamed rivers, built countless new factories and mills, sunk new mines.

During the period of Stalin's second Five-Year Plan the Soviet people practically overcame their technical deficiencies. By 1937, 80 per cent. of the entire industrial output came from factories built during the Soviet period. Ninety per cent. of all agricultural machinery was produced in Soviet factories. The gross output of industry in 1940 was twelve times what it was just before the first world war. The expansion of industry was associated with a marked improvement in the material and cultural condition of the people.

Towards the end of 1936, after a nation-wide discussion, the people adopted the new Stalin Constitution, giving legislative embodiment to the nation's achievements. It established for all citizens of the U.S.S.R. the rights which had become realities only through their own efforts: the right to work, to rest and leisure, to education, to maintenance in old age and in sickness.

These rights give man all the security he needs to allow him to exercise his creative capacities.

The Stalin Constitution states that the economic foundation of Soviet society is a system wherein there is no room for exploitation of man by man. It is a system based on public property existing in two forms: (1) State property, the possession of the whole people; (2) property of individual collective farms and co-operative organisations. State property, that is, the property of the whole people, is the source of the nation's material and cultural prosperity.

The Stalin Constitution states that the land and its natural deposits of waters, forests, mills, factories and mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, post, telegraph and telephone services, large State-organised agricultural enterprises (State farms, tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and most dwelling-houses in the cities and industrial localities are State property—that is, they belong to the whole people.

The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. embodies the right of the collective farms to use State land free of charge, in perpetuity. The collective farms do not have to pay rent for their land. The membership of a collective or co-operative organisation are master of their livestock, implements and equipment, their produce and common buildings. After discharging their obligations to the State, the collective farm disposes of its produce at its own discretion.

The aid rendered to the collective farms by the State has enabled the farmers to become more prosperous from year to year. The State has placed at the disposal of Socialist agriculture over half a million tractors and an immense number of other complex agricultural machines. It has also assisted the application of the latest achievements of agricultural science. The crop area in 1938 was 130 per cent. greater than in 1913. Grain yields are nearly twice what they were in pre-Soviet times.

The general growth of public property has brought about the socialisation of various functions of household economy, freeing women from drudgery and enabling them to work in public enterprises and improve their qualifications. The U.S.S.R. has a network of public restaurants, mechanised laundries, mechanised bakeries, children's nurseries and kindergartens, all of which lighten the responsibilities of the woman in the home.

The Constitution makes it the duty of every citizen of the U.S.S.R. to safeguard and strengthen public Socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the country's wealth and might, and of a prosperous, cultured life for all working people. Persons committing offences against public, Socialist property are regarded as enemies of the people.

Is it surprising that the Soviet people should feel a righteous, sacred hatred for the Nazis, who break up collective farms and transfer the land to robbers, who wreck factories, mills, schools and other remarkable achievements of the Soviet people in the spheres of technique and culture?

### 13. SMALL PRIVATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

**I**N the 25 years of Soviet power, public property has become predominant in the U.S.S.R. Highly significant is the process of development of public property in the countryside, where in the early years of Soviet power there existed about 25 million scattered, dwarf farms. Each peasant was faced with the problem: should he uphold the old system of small, individual farms, or go over to large-scale collective farming?

Land was made available to the collective farms free of charge in perpetuity. The State supplied tractors, harvest combines and other agricultural equipment. It initiated great electrification projects. The peasants were convinced that collective farming would not only lighten their labour, but lead to material abundance and a higher cultural level. The collective farm system emerged victorious.

The stability of the collective farm system lies in the strict observance of the principle of voluntary membership. The law provides that those who prefer not to join collective farms have the right to maintain individual farms on State-owned land. Alongside the predominant system of collective farming the law permits the existence of the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour, and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others. The relative importance of this small private economy is insignificant. In 1938 individual farms accounted for only 0.6 per cent. of the entire sown area. This figure is eloquent proof of the peasantry's profound realisation of the true significance, for them, of collective farming.

The Stalin Constitution safeguards the right of citizens to personal property in two forms. Citizens have the right to personal ownership of their incomes from work, to their savings, to their dwelling houses, to their household furniture and utensils, to articles of personal use and convenience. They have the right to inherit personal property.

The Stalin Constitution safeguards the right of every household in the collective farm, in addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, to have for personal use a small plot of land attached to its dwelling house, livestock, poultry and minor agricultural implements, in accordance with the statutes of the agricultural artel.

Neither land nor major implements of production may be privately owned. Personal property accrues only from income for work, and from income obtained by personal cultivation of

a plot attached to a dwelling. No unearned income from personal property is permitted.

The scale of personal property is closely dependent on the development of public property. The more effectively a factory worker does his job, the more he earns, and the larger his personal property. The more solid, the more efficient a collective farm, the greater the well-being of its members.

In the Soviet Union, public property comes first. The development of public property, the development of the country's wealth, enables the citizens of the U.S.S.R. to receive not only a larger income from their work, but also an immense variety of services rendered by society to the individual free of charge. The quantity and quality of the individual's work for society govern his prosperity. Personal interests are closely bound up with public interests.

Here are some figures to show how the personal incomes of working people have grown as a result of the development of public wealth. In 1933 the average annual wage of workers was 1,513 roubles. In 1938 it was 3,447 roubles. In 1933 the monetary income of collective farms totalled 5 milliard 661.9 million roubles. In 1937 it was 14 milliard 180.1 million roubles. To this should be added the grain received by individual collective farm households in grain-growing districts, increased from 61 poods in 1933 to 144 poods in 1937.

Every citizen of the U.S.S.R. has the right to dispose of his personal property at his own discretion. A collective farmer, for instance, has the right to sell in the market that part of his income which he receives in kind.

In the general development, cultural progress is followed by material progress. The Soviet people, looking back at the past 25 years, see for themselves that they have not worked in vain. Their work has increased the country's wealth and at the same time made them prosperous.

What does Nazism offer them? Humiliation, torment and slavery. Those who have remained in temporarily occupied regions are not only deprived of their personal property, but are being physically exterminated.

The Soviet toiler, whose work won him fame, earned him honours, must under German rule forget his own name, give up his accustomed human dignity and become like an animal, wearing a tag with a number on it.

He sees his dear ones disgraced and killed, his nation's historic shrines wrecked, his national sentiments outraged. In his hatred for the invaders he joins guerilla detachments to help his people and his Red Army to defend Soviet society.

## 14. CONCLUSION—MOTIVE FORCES OF VICTORY

WHEREIN lies the might of the Soviet Union? What are the motive forces that developed and inspired its people and multiplied their strength for the struggle against Fascist Germany? What is the source of its unswerving determination to fight to the end, until victory? Here, in brief, are my replies:—

1. Never in Russia's history has there been a movement which stirred the people so deeply, and appealed to their imaginations so strongly, as the movement which began 25 years ago in November, 1917.

2. The popular character of this movement was determined by the popular character, the democratic essence of the Soviet Government. All earlier regimes in Russia had been founded on a small body of officials representing the ruling caste, whereas the Soviets are rooted in the people, who fully control their activities. In the U.S.S.R. the people themselves exercise power, and this effectively disposes of all barriers between them and their government.

3. The people, though they won victory comparatively easily in November, 1917, had to exert all their strength to preserve their form of government, in struggle against anti-popular elements and many attempts at foreign intervention. There were times when the Soviet country was merely an island surrounded by hostile anti-Soviet elements.

Led by the Soviets, the people found within themselves the strength to break the hostile encirclement, to defeat their opponents, and to establish their own Soviet form of Government.

It is important to note that the armaments of the Soviet people were then far inferior to those of its enemies. But in the end they triumphed, for they were guided by an unbending will to win, by consciousness of the justice of their struggle for liberty. This struggle fostered friendship among the nations of the Soviet Union and enthused them with an ardent patriotism.

4. The Soviet people are filled with pride when they look back on what they have created in the 25 years of Soviet rule. Having learned the joy of labour under the guidance of the Soviets, in a remarkably short time they converted the old agrarian Tsarist Russia, technically and culturally backward, into an advanced, cultured and technically highly developed country.

5. As an historic type, the Soviet form of State is simple and majestic. It is simple because the people, controlling as they do the machinery of government, have eliminated from it the bureaucratic hindrances that earned the detestation of Russians

in pre-Soviet times. It is majestic because it is surrounded and supported by numerous public organisations from which the State constantly draws the forces necessary for its gigantic efforts in construction and defence.

6. The Soviet Union is strong because it has welded many nationalities into an indissoluble alliance. It is a federated State, representing the voluntary union of 16 constituent republics, which in their turn embrace autonomous republics, autonomous regions and national areas. All these national political formations live together without conflict or national dissension. Federal legislation does not conflict with the interests of individual nations.

The highest organ of State authority—the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.—has a special chamber, the chamber of nationalities, which examines all legislation from the point of view of the development of the various nationalities. Could anything like this have existed in old Russia, which was the arena of perpetual conflict among the nations inhabiting its territory?

7. The Russian people of today are not what they were 25 years ago. Today they are better armed, they have more friends in foreign lands. They are a new generation, who know from the experience of civil war how difficult and complex is the road to victory.

This generation is faithful to the cause of its fathers. It remembers that the will and wise leadership of Lenin and Stalin ensured the victory of their fathers. It holds firmly to Lenin's way, and under Stalin's guidance is fighting devotedly for the victory it knows will be achieved.

Another powerful motive force of the Soviet people is their patriotism, their love for their country, their pride in its cultural achievements.

"Is the sentiment of national pride alien to us, as conscious Russian proletarians?" asked Lenin 28 years ago. And he answered, "Of course not. We love our language and our country, and what we are working for most of all is to elevate its labouring masses, that is nine-tenths of its population, to the conscious life of democrats and socialists."

In these past 25 years these labouring masses have risen to this "conscious life of democrats and socialists," and now they have reared up a wall of steel to defend their Soviet land from Nazi barbarism and ignorance.

Their strength lies in their love for their country, for the social system they won 25 years ago in stern battle, and in their consciousness of what they are fighting.

Therein lies the strength of the U.S.S.R. and the guarantee of its victory.

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