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SOCIAL GAINS OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE

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FIFTY YEARS OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

N. Lagutin

**SOCIAL GAINS
OF THE SOVIET
PEOPLE**

PEACE
AND SOCIALISM PUBLISHERS
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INTRODUCTION

"We have a right to be and are proud that to us has fallen the good fortune to begin the building of a Soviet state, and thereby to usher in a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a new class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars."

(V. I. Lenin, *Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution*).

Fifty years ago, in October 1917, the working people of Russia, led by the Communist Party at the head of which stood Lenin, performed the greatest feat in human history—they broke the chains of slavery for all time and ushered in a new era, the era of the collapse of capitalism and the rise and development of communism.

Having taken over power in alliance with the labouring peasantry, the proletariat was faced with the formidable task of creating a new state, the Soviet state. Its chief aim, Lenin wrote a few months after the October Revolution, was to make Russia strong and rich, set the country on the path to "the bright future of communist society, universal prosperity and enduring peace." In other words, as the CC CPSU Theses on the half-centenary of the Revolution points out, the purpose of the new government was economic, social and political emancipation of the people. "The proletariat fought for emancipation from wage slavery," the Theses say, "and it became the master of factories and mills. The toiling peasantry suffered from land hunger, and Soviet power abolished the landlord property rights, turning the land over to the peasants... The oppressed nationalities inhabiting tsarist Russia suffered from a lack of political rights, and Soviet power proclaimed the equality of nations and their right to self-determination. The division into social estates and estate

privileges were abolished... The people passionately desired peace and the Decree on Peace became the first Soviet decree."

However, in the very first months of its existence, Lenin emphasized, the Soviet Republic was faced with its most trying ordeal. On the very next day after the revolution it appealed to all the warring powers immediately to end the monstrous and useless world war and conclude a just peace without annexations and indemnities. The answer of the capitalist world was for fourteen countries to launch armed intervention.

All the forces of the old world: Russian landowners and capitalists, Whiteguard generals and cossack chieftains, supported and encouraged by the foreign intervention forces, united in a desperate attempt to destroy the young republic. Soviet Russia was caught in a ring of fire; for three years its workers and peasants fought back ceaseless counter-revolutionary attacks. Despite all the hardships this entailed, the people withstood the frenzied enemy onslaught and smashed the joint forces of Whiteguard and foreign intervention.

But victory was not easy. It was bought at the price of economic dislocation. Many factories and mills were at a standstill. There was not enough food for the population, not enough fuel nor clothing. Heavy industry output in 1921 was only one-seventh and steel production less than 5 per cent, of the 1913 figure. Farm output was reduced to practically half of prewar.

It was against this background that the Soviet people turned their attention to peaceful construction, to building a new society. The difficulties were many and formidable. There was the economic blockade and the danger of more foreign armed intervention. And there were, of course, the never-ending prophecies that the revolution could not last. But freed of exploitation, the people performed a veritable miracle: in a remarkably short time the country passed from economic backwardness to one of the world's leading industrial powers. This required gigantic effort and entailed a certain amount of hardship, but it enabled the USSR to build a powerful industrial structure, the material basis of socialism. Heavy industry output in 1940 was more than 13 times above, and gross industrial output 7.7 times above, the 1913 level. Large-scale collective farming was developed and produced 40 per cent more than the whole of Russia in 1913. There were no more exploiting classes and the very possibility of their reappearance was ruled out. Illiterate under the tsars, Russia became a country of progressive culture and science. The Soviet people demonstrated to

the world what could be accomplished by a nation free of oppression and exploitation.

But a fresh danger was developing in the West, fascism. In June 1941, Hitler's armies treacherously attacked the Soviet Union, temporarily interrupting its progress. In this hour of supreme danger, all the Soviet people displayed courage and fortitude in defending their country. In fact, mass heroism became a distinguishing feature of our people at war. The world was moved to admiration by the valour of the defenders of Moscow and Leningrad, Odessa and Sevastopol, by the historic battle of Stalingrad, by the skill and bravery displayed in numerous other battles. The Great Patriotic War fully confirmed the words of Lenin: "A nation in which the majority of the workers and peasants realise, feel and see that they are fighting for their own Soviet power, for the rule of the working people, for the cause whose victory will ensure them and their children all the benefits of culture, of all that has been created by human labour—such a nation can never be vanquished."

The Soviet people bore the brunt of the struggle against nazidom and went through much hardship to destroy it. The damage done the economy was immense: the nazis fully or partially destroyed and burned 1,710 towns and smaller communities, more than 70,000 villages and hamlets, leaving about 26 million people without homes. They destroyed about 32,000 industrial establishments, 65,000 kilometres of railway and 4,100 railway stations. The list could be continued—the destruction and pillaging of 98,000 collective farms, 1,876 state farms, and 2,890 machine and tractor stations. The nazi army requisitioned or destroyed 7 million horses, 17 million heads of cattle, 20 million pigs, 27 million sheep and goats. But even that is only a partial list, for the destruction spread to 40,000 hospitals and other medical establishments, 84,000 schools and research centres, 43,000 public libraries. All in all, the country had lost approximately 30 per cent of its national wealth.

But the greatest loss of all was in human life—20 million people. The war brought its suffering into every family.

The years since the war have seen continued and rapid progress in the economic and cultural fields. Our people again set an example of devoted labour and rebuilt the economy in record time: 6,200 major industrial establishments were reconditioned in 1946-50; the industrial output level of 1940

was regained, in the main, in 1948, and the agricultural level in 1950.

The following table shows Soviet economic advances in percentages of 1913.

| | 1928 | 1940 | 1945 | 1966 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| National income | 119 | 535 | 445 | 3,431 |
| Gross industrial output | 132 | 769 | 705 | 6,613 |
| Gross farm output | 124 | 141 | 86 | 276 |
| Freight carriage | 104 | 387 | 297 | 2,315 |
| Total employment | 100 | 263 | 221 | 618 |

The figures speak for themselves. In the Soviet years national income increased more than 34-fold, and 6.4-fold compared with the prewar year 1940. The respective figures for industrial output are 66-fold and 8.6-fold, and for farm production nearly 2.8-fold and 2-fold.

Every Soviet citizen takes pride in these results. It should be remembered that out of the 50 Soviet years, nearly 20 were taken up by war and postwar rehabilitation. No other country had ever suffered such terrible losses and devastation as the Soviet Union as a result of civil war, foreign intervention and nazi invasion. Its impressive achievements were thus made in less than 30 years.

The source of Soviet heroism, on the battlefield and the labour front, is the people's boundless devotion to their country and Communist Party, their supreme fidelity to the cause of communism. Soviet power gave the working man a new sense of dignity, made him a conscious builder of the new life, the master of his country, with all its wealth. It gave the people the right and opportunity to share in the administration of the state. And in this lies the source of Soviet strength, for Soviet power, in the words of Lenin, is "an authority open to all, it carries out all its functions before the eyes of the masses, is accessible to the masses; springs directly from the masses and is a direct and immediate instrument of the popular masses, of their will."

On this half-centenary of the world's first socialist state, every Soviet citizen looks back on the path travelled by his country. And it is a meaningful path—from the landlord-capitalist system to fundamental socialist transformations and a society free of exploitation; from political disfranchisement

of the workers to socialist democracy; from national oppression to freedom and equality, friendship and fraternity; from technical and economic backwardness to modern industry and mechanized collective farming; from illiteracy to an unparalleled flourishing of education, science and culture; from wide spread poverty to steadily rising prosperity standards.

Many obstacles had to be surmounted before all this could be brought to reality. For the Soviet Union was advancing along uncharted paths and errors were inevitable. The Party and people rejoiced in every victory, but there were also temporary setbacks. From all these ordeals the Communist Party emerged stronger and more steeled, with unswerving revolutionary optimism and deep confidence in the triumph of the great Communist cause. Experience clearly showed that, led by the Communist Party, the Soviet people were following a correct course.

The main result of all these revolutionary transformations is the full and final victory of socialism in the USSR and the transition to the building of communism.

Socialism has given the Soviet people guaranteed rights and opportunities—the right to work and leisure, material maintenance in old age and in times of illness, the right to education, legal safeguards for every citizen, freedom of speech and creative activity in the interests of socialist society. All these are part of Soviet democracy and their exercise is guaranteed by the very way of Soviet life—so much so that they have come to be taken for granted. Socialism wiped out unemployment, tyranny and poverty. It gave a new meaning to citizenship, a new sense of honour and dignity. The Soviet system has assured women full equality, and political and economic equality to all nationalities. The rights and freedoms of the Soviet citizen, all the social gains of the people, have found legal consolidation in the Constitution of the USSR adopted some thirty years ago.

Fresh evidence of the Communist Party's concern for improving living standards is furnished by a decision adopted by the Party Central Committee on September 26, 1967. It is in line with the Soviet government's general policy of evening out prosperity standards of various sections of the population and, more specifically, of increasing the earnings of workers in the lower pay brackets. Under the new ruling, which comes into effect on January 1, 1968, the minimum wage is being raised to 60 rubles a month, and to 70 rubles for certain cate-

gories. In addition, income tax on earnings between 61 and 80 rubles a month will be cut 25 per cent, sick benefits will be increased, also pensions, with a considerable increase in pensions, and a reduction of the pension age for invalids and incapacitated servicemen. Pension age is being lowered by five years for collective farmers and women workers in some branches of the textile industry. The new ruling sets a higher pension minimum for collective farmers incapacitated as a result of accidents at work or occupational disease. Last, but not least, the minimum paid holiday is being increased from 12 to 15 workdays, and a special pension scheme is to be introduced for persons who are invalids from childhood. Millions will benefit from these and other measures, and the government is appropriating thousands of millions of rubles to meet the additional cost involved.

How are these rights exercised? What are the principal social gains of the Soviet people? That is the subject of this pamphlet.

THE RIGHT TO WORK

"Citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality."

[Art. 118 of the USSR Constitution.]

Throughout the whole of history, the material wealth of every society has been created by the work, energy and skill of the people. But it was not always that the working people were able to dispose of the country's wealth in the interests of the majority. And it was not always that the people enjoyed what is perhaps the most important of all the rights, the right to work.

For capitalist Russia 1913 was a boom year. Economic development had reached peak level, and yet hundreds of thousands were without jobs, prepared to take on anything to ward off starvation for themselves and their families.

In pre-revolutionary Russia, winter unemployment in 1900-13 never dropped below 500,000, and this only in the chief industrial centres, and not counting seasonal workers and newcomers from the villages. And the newcomers were many. Impoverished peasants who had to leave the villages in a vain search for work used to stand for hours at factory gates or make the rounds of smaller shops to offer their services, prepared to work for sub-standard wages.

Unmitigated poverty, with no improvement in sight, compelled thousands of families to emigrate abroad.

Unemployment was one of the most horrible scourges. But there was another — backbreaking labour and beggarly wages for those lucky enough to have jobs. In tsarist Russia, it will be remembered, capitalist development started later than in other countries. In 1913 per capita national income was one-seventh of the U.S., less than one-fourth of the British and about one-third of the French and German figure. In industrial output, again on a per capita basis, Russia was producing about one-fourteenth of the U.S. figure. The Russian capitalists tried to compensate this economic backwardness by intensified exploitation in order to match Western profit margins. The huge

unemployed army made this all the easier because capitalists could intensify exploitation, lengthen the workday and depress wages. There were always enough men outside the factories willing to work on any terms.

At the turn of the century the workday in Russia was as much as 12 hours, and in some cases as much as 16. In 1897, following a wave of labour unrest, the government was compelled to restrict the workday to 11.5 hours. In 1913 the legal workday was 9.9 hours, but there was much overtime. In the iron and steel, coal, tanning, paper and food industries, the workday was usually more than 10 hours. In the small-scale and cottage industries there was no legal limit at all and, of course, the hours were much longer. More, 60 per cent of all juvenile workers worked 10 or more hours a day. Considered apprentices, they were exploited in a way that undermined their health.

The industrial accident rate increased from year to year: 69,700 in 1904 and 113,300 in 1913.

Wages were woefully low. The average annual wage in the manufacturing industries in 1910 was 232 rubles, or about one-fourth of the U.S. average (1,036 rubles). In 1913 average industrial wages were somewhat higher, about 25 rubles a month, or less than 1 ruble a day. That wage, Lenin remarked, could not even be described as beggarly, considering that one-fifth went into rent and heating. Housing conditions were of the worst—an average of 2.5 square metres per capita in working class families. Many workers lived in barracks or shared garrets or basement rooms with other families.

Only the socialist revolution created the social and material prerequisite for eliminating unemployment and improving labour conditions.

The October Revolution was a turning point in the long fight for the emancipation of labour. For the first time in history, people were able to work not for the profit of rich idlers, but for themselves, for the benefit of the community. This fostered a new attitude towards work, a conscientious attitude which regarded labour as a prime necessity, and for the first time in centuries people were not working under compulsion.

The building of socialism brought to reality a cherished dream of the people—everyone was given a real, not merely theoretical, right to work—guaranteed employment with payment according to the quantity and quality of work done.

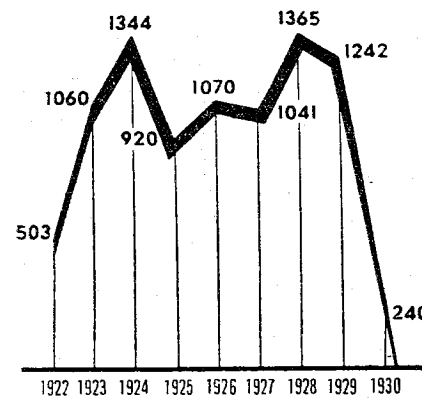
But socialism also made work a civic duty. The first Soviet

Constitution, adopted in 1919, proclaimed the duty of every citizen of the Republic to engage in useful labour. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat" became the motto of socialism. Lenin pointed out that expressed in this simple formula was the very basis of socialism, the inexhaustible source of its strength, the earnest of its final victory.

Needless to say, the young Soviet Republic could not wipe out unemployment all at once. After seven years of world and civil war, many mills and factories and much of the transport system were still not operating, with the result that unemployment actually increased. But even in those difficult years, the Soviet Republic did much to improve the lot of the unemployed. An unemployment insurance law was promulgated on December 11, 1917; there was no unemployment insurance in pre-revolutionary Russia. For the first time in history social insurance was extended to all workers, irrespective of sex, nationality, age, place of work, etc. Measures were taken to register the unemployed and find jobs for them through the newly-established government-controlled labour exchanges.

The position changed as economic rehabilitation proceeded and new construction began. The prewar industrial production level was regained in 1926, and by 1927 the number of industrial workers had more than doubled compared with 1920. But there were still many unemployed: 1,600,000, or 15 per cent of the

total labour force, were on the register on April 1, 1928. The first five-year plan was drawn up on the assumption that unemployment could be reduced to 500,000 by 1934, but industrialization absorbed a much larger number of workers than was originally expected. On October 1, 1930 unemployment stood at 230,000, and the figure was reduced to zero towards the end of the year. There were no unemployed to be "registered" and "allocated," so that at the end of



Unemployment Eliminated in USSR
Unemployed registered at labour exchanges (000's)

1930 the labour exchanges were closed. This was a very significant victory for the new social system. Ever since then the statistical reports contain one and the same formula: "As in earlier years, there is no unemployment."

Over 180 million of the USSR's present population, or more than three-quarters, were born after the October Revolution. This generation knows of unemployment only from books, or from the stories of old people, but even these oldsters have long forgotten the depressing feeling of being left without a job. Socialism gave the Soviet people confidence in the morrow, freedom from the danger of unemployment, from poverty and employer tyranny.

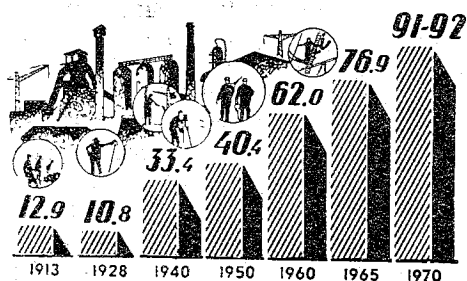
Abolition of unemployment and the guaranteed right to work rank among the greatest social gains of the new system.

The USSR provides unlimited opportunities for work in any branch of the economy and in any area of the vast country. It is no longer a matter of the worker looking for a job, as was the case before the Revolution, but of the job looking for the worker. One has only to look at the Help Wanted notices outside factory gates, on advertisement billboards and in the daily papers to appreciate what this means. For the vast sweep of new construction and the rapid advance in science, culture and technology have made these "job invitations" an integral part of the Soviet way of life.

And there are bound to be more such "job invitations", despite the fact that total employment is increasing from year to year. In 1913 Russia employed 12,900,000 workers and office

workers; the figure for the USSR in 1966 was 79,700,000; a more than six-fold increase.

If we take into account collective farmers and members of their families and members of workers' families working on household plots, then the number of gainfully employed will add up to more than 110 million, nearly half of the entire popula-



Total Employment
(annual averages; millions)
1913 1970
(in present USSR boundaries) (five-year plan estimate)

tion and more than four-fifths of the able-bodied population.

The occupational structure has changed substantially, as will be seen from the following table (in percentages of total employment, exclusive of students and military personnel):

| | 1913 | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1966 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Total employed | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>Of which</i> | | | | | |
| Material production | 95.0 | 88.3 | 86.2 | 83.0 | 79.7 |
| Non-production branches | 5.0 | 11.7 | 13.8 | 17.0 | 20.3 |
| <i>Of which</i> | | | | | |
| Education, public health, arts and sciences | 1.0 | 5.9 | 7.7 | 11.2 | 14.0 |

It will be seen from these figures that the overwhelming majority—four-fifths to be exact—are now engaged in industry, construction, agriculture, transport, and communications catering to production, trade and ancillary branches with a small number working on their household plots. And since the material benefits enjoyed by society are produced only in these branches, that is, by workers engaged in industry, construction, agriculture, etc., they are assured a proper supply of labour power, modern machinery, etc.

Sweeping changes have taken place also in the class structure of the population, as will be seen from this table (in percentages):

| | 1913* | 1928 | 1939 | 1959 | 1966 |
|--|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| Total population (including non-working members of families) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>Of which:</i> | | | | | |
| Workers and office workers | 17.0 | 17.6 | 50.2 | 68.3 | 76.39 |
| Collective farmers and members of artisan cooperatives | — | 2.9 | 47.2 | 31.4 | 23.58 |
| Individual farmers and artisans | 66.7 | 74.9 | 2.6 | 0.3 | 0.03 |
| Capitalists, landlords, merchants, rich farmers | 16.3 | 4.6 | — | — | — |

* USSR in 1939 boundaries.

Before the Revolution, the exploiting classes made up more than 16 per cent of the population; by 1928, when the first five year plan was launched, the proportion was down to 4.6 per

cent. Today there are only two friendly classes—workers and office workers, who make up three-quarters of the population, and collective farmers, who make up slightly less than one-quarter.

The abolition of exploiting classes is another major result of the Great October Socialist Revolution and has played a very big part in raising prosperity standards. Again let us cite the relevant figures: in tsarist Russia, the labouring population, 84.7 per cent of the total, received only one-quarter of the national income; in the USSR the whole national income belongs to the people, and three-quarters of it goes directly into consumption, that is, to meet the immediate requirements of the people.

Though priority is given to the productive industries as an essential factor in increasing the national income, the Party and government have seen to it that more and more people are employed in public education, health and other services. Indicative in this respect is the following comparison: in pre-revolutionary Russia only 1 per cent of the labour force were engaged in the education and health services; in the USSR the proportion is 14 per cent, and more people are being brought in from year to year. For example, in 1966 the number of medical personnel was 190 per cent, teaching personnel 160 per cent, and science and research personnel 660 per cent above 1940. Also this figure: in 1966, 60 out of every thousand of the population were employed in education, health and science—one more indication of how prosperity and cultural standards are steadily being raised.

There has been a marked change in the occupational composition of the population, and in educational and technical levels; indeed, the very substance of certain jobs has fundamentally changed.

All this is the result of systematic and intensive work to provide better educational and technical training facilities. The effect is measurable in figures: the number of top-skill specialists is 68 times greater than before the Revolution. In 1913, the number of specialists with higher and secondary-school education was 190,000, in 1940 the figure was 2,400,000, and in 1966 nearly 13,000,000. Of this latter figure, 5,227,000 (40 times more than in 1913) have a full higher education. Educational levels are considerably higher also among workers and collective farmers: in 1939 there were 123 persons with higher or secondary education per 1,000 of the gainfully employed popu-

lation; on January 1, 1963 the figure was 542, an increase of 340 per cent; today about half of all our workers have a seven-year or ten-year secondary education.

Fifty years ago Lenin said that Communism presupposed universally developed and universally educated people capable of undertaking any job. Communism is advancing towards that goal, he said, and it will reach it, but only after many years. Lenin's prediction is now becoming a reality.

Last but not least, there is also this distinctive feature of the new system: in 1966, women made up 50 per cent of the labour force. This is fully in line with the policy of giving women full equality and ample opportunities to apply their energy in every branch of the economy.

But what was the position before? In tsarist Russia there was no equality, not even nominal. In fact, Russian law expressly provided that "female subjects of the Tsar shall not be included in the register of those entitled to vote in elections to the State Duma." Women could not hold administrative posts, were barred from the teaching profession, from all branches of science. A woman of the people able to read and write was a rarity.

According to the 1897 census, women comprised only 9 per cent of the gainfully employed population. The overwhelming majority were condemned to household drudgery. And yet we know that woman's participation in production is a major condition for her emancipation. Lenin emphasized that in 1919: "To effect woman's complete emancipation and make her the equal of the man it is necessary . . . for women to participate in common productive labour. Then women will occupy the same position as men."

In tsarist Russia women worked from 10 to 12 hours and received half the pay of men for the same kind of work. There was this rather typical case examined by a court in the town of Kamyshyn: for ten years a woman had disguised herself as a man in order to get work as a common labourer. Asked why she wore men's clothes, she replied that this was the only way to get men's pay, otherwise she would be earning from 3 to 5 rubles a month instead of the 12—15 rubles paid male workers.

The Soviet Union was the first country to give women full and unrestricted equality. Soviet power opened up wide opportunities for women to share in social labour, receive an education, enjoy all material and cultural benefits, all the rights of citizenship, on an equal footing with men. It freed woman

from the humiliating semi-slave status to which she was reduced in the empire of the tsars.

The right to equal voice and vote in family affairs was the first, simple but tangible change in the life of millions of women. In December 1917, Lenin signed the first decree on marriage and divorce, and a code of laws regulating family and guardianship relations was published in 1918. All the old laws of the Russian Empire that in any way restricted women's rights were repealed. Women were granted equal property rights, and more important, the right freely to choose profession and domicile.

In 1919 Lenin could say with full justice that, in one of the most backward countries of Europe, Soviet power "has done more to emancipate women, to make her the equal of the 'strong' sex, than the most advanced, enlightened, 'democratic' republics taken together have done in the past 130 years."

Complete equality in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, public and political activities is embodied in the USSR Constitution (Art. 122).

This policy has enabled women to play a leading role in a number of industries: they now make up 71 per cent in public education and 86 per cent in public health. Pre-revolutionary Russia could boast only 2,800 women doctors (10 per cent of the total); in 1965 the number was 409,000, or 74 per cent of the total. Much the same applies to scientific research, in which nearly 250,000 women (over 38 per cent of the total) are engaged, and of this number 36,000 hold doctor's or master's degrees, and 1,100 are full or corresponding Academy members or hold professorships.

Wide opportunities for education have made it possible for women to bridge the gap that separated them from men and hampered their intellectual development. Before the Revolution only few women, mainly from the privileged classes, could hope for a secondary or specialized technical education; in the Soviet Union there is full equality in this respect too. The number of women with higher and secondary education employed in the economy increased nearly 50 times over between 1928 and the end of 1966, when the figure stood at more than 7,500,000, or 58 per cent of all specialized personnel, compared with only 29 per cent in 1928.

But while encouraging women to work in industry, the socialist state takes special measures to protect their labour. For instance, there is a legal ban on employing women on

heavy and health-injurious work, and night work for women will be abolished in the very near future. True, a small number of women are still engaged on heavy work, but this too will soon be a thing of the past.

Equal pay has been the rule ever since the inception of Soviet government and any violation of that rule is stringently punished.

The October Revolution put an end to woman's political disfranchisement. The Soviet government is guided by Lenin's principle that women have an active share in the affairs of state. "Without drawing women into public affairs and political life, Lenin wrote, "without tearing women away from the deadening drudgery of housework, we cannot give them real freedom and we cannot build democracy, let alone socialism." All these measures, in combination, have made it possible for women to play a leading role in government. Women are represented on the Council of Ministers; there are women deputy ministers, presidents of various government committees and international societies. The USSR Supreme Soviet elected in 1966 has 425 women, 28 per cent of its total members. By way of comparison it might be mentioned that the 90th U.S. Congress has only 12 women out of a total of 535 members. Women also make up a large proportion of the Supreme Soviets of Union and Autonomous Republics and of local Soviets.

All this is clear evidence of the high level of Soviet democracy and of the genuine equality woman enjoys in our socialist society. It is evidence, too, that Soviet women have an active part in political and public life.

THE RIGHT TO REST AND LEISURE

"Citizens of the USSR have the right to rest and leisure."

[Art. 119 of the USSR Constitution.]

In every capitalist country without exception labour's economic struggle always contains the demand for a shorter workday and higher wages, and in many countries the workers have won a shorter workday by dint of hard-fought struggles. But right up to the October Revolution the eight-hour day was everywhere an aim still to be attained. Only the Russian workers, led by the Communist Party, made this aim a reality after the Revolution. On the fourth day after taking power, the Soviet government issued a decree on the eight-hour day and it was put into practice throughout the vast country in the closing days of 1917 and the early part of 1918.

The decree expressly stated: "The workday shall under no circumstances exceed eight hours, or 48 hours a week, including time necessary for cleaning machinery and working premises."

The law also provided for a shorter workday in injurious trades. Overtime was permitted only in exceptional cases, only with the approval of the trade union, and was limited to four hours in two successive days. The decree made a one-hour or two-hour lunch break obligatory in all industries, set aside special rest days and provided safeguards for women and juvenile workers. Thus, juveniles under 14 could not be employed under any circumstances, those in the 14—18 age group were allowed to work only 6 hours a day, and juveniles under 16 could not be employed on night work (from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m.), nor could women and youths under 18 be employed on underground work. Violation of these provisions was punishable by prison sentences of up to 1 year.

And in this connection it might be recalled that way back in 1866, the Geneva Congress of the First International, on Marx's proposal, proclaimed the eight-hour working day a preliminary condition "without which all other efforts towards emancipation would be doomed to failure". The Soviet government decree made that a living reality.

These and other provisions relating to the eight-hour day were embodied in the Labour Code adopted in 1918. Addressing the fourth session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets, Lenin described this as an "immense gain of Soviet power, for at a time when all the countries have united in an assault on the working class, we are issuing a code of law which firmly establishes the foundations of labour legislation and among them the eight-hour workday."

The establishment of the eight-hour day in the socialist republic strongly influenced its introduction in a number of capitalist countries. Frightened by the October Revolution and the rapidly mounting revolutionary movement, the capitalists of all countries were obliged to make certain concessions on the eight-hour day issue. In fact, in 1919 the International Labour Office adopted a convention restricting working hours in industry to eight a day and 48 hours a week. True, up to 1953, only 27 of the 80 ILO member countries ratified the convention.

On the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, in 1927, it was decided gradually to go over to a seven-hour workday without wage reductions, and the changeover was made in the next 5—6 years. The Soviet Union was the first country to introduce a seven-hour day, with even shorter hours for certain categories. Towards the end of the first five year plan period the workweek averaged 40.2 hours, substantially less than in the U.S. (48.7 hours) and France (46.7).

The tense international situation and the very real threat of attack by Nazi Germany made it necessary to reintroduce an 8-hour day in 1940, but everyone knew that this was only a temporary expedient, and as the socialist economy expanded the work-day would be further reduced leaving people more time for rest and personal pursuits. And, indeed, a decision to reduce working hours was made as soon as postwar rehabilitation was completed. Higher productivity (which in industry had risen 13.8-fold in 1964 compared with 1913) and also more available labour power made it possible to cut working time. In March 1956, two hours were cut off Saturdays and holiday eves, and by the end of 1960 the seven-hour day had been reinstated throughout the economy, with a shorter, 6-hour day in underground work.

To this should be added that reduction of working time did not entail any reduction in wages; on the contrary, average industrial wages were increased.

Considering that many work six hours a day, and on especially hard jobs only four hours, in 1965 the average workday of adult industrial workers was actually less than 7 hours, and nearly 3 hours less than in 1913. For juveniles the workday was reduced to six hours and to only four for the under-sixteens. Besides, juveniles receive a special supplementary wage to compensate for the shorter hours.

At present, the average workweek for most industrial workers and office staff is 41 hours, or 18 hours less than in 1913. There is a shorter workweek, 35 hours—in some cases even less—for miners, workers in trades injurious to health, school-teachers, medical personnel and workers in the 16–18 age groups. If we take this into account, we will find that in industry the average workweek is 40 hours and for the whole of the economy (in 1965) 39.4 hours. Again, by way of comparison, reference might be made to the U.S., where the workweek averages 40.4 hours, Britain (47.7), France (46.1) and West Germany (nearly 44 hours).

The right to rest and leisure is assured by full-pay annual holidays for all workers, office staffs and professionals. Needless to say, this was a great rarity before the Revolution. Under existing legislation, every employed person is entitled to an annual holiday with full pay based on his average for the preceding 12 months.

Under the Party and government decision of September 26, 1967, the minimum paid holiday is to be increased from 12 working days to 15 as from January 1, 1968.

There are, in addition, legislative and collective agreement provisions for longer holidays for certain categories, depending on degree of health-hazards, seniority, adverse climatic conditions, etc. For instance, in some industries workers with an employment record of more than three years are entitled to an extra three days; miners, steel smelters, etc., get 12 or more extra days.

Holiday periods are being increased all the time. The average on March 31, 1964 was 19.3 working days, that is, exclusive of holidays and Sundays, compared with 18.5 on April 1, 1958. Moreover, the number of persons entitled the minimum holiday is steadily being reduced, as will be seen from these figures for 1937: for every 100 persons employed, 66 enjoyed a 2 to 3 week holiday, 20 a 24 day holiday, and 14—27 days or more. In all cases legal holidays and Sundays are not included.

And also these figures: holiday pay added up to 6,100 mil-

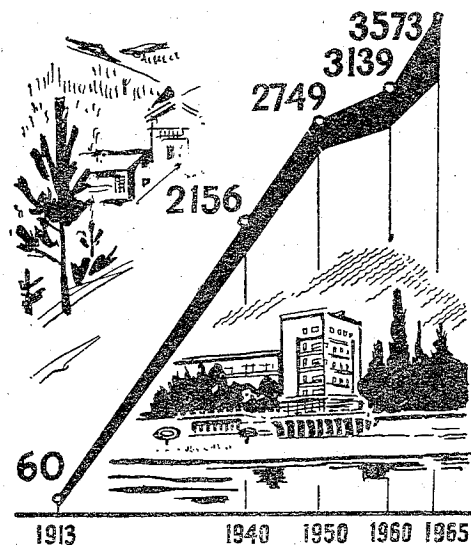
lion rubles in 1966, or more than 5 per cent of total budgetary expenditure. This is due to longer holidays, more employment and higher wages. Last year average holiday pay was 77 rubles and 86 rubles for industrial workers.

The worker can spend his annual holiday in one of the numerous sanatoriums and rest homes. Rare was the worker in tsarist Russia who could even dream of spending a few days at a spa or at the seashore. In 1913 there were in Russia only 60 private sanatoria with accommodation for about 3,000. Rest camps were totally unknown. Visitors to spas lived in hotels and were treated by private doctors. Both were expensive, way beyond the reach of even the skilled worker. The health resorts were only for the rich.

In 1919, in one of the most critical periods for the young Soviet Republic, Lenin signed a decree nationalizing all health resorts and opening them to the workers. But that was only the start. More resorts had to be built and today their number is larger than in any other country—2,197 sanatoria (37 times more than in 1913) to accommodate 407,000 (135 times more than in 1913). But there is also a new type of institution, the

prophylactical sanatorium, for overnight treatment, and of these there are nearly 1,500 with accommodation for 79,000 patients. To continue the list, there are 829 rest homes, accommodating 215,000, and 153 dormitory units capable of accommodating up to half a million people. All in all, in 1966 the USSR had 4,678 sanatoria and rest homes able to accommodate 845,000 people, some 9 million a year.

Number of Sanatoria

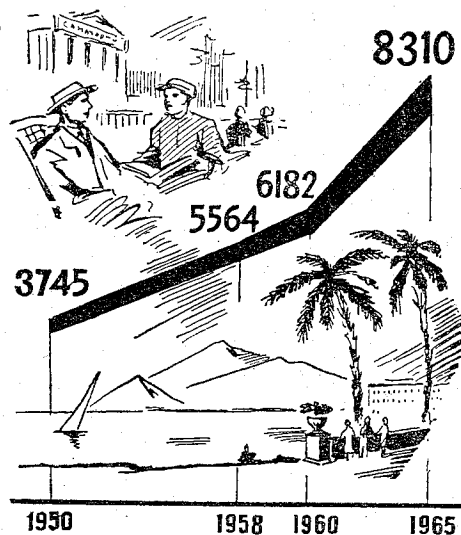


About 7 million are catered for by health and rest centres run by the trade unions. About 20 per cent are given free accommodation and most of the rest pay 30 per cent of the actual cost. In the past seven years, 2,000 million rubles out of the state social insurance fund were spent on health resort facilities. The children are cared for in Young Pioneer camps, which are also run by the trade unions. In 1966 over 7 million schoolchildren spent their summer holidays in such camps. Altogether, in 1965 more than 15 million people availed themselves of the services in our sanatoria, rest homes, health centres, Young Pioneer camps, etc.,

Many prefer vacationing on river steamers or making rail trips through interesting parts of the country.

Still another type of facility for vacationists is the wide network of tourist camps. And it is being expanded, for tourism has become extremely popular in the USSR. Every year more than 2 million people use these camps, which are located in some of the country's famed beauty spots. Besides the camps, there are tourist groups for those who want a more active holiday—travelling to remote parts of the country, mountain

Number of persons accommodated in sanatoria, rest homes, health resorts (000's)



climbing, studying nature, the development of new areas. It is estimated that 8 million people take part in such travel every year. More people are going abroad for their holidays, and more are joining groups travelling to remote parts of the country. All in all, the number of such "mobile" vacationists and week-end tourists is estimated at more than 40 million people.

Tent colonies at the seashore, in the mountains or simply

in picturesque spots near industrial centres, are rapidly gaining popularity, and so are week-end rest homes opened around many of our bigger towns.

For those who spend their holidays at home there are numerous recreation parks, libraries, clubs, sports grounds, swimming pools. The number of clubs now stands at 129,000 or 624 times more than in 1913, and they run 182,000 amateur art circles in which more than 2,500,000 people take part. The number of public libraries in 1963 was 127,000 (nine times the 1913 figure) and the total number of books and magazines in them was 1,002 million—more than 100 times the 1913 figure. Incidentally, in that year there was one library (with an average of 676 books and magazines) for 11,500 of the population; in 1966 the ratio was one library averaging 8,600 books and magazines for every 1,800 of the population.

Sports have become a popular form of recreation, with over 50 million people attending sport circles, as against 5,300,000 in 1940. By way of comparison, the total number for the whole world, according to UNESCO estimates, is about 200 million.

In pursuance of a Twenty-Third CPSU Congress resolution, the country is going over to a five-day workweek with two free days. The process will be completed by the fiftieth anniversary of the Revolution. And while not actually reducing the workday, this will give people much more free time. This is how it will work out: under the new arrangement the worker will economize one or two hours a week on travelling to his job, and over a year this will amount to 70—80 hours, or to 8-10 extra free days. With 100 free days a year, this will furnish more opportunities for study and re-qualification, will allow more time for the family, cultural interests, and just simple rest.

Even before the shift to a five-day week, a substantial portion of the worker's free time was devoted to study, reading, etc. Highly indicative in this respect is a survey of how free time is spent in Osnabrück (West Germany), Jackson (USA), and Pskov (USSR), undertaken in 1965-66 by the UNESCO social science centre in Vienna. This is the picture it produced: in all the cities surveyed the time spent on sleep, meals, etc., is about the same, from 9 to 10.7 hours. But unlike the other cities investigated, in Pskov more than half of free time, an average of 2.5 hours in the case of men and 1.5 hours in the case of women, is devoted to self-education, watching televi-

sion, reading, the theatre. The figures for the U.S., Belgium and West Germany show that most of the free time goes into watching television. Also these significant figures of how free time is spent: in Pskov, in the case of every 100 men polled, 73.7 per cent of free time (and 57.2 per cent among the women) is devoted to reading. The figures for West Germany are 41.6 and 31.7 respectively. Much the same applies to theatre-going: USSR 17 per cent of free time, USA 3.2 per cent, West Germany 4.6 per cent, France 4.9 per cent.

Pskov workers devote as much as 4.9 hours a week to study; the figure for Osnabrück, Jackson and the French cities is only 0.7 hours.

These figures are eloquent testimony to what the Revolution has meant for the people in terms of cultural and recreational amenities. And many more such amenities will have to be provided now that the five-day week is being introduced. Socialist society devotes much money and effort to this. The number of clubs, libraries, rest homes, etc., will surely prove inadequate to meet constantly growing requirements—suffice it to say that about 66 million people were shifted to the five-day week by the fiftieth anniversary of the Revolution. The problem was carefully studied by the USSR Central Committee of Trade Unions long before the change-over to the five-day week. And the problem deserves close study, because the community must make proper arrangements for people's free time; it must help every worker use this time in a beneficial way.

Under the present five-year plan, the trade unions are to build new sanatoria with accommodation for 45,000 people and new rest homes and tourist camps with accommodation for 358,000. The network of prophylactical sanatoria and Young Pioneer camps will be substantially extended. By 1970 the trade unions should be in a position to provide rest and recreation facilities for 23 million people a year. This figure does not include facilities built and operated by other organizations.

The present economic reform also will facilitate expansion of these facilities. Data issued by the State Planning Committee show that expenditure for this purpose will add up to an impressive sum of 4,000 million rubles in 1968-70.

Socialism guarantees the worker the right to work and rest. The five-day workweek introduced by decision of the CPSU Congress, full employment, steadily rising earnings—these are all elements of the Soviet government's and Communist Party's consistent policy of improving the conditions of the people.

SICK BENEFITS AND MAINTENANCE IN OLD AGE

"Citizens of the USSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or disability."

(Art. 120 of the USSR Constitution.)

On October 30, 1917, the fifth day of Soviet power, the government announced that it would issue a decree establishing an insurance scheme for all workers. The social insurance system took final shape on October 31, 1918, when Lenin signed the relevant act.

To appreciate the significance of this step by the new government, one need only recall that for 90 years, up to 1917, Russian law provided for pensions to government officials, army generals and officers of up to 12,000 rubles a year. The widow of worker Demid Vekshin, killed in an accident at a mill belonging to Count Stenbok-Fermore (three of her sons had been killed there too) was given an annual pension of 1 ruble 72 kopeks. Widows of army privates who had served for more than 20 years or who had been incapacitated in the course of their military duties, were paid 3 rubles a month.

But there was no pension of any kind for the workers. True, at some of the Urals iron works there were arrangements for workers being pensioned off after 35 or 40 years of uninterrupted service. But there were so many dequalifying reservations (insubordination, insulting behaviour towards superiors, etc.), that very few ever earned the pension. For instance, at the Nizhni-Tagil plants, only 30 workers were receiving pensions, and these amounted to approximately 7 per cent of their former earnings.

Russia had its counter-part of "public welfare" and its own version of the workhouse. The inmates of the latter, according to a set of rules issued in 1915 "shall be kept on bread and water." At the beginning of the century local government authorities maintained 126 such homes for 4,200 people. They were open to "the incapacitated, aged and impecunious of all estates". Some of these homes were attached to factories. The one at the big Putilov engineering works in Petrograd, for instance, housed some 40 old workers, but to qualify a man had

to have a long work record and a "good character" from his superiors. Old age in the empire of the tsars was unenviable indeed.

Continued protests by the labour movement and repeated strike action forced the government, in 1903, to enact a law on compensation for victims of accidents and their families. It applied to manufacturing, mining, and iron and steel, and only to industrial accidents. Nevertheless, employers did everything they could to bypass it, and if they could not avoid paying compensation, they at least reduced it to a minimum.

The working class and its Bolshevik Party never relaxed the fight against tsarism. In 1912 the new rise of the labour movement compelled the tsarist government to promulgate new laws on accident and sickness insurance. They came into force, to all practical purposes, only at the close of 1913, and concerned only one-sixth of all wage earners. Besides, insurance payments were minimal and the workers contributions unduly high, 3 per cent of wages, while the employer paid only 2 per cent. In short, the worker was expected to pay 3 kopeks out of every hard-earned ruble, while the capitalist would pay 2 kopeks out of every easy-earned ruble, and he earned thousands. Lenin described this as a travesty and insult to Russia's working class. There was no provision for old-age, invalid, loss of breadwinner or unemployment insurance.

The problem, always a pressing one for the labour movement, was solved only by the October Revolution. The Soviet government's declaration of October 30, 1917 provided for a universal insurance payments were minimal and the workers' contributory incapacity, old-age, maternity and unemployment, with provisions also for widows, orphans and invalids. Those no longer able to work were assured a cost-of-living minimum. Equally important, the scheme was not contributory as far as the workers were concerned, and was administered by elected workers' insurance councils.

The declaration became the basis of a number of decrees. Some prescribed double pensions for workers incapacitated by industrial accidents, others authorized special pensions for Red Army soldiers and their families, etc. All charitable organizations were abolished and the government assumed responsibility for every aspect of social maintenance. Aid to the aged and sick, left entirely to charity before the Revolution, now became the duty of the government. By 1920 the number of pensioners had reached the one million mark.

Every year saw the social insurance system expanded and perfected. In 1924 higher accident pensions were introduced and arrangements made for sanatorium treatment and rest facilities for all the insured. In 1925 service pensions were introduced for schoolteachers and certain other categories in public education and public health, and also for veterinary and agronomical personnel. Persons incapacitated at work were eligible for pensions at the age of 50, providing they had worked at least eight years.

The size of pensions was gradually increased, particularly minimum pensions.

Introduction of old-age pensions began in 1928, at first in the textile industry, somewhat later in mining, iron and steel and on rail and water transport. The pension was fixed at 50 per cent of earnings and granted to men on reaching 60 and women at 55. Seniority requirements were 25 years for men and 20 for women. At the close of 1930, when unemployment had been fully eliminated and, consequently, there was no more need to pay unemployment benefits, the government put more money into the social insurance scheme and old-age pensions were extended to other branches of the economy.

With the growth of the economy, pensions were geared to wages, with higher pensions for good work, long work record, etc., and new minimums were established. In short, pensions out of the social insurance fund depended on one's work record.

All this necessitated bigger appropriations for social insurance and social maintenance. As pointed out above, the social insurance fund is made up of contributions by factory managements without any deductions from wages. In the first five-year plan period, the fund amounted to 10,400 million rubles, in the second five-year period the figure was 32,500 million, in the third 34,900 million, in the fourth 80,100 million (in 1960 prices). Pension expenditure increased 9-fold in the 15 years 1940-55.

Up to the mid-fifties the Soviet Union was not in a position radically to increase pensions. Besides, the scheme was still governed by laws enacted in the 1920's and 1930's, and these contained many obsolete provisions, with the result that pensions differed widely. Some industries and factories—in fact, even some factory shops—had their own pension arrangements and their own scale for rewarding seniority. There were even cases of some groups of workers on particularly heavy

jobs getting no extra pensions because their factories happened to belong to a department not entitled to pension privileges. There was a gap between pensions and wage levels because most of the pensions had been fixed way back in the early years of Soviet government, while wages had increased substantially. There was also a wide gap between minimum and maximum pensions. In other words, there was a crying need for a uniform pension law.

The Twentieth CPSU Congress examined the situation and outlined measures for re-adjusting the whole pension system. Minimum pensions were increased and unduly high pensions reduced. The measures provided also for higher old-age pensions and for part-time jobs for invalids.

The new pension law of October 1, 1956 practically doubled the size of old-age pensions and raised the minimum three to fourfold, bringing it closer to the minimum wage. Other pensions were increased too, the overall increase averaging 80 per cent. Unduly high pensions were abolished and the pension ceiling set at 120 rubles a month. Obsolete pension differentials were abandoned in favour of a single criterion, factual earnings. This is fully in conformity with the socialist principle that he who works more and better shall receive more compensation in old age or in the event of incapacity. The new law extended pensions to a much wider range of the population. For instance, persons who did not have a full work-record could now get part of the full pension, but not less than one-fourth.

The introduction of pensions for collective farmers, in 1965, rounded out the Soviet Union's universal uniform social insurance system, which now covered every section of the population.

The social insurance budget is made up of the pension and the grants funds. In both cases the money comes from factory, office and collective farm managements, which contribute a certain percentage over and above their regular payroll, and partly from the state budget.

All employed persons come under the social insurance scheme, and are entitled to sick benefits depending on length of employment; payment for time spent in looking after a sick member of the family; grants for sanatorium treatment, etc. Sick benefits are paid from the very first day until the worker returns to his job, or until a special medical commission finds that he cannot continue his work and is entitled to an invalid pension. On the recommendation of the trade union, incapacity

grants in cases of industrial accidents or occupational diseases amount to the man's full earnings, irrespective of the period of employment. In 1965, nearly 2,000 million rubles or approximately 20 per cent of total social insurance expenditure, were paid out in sick benefits. In addition, 364 million rubles were paid out in sanatorium treatment grants and for the provision of dietetic food.

Here, too, the decision of September 26, 1967 mentioned above signifies an important improvement. As from January 1, 1968 all employed persons with a work record of more than 8 years will receive their full wages during sickness leave, instead of 80-90 per cent. Those with a work record of 5 to 8 years will receive 80 per cent of their earnings instead of the present 70 per cent. This will affect more than 40 million people in every branch of the economy.

Another very sizeable part of social insurance money (7,400 million rubles in 1965) goes into pensions. But since pensions are paid from other sources too, the total figure for that year was 10,600 million rubles, or more than 10 per cent of the national budget. In 1966 the figure came to 11,800 million rubles, which is 36 times greater than in 1940, and 1.6 times greater than in 1960. At present pensioners make up nearly 15 per cent of the population, compared with slightly more than 2 per cent in 1940 and about 10 per cent in 1959. The picture for a longer period will be seen from the following table.

Number of Pensioners
(beginning of year, 000 omitted)

| | Total | Of which | |
|------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | Old age, invalid, etc., pensions | War invalids and members of family |
| 1940 | approx. 4 million | — | — |
| 1959 | 19,917 | 13,044 | 6,873 |
| 1960 | 20,606 | 14,342 | 6,264 |
| 1962 | 23,762 | 18,019 | 5,743 |
| 1964 | 25,845 | 20,440 | 5,405 |
| 1965 | 26,487 | 21,261 | 5,226 |
| 1966 | 32,027 | 26,998 | 5,029 |

In 1967, 34 million people, including 8,900,000 collective farmers, were receiving old age or invalid pensions.

In its main features, the Soviet pension system is superior to any in the capitalist countries. The pension age is one example: in Canada, Ireland and Norway the pension age is 70, in Sweden and Iceland 67, in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Finland and Chile 65, and in most European countries—Britain, Austria, Belgium, West Germany, etc., and also in the USA men are eligible for pension only at 65 and women at 60.

In the USSR the age is much lower than that recommended by the International Labour Organization: men can retire at 60 and women at 55, with lower age requirements for certain categories.

The required work record is 20 years for women and 25 years for men, and in all cases this includes vocational training, service in the armed forces, study in higher or secondary specialized schools, etc.,

The vast majority of pension applicants have more than the required seniority, and about one-third are entitled to an extra long-service bonus.

Old-age pensions range from 50 to 100 per cent of wages. The lower the wage, the higher the percentage paid out in pensions—100 per cent in the low-pay categories—in this way the gap between maximum and minimum pensions is narrowed. The minimum old-age pension is 30 rubles a month and the maximum 120 rubles. But on an average, taking all pensioners, it works out at more than 70 per cent of wages. Furthermore, pensions are not taxed.

It might be remarked in this connection that Britain is to establish pensions at 50 per cent of wages by the year 2010. At present the average old-age pension is 23 per cent of wages, 20 per cent in the US and Italy, and 18 per cent in France. In Britain, West Germany and several other countries pensions are taxed.

Soviet pensions are usually based on average earnings over the last 12 months of work. But if this amounts to less than the person earned at a younger age, he can choose any five years out of the last ten. The amount of the pension is determined, for every applicant, with due account to his work record, living conditions, etc. Let us take this example: two persons of the same age and with the same number of years at similar jobs, but one with no family and the other with several depen-

dents. Obviously they cannot be given one and the same pension. The family man will get an extra bonus, which could amount to as much as 30 per cent of his pension.

Pensions are paid also to families that have lost their breadwinner. This applies to children, brothers and sisters younger than 16 (or 18 in the case of students), aged parents, grandparents, grandchildren, able-bodied spouses if they have to look after the children or other dependents of the deceased.

Orphans are legible for pension even if one parent is working and earning. Pensions are paid to orphans even if they are receiving scholarships.

In accordance with the decisions of the Twenty-third CPSU Congress, certain pension differentials for collective farmers and workers are now being eliminated. For instance, there is to be a uniform pension age, and this will increase the number of rural pensioners by more than 2,500,000, bringing the total to more than 11 million, or more than one-third of the national total. Minimum disability pensions for collective farmers on part-time jobs or lighter work will be increased, in some cases by more than 50 per cent and in all cases by not less than 25 per cent.

The pension age is also being lowered, from 55 years to 50, for textile workers engaged on heavy work (with a job record of 20 or more years), and for women collective farmers with five or more children. Another age reduction, to 55 years for men and 50 years for women, will affect all persons who have worked not less than 15 years in the Far North or not less than 20 years in other rigorous climate areas. Similarly, the pension age is being cut by 5 years for ex-servicemen wounded in the war or in line of duty or incapacitated by sickness contracted in the course of military service. The requirements are: 55 years for men and not less than 25 years work record, and 50 and 20 years for women.

Beginning with January 1, 1968, all pensions for ex-servicemen disabled during their term of service will be increased by 15 rubles (privates) and 25 rubles (officers), and there will be another increase, this time of minimum service pensions, for Victory Day (May 1968). This will affect 1,300,000 pensioners.

There is to be an extra monthly grant also for families caring for invalids.

The Soviet pension system is financed entirely by the state. In the capitalist countries the worker has to make regular

contributions to social insurance and pension funds. These amount to 3.6 per cent of wages in the U.S. and Britain, 4.5 in Belgium, 5 in Austria and Argentina, 8 in West Germany (and an additional more than 3 per cent in contributions to sickness funds), 6 per cent in France. In other words, the pension the worker gets is at the expense of his standard of living. In the United States workers' contributions make up half of the pension fund.

The payment of pensions, however, is not the only form of the Soviet Union's concern for the pensioner. He gets free medical care, treatment in sanatoria and health resorts, is paid for any job he may want to take on and enjoys other advantages in such matters as education, housing, welfare and cultural services.

The pension system will be further improved under the current five-year plan (1968-70).

FREE MEDICAL CARE

Having assumed power, the Soviet people declared war—on disease, and they have been fighting that war ever since the early days of Soviet power. Numerous research institutions, a ramified network of hospitals and outpatient clinics and a veritable army of doctors and other medical personnel are involved in this concerted offensive against disease. And the results are impressive: such infectious diseases as cholera, plague, smallpox and typhus have been wholly eliminated. Much the same can now be said of malaria, and we are well on the way to wiping out polio and diphtheria. The incidence of tuberculosis, whooping cough and other infectious diseases is steadily being lowered.

In the past they were the cause of much suffering and loss of life. Tsarist Russia held a high place in world disease and mortality statistics. The figures for 1913 were 29.1 deaths per 1000 of the population, much higher than in any other developed country. Or this figure: more than a quarter of all infants died in their first year.

Epidemic was rife—the plague, cholera, typhus, particularly typhoid fever, of which over one million cases were registered in the ten years preceding the First World War. Cholera was another scourge—more than 2,800,000 cases in 1907-10, of which 134,000 were fatal. According to official data, the average annual incidence of smallpox in 1909-19 was 125,000. Epidemic diseases took an annual toll of about 1,000,000.

Medical examination of young men called up for army service—and they were usually the stronger and healthier type—revealed between 50 and 100 T.B. cases in every 1,000 examined. More than 30 out of every 1,000 persons applying to doctors, were found to have some venereal disease. And lastly this damning figure: 64 trachoma cases for every 10,000 of the population, and in some outlying areas as much as 50 for every hundred of the population.

How did the tsarist government react to this calamitous state of affairs? Its health appropriations in 1913 reached a record high—90 kopeks for each inhabitant of the vast empire, and of this sum 5 kopeks was spent on combating epidemics and improving general sanitary conditions. That the allocations were woefully inadequate, to put it mildly, need hardly be said.

The number of doctors was inadequate too, 28,100 in 1913

{exclusive of the army medical corps}. This works out at one doctor to about 5,700 of the population, and to 25,000 in rural areas. In this, too, Russia was way behind the U.S. and Western Europe. To all this might be added that doctors, particularly in the towns, engaged in private practice and catered mainly to wealthy patients. Free medical care, mostly sponsored by charitable organizations and in some cases by the municipal authorities, was accessible only to a fraction of the population.

Nor was the position any better in respect to hospitals, outpatient departments and other health amenities. All told, they numbered about 5,300, or one hospital bed to 1,000 of the population. But large areas had no health services whatever. There is the example of Kirghizia—in 1913 it had six hospitals with a total of 100 beds, or the vast Krasnoyarsk region in Siberia, which had 500 hospital beds.

In 1913 Russia had 16 higher medical schools and only one medical research centre. This, too, is indicative of the sorry state of the health services under the tsars.

Immediately after the Revolution the Soviet government issued a series of decrees designed to improve the health services. On July 11, 1918, the day after the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets had adopted the country's first Constitution, a decree issued under Lenin's signature established the People's Commissariat of Health. Another important landmark in building up the new health service was the programme adopted by the Communist Party at its Eighth Congress in March 1919. It defined the object of the Soviet health services as follows: "1) comprehensive and far-reaching measures to improve sanitary conditions . . .; 2) measures to combat social diseases (tuberculosis, venereal diseases, alcoholism, etc.); 3) provision of free and competent medical services and free medicine."

The distinguishing feature of the Soviet public health system is *free medical assistance with all services fully available to the people*. Non-payment for medical care is a long established principle and is expressly set out in government decisions. Availability of fully competent and specialized medical assistance is guaranteed by the rapid expansion of medical institutions, the employment of more doctors and the opening of more medical schools and research centres. When the Seventh Congress of Soviets adopted the present USSR Constitution in 1936, it reaffirmed the right of all citizens to free medical aid, social maintenance, rest and recreation, accommodation in rest homes, sanatoria, health resorts, mother and

child protection, and numerous other services. By this time the USSR possessed the material means needed to make all these constitutional rights a reality. Thus, in 1937 health expenditure reached 10,300 million rubles; the number of doctors was five times greater than in 1913, totalling 105,600; the number of hospital beds had increased five-fold in urban communities, and the number of rural medical establishments nearly three-fold. There was also a much larger number of outpatient clinics.

The main object in the prewar period, that is up to 1940, was to make medical care available to the entire population. To do this, the government concentrated on district hospitals, maternity wards, etc. This was especially important in rural areas, which before the Revolution had been deprived of the most elementary medical facilities.

Another important step was the organization of a comprehensive anti-epidemic service. Soon after the Revolution a series of laws were passed outlining measures to wipe out epidemic diseases and generally improve sanitary conditions in town and country. These were vital measures, considering that in the early Soviet years civil war and foreign armed intervention had produced widespread famine and its inevitable concomitant, epidemics.

The number of doctors employed in the anti-epidemic campaign was greatly increased, from about 500 in 1913 to 12,500 in 1940. This and intensive microbiological research made it possible to reduce the incidence of enteric typhoid fever to one-fifth of the 1913 figure, and malaria to one-third of the 1934 figure.

The war destroyed much what had been so patiently built up since 1917. It required immense outlays to rebuild the public health system, and since then it has been expanding at a rapid pace. The general picture of Soviet progress in this field can be seen from the following table (000 omitted, all figures for end of year).

| | 1913 | 1940 | 1960 | 1966 |
|--|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| Number of doctors (exclusive of army) | 28,1 | 155,3 | 431,7 | 577,7 |
| Number of hospitals | 5,3 | 13,8 | 26,0* | 26,3 |
| Number of hospital beds (exclusive of army) | 207,6 | 790,9 | 1739,2 | 2321,0 |

* 1958.

The number of doctors is now 20 times greater than before the Revolution and in this respect, as in certain others, the USSR leads the world. In fact, it employs more doctors than the U.S., Britain and France taken together; one out of every four doctors in the world is in the Soviet Union. The ratio now is one doctor to every 404 of the population and, taking a more customary criterion, the number of doctors per 10,000 of the population, we get these figures:

| USSR | USA | BRITAIN | ITALY | GFR | JAPAN |
|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 24,7 | 18,6 | 14,7 | 16,3 | 19,3 | 14,3 |
| (1966) | (1964) | (1963) | (1961) | (1965) | (1962) |

The whole doctor-patient relationship has changed: no longer does the doctor wait for the patient to consult him—he is expected to take an active interest in the health of the people in his particular district. Routine health checks have become customary, especially for children under 14, teenagers, students, expectant mothers, and people suffering from chronic ailments (tuberculosis, cancer, cardio-vascular and gastric ailments), also workers engaged in potentially health-hazardous occupations, etc.,

The number of hospital beds now works out at one to every 101 of the population, or 99 per 10,000.

To sum up: the Soviet Union was the first in the world to introduce free medical care, from treating a slight wound to complex surgery and long hospital treatment. More, sick people receive disability benefits towards which they make no contribution. Health expenditure has been increasing from year to year.

Special mention should be made of mother and child protection, one of the greatest achievements of the Soviet health system. Looking across the past fifty years, one can fully appreciate what has been done in this field.

And the picture fifty years ago was very somber indeed: 27 per cent of infants, or 269 out of every 1,000, died in their first year. In some years infantile mortality was as high as 30, even 40 per cent. The figures could have been much lower, of course, if the government had put more money and effort into mother and child protection. Expectant mothers had to work until the very last day, in some cases the very last hour. There were nine mother and child consultation centres for the whole of Russia, and even these had been started by doctors without government support. Maternity beds—there were 7,500—were concentrated in the big cities, and there were

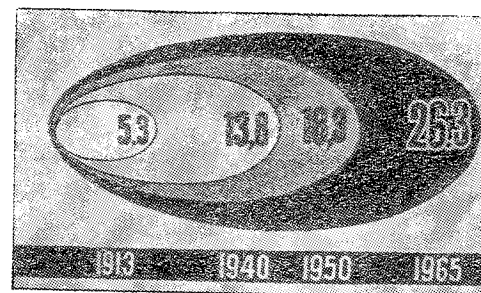
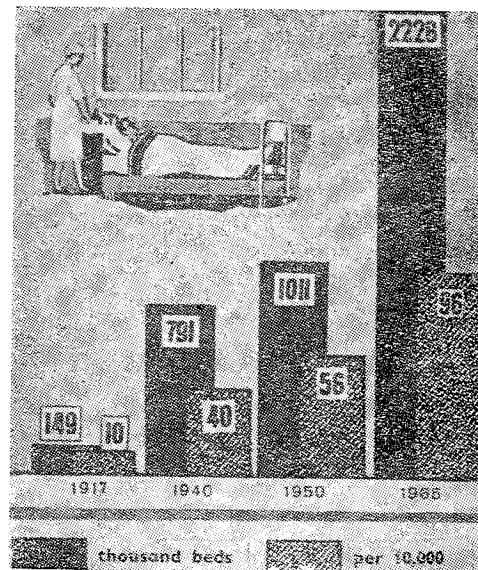
only 20, at best 30, in each of what are now the Union Republics and none at all in Tajikistan and Armenia. The result, as was only to be expected, was that 30,000 women died every year of childbirth and thousands more were made cripples for life.

The October Revolution did away with the inequality of women and proclaimed protection of mother and child a duty of the state. In January 1918, Lenin signed a decree initiating a broadly conceived programme to provide health protection for mothers and children. The system was entirely financed by the state.

The number of consultation centres and clinics that form part of this system increased from 8,600 in 1940 to 16,400 in 1960 and 19,900 in 1966, and maternity beds (225,000 in 1966, or 30 times more than in 1913) are more evenly distributed throughout the country.

The mother and child protection system employs 33,300 doctors (3.4 times more than in

Hospital beds
(000's and per 10,000 of the population)
Medical establishments (000's)

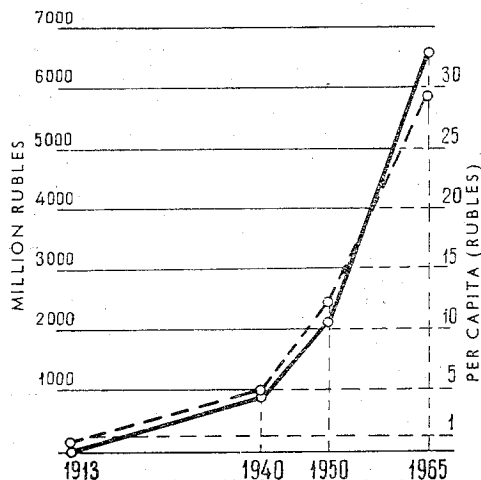


1940) and 80,200 junior personnel (6.3 times more than in 1940). No woman in the USSR is left without medical assistance and

advice during pregnancy. In the cities all births, and in the rural areas more than three-fourths, are in maternity wards, and competent medical assistance is always available for those who give birth at home. As a result, the death rate was cut in half in the prewar years and in 1966 stood at only 0.05 per cent.

Soviet law provides ample protection for pregnant women and nursing mothers employed in industry and office work. Refusal to employ pregnant women, or any reduction of their earnings, are punishable by law. The law also provides that these women shall not be put on jobs likely to prove injurious to their health. For instance, expectant mothers, beginning with the first month of pregnancy, cannot be employed on night work or overtime, nor can they be sent on assignments outside their city after the fourth month of pregnancy. That also applies to nursing mothers. Medical officers can order managements to transfer expectant mothers to lighter work without any reduction in earnings. All women, whether employed in industry, offices or collective farms, are entitled to four months maternity leave (56 days before and 56 after confinement), and to 70 days if they give birth to twins. Besides, they can receive extra but unpaid leave of up to one

State-Budget Expenditure on Public Health and Physical Culture



year and this does not affect their seniority standing. Nursing mothers are allowed an extra paid one-hour break during working time.

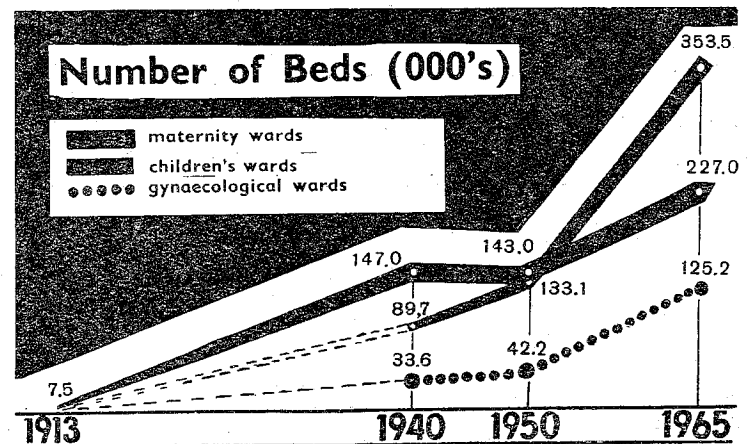
Another feature of the mother and child health programme is state family grants. Mothers with two children receive a grant on the birth of the third, and mothers of three a monthly grant on the birth of the fourth and every successive

child. In 1966, such monthly grants were paid out to 3,541,000 women and one-time grants to 524,000 women on the birth of the third child. Total expenditure on these grants, and on grants to unmarried mothers, amounted to 462 million rubles in 1965, compared with 123 million in 1940. Expenditure on maternity leave, layettes, child food, amounted to 618 million rubles (56 million in 1940).

Mothers of five and six children are decorated with the Maternity Medal and those with 7, 8 or 9 children with the Order of Motherhood Glory. Mothers of ten children are accorded the title of Mother Heroine (there were 95,000 holders of this title in 1966).

Child welfare is still another concern of the state, and there is a large and expanding network of children's hospitals, clinics, prophylactical centres, etc. The number of beds in child health institutions in 1966 was 383,000, or more than four times the 1940 figure. Infants are examined monthly up to one year of age, once in three months up to two years, and twice a year up to seven years of age. This service is operated by 74,000 child specialists (compared with 19,400 in 1940). Children's sanatoria play an important part too: the number of beds increased from approximately 95,000 in 1939 to nearly 139,000 in 1966, including an increase of from 39,000 to 93,000 in the number of beds in tuberculosis sanatoria.

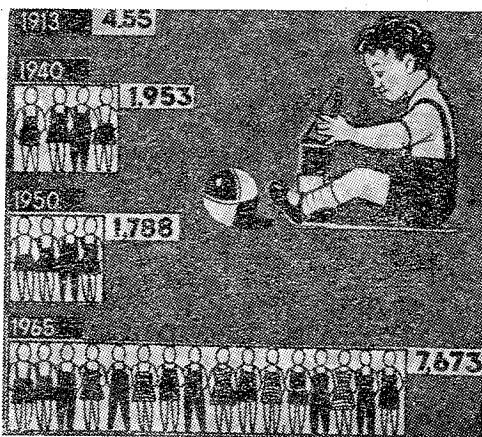
More kindergartens and day nurseries, which provide the hygienic and pedagogical conditions needed for the child's



proper development, are being opened from year to year. In 1966 they accommodated 8,200,000 children, compared with about 2,000,000 in 1940. There are also summer kindergartens and day nurseries and playgrounds, which in 1936 serviced more than 4 million children.

In combination, all these medical and pre-school child centres, maternity homes, dietetic food distribution units, etc., provide reliable protection for the health of the growing generation. State expenditure on kindergartens, nurseries, children's homes, summer camps, etc., increased nearly seven times between 1940 and 1965, when the total stood at 3,155 million rubles.

Number of Children in Year-Round Day Nurseries and Kindergartens (000's)

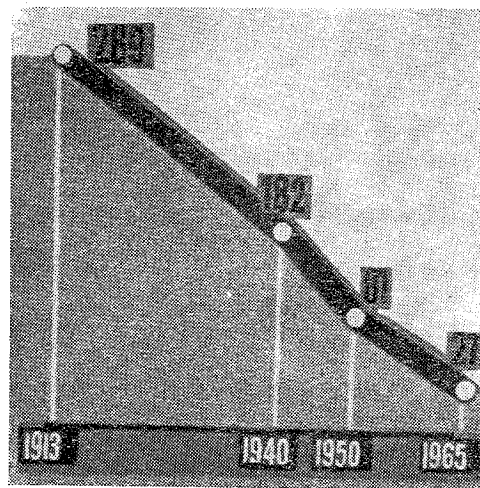


All this has reduced child mortality to one-tenth of pre-revolutionary, and even that figure will be lowered as doctors and researchers devise new preventive and cure methods.

The war on disease, combined with growing prosperity standards, has drastically reduced mortality rates and substantially increased average life spans.

In 1966, the mortality rate was 7.3 per 1,000 of the population, or less than one-fourth the 1913 figure and considerably lower than in any other country, as will be seen from the following table of deaths per 1,000 of the population:

| | 1913 | 1965 | | 1913 | 1965 |
|---------|------|------|-------------|------|------|
| USSR | 29,1 | 7,3 | France | 19,0 | 11,1 |
| USA | 13,2 | 9,4 | Italy | 19,3 | 10,0 |
| Britain | 14,2 | 11,5 | Norway | 13,3 | 9,1 |
| Austria | 18,8 | 13,0 | Finland | 17,3 | 9,7 |
| Belgium | 15,3 | 12,1 | Sweden | 13,9 | 10,1 |
| Denmark | 13,0 | 10,1 | Netherlands | 13,1 | 8,0 |



Infant mortality per 1,000

The average life life span rose from 32 years in 1896-97 to 44 in 1926-27 and to 70 in 1964-65, or has more than doubled in less than 70 years. Together with the sharp reduction in mortality rates, this has made for a rapid rise in the population, which on January 1, 1967 stood at about 235 million, an increase of nearly 15 million over the past five years alone.

The advantages of the socialist system, which provides all the conditions needed to raise health standards, have been fully demonstrated in the past fifty years. In mapping out the country's progress till 1970, the Twenty-third CPSU Congress envisaged increasing the number of hospital beds to 2,680,000 (109 per 10,000 of the population) and a still steeper rise in health and prophylactical facilities for women and children. Besides, the medical profession is working intensively to improve prophylactical, diagnostical and curative methods, and this, too, will make for still higher health standards.

THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

"Citizens of the USSR have the right to education."

[Art. 121 of the USSR Constitution.]

The high level of public education is one of the Soviet Union's biggest gains. A third of the population, or at least one member of every family, are studying. In the 1966-67 school year, 73,559,000 were attending primary, secondary, vocational training schools, higher educational establishments and various study courses.

That figure, impressive in itself, should be measured against the corresponding pre-revolutionary figure. According to the 1897 census, 72 per cent of the adult population between the ages of 9 and 49 were illiterate, with the proportion among women higher still, 83 per cent. The number of persons with more than primary schooling was only 1,400,000, and for the most part they were landowners, capitalists, government officials, members of the clergy, etc.

Education was well-nigh inaccessible to the majority. It need only be said that about 80 per cent of the child population could not even hope for primary schooling, and of course, secondary and higher schools were reserved for children from wealthy families. In fact, an *Ukaze* issued by one of the tsar's ministers of education expressly said that universities, colleges and secondary schools were closed to "children of kitchen-maids, servants, cooks, small shopkeepers, etc." The result of that policy is spelled out in the following figures showing the social background of university students in 1913.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|
| Landowners and government officials | 38.3 | Peasants (chiefly rich) | 14.0 |
| Clergy | 7.4 | Urban petty bourgeoisie | 24.4 |
| Merchants | 11.4 | Others | 4.5 |

Another tsarist minister, in a reply to a request from the citizens of Chernigov to open a secondary school, wrote: "The government does not contemplate starting schools for the lower classes."

The tsarist government was especially anxious to prevent

the spread of education in the outlying regions inhabited by national minorities. More than 40 of these nationalities did not even have their own alphabet before the Revolution and some, notably in the Far North and Central Asia, were totally illiterate.

Lenin wrote: "There is no other country in Europe in which the mass of the people are so savagely *robbed* in terms of education, enlightenment and knowledge."

The October Revolution furnished an outlet to the people's thirst for knowledge and culture. The right of every Soviet citizen to education is guaranteed by the Constitution and made a living reality by a series of measures of which free education at all levels is one of the most important. The democratic character of the Soviet educational system finds its most direct expression in the fact that education, at every level, is available to all. This has been made possible by building a nation-wide network of schools and other educational establishments and by training the necessary personnel. That explains the Soviet Union's remarkable achievements in education.

But, of course, they did not come all at once. When the Soviet Union launched its cultural revolution, it had to start by teaching people to read and write. The decree on liquidation of illiteracy issued under Lenin's signature in 1919 read in part: "All persons between the ages of 8 and 50 unable to read and write must be taught to do so in their own language or in Russian, whichever they choose." Next year an Emergency Commission to Combat Illiteracy was appointed and similar commissions were set up in every community. An anti-illiteracy society was founded to help in this work.

Literacy classes were started in every factory, school, workers' club and residential quarter. This was an unparalleled crusade to bring knowledge to the people, a gigantic effort unparalleled for scope and intensity: in the 15 years 1920-35, about 50 million were taught to read and write.

Meanwhile, a new school system was being developed. Its purpose was formulated in 1919 in a resolution of the Eighth Party Congress: "Free, obligatory and universal general education for children of both sexes up to the age of 17, as well as polytechnical education, to give them theoretical and practical acquaintance with all the chief branches of production.

"Full implementation of the principle that tuition shall be in the native language, co-educational and secular, i.e. free from religious influence, and closely linked with productive

work in order to train harmoniously developed members of communist society.”

In that same year a law was passed making education obligatory, universal and free.

By 1929 the number of schools and pupils considerably exceeded the figure for 1914.

In accordance with a decision of the Sixteenth Party Congress (1930), 7-year schooling was made obligatory in all the towns and primary schooling in all the rural areas; thus all children between the ages of 8 and 12 were now attending school.

But Soviet power did more than make education accessible to all. From the very early days of the Revolution, workers and peasants were encouraged to study for the professions, and many new specialized secondary and higher schools were opened. In this way university education ceased to be the privilege of the propertied classes. The universities were now open to all, with preference given to workers and peasants. All barriers of tsarist days were removed, including the most important, high tuition fees. The Twelfth Party Congress declared in its resolution: “The enthusiasm young workers have invested in their revolutionary work must now be redirected to the mastery of science and technology.”

In 1919-20, Workers' Faculties were opened at most universities. The idea was to enable workers and peasants to go through an accelerated course, usually three or four years, to qualify for admission to university and college. As a rule, the students were selected by trade union, Party and Young Communist League organizations. In later years they were to take over important executive posts in the economy. Enrollment in these Workers Faculties rose from 38,000 in 1922-23 to 155,000 in 1930-31 and 340,000 in 1932-33. However, with more people graduating the regular secondary schools and evening schools for adults, enrollment gradually declined and in 1940 the Workers Faculties were discontinued.

All these measures naturally made for higher cultural levels. By 1923 the literacy figure had doubled and by 1939 illiteracy had, in the main, been eliminated.

The nazi attack in 1941 temporarily halted our progress in this as in many other fields. Apart from everything else, the nazi invaders destroyed 18,000 schools, more than 40 per cent of the total, 334 higher educational establishments and 605 research institutes.

But thanks to the socialist system we were able to rebuild and expand the educational system in a comparatively short time. Eight-year schooling was made universal, in the main, in 1949-51, and in 1950-55 ten-year schooling was made obligatory in the capital cities of all the Union Republics and in the larger towns. In 1958, eight-year schooling became obligatory throughout the country.

The 1959 census revealed that only 1.5 per cent of the population in the 9 to 49 age groups (1.9 million people) were still illiterate, but since then the figure has been reduced almost to zero. The 1959 census also revealed that over a third of the population (72,200,000) had more than a primary education, 12,500,000 of this number had a seven-year education and 58,700,000 a higher, secondary or incomplete secondary education; at the beginning of 1967 this figure had risen to 85 million.

At present, more than 48 million children attend school. The number of teachers in the 1966-67 school year was in excess of 2,500,000 (of which 55 per cent were university graduates). It might be mentioned, by way of comparison, that in 1914 there were only 280,000 school teachers.

Much has been accomplished in the Union Republics. Before the Revolution tuition was usually in the Russian language; now it is being conducted in 57 languages of the various nationalities. The rate of progress can be judged from the example of Uzbekistan: before the Revolution it had 160 schools with 17,000 pupils; the respective figures now are 8,716 and nearly 2,500,000. In Tajikistan the situation was even worse—a few “Russo-native” primary schools with 369 pupils, most of them children of Russian officials or the local rich; now there are 2,834 schools with an enrollment of more than 580,000.

Education has become an integral part of the Soviet way of life.

This, in brief outline, is the school structure that has evolved over the past years. Children begin attending school at the age of seven and are given an eight-year or ten-year education. Graduates of the eight-year schools can continue their studies in vocational training schools, specialized secondary schools or in a wide range of training courses. Graduates of the ten-year schools can enter technical schools, colleges and universities. These are open to all. School curricula are so designed as to provide systematic knowledge in the basic branches of science, culture, technique, history, etc. And it can safely be

said that graduates have a wide range of knowledge and interests. The secondary schools give pupils a good grounding in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, history, literature, their native and one or more foreign languages. Much attention is paid to polytechnical education, that is, acquainting the pupils with the major branches of the economy, factory operation, practical skills, and so on.

Those who for some reason were unable to go through the full school course can continue their studies in evening schools or through correspondence courses. The evening schools were started in 1943, during the war, to cater for teenagers who had replaced older men in the factories. Since then they have been reorganized to serve adults who for various reasons were not able to finish school. In 1966-67 there were 22,000 evening schools and correspondence courses with 4,641,000 students, most of them workers, collective farmers and office employees. They are afforded every opportunity to pursue their studies: apart from the fact that young workers under 18 are on a short day, no student can be put on night work; all students are allowed to take their annual holidays during examinations, eighth-class students are given an extra 15 days and tenth-class students an extra 20 days holiday with full pay. Millions can avail themselves of these evening schools and many have gone on to universities.

The system is being expanded under the current five-year plan. Now that eight-year schooling has become obligatory, the next task is to introduce obligatory full-secondary education. Attendance in secondary schools in the present five-year period will be four times greater than in the preceding five years.

The plan calls for 22,000 new schools in addition to the 210,000 existing ones. This will make for better facilities and reduce the number of second-shift (afternoon) classes.

Progress in higher and specialized secondary education has been similarly rapid. Russia had only 105 higher and 450 specialized secondary schools in 1914; the figures now are 767 and 3,980.

Specialized secondary schools have a student body of 3,994,000, and in 1963 were graduated by 685,000 (compared with 7,400 in 1914). Total graduation in the fifty Soviet years is more than 11 million.

The Soviet Union has more university and college students than any other country, in fact twice as many as the whole of Western Europe: in the 1966-67 academic year total enrollment

was 4,123,000. The 1966 graduation class numbered nearly 432,000, or 35 times more than in 1914. Altogether, nearly 7,000,000 people graduated universities and colleges in 1918-66. In no other country is scientific training conducted on such a grand scale.

To this should be added that a person can obtain a university or college education without giving up his job. In the 1966-67 academic year nearly 2,400,000 students, or 58 per cent of the total, were taking evening or correspondence courses. They are allowed supplementary paid holidays and enjoy other advantages.

All tuition, of course, is free of charge and most students, about three-fourths, receive state scholarships; students are usually paid full wages during practical work; over 50 per cent live in student hostels.

The present five-year plan envisages a continued and very substantial increase in the country's student population. By 1970 total enrollment in higher and specialized secondary schools will amount to 5,000,000, and approximately 7,000,000 will graduate over the five-year period.

Another aspect of the Soviet training programme is the wide range of facilities for training skilled workers in every branch of the economy. Under the current five-year plan, 6,000,000 will receive such training. In 1940 the Soviet Union started a system of vocational training schools for industry and transport and in 1953 a similar system was started to train farm machinery operators. Some 16 million skilled workers had graduated these schools by 1965. But skilled workers are trained also in the factories, most of which have their own apprenticeship and refresher programmes which this year will cater to 15,300,000.

The October Revolution raised cultural standards—a veritable *cultural revolution* was performed under the leadership of the Communist Party. The Soviet people are the true inheritors of all the cultural values created by mankind.

The USSR has brought to reality Lenin's prophetic words at the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets in 1918: "In the old days, human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole."

RIISING PROSPERITY STANDARDS

"Socialism alone will make it possible... to achieve the aim of easing the lives of the working people and of improving their welfare as much as possible. Socialism alone can achieve this. And we know that it must achieve this, and in the understanding of this truth lies the whole complexity and the whole strength of Marxism."

(V. I. Lenin, Speech at the First Congress of Economic Councils, May 26, 1918.)

In every society production is in one or another way tied to consumption. There must be production if people are to have enough food, clothing, housing, and so on. But only a socialist economy, which knows neither private ownership of the means of production, nor exploitation, organically links production to consumption, and only under socialism is production so organized as to meet the vital requirements of the entire people. Long before the Revolution, in the formative years of the Communist Party, when its programme was being elaborated, Lenin pointed to this feature of socialist production, emphasizing that it would not only satisfy the needs of the people, but would assure full prosperity and free, all-round development of all members of society.

Guided by this proposition of Lenin's (it has been incorporated in the Party Programme), the Communist Party has directed the efforts of the people to building up a strong socialist economy as the foundation for a rapid rise of prosperity standards. And this, among other things, means a larger supply of food, higher incomes, better housing.

The growth of food consumption, made possible by a considerable rise in farm output, is shown in the following table (kilograms per capita):

| | 1913* | 1950 | 1960 | 1966 | 1966 increase over 1913 |
|---|---------|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| Meat and fats (including poultry) | 29 | 26 | 40 | 43 | 1,5-fold |
| Milk and dairy products (in milk units) | 154 | 172 | 240 | 259 | 1,7 " |
| Eggs | 48 | 60 | 118 | 130 | 2,7 " |
| Fish and fish products | 6,7 | 7,0 | 9,9 | 12,9 | 1,9 " |
| Sugar | 8,1 | 11,6 | 28 | 35,3 | 4,4 " |
| Vegetable oils | no data | 2,7 | 5,3 | 6,1 | |
| Potatoes | 114 | 241 | 143 | 136 | 1,2 " |
| Other vegetables | 40 | 51 | 70 | 72 | 1,8 " |
| Bread and bakery products | 200 | 172 | 164 | 154 | decline of 23 per cent |

* Figures for 1913 include consumption by the wealthier classes, which was much higher than that of the workers: 2.5 times in wheat bread, 4 times in sugar, 3 times in meat, and 5 times in milk, eggs, cured meats.

The table shows that the sharp change in the dietary structure has been basically towards high-calory foods, such as meat, milk, dairy products, eggs and sugar. It is only natural that the proportion of bread in the national diet should have declined. In calory value, the Soviet diet is in no way inferior to that of most developed countries. True, consumption of meat, milk, vegetables and fruits is still below of that of some countries, but the gap is rapidly being narrowed. Consumption of these foods will increase considerably by 1970 to reach the following levels (kilograms per capita):

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Meat and meat products | 50 | Vegetables | 100 |
| Milk and dairy products | 300 | Vegetable oils | 10 |
| Sugar | 42 | Fish and fish products | 20 |

There has likewise been a marked increase in consumption of such goods as fabrics, knitgoods, shoes, etc., as will be seen from the following per capita figures:

| | 1913* | 1950 | 1960 | 1966 |
|--------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| Fabrics sq. metres | 13,4 | 16,5 | 26,1 | 27,1 |
| Of which | | | | |
| cotton | 11,6 | 13,9 | 19,2 | 19,9 |
| woollen | 0,9 | 1,3 | 2,2 | 2,3 |
| silk | 0,2 | 0,6 | 3,4 | 3,6 |
| linen | 0,7 | 0,7 | 1,3 | 1,3 |
| Footwear | 0,43 | 1,1 | 1,9 | 2,5 |

* These figures include consumption by the wealthy classes. In tsarist Russia, one-sixth of the population, the exploiting classes, accounted for more than half of total consumption of fabrics, clothing, footwear, and for an even greater proportion of other light-industry goods. Per capita consumption by the working population was only about a third of that of the bourgeoisie.

Retail sales of such items as watches, radio sets, cameras, etc., have been increasing at an especially rapid rate. How rapid will be seen from the following tables (thousand units):

| | 1913 | 1940 | 1960 | 1966 |
|--------------------------|------|-------|--------|--------|
| Watches and clocks | 700 | 2,500 | 22,326 | 23,789 |
| Radio sets | — | 156 | 4,179 | 4,768 |
| Cameras | 16 | 355 | 1,506 | 1,157 |
| Bicycles | 29 | 200 | 3,000 | 3,962 |
| Motorcycles and scooters | 0,1 | 7 | 501 | 738 |
| Sewing machines | 272 | 175 | 3,337 | 1,488 |

There has been a similar rapid growth rate in sales of durable consumer goods since the war. The figures (in thousand units) are given in the following table:

| | 1950 | 1960 | 1966 |
|------------------|------|-------|-------|
| Refrigerators | 1.2 | 518 | 1,948 |
| Washing machines | 0.3 | 907 | 3,561 |
| Vacuum cleaners | 6 | 417 | 721 |
| Television sets | 12 | 1,488 | 3,973 |
| Pianos | 12 | 91 | 165 |

Retail sales, both by state and cooperative stores, have been steadily increasing in line with the rapid growth of cash

incomes. Thus, per capita sales rose from 90 rubles (of which 57 rubles for food) in 1940 to 454 rubles (food—264 rubles) in 1965.

The current five-year plan provides for an increase of nearly 45,000 million rubles, or 43.5 per cent, which will bring per capita figure up to more than 600 rubles, or 1.3 times the 1965 figure.

Wage increases are another major element in raising living standards.

The prerevolutionary worker had to return a sizeable part of his low wages to his employer in the form of fines and other deductions, which kept on increasing from year to year, and, besides, wage discrimination was widely practised.

The Revolution abolished all exploitation and all political and economic discrimination. It proclaimed the principle of equal pay for equal work, and this has been basic to all Soviet legislation. The trade unions see to it that this principle is stringently observed.

The 1913 wage level was surpassed already at the beginning of 1926, and in 1928 industrial wages were about 25 per cent above the 1913 figure for real wages.

Accelerated industrialization and the build-up of the country's defence capacity to meet the mounting danger of nazism put a terrible strain on the economy, with the result that real wages declined somewhat between 1929 and 1940 due to higher retail prices, though monetary wages continued to increase. There was another decline during the war, in which the USSR bore the main burden. The prewar 1940 level was regained in 1948 and since then average wages have risen steadily. The following figures for average monthly wages (in rubles) for the entire economy give an idea of the process.

| 1940 | 1946 | 1950 | 1955 | 1958 | 1960 | 1965 | 1966 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 33,0 | 47,5 | 63,9 | 71,5 | 77,8 | 80,1 | 95,6 | 99,2 |

It has been consistent Soviet policy to raise wages. For instance, in 1950-66 the average monetary wage rose by more than 50 per cent, and between the end of 1964 and May 1, 1965 by another 21 per cent for 20 million people in the service industries. These are the figures for the various branches: municipal workers—15 per cent, trade and public catering—19 per cent, public health—24 per cent, education—26 per cent. If we take into account the changes in state retail prices (40 per

cent above the 1940 level in 1965) and prices on collective-farm markets (11 per cent above 1940), then we will find that real wages in 1965 were about 2.1 times higher than in 1940 and at least 2.8 times higher than in 1913.

And once on the subject of prices, it should be observed that one of the biggest achievements of the Soviet economy since the war has been its ability to overcome the trend towards higher retail prices. The high prices obtaining during the war were reduced by a series of price cuts, seven in all, carried out in 1947-54. This brought average retail prices down by nearly 60 per cent. Later on it was decided to eliminate, or at least reduce, the differential in the incomes of various groups of the population by using available resources to raise wages rather than for blanket price reductions. Accordingly, several minimum-wage increases have been carried out in recent years, and the new wage-scales introduced for most categories are, as a rule, higher than previous ones. Pensions, especially minimum pensions, have been raised too, and measures have been taken to repeal or reduce income taxes, first of all on low incomes; old age-pensions have been introduced for collective farmers, and cash incomes of collective farmers are steadily and rapidly rising. State retail prices have been stabilized. Taking 1940 as 100, the price level in 1955 was 138; 1958—141 and 1965—140. If we take 1950 as 100, the index figure for 1958 is 76 and 75 for 1965. Stable prices rule out inflation and safeguard the people's purchasing power.

The Party and government are contemplating a new and very substantial raise in wages and salaries to bring the average up to 150 rubles a month by 1970, or about 20 per cent higher than in 1965.

The Party and government decision of September 26, 1967, to come into force on January 1, fixes the minimum wage at 60 rubles a month and 70 rubles for certain categories. This represents a further step in narrowing the difference between low-paid and high-paid personnel.

There will be higher wages also for workers in industries that set the pace of technical progress. For instance, about 1,500,000 machine operators in engineering are to get a 15 per cent rise in the first half of 1968.

Much attention is now being paid to developing the natural wealth of Siberia, the Far East and the Far North, and this makes it important to attract more workers to these areas. Accordingly, the special bonus is to be extended as from

January 1, 1968 to workers, office staff and professionals in the light and food industries, education, public health, municipal services, scientific research, etc., in these regions. Furthermore, the seniority bonus is to be paid after a shorter service period: a 10 per cent wage increase after the first six months, and 10 per cent for every successive six months. In some areas there will be a 10 per cent bonus for every year on the job.

The equal pay for equal work principle applies to all workers, office staff and professionals, and this includes collective farms. Though on the collective farms payment is not only in cash, but also in kind, the general principle of payment by quality and quantity of labour is observed here too. And another principle, material incentive, is likewise applied. Its neglect in some of the postwar years was one of the chief reasons for the lag in agriculture. In recent years, however, much has been done to raise the collective farmer's material interest in his work, primarily by steeply increasing prices paid to collective farms for their produce, reducing prices on machinery sold to collective farms, revising income tax rates, and, lastly, introducing a guaranteed wage approximating the wage level on state farms. The result has been a rapid growth in collective farmers' earnings, as shown in the following figures (percentages of 1953):

| 1954 | 1955 | 1958 | 1960 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 120 | 150 | 182 | 168 | 229 | 271 | 320 | 370 |

And so, the overall picture is one of a steady and uninterrupted rise in wages, the Soviet citizen's basic source of income. Capitalist economists often boast of the high wage levels in some of the leading Western countries. The usual method is to take *nominal* wages in these countries and in the USSR and compare them in terms of how much they will buy. But this ignores the very simple fact that before buying butter or a suit, sugar or a pair of shoes, a chicken or a radio set, the worker has to pay taxes, rent, and so on. And seen in this light, the picture is rather different. Taxes, to take one example, account for nearly 33 per cent of wages in the U.S., about 20 per cent in Britain and Italy, and 30 per cent in France and West Germany. The same with rent, which in the U.S. adds up to between 20 and 25 per cent of wages. Then there are the worker's contributions to pension funds, medical char-

ges (which in the U.S. represent about 5.6 per cent of the family budget) and in some countries tuition fees.

In the USSR it has been the consistent policy of the Party and government to reduce taxes and eventually eliminate them altogether. At the present time workers earning up to 60 rubles are exempt from taxes, and the tax paid by workers in the 61-70 rubles-a-month group have already been cut by an average of 40 per cent. Beginning with January 1, 1968, in accordance with the Party and government decision mentioned above, there will be another reduction, averaging 25 per cent, for the 60-80 rubles-a-month group. In other words, people earning from 61 to 65 rubles will practically be paying no taxes at all, and those earning from 66 to 80 rubles will be paying a very low tax.

The current five-year plan envisages the repeal of income taxes for certain categories of workers. The income tax depends on total earnings and also on the size of the family and is in no case higher than 13 per cent.

There is also this: revenue from taxes levied on the population amounted to 8,400 million rubles in 1966, but this was only 7.9 per cent of total budgetary revenue. The state spends much more on social maintenance and social insurance than it receives in the form of income taxes: in 1966 expenditure on these items amounted to 15,600 million rubles; of which 11,800 million went into pensions.

Rents in the USSR are lower than in any other country, amounting to between 4 and 5 per cent of monthly wages. And more housing is being commissioned. Compared with 1913, housing facilities have increased seven-fold and three-fold compared with 1940. Total housing built in the Soviet years adds up to 1,438 million square metres. This does not take into account the more than 20 million houses, totalling 695,200,000 square metres, built in rural areas by collective farms, their members, rural schoolteachers, etc. Nearly 17 million housing units were commissioned in the seven years 1959-65. Since 1957, between 10 million and 11 million people have moved into new houses every year, all in all, over the past ten years new flats or improved housing conditions were provided for 112 million, or nearly half of the country's population. More than 17 million units will be built under the new five-year plan, and this will mean improved housing for 65 million, as against 54 million in the preceding five-year period.

Total state allocations for the medical services, education,

pensions and similar purposes are usually referred to as the public consumption fund.

In the early Soviet years, though the public consumption fund was necessarily small, sizeable appropriations were made for liquidation of illiteracy, public health, mother and child protection and other services. Later, as the Soviet Union became richer, it set itself much more ambitious goals in all these fields and the public consumption fund was correspondingly increased. In 1940, on a per capita basis, it amounted to 24 rubles a year; the 1967 figure was 8.6 times greater—195 rubles, or more than 16 rubles a month for every man, woman and child.

In 1966, the gross PCF amounted to 45,500 million rubles. The money was used for education (more than 73 million attending school, college, etc.), pensions (more than 32 million pensioners) and monthly family grants to more than 5,100,000 women, day nurseries and kindergartens for 8 million children, free child and medical care, and so on.

What these additional grants mean to the ordinary Soviet citizen can be gauged from the following figures. Average wages in 1936 were 99.2 rubles a month, but with these additional grants and benefits out of the PCF the figure was 134 rubles. In other words, every person employed received nearly 35 rubles a month over and above his wage or salary or, what amounts to the same thing, a 35 per cent wage raise.

By the close of 1970 PCF appropriations will add up to 60,000 million rubles or, to take the per capita figure, 240 rubles a year or 20 rubles a month.

This should make it perfectly clear that in our socialist society wages, though the main, are not the only source of a man's income. A very considerable part of his requirements are met out of the PCF. Another source, though a lesser one, is income from the household plots of collective farmers and a certain part of urban workers. That is why Soviet statistics use the term *real incomes* of the population as the index of living standards. The term designates all incomes minus taxes, trade-union dues, increase in savings-bank accounts, with due consideration to changes in prices and other charges. And real incomes have been rising at an exceptionally fast pace. In the postwar years up to 1966, as compared to 1940, the per capita increase was 200 per cent—140 per cent in the case of workers and office staff, and 260 per cent in the case of peasants. Compared with 1913, real incomes of industrial and construc-

tion workers (taking into account that there is no unemployment and that working time has been sharply reduced) increased 560 per cent, and peasant real incomes 750 per cent.

In pre-revolutionary Russia peasant incomes were about one-third of those of industrial workers; now the gap has been considerably narrowed (to about 20 per cent) and by the close of 1970 the difference will be insignificant.

The current five-year plan envisages a considerable rise in real incomes, by 30 per cent per capita, compared with 20 per cent in the preceding five-year period. This rate of growth is one more indication of the country's greater and growing economic potential.

In 1966, the first year of the present five-year plan, real incomes increased by more than 6 per cent per capita. The results achieved in 1966 and the measures adopted by the Communist Party and the Soviet government in September 1967, make it certain that the grand programme of raising prosperity standards adopted at the Twenty-Third CPSU Congress—a programme that is translating into reality the ideas of the Great October Socialist Revolution—will be successfully carried out.