

PLANNED RECONSTRUCTION IN THE SOVIET UNION



by
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"My joy and my pride is the new Russian man, the builder of the new state.

To this small but great man, who is to be found in all the remotest and wildest parts of the country, in factories and in villages, and cast away in the steppe and the Siberian taiga, in the Caucasian mountains and in the northern tundra; to the man who is sometimes very lonely working among people who still find it hard to understand him; to the servant of his state, who is modestly performing a job that seems to be insignificant, but whose historical significance is tremendous—to him I address my sincere greetings.

Comrade, be steadfast in the knowledge that you are the most necessary man on earth! In doing your small job, you have really begun to create a new world!"

Maxim Gorky.

THE rebuilding of the devastated areas of the U.S.S.R. constitutes a problem more gigantic than any other of its kind that has to be faced by one of the United Nations. At one period 612,000 square miles of Soviet territory were overrun by the enemy. The whole of that territory was blasted, and there are many towns in which not a single building remains intact. In Stalingrad, for instance, only five per cent. of the houses were capable of repair, and the percentage of public buildings and industrial undertakings was even lower than this. Thus the problem confronting the Soviet Union is vastly different from that of Great Britain, not only quantitatively, but qualitatively as well.

The problem is so vast that had not the Russians already acquired an immense amount of long-term planning experience it would be difficult to see anything but chaos for many years ahead.

Whilst the liberated areas have priority in Soviet rebuilding schemes, even the areas not reached by the Germans or devastated by war, also present very considerable problems.

In Moscow, for instance, although the bomb damage has been much less, proportionately, than that of London, nevertheless the already crowded city has found its population increased by a million during the war years—this despite strict official restrictions on newcomers to the capital. For close upon four years there has been no new building and only the most urgent repair work. In the Urals and beyond, the population increases have been enormous, by reason of the vast number of workers transferred from cities further west, many of whom intend to remain permanently in the eastern regions and by reason of the natural increase of population.

A certain amount of surprise has been expressed in this country at the statement made by John Parker, M.P. on his return from the U.S.S.R. which he had visited with the British Parliamentary dele-

gation in the early part of 1945. He said, speaking of the reconstruction of Stalingrad:—

“In the two years since the German surrender, an enormous effort has been put into its industrial construction. The well-known tractor works and the large metallurgical works adjoining them will soon be back to pre-war output

“In the work of reconstruction industrial plants definitely have the first priority. Second priority goes to Government offices and administrative buildings. Schools and hospitals come third. The children are all back at school on a half-time basis in fine modern buildings. I visited a recently opened hospital fitted out with surgical implements and equipment sent from Britain by the Stalingrad Hospital Fund. Theatres, cinemas and places of amusement come fourth on the list. Housing comes fifth.”

To many people in this country this information came as a shock. They found it almost unbelievable. It seemed to them to be inhumane that such buildings should have been erected whilst the people continued to live in the most hastily improvised shacks or even in holes in the ground. But, as Mr. Parker also pointed out: “The good of the community as a whole rather than of the individual is emphasised in the work of rebuilding.”

TWO POSSIBILITIES

LET us consider the possibilities of which there were two, before the rebuilders of Stalingrad. They could have concentrated all building labour and material on housing the people and, only when that was finished, have started on other categories. But what would have been the good of houses for people without jobs to go to, for a town without administration and hence without public services, for a town whose children would run wild in the streets, whose sick and wounded would go without care and attention, for a town whose people would not only be bereft of work, of organised services and food supplies, but of education and medical care, of any sort of cultural life?

The majority of Stalingrad's workers are living for the time being under the most primitive conditions, but—the re-opened works give them employment and wages. From the new administrative centres the essential services of water, light and sanitation have been organised, as well as transport and food supplies; their children are going to school, their sick are being tended in a modern hospital and the theatre and the cinema are functioning.

What other possibility was open for a city so completely destroyed as was Stalingrad? In London, Coventry, Hull or Plymouth, factories have been damaged by enemy action but, in all these cities, industries, public services and entertainment have remained substantially intact. Only one priority has been possible for them—housing. And therein lies the difference between the blitzed towns of England and the devastated towns of the U.S.S.R.

STALINGRAD IN 1944

HERE is a picture of Stalingrad in October, 1944, as seen by a visitor from Moscow:—

“Nineteen months have gone by since the last shot was fired at Stalingrad.

“More than 100,000 civilians of our city and region lost their

lives either by the hazard of battle or at the hands of the enemy. Tens of thousands more were deported for slave labour.

“In the city itself, more than 500,000 people were made homeless; 1,210 big blocks of flats, some 4,000 smaller dwellings, 292 schools, 154 hospitals, polyclinics and dispensaries, 129 kindergartens and creches, seven theatres and 11 cinemas completely destroyed. In the countryside the Germans demolished 65 machine and tractor stations and thousands of farm buildings, stole more than 100,000 head of cattle and wrecked some 2,000 livestock farms.

“Stalingrad began its restoration immediately after the Germans were ousted. The results of this heroic labour are already evident.

“Sixty five machine and tractor stations have been restored in the Stalingrad region, and the liberated collective farms have received 124,879 head of cattle brought back from evacuation. This herd was further augmented by gifts from collective farms in the Gorky, Molotov and Mirov regions and from Azerbaidjan and the Tartar and Turkmenian republics.

“Hundreds of schools and three institutions of higher learning have been re-opened, as well as 28 hospitals, 72 polyclinics, 98 creches, 127 kindergartens and many children's homes. The latter are equipped with all the necessary furniture and equipment.

“Two theatres, eight “houses of culture,” 204 rural and 30 city libraries and 22 cinemas are now functioning in the city and rural districts. The debris has been cleared from the sites for our new parks and gardens, and the roads are in good shape again.

“Over four miles of tramway have been restored, and the trams are running from the “Red October” plant to the centre of the city. Restoration is under way on another six-mile stretch between “Red October” and the tractor plant, and a third section connecting the centre with the sawmills. More than 65 miles of water mains have been laid.

“The railways were restored as soon as the city was freed, and the trains have run to timetable ever since. In the past year the railwaymen have laid a new 55-mile line, and rebuilt 8 stations and 9 locomotive depots.

“Four months after the liberation of Stalingrad the tractor plant workers gave the Red Army their first fighting machines, named “Stalingrad's Reply.” These tanks were used against the enemy in the Ukraine and Byelorussia and at Leningrad. The plant has now resumed tractor production.

“The “Red October” metallurgical plant, the “Barrikady” machine building plant and scores of factories are gradually regaining their former capacity. A powerful blooming mill restored at “Red October” is yielding steel and rolled metal.

“Stalingrad's rapid restoration owes a lot to the timely revival of the power station. More than 30 miles of high tension lines have been restored, as well as boilers, transformers and auxiliary plants.

“Naturally the restoration of our industry is still beset with tremendous difficulties. The acute shortage of timber, cement, glass and other building materials is felt at every step, but thanks to the initiative of the people considerable use has been made of local resources.

“But we could not have achieved such results in so short a time had it not been for the aid of the whole country.”

The people of Stalingrad and other Soviet cities know that great though their hardships may be their future is secured.

“In the next ten years” says Professor Alabyan, Vice-

President of the Academy of Architects, who is also in charge of replanning Stalingrad, "we will have rebuilt a billion square metres of living space, or roughly twenty-five million houses.

"The Academy of Architects, along with the Commissariat of Building is now preparing a gigantic planning scheme which will cover the whole of the U.S.S.R. and which will have sections in each Republic. Haphazard buildings are useless; we must tackle the problem from the beginning, which means starting by building factories to produce construction material.

"In every large region we propose to establish Combinats—groups of factories producing bricks, cement, glass, paint, waterpipes, sewerpipes, nails, plumbing fixtures and prefabricated parts such as walls, doors, window frames. First, of course, we shall have to make machine tools to produce all these things. We want to mechanise processes of painting, plastering, sawing and planing. So we start by building factories to make tools to produce construction materials to build houses. The establishment of these Combinats will take time."

Alabyan continued, "But even if there were no house building at all, for the first two to three years, we would still save time in the end. We shall economise in workmen, too, for when industrial methods are used housebuilding requires less labour in general and also less skilled labour."

AND IN OREL

STALINGRAD does not stand alone in the extent of its devastation, as witness the report of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Committed by the German-Fascist Invaders, on the activities of the Hitlerite armies and civil administration in the region of Orel:

"Of 36 educational institutions in the city which had an enrolment of 18,000 children, only six buildings, which can be rebuilt are left. Only one museum and one library are left in the city, but even these have been partly demolished and looted. Only piles of rubble and bits of scrap iron remained of the fine hospital with 600 beds. The Hitlerites dealt with the city hospital in the same barbarous manner. They demolished the brick buildings of the maternity home, the children's polyclinic, the children's hospital, the mother and child welfare centre, the children's sanatorium and other medical and prophylactic institutions.

According to incomplete data, in the 19 districts of the Orel Region they destroyed or demolished 560 buildings of state institutions, 317 buildings of industrial enterprises, 316 buildings of transport institutions, 881 buildings of educational and cultural institutions, 81 medical and sanitary institutions, 284 municipal buildings, 475 buildings of trade enterprises and 58,866 agricultural structures. Only piles of ruins and ashes were left where before the coming of the barbarians, stood fine towns and flourishing collective farms. They seized from the population and collective farms 11,986 horses and goats, 10,994 hogs, 34,410 chickens, 82,054 tons of grain and foodstuffs. They took away everything they saw, foodstuffs, clothes, footwear, bedding, furniture, crockery, and even children's toys.

"The medical experts committee held an inquest on 932 bodies exhumed near the town prison, from brick kilns in a gully at the village of Nekrasovo, from the site of the former children's

camp in Medvedovo Forest and from the front at the village of Melaya. The Committee established that these were the bodies of Soviet citizens shot from one year to eighteen months ago. They had been shot at close range through the backs of their heads."

And this is an extract from the Committee's report on Odessa:

"After the capture of Odessa, the German-Rumanian invaders proceeded to the mass extermination of Soviet people, conducted systematically and by the most brutal methods. On October 19, 1941, they burned over twenty-five thousand civilian Soviet citizens and their children in the buildings of the former powder stores.

MURDERED IN THE CAMP

"IN November 1941 the German and Rumanian invaders herded over 55,000 Soviet citizens in one camp at the "Bogdanovka" State Farm in the Domanevka district. The interned Soviet citizens were kept in the open air, and in the State Farm pigsties and were given no food or water. The extremely unhygienic conditions gave rise to widespread disease. People died from hunger and disease.

"On December 21, 1941, Rumanian gendarmes started shooting the camp inmates. They were taken under heavy escort to a semi-demolished building on the edge of a forest. They were forced to kneel on the edge of a precipice and were shot. The killed—and sometimes only wounded—people fell from the edge of the precipice to the bottom of the gully, where a gigantic bonfire of straw, reeds and firewood was burning. The hangmen hurled babies alive into the flames of that bonfire. The burning of the bodies went on day and night. At night residents of the village of Bogdonavka saw from their houses a huge glow in the area of the State Farm.

"The German Military Command pillaged Odessa's museums and carried away from them hundreds of unique articles, including 200 canvasses, 80 chinaware articles, 60 bronze articles, 40 ancient weapons, 30 carpets, 10 ivory articles and other valuable museum exhibits.
(Protocol No. 22)

"During their rule the Rumanians seriously damaged the economy of Odessa. The list of large enterprises destroyed includes the "Marty" shipbuilding and ship repair yards, with all auxiliary installations and equipment, the "January Uprising" works, the Second State Tannery and the tobacco factory.

"The Rumanian engineer, Cupfer Romeo, and his assistant, Olara, were in charge of the destruction of the "Marty" Works. The Rumanians reduced to ruins the machine-tool building works named after the Sixteenth Party Congress, the agricultural machine-building works, the "Dzerzhinsky" steel rolling mill, the "Krasny Profintern" Works, the knitted goods mill named after Krupskaya, the meat-packing plant, the macaroni factory, the daily products plant, the coffee factory, the mechanised bakeries, all the flour mills, the confectionery factory, the sugar refinery and other enterprises.

"During April 7 and 8, 1944, the German-Rumanian invaders demolished the first-class fully mechanised port of Odessa, blew up the Vorontzovsky Lighthouse, the cold storage building, the

elevator, the mechanised warehouse, the floating portal steam cranes, the piers and 56 warehouses; they put out of commission the power supply system of the port, burned down dwelling-houses and office premises.

"In mid-March 1944 the Germans completely abolished the Rumanian "administration" in Odessa and established their own regime, which completed the destruction of the entire industry of Odessa. On the eve of the Red Army's entry into Odessa (April 9) the last large industrial objective—the "Lenin" Cannery—was demolished on the order of the German Command."

VANDALS IN KIEV

THE evidence of Paul Winterton, correspondent of the *News Chronicle* is illuminating as to the fate of Kiev:—

"The fine main street of Kiev called Krestinik—the street which used to abound with life and colour and along which I have taken many a pleasant evening stroll in happier days—was dynamited from end to end early on in the Nazi occupation, as a violent reprisal for the acts of some Russian guerillas. The twelfth century Uspensky Cathedral in the historic Perscheky monastery, mecca for pilgrims from all Russia was blown up by the vandals, apparently just for fun. The University of Kiev was looted and burnt.

"Though the Germans did not have the opportunity to destroy many buildings they managed to rob the city of a large part of its valuables, public and private.

"An amazing example of their thoroughness in this respect is a building of the Party Executive Committee, which I have just visited. This was a costly modern structure, first of a series of buildings in a well planned semi-circle. No explosive had been used here and no incendiary had been at work. But the building was nevertheless destroyed. All marble had been removed from floors and pillars. Every scrap of iron and bronze had been carried away. Doors had been torn from hinges and windows prised from sashes. All that was left was a rubble-strewn floor and staircase, and battered walls and ceilings.

"Many German firms had their representatives in Kiev. Their main function was brigandage. The Germans brought nothing into Kiev except a savage army and an unparalleled appetite for loot. In Nazi-occupied Kiev there was nothing for the people but humiliation, hunger, disease, cruel torture, sordid death and servile labour. The twentieth century barbarians from Berlin left in their path a volume of terror which will be remembered by the Russian people for a thousand years.

"It used to have a population of 1,000,000. When the Red Army reconquered it they found only 10,000 Russians left. This great and beautiful Ukrainian city, once one of the gayest spots in the Soviet Union, must today be one of the grimmest places in the world!"

Many of us will remember the ghastly and inhuman scenes of destruction and devastation which were shown in our newspapers of Warsaw at the time of its liberation. There are more than 1,000 Warsaws in the Soviet Union. Smolensk, Orel, Rzhnev, Stalingrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Sebastopol,—were once great Soviet cities. Where the Germans passed there were no longer cities.

RECONSTRUCTION

SO Soviet Russia builds again. In the wake of the liberating armies, came the armies of reconstruction—builders, engineers, architects, doctors, teachers, agronomists. It doesn't take these armies long to get to work.

On February 10, 1944, 16 days after the Germans had been chased out of Voronezh, eminent Soviet architects, including Victor Vesnin winner of the Royal Gold Medal of the British Institute of Architecture, Karo Alabyan and Boris Yofan, arrived on the Don to plan the restoration of the damaged towns of the liberated Don and Volga regions.

On August 25, 1943, exactly 48 hours after the last German soldier had evacuated Kharkov, experts from the People's Commissariat for Heavy Machine Building had arrived to plan the reconstruction of the big turbo-generator plant. Another group from the same Commissariat was reporting on the state of the Lenin Housing and Conveying Machinery Plant. A third group was looking over the welding equipment plant and the Kharkov Machine Building Institute. A special commission from the Food Industry was examining Kharkov's bakeries, confectionery and soap factories, distilleries, and its "New Bavaria" brewery. From Kuibyshev, on the upper reaches of the Volga, from Sverdlovsk and from far away Tashkent in Central Asia equipment and building materials were already on the way.

The work of these Commissions was not long in bearing fruit. In October 1944 a "Reconstruction Exhibition" was held in Kharkov. On view were a threshing machine, a grinding lathe, electrical goods, all of which had been produced in Kharkov during 13 months of liberation. In Kiev the Municipal Agricultural Department started work on the same day as the Red Army entered the city.

The Stalin Coal Combine in the Donbas which was completely overrun, had produced over one million tons of coal within 3 months of liberation. At Krivoi Rog, liberated on February 22nd, 1944, 13 ironore mines had been pumped and restored to production before the autumn—28 began production before Christmas. In that part of the Ukraine which was liberated before autumn 1943, 10,000,000 acres were sown with wheat before winter. Bread was baked from Ukrainian wheat the following spring.

In Minsk, the Peoples Commissariat of Municipal Building of Soviet Byelorussia began work the day after the liberation of the city. Without light or water at the time of its liberation within 14 days a 1,000 kilowatt electrical generator and the water supply of the city had been completely restored.

In Soviet Lvov, liberated in July 1944, by December the radio station, water and gas supplies and almost all the city's factories were working. Shoes, clothes, enamel ware and sweets were in manufacture. The Polytechnic and medical colleges, teachers' training college and 62 schools had reopened. The Ukrainian Theatre, Polish Drama Theatre and the Lvov Philharmonic Orchestra were giving daily performances.

THE PLAN

RECONSTRUCTION, like all production in the Soviet Union is, of course, planned. The basis of reconstruction of the areas devastated by the German invaders is a decree of the Council of People's Commissars dated August 22, 1943, which provides for:—

1. The return of all livestock evacuated from the liberated areas.

2. The conclusion of supplementary contracts for the purchase of livestock by the liberated areas and the exemption of collective farms from the delivery of horses for the needs of the army and national economy in the years 1943, 1944, 1945.
3. The restoration of collective farm poultry breeding.
4. Certain privileges for collective farms, and collective farmers with regard to delivery of agricultural produce to the state.
5. The provision of seed and assistance by the Soviet Government to liberated areas for winter sowing.
6. Restoration of machine tractor stations and repair depots.
7. Restoration of damaged houses and the building of new houses in liberated towns and villages.
8. The restoration and construction of railway lines.
9. The education and upbringing of orphaned children.
10. The establishment of nine military colleges named after General Suvorov, 23 special educational schools and other boarding schools and infant homes in the liberated areas.

In an interim report covering solely the period October-December 1943, it was announced that in the liberated areas in this 3 monthly period 1,723,000 head of live-stock had been returned, 96,000 tons of seed had been sent by the central government, 575 machine and tractor stations had been restored, over 2,000,000 persons had been rehoused, 326,000 new houses had been built and 122 railway stations rebuilt, 9 Suvorov Colleges, 23 special trade schools and 118 childrens' homes had been established.

During 1944, 16 milliard roubles were allocated by the All-Union Government for reconstruction in the liberated areas. This was in addition to the further considerable sums provided out of the Union Republican budgets.

PLANNERS AT WORK

IN addition to the State Planning Commission which deals with all productive planning in the Soviet Union, a special joint Commission, consisting of members of the State Planning Commission, People's Commissariat for Building, People's Commissariat for Building Materials, Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., and the Academy of Architecture of the U.S.S.R., has been established to work on repairing buildings in districts ruined by the invaders.

Nor is quality forgotten. A Committee on Architecture, under the chairmanship of A. G. Mordvinov, has been set up in Moscow, with Departments of Architecture in each Union and Autonomous Republic, to improve the standard of architecture throughout the Soviet Union and ensure state direction of architectural and planning work in the liberated areas. Three of the best-known architects of the Soviet Union—Shchushev, Alabyan and Yofan have been entrusted with the reconstruction of Stalingrad. Towards the end of 1944 the Union of Soviet Architects convened a conference to consider the restoration of collective farm buildings. In Moscow in December 1944 the first All-Union Conference of Architects, at which were present heads of Architectural Boards of Union and Autonomous Republics, chiefs of architectural departments and chief architects of towns and large regions, met in order to subject plans to the State Planning Commission for the reconstruction of more than 140 devastated towns and cities including Stalingrad, Smolensk, Kiev, Kharkov, Novgorod, Rostov-on-Don. The following report on their activities appeared in the *Evening Standard* in February 1945.

"Soviet architects have completed plans for the reconstruction of Yalta, scene of the Crimea conference of the 'Big Three,' as a first-class health resort.

"The main feature of the general plan for the new Yalta is the reconstruction of its famous quay," said Moscow radio. "It will be transformed into a garden with a number of fountains.

"A new motor highway being laid in the mountains near Yalta will circle the town and pass through a tunnel under the quay."

In the Soviet Union since all land belongs to the State there are no landlords to obstruct reconstruction by demanding high rates of compensation. Since all productive instruments are state property, no monopoly or restrictive patent acts prevent the utilisation of the latest designs in the work of rebuilding. The Soviet Union works as a team. Rebuilders, near and distant, work on a principle fundamental to the whole Soviet family; "The best for everyone means the best for ourselves."

No account of reconstruction in the Soviet Union can be complete unless one understands "sheftstvo" the system of mutual assistance. Not only are great new enterprises created especially for the work of reconstruction such as the Siberian factory 230,000 square feet which has been established to make the hydraulic presses and heavy machine-tools necessary for the restoration of the steel and machine-tools industries of the Donbas. From the far-off island of Sakhalin, within 50 miles of Japan, comes a donation of four million roubles to assist in the reconstruction of Stalingrad. Cattle, sheep and bees come from Stalinabad, almost in the shadow of the Himalayas. From the forests of Karelia, on the borders of Finland, comes timber.

ALL PARTS CONTRIBUTE

FROM Kuibyshev and the Urals come machine tools and mechanical equipment. From Gorky 25 lorries, 25 haulage tractors, 50 motors for combines, 100 tons of corrugated iron and 100,000 roubles' worth of goods of various kinds. From Kalinin comes linen and children's clothing. Ivanovo, the Manchester of the Soviet Union, sends 15,000 suits, 31,000 other garments, 15,000 handkerchiefs, 1,800 pair of boots. The fishermen of the Upper Volga send boats. Nikolai Lunin, railwayman, Stakhanovite and Hero of Socialist Labour, with his own personal savings buys 1,500 tons of coal and himself drives it 1,500 miles from Kharaganda, on the borders of the deserts of Central Asia to Stalingrad.

Nor, of course, is mutual assistance limited to Stalingrad. Seed is furnished to the collective farmers of Smolensk from the Yaroslavl, Ivanovo, Kuibyshev and Eastern regions. From Tula to Orel and Byelgorod come equipment and railway materials. To Vyazma from Novosibirsk comes a trainload of tractors. To Stalingrad in the Donbas from Daghestan in the Caucasus come 100 tons of fish. Machinery, bread, tools, crockery, clothing, medicaments come from Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Urals.

Voluntary assistance extends beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union. In February 1945 the Soviet Government announced that after consultation with the Governments of the Ukraine, Lithuania and Byelorussia it had decided to send the necessary number of experts to assist in drafting a plan for the reconstruction of Warsaw and to donate technical and material assistance to the amount of 50 per cent. of the cost of rebuilding. In March a group of Soviet technicians, experienced in reconstruction of Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, arrived in Warsaw and started work on the reconstruction of Warsaw's shattered

streets and buildings. Within a few days of its liberation these three Republics and Soviet Moldavia sent more than 60,000 tons of wheat and other foodstuffs as a free gift to the suffering people of Warsaw.

From the United States, the American Red Cross has sent considerable sums to the Soviet Union. In Iran a fund has been opened under the patronage of the Shah for assistance to the families of Soviet citizens who have suffered at the hands of the invaders. In Britain the Red Cross Aid for Russia Fund has reached £7,000,000. The Joint Committee for Soviet Aid has raised about £1,000,000 in cash and kind. The National Council of Labour, Mineworkers Union and other bodies, national and local, have sent or guaranteed further considerable sums. The city of Coventry which, too, knew the weight of the "Hitlerite invader" has adopted as its Soviet counterpart the city of Stalingrad. Citizens of Glasgow contribute towards the reconstruction of Stalino.

DIN OF THE HAMMER

THE thunder of the cannon gives place to the din of the hammer. In Maikop evacuated by the Germans on January 30, 1942, it was announced on March 19th that Soviet oil flowed once more. The vineyards, wineries and distilleries of the North Caucasus are under restoration. The famous Caucasian health resorts and bathing cures have been re-opened. The Kirov railway works in North Ossetia are turning out new passenger carriages and goods wagons on a large scale.

The Stalin Coal Combine, one of the coal trusts of the Donbas, turned out a million tons of coal within 2 months of liberation.

At Krivoi Rog, Sheffield of the Ukraine, liberated on Red Army Day 1944, 28 mines were restored and 18 million tons of high grade iron ore mined before the end of the year. In the liberated areas of the Ukraine in less than one year before October 1944, 26,000 collective farms, 57,000 cattle-building stations, 1,000 machine and tractor stations had been restored, more than 10,000,000 acres had been sown and squadrons of the Azerbaidyan Agricultural Air Force had been loaned to deal with crop diseases.

At Voronezh, on the steppes of the Don, food factories, flour mills and sugar refineries are in production. At Rostov-on-Don several shops of the Rostov Agricultural Machinery Plant have been restored. The Don Tobacco Works again turn out cigarettes, a luxury appreciated as much in the Soviet Union as elsewhere.

At Stalino, in the south east corner of the Ukraine, 4 blast furnaces, 12 open hearth furnaces, 8 rolling mills and 7 coal mines are in production. At Novo Kramatorsk, on the bend of the Donets, 14 departments of the Stalin Machine Building plant are recommissioned and turn out heavy machines for the power stations, mines and the iron and steel industries of the Donets Basin.

At Nikopol the Machine Building Works is in operation and a number of manganese mines have been restored. The Beshui Coal Mines of the Crimea, which during 2½ years gave the Germans less than 30 tons of coal, were in large scale production within 3 months of liberation.

In March 1944, an aeroplane brought 15 workers to begin work on the reconstruction of the giant Dneiper Dam, pride of the Soviet Union in the years before the war; by July 1944 over 10,000 workers many of them voluntary helpers, were on the job and the first slabs of concrete were laid to fill the breaches which Red Army engineers had blown during the great retreat.

Factories in Moscow, Baku and the Urals were working on orders for the new construction. By January 1945 the entire constructional work had been completed, the Dneiper bridges were under reconstruction and it was announced that the crossings of the river would be normal before the spring.

A TALE OF THREE CITIES

AND here is the tale of 3 Soviet cities.

SMOLENSK. The big Russian city of Smolensk was liberated by the Red Army on September 25, 1943. Immediately after the expulsion of the Germans the people of the region set to work to restore their towns and villages.

What has been done in the year that has passed? The peasants in the Smolensk area not only restored 7,140 collective farms, but reached the pre-war level for winter and spring sowing. More than 67,500 head of cattle, 8,200 horses, 82,000 sheep and goats, 15,000 pigs and 106,000 chickens have been sent in to restock the Smolensk Farms. In all, nearly 4,175 dairy farms pig-breeding stations have been set up.

The Sychev and Smolensk pedigree stockbreeding farms, with more than 8,000 head of cattle, have been started up again. The State distributed 18,000 tons of rye seed among collective farms for last winter's sowing, and another 2,680 tons of seed were sent in from farms, in the Yaroslavl, Ivanovo and Kuibyshev regions.

This spring, the Government gave to Smolensk farmers 7,000 tons of grain seed and 3,135 tons of flax seed. In addition, nearly 4,000 tons of grain seed were sent from collective farms in the East. The Smolensk farms were given special treatment as regards the delivery of agricultural produce to the State, so that they might have a chance to get to their feet again. They have become sufficiently strong, however, to distribute more than 5,800 head of horned cattle among the families of men serving with the Red Army or guerilla detachments.

Machinery in large quantities was required to work the farms, and 90 machine and tractor stations were restored during the past year, as well as 81 farm machinery repair shops, and five shops for carrying out major repairs. Over 150 houses were built for the mechanics employed at these stations.

New houses were needed, too, for the collective farmers and their families. They repaired or built 57,359 houses for the people of the countryside who had been living in dugouts, or among the ruins of their wrecked homes. In the towns and workers' settlements over 37,000 houses were restored. This was after the economic life of the region had been restored.

By the end of the first year of freedom industry in the region had been restored to normal. There were nine power stations and four waterworks in operation; 15 steambaths and 14 hotels were available for use. The people of Smolensk had also restored to working order 113 factories, and set up 43 new factories turning out over 400 products.

Thirty eight food factories and 97 flour mills are now working, while 94 industrial co-operatives are producing over 150 types of

article. In addition, 21 articles run by war invalids have been set up which make 80 different sorts of goods.

The work of transport reconstruction progresses at the same pace as this wholesale agricultural and industrial restoration. Railwaymen in the region have relaid nearly 20,000 miles of main line and over 300 miles of sidings. They have repaired and rebuilt houses and dormitories for themselves, signal boxes, locomotive sheds, rolling stock repair shops and station buildings.

The children were not forgotten in this spate of reconstruction. Altogether 1,814 schools, 25 children's homes, 68 kindergartens, 10 technical schools and 18 trade schools were re-opened.

Extensive help was given the families of Service men and guerrillas who had suffered at the hands of the Nazis; 18,325 houses were built for them, and 29,718 flats and apartments occupied by them were repaired.

OREL. In the Orel Region 80,000 civilians were tortured and executed by the Germans, and a further 250,000 including 55,000 adolescents, were deported to Germany for forced labour; 22,000 young women and girls were shipped to Germany from the town of Orel itself. Mtsensk, Bolkhov, Novosil, Livny and many other towns in the region were razed to the ground.

In 19 districts of the region they burned and wrecked 583 government buildings 317 industrial enterprises, 316 railway stations, 881 educational and cultural centres, 181 medical institutions, 284 municipal buildings, 493 trading enterprises, 56,866 farm buildings and 200,000 homes belonging to collective farmers, factory and office workers.

The day of August 5, 1943, when Red Army man Adzharov hoisted the banner of the Soviets in the capital of the region, marked the beginning of Orel's rebirth.

In one year the Soviet Government spent 11 million roubles on restoring the city and region; 75,000 square yards of housing were restored in the town and six new hospitals were built in place of the five destroyed by the Germans; 895 volunteer construction teams organised by the citizens, have contributed 800,000 work hours during the last three months alone.

By April this year 45,000 collective farm homes had been restored and more than 210,000 people had moved from tents and dugouts.

The Germans did not leave a single industrial enterprise standing in the Region. Seven big factories have been restored or built anew since then, and their main shops are already producing. The Yelets mines are working.

At present 39 district industrial associations uniting a total of 309 different enterprises are functioning, as well as 184 enterprises of the local food industries and 82 producers' co-operatives shops, whose production during the past year has run into scores of millions of roubles.

The Orel railwaymen have restored 67 railway stations, repaired the rolling stock, got three power plants going and restored or rebuilt 41,820 square yards of housing. During the first six months of 1944 they transported 33,000 tons of freight above plan.

Agriculture, too, has great things to its credit. During 1944 the cultivated area increased by an average of 17.5 per cent., while the acreage under hemp—the leading industrial crop in the region—increased by 238 per cent. All the 129 machine and tractor stations and an equal number of machine and tractor repair shops have been restored. Over eight thousand livestock farms are again in being; their cattle now number 50 per cent. of the pre-war figure, their sheep 40 per cent. and their poultry 60 per cent.

Government aid to the Orel collective farmers is supplemented by the generous contributions of the working people of Kazakhstan, of the Tartar republic and Penza Region, who have become "patrons" of the Orel countryside.

For war orphans, the region has a Suvorov school for 500 youngsters, 31 children's and four infants' homes, and several industrial training schools where thousands of youngsters are receiving vocational training. Seven kindergartens and creches have been restored, and a further extension of pre-school institutions is planned.

The Germans destroyed 1,058 of the 1,967 schools which existed in the region before the war, as well as the teachers' training schools; 2,066 schools have been opened for the new term, and the teachers' training schools are functioning again.

Forty-two cinemas are open, and 16 travelling cinemas are touring the countryside; 538 village libraries, and 28 district centres of culture are open again.

KHARKOV. A minimum of four years will be required to restore essential service in the Ukraine, so thoroughly did the retreating enemy destroy everything.

In 1944 the great Ukrainian city of Kharkov held a Reconstruction Exhibition. Before the invasion Kharkov's industries were world famous. Before their retreat from the city the Germans did their best to destroy its industries completely, when the liberating troops entered they found no single industrial enterprise undamaged.

The exhibition gave a graphic picture of the progress that had been made in reconstruction within thirteen months of liberation. Models of rebuilt factories were on show, along with samples of goods produced in them. And having seen the restoration in miniature at the exhibition the curious could tour the town at random and see for himself that in no way had the actual progress been exaggerated.

In the winter of 1943 the great Hammer and Sickle plant lay in ruins, its machinery was twisted and broken; its workshops were blasted to pieces. But within a year the main shops were working again—and at the exhibition a powerful threshing machine, the Mk.-1,100 was on view as an example of how fully the factory had been restored.

On the stand of the Molotov machine-building factory was a grinding lathe manufactured in 1944. The walls of the new factory were still going up, and the roof was not yet on. But the workers began assembling and mounting new lathes without waiting for the builders to finish.

What the Germans did to the famous Kharkov tractor plant is common knowledge. In photos taken on August 23, 1943

the day Kharkov was liberated, the factory is seen completely wrecked.

A tractor, with the factory's trade mark, was on view at the exhibition. It was a salvaged machine. But the plant is preparing to resume production, and samples of new tractor parts could be seen.

In common with all the city's factories, the Kharkov electrical machinery works suffered barbarous destruction.

This factory too, is being put back on its feet. Already much important machinery for the Donbas mines has come off the assembly lines.

Kharkov will soon regain its high place as a centre of Soviet industry and scientific research. Its 60 research institutions are represented at the exhibition, along with the rebuilt factories and restored farms.

The Kharkov area was for along time the scene of terrible battles. Great stretches of land all around the city have been ploughed over by the fighting, pitted with trenches, bombs and shells, and slashed with anti-tank ditches.

But this year the fertile Ukrainian soil has lavishly repaid its liberators. In the Liubotinsk district the Novaya Zhizn collective farm this year sowed more than ever before the war and gathered a larger harvest.

The Ukrainian peasantry has made an amazing recovery. Here, for example, is the history of Petrovsky district, as shown at the exhibition. Over 8,000 villages were burned by the enemy. During the past year 2,349 new cottages have been built. Before the war there were 52 schools in the area. Most of them were either completely destroyed or badly damaged by the Germans. By now, 42 have resumed their activity.

Diagrams, photographs and figures indicated the success of the local livestock breeders. The Ukrainian farms, famous for their herds of great horned cattle, their pigs, horses, sheep and goats were, robbed of all their livestock during the invasion. Within the last year 4,500 stock-breeding farms had been re-established around Kharkov. They own 55,000 head of horned cattle, 16,000 sheep and goats, 10,000 pigs and 11,000 horses.

AT DNIROPETROVSK

AT Dnipropetrovsk, on the bend of the Dnieper, 2 blast furnaces, 2 rolling mills, 1 blooming mill, 23 steam boilers and the structural steel department, foundry forge and electrical shop of a big works are in production. Dozens of kilometres of railway tracks have been restored and the Dnipropetrovsk ironworks and Dniprodzerzhinsk coking—chemical plant are under restoration.

In Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, 242 factories and the principal shops of the Dnieper shipyard are working, a new type-writer factory, one of the largest of its type in the Soviet Union, is under construction and town planners have adopted the novel idea of building escalators instead of footpaths in some of the steepest parts of the city.

In Kherson, at the mouth of the Dnieper, ship-repairing yards have been entirely restored and the ship building yards are under restoration.

At Minsk, capital of Soviet Byelorussia, within 7 months of liberation, the electricity and water supplies of the city had been restored, the government departments were back at work, a 50 mile long railway had been laid to connect the city with the nearest big forest in order to ensure the supply of timber for building and 15-60 hours per week were being done by more than 60,000 voluntary building workers.

In the first seven months of 1943, 55,000 miles of telephone wire, 159 telegraph and 250 radio transmitting stations, 387 city telephone stations, and nearly 5,000 post offices, and in the first five months of winter 1942-3 more than 4,700 miles of railway line had been restored in the liberated areas of the Ukrainian and Russian Republics. In the Arctic Republics of Soviet Karelia in the Far North 440 collective farms, 13 machine and tractor stations, 4 state farms, more than 50 saw-mills, hundreds of miles of railway line, 236 bridges and 3 electric power stations have been restored.

SOME OTHER SECTORS

ALL this is but a cross-section of the work of reconstruction which has taken place in the liberated areas. It is pitifully inadequate to convey any impression of the vast works of construction which have taken place in wartime throughout the Soviet Union. It does not deal with the enormous projects of irrigation which have been undertaken in the North Caucasus and in Siberia where nine and eleven million acres of waste lands have been watered and put to fertile use respectively, nor with the discovery of coal seams 50-170 yards thick and a few feet beneath the surface in the North Urals by prospectors prospecting for minerals of use in munitions; nor with the development of the iron smelting industry at Magnitogorsk or in Georgia, nor of the automobile and machine tractor industries in the Kuzbas and in the Urals. Such events, of moderate importance in themselves, but taken together, gigantic enough to create history's immediate future shape, are beyond the scope of this title. In the words of a Soviet leader "We shall be richer after the war not poorer. Before the war we had two great machine tractor plants. After the war we shall have five."

ROLE OF THE PRESS

POWERFUL in the work of reconstruction is the Soviet press, playing its accustomed role in Soviet society, underlining the aim, encouraging the honest, chiding the tardy. On February 19, 1943, *Pravda* wrote:—

"The restoration of the liberated areas is a work of immense social importance. Their people are working with tenfold energy. It is not only a matter of restoring the social economy and creating proper living conditions but of restoring agriculture and industry. The freed areas must be made 100 per cent. valuable links in the Soviet economic system. It is a huge task and it will take a great deal of hard, stubborn work. The liberated districts are now part of the rear of the victorious Red Army. They must become a firm support for the front!"

A sharp rebuke was handed out to the leaders of the building materials industry:

"Even while they fight the Soviet people are constructing on a vast scale. New factories, mines, dwelling-houses and schools are being built, particularly in the eastern districts, to which hundreds of thousands of working people went along with the evacuated factories.

"On August 22, a Decree of the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Committee of the Communist Party was published dealing with the immediate measures to be taken to restore the economy of the liberated districts. The implementing of this decree will involve a gigantic building programme and this programme requires enormous quantities of timber, bricks, cement and glass. We cannot rebuild what the Germans have laid waste or cope with our needs in the deep rear, unless we have an efficient building material industry.

"Our building material industry is not fulfilling its responsible and honourable duty. Since the outbreak of the war the Soviet people have achieved a gigantic reorganisation of the whole national economy on a wartime footing. But the leaders of the building material industry have failed to take the necessary steps in good time to increase the output of bricks, cement, glass, roofing materials and plumbing and electrical equipment.

"Apparently they do not appreciate the political importance of the production of say, glass. Many thousands of buildings are under construction at the moment. Without glass there is no light. Not a single building can be made usable without glass. Only now is the People's Commissariat for the Building Materials Industry taking steps to increase the output of glass. Such slowness and lack of flexibility cannot be tolerated."

REHABILITATION

In the Soviet Union reconstruction does not, of course, mean only the reconstruction of factories and buildings. It also means the complete rehabilitation of the people of the liberated areas. For in the words of Stalin "of all our assets human beings are the most precious."

In view of our own problems in providing for the elemental human needs of food and warmth in the countries which we, ourselves have liberated, the experience of the Soviet Union is of interest of us. Everywhere military control was replaced almost immediately by civil authority. Large stocks of food-stuffs, cooking apparatus, fuel and even mobile power stations with their own supplies of labour and transport were stored up behind the Red Armies and dispatched immediately to the liberated regions.

In Kiev 1,840 public dining rooms were opened within two and a half months of liberation. Stalino, within a month of its liberation, had 18 restaurants, 23 bakeries and 11 flour mills. Kharkov, within the same period, had several mechanised bakeries, 60 canteens catering for over 50,000 factory and office workers, with many others catering for the general population, and several departments of the Kharkov meat combine were in operation.

Immediately after liberation, work was begun on the restoration of power stations, electricity and water supplies and transport services. In the interim temporary services were frequently utilised. Thirty mobile power stations of capacity 500-4,000 kilowatts, each mounted on two to eight standard platform cars, followed the liberating armies. These played an important part in restoring Stalingrad, the Donbas, the Crimea, Zaporozhe, Krivoi Rog, Gomel, Minsk and other cities. Sometimes they were used conjointly as was the case when two were coupled together to bring the Tractor Plant at Stalingrad back quickly into operation. Hospitals and rest homes for persons from the liberated

areas who were in need of care and attention have been constructed and restored.

The sanatoriums of Mineralny Vody and Essentuki, the curative mud-baths of Paytigorsk and the convalescent homes of Kislovodsk, for which aeroplanes left Moscow every day in time of peace, have been reopened. Yalta, Odessa and Sevastopol are under restoration. Old resorts such as the famous group of rest homes and sanatoriums on the shores of Lake Issyk Kul in Kirghizia are pressed into more general service. New resorts such as Surafan in the Caucasus or the rest homes of Chelyabinsk, Novosibirsk and Tomsk, are being developed.

THE CHILDREN

SPECIAL attention in the work of reconstruction is being paid to the children. Great care is given to the problem of orphaned children. By a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of January 1942 orphans up to 3 years of age are cared for in creches and orphans from 4 to 14 years in children's homes under the auspices of the People's Commissariat of Health. Orphans over 14 are placed in training schools, like other Soviet children, where they learn to become skilled workers as well as continuing their general education. In April, 1944 there were more than 100 such "Homes for the Child" throughout the liberated areas, local authorities are free to make their own arrangements.

In the Smolensk city and district 25 regional homes have been established and at Stalingrad another 25. The 50 opened in the Voronezh region each have their own orchards, livestock farm and apiaries which are organised by the collective farmers of the region, who in addition cultivate vegetables for the children.

A "Narkhemov" School has been opened in Leningrad for the orphans of servicemen, guerillas, Communist Party and State Workers. In the Moscow region a school named after the eminent botanist Professor Komarov, President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, has been founded for the education of children of scientific workers killed at the front. The "Artek" sanatorium for tubercular children, evacuated to the Altai mountains, has returned to the Crimea. New children's sanatoriums have been opened at Chkalov in the Urals, Uzbekistan in Central Asia, Tashkent, in the shadow of the Himalayas, and for the children of Leningrad amidst the pine trees of the Urals. In the liberated areas new sanatoriums for children have been built at Minsk, Gomel, Vitebsk and Bobruisk.

The famous Moscow Children's Hospital admits children from the liberated areas. Under the slogan "There must be no orphans in the Soviet Union" the practice of adoption has been extended. At the beginning of 1944 over 3,000 homes in the Republic of Uzbekistan alone had adopted orphans. In addition, with liberation, children have their rights under the Soviet law restored.

Everywhere the Red Army is followed by the reopening of schools. By the end of 1944 schools for more than 4½ million children had been opened in areas liberated during 1943. In August 1944 in the Republic of Byelorussia, liberated during the offensive of 1944, of the 12,000 schools which existed before the war, 10,000 had been restored. All the factory and technical schools in iron and steel districts of the Ukraine have been restored and have taken on 5,000 more students than in the pre-war period. Two hundred new vocational schools have been opened

in the Soviet Union, mainly in Byelorussia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Moldavia, where pupils will learn to play their part in post-war production. It is notable that immediately after the liberation of Stalin more schools were opened than shops or indeed, any other type of building.

CULTURE

SCARCELY less important than the restoration of human beings in the Soviet Union is the restoration of culture, for educated man is as necessary as man himself to the building of Soviet society. Everywhere the Nazis went there followed an orgy of destruction and loot. As Attila had hoped to destroy the memory of Rome so the Hitlerites hoped to destroy all memory of Soviet and Russian culture and in the name of a vandalism a thousand times more foul in its generation. Schools were pulled down or converted into brothels or barracks. Museums were dismantled, their most valuable exhibits sent to Germany. The manuscripts of Chekhov were used to light the fires of German soldiers. The home of Tolstoy was wrecked and turned into a garage and parking place for German motor cyclists.

At Istria, the beautiful "New Jerusalem" Monastery, modelled on the Church of the Ascension and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem was left in ruins. Architects including Stalin Prize-winner Alexei Shchushev, are working on the restoration of the ruined buildings. The house of Chaikovsky at Klin has been restored. Work is in progress on the ruins of Peterhof and Pushkin, near Leningrad.

The Opera Theatre of Byelorussia at Minsk and the Lunacharsky Theatre of Opera and Ballet and State Theatre of the Revolution at Odessa have re-opened and present performances. In February 1944, Ronald Matthew, Moscow correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, described how Red Army men and sailors of the Baltic Fleet were donating their free time to help building workers on the restoration of the Mariinsky Theatre at Leningrad so that the people of Leningrad might have their opera by May 1st. Players of the Moscow Theatre visit the liberated areas. The Russians are great lovers of music. Stalingrad, Voronszh, Kursk, Orel, Odessa and other cities re-establish their Municipal Philharmonic Orchestras. A group of Moscow scientists is working on the restoration of the public gardens of the Crimea, including the famous Nikitsky Gardens near Yalta. The vineyards of the North Caucasus and the Crimea are under restoration.

The liberation of each town is rapidly followed by the free establishment of local and wall newspapers, those indispensable instruments of Soviet democracy which act as forums for hard discussion and the expression of public opinion. Four million books have been collected by the People's Commissariat for Education of the Russian Socialist Republic at Moscow and 34 other district centres and sent to re-establish the libraries of the devastated areas. Books from this collection go to re-equip the libraries of Orel and Byelgorod. The Lenin State library of the U.S.S.R. sends books from its own collection to the liberated areas. A special print of 30,000,000 books—including works by Leo Tolstoy, Nekrassov, Chekhov, Pushkin, Gogol, Gorky, Dickens, Shaw, Kipling, Chaucer, Mark Twain, and Zola—is under preparation by one of the largest publishing houses of the Soviet Union to replace books destroyed by the invaders. Soviet trade unions re-equip the libraries of the Donbas.

At Stalingrad 2,000 students attend the Medical, Mechanical and Pedagogical Institutes. The University of Orel has re-opened. The Agricultural Colleges at Kishinev, Kiev, Odessa and in the Crimea have been restored; new colleges have been established at Stalingrad, Yaroslavl and in the Stavropol Territory. The Academy of Sciences at Odessa has been restored. By the end of 1944 throughout the liberated areas of the Soviet Union, which before the war had several times the number of universities and institutes for higher education than existed in the whole of Hitlerite Germany, 86 Universities and 127 institutes of higher education have been restored.

REHOUSING

ALTHOUGH housing has not been a first priority in the reconstruction of the devastated areas in the U.S.S.R., particularly in the towns, plans for the eventual rehousing of the entire Soviet people in the best possible manner are being carried forward with customary Soviet thoroughness.

A Government Commission on Architecture now covers the whole Soviet Union and embraces 214 planning organisations employing more than a thousand architects. Building plans for 140 towns were completed in 1944 and plans for 315 more towns will be drawn up this year.

In every Soviet Republic new schools of architecture are being opened. These range from higher technical institutes to vocational schools for training in exterior and interior decoration.

Throughout the whole Union courses have been established to turn out trained building workers.

In addition to widespread State and municipal schemes there is a widespread campaign, particularly in the rural districts, for individual house-building. The State is prepared to give the individual house-builder credit up to 10,000 roubles, repayable in seven years, free of interest, for which purpose 257 million roubles have been allocated from the State budget.

In rural districts many peasants have always built their own cottages. Under the new scheme they will be able to purchase prefabricated parts such as window frames, doors and floors. In every Soviet region there will be a model village built by the State which the prospective builder of his own home will be able to visit and study. Typical of such projected villages is one in the Kalinin district which will have fifty cottages, a club, school, kindergarten, post office and fire station. It will have electricity and an internal water supply and will be surrounded by orchards and have a park with an open-air theatre.

Industrial workers in devastated areas who wish to build their own houses are being helped not only by the State but also by their undertakings, which allot a percentage of their construction material to the individual builders and organise delivery to the site. Workers intending to build their own house will get such materials as bricks, metal, and window handles at cost price. A number of factories have started to employ building experts to advise the workers and have established departments to produce furniture.

Whilst the long term building plans are being worked out, everything possible is being done to rehouse at least some of the people in prefabricated wooden houses on brick foundations, estimated to

have a life of about fifteen years. In this connection the vast experience of the Building Trust of the Commissariat of the Aviation Industry has come in useful. During the war they have been compelled to build in quick time large numbers of dwellings for skilled workers evacuated to the Urals.

THE PAVLOV HOUSE

IN the *New Statesman* of March 24, that journal's Moscow correspondent describes one of these prefabricated cottages—the Pavlov House—which has been erected in the neighbourhood of Moscow. She describes it as follows:

"The show house is a pleasant-looking small bungalow with a red brick base, cream painted wooden wall, side verandah, white pillared porch and steep grey tiled roof with overhanging eaves. And it was built in 30 working hours—from digging of foundations to screwing in of last electric bulb and placing of stone flower urns on lawn. The house was built to a time-table by a brigade of 40 Stalingrad workers of whom 19 were skilled artisans. It consists of bedroom and kitchen to the right of the hall, second bedroom to the left and a bathroom at end of hall. Since the whole floor space is only 50 square metres the rooms are very small.

"The house is heated by tiled wood-burning stoves let into the walls, so that one stove warms two rooms and hall; central heating would involve construction of cellar, so increasing construction time. The living room, the walls of which are coloured plaster, applied mechanically, has a French window leading on to the verandah. All windows naturally have double panes. The rooms are lighted by a big central globe and there is an electric wall plug for radio, lamps or kettle.

"Cooking apparatus is a woodburning brick stove which Russian housewives have used for generations. Nowhere is there a built-in cupboard or even shelves, and the loft which runs the whole length of the house can be reached only by placing a ladder against the outside wall. The small sink in the kitchen and the bathroom wash-basin, have only a cold water tap, the hot water supply coming from the wood-burning geyser which runs into the bath.

"As a result, the laundry must be done in the bathroom. The plumbing fixtures are very plain—there is no gleaming nickel and porcelain—but the main point is they are there, and the new householder will no longer have to use the communal lavatory or go to the public baths for a weekly scrub.

"Such is the standard of a Russian prefabricated cottage. To the British housewife it might not seem very tempting, but to the Russian family, who have moved in from a single crowded room or a cubicle in barracks or a hole in the ground, it looks like paradise.

"Do not imagine" said the Chief Engineer of the Building Trust that we think this is a perfect house. If we added all the improvements I would like to see, the house would take much longer to prefabricate and erect. Our main job at the moment is to get roofs over peoples heads and give them warmth, privacy and space."

In addition whole new towns and villages are being constructed

in the liberated areas. Voronezh, which before the war had a population of 35,000, is being reconstructed to accommodate 450,000. The Architectural and Designing Department of the Moscow Executive Committee has redesigned more than 560 new hamlets in the Moscow region and they are now under construction.

REHABILITATION OF NATIONALITIES

IMPORTANT, too, is the rehabilitation of nations. Marshal Stalin, a master not only of warfare but also of the problems of Soviet nationalities referred to Tzarist Russia as a 'prison-house of nations.' These nations were emancipated by the Soviet Revolution. Soviet laws prohibit the stirring up of national hatred and national rights are respected. By the decisions of Yalta, Byelorussians and Ukrainians torn apart from their kinsmen by the Treaty of Riga were re-united within the boundaries of the new Ukraine and the new Byelorussia. With the aim of respecting national rights, on the 9th August, 1944, agreements were concluded between the Government of Poland in Lublin and the Governments of the Ukraine and Byelorussia. They provided for:—

(1) The evacuation of persons who had been Polish citizens on 18th September, 1939, from the Ukraine and Byelorussia to Poland and for Ukrainians and Byelorussians in Poland to the Ukraine and Byelorussian Republics.

(2) All evacuations to be voluntary and the resettlement and employment of persons evacuated to be the responsibility of the respective administrations.

(3) Persons evacuated from Poland may at their option be settled on collective farms or given allocations of land for individual farming; persons evacuated from the Ukraine and Byelorussia will receive land in accordance with the Laws on Agrarian Reform in Poland.

(4) Landless peasants, if they so desire will receive land on the same general basis as others.

(5) Arrears of deliveries in kind, money taxes and insurance payments are annulled for evacuated persons and they are entitled to a state loan of 5,000 zloti per family, repayable in 5 years, and to exemption from State taxes and insurance payments for two years.

(6) Evacuated persons handing over their harvest will receive the same quantity of crops on arrival and those who had sown winter wheat to receive the same amount as far as possible.

(7) Evacuated persons are permitted to take 2 tons per family of domestic and economic goods and to receive compensation for movable and immovable property left behind according to the existing laws of Poland and the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

On the 22nd August, 1944, a similar agreement was concluded between the Polish Government in Lublin and the Government of Soviet Lithuania. It will be noted that in handing back Transylvania to Rumania, Marshal Stalin as head of the Soviet Government likewise demanded and received from the Rumanian Government guarantees against the oppression of Hungarian minorities.

As reconstruction in the Soviet Union means restoration of

fraternal relationships between Soviet nations, the obliteration of all attempts at exploitation of nation by nation, so it means the restoration of Soviet Society, the obliteration of all attempts to restore the system of exploitation of man by man. It means the wiping out of the last traces of the German landlords and of those elements which helped the German landlords to power and perpetrated crimes against the Soviet people. For to Soviet Russia the last 10 years from Franco to Marshals Tuchachevsky and Petain, have abundantly proved the necessity for watchfulness. Here, no weakness with the Fifth Column, no truck with traitors. Hence the punishment and liquidation of the traitors of Kharkov and Krasnodar.

REPARATIONS

Finally, no examination of reconstruction in the Soviet Union can be complete without a reference to the problem of reparations. On one thing the whole Soviet people is agreed. The Germans shall be made to pay to build up what they have torn down. Discussion now centres on the ways and means of payment. Professor Eugene Varga, a leading Soviet economist, writing in the Moscow Paper *War and the Working Class*, has focussed attention on certain proposals, but the Soviet Government has not yet publicly pronounced on the principles of payment. In the Armistice Agreements between the Soviet Union and Finland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania the Soviet Government has finally stated its claims against these four countries. Reparations are to be paid from capital equipment as well as from current production. Pro-Hitler and Fascist organisations are to be dissolved and their property presumably confiscated. War criminals are to be apprehended and surrendered. All these countries had already declared war on Hitlerite Germany and no demand was presented that their nationals be sent to work in the reconstruction of the Soviet devastated areas.

IN RETROSPECT

On the Soviet national holiday, May 1, 1943, just before the battle of Kursk—Hitler's last large-scale offensive against the Soviet armies—there appeared in *Pravda*, the slogan streaming across the page-top of this Soviet paper: "We shall break them!"

In the years following the 1917 Revolution, no less than eight different nations intervened with arms against the Soviet State. Moscow was surrounded.

The White Guards and foreign invaders penetrated before Stalingrad in the South, Orel and Tula in the West, the suburbs of Leningrad in the North. In the East they were before Kuibyshev. The Soviet Union was reduced to less than one-twentieth of her present size. Four-fifths of her population were beneath the heel of the invader. Workers in the wooded districts of Moscow worked waist-high in water to produce munitions. There was famine. Soldiers, without sheepskins in mid-winter, often without rifles, fought a war on no less than 13 different fronts. But they broke them. Industries were destroyed, towns razed to the ground, agricultural instruments smashed and livestock slaughtered or driven away. It was 1928 before the Soviet Union was restored to her economic level of 1913-1914. Countless

obstacles stood in the way of the very existence of the Soviet Union. But they broke them.

For 20 years the Soviet Union had to face great hostility from the Governments of most of the world. Many difficulties stood in the way of an understanding between the Soviet peoples and the peoples of the democracies of the West. But they have broken them down. For 10 years the Soviet people struggled for peace. They needed peace to build their Soviet Society. That peace was denied them.

Towards the end of the 1930's the Soviet people were looking forward to the enjoyment of a high level of living. That level of living they were able to enjoy only for a short time. The problem of reconstruction has saddled the Soviet people with another huge burden. For a second time within 26 years they have seen countless homes destroyed, industries smashed, towns razed, agricultural implements smashed and livestock slaughtered or rustled away.

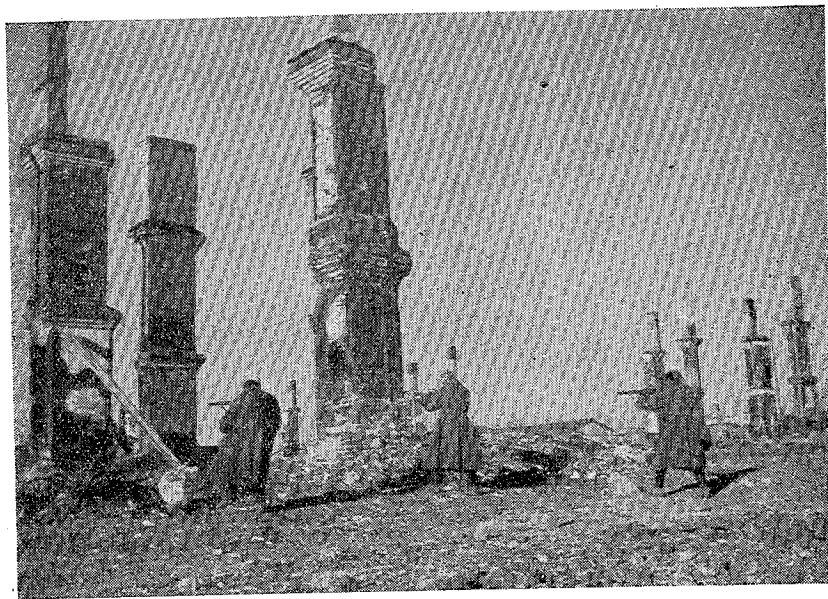
Over 50,000,000 Soviet citizens have been subjected to a brutal enemy. Over 600,000 square miles of Soviet territory fell beneath the heel of the barbarians, all of which has been regained. The Soviet people retreated 1,000 miles from their Western territories to Stalingrad. Then they turned and broke the invader. There is no doubt that a people who can do all this can successfully deal with the difficulties, great though they may be, which confront them in the problem of reconstruction of their devastated areas. But we, ourselves, may profit from our mistakes of the past and learn to understand the Soviet people. Let no President of the Soviet Union ever again have to say:

"What are the sources from which our industry obtains the strength to supply the front with all its needs? Where does it find technically trained people, highly capable and gifted specialists? The foreign press asks this question with joy, the neutral press with astonishment, and the German press with shouts of 'Help'! Yet our industry was developing before the eyes of the whole world. A full picture of its development can be obtained from the reports and directives which Stalin has given since say, 1930. In the reports of heads of industry and planning commissions, at conferences of Soviets and the Party, detailed plans for industrial development were outlined together with full lists of factories, and the sums allocated for their construction. These figures were printed in official publications which were on sale. Anyone who wanted to study the development of our industry could very easily have done so."

Let us draw even closer the links which bind the British and the Soviet peoples. The friendship of the future must be based on mutual knowledge and understanding.



One of the Stalingrad hospitals which have been repaired and fitted with medical equipment sent from Britain.



The chimney stacks were all that remained of these Stalingrad homes, standing like memorials to the vanished houses as they shelter Red Army soldiers and their automatic rifles.

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