

Women Crusade for Peace

No wonder the women of Boston, shortly after this event which brought the cold war close to their homes and communities, determined to answer the warmongers. A peace ballot, launched by volunteer women, was responded to by women in Greater Boston, the surrounding cities of Cambridge, Fall River, Springfield, New Bedford. "Minute Women for Peace" polled their neighbors, the women textile workers, Negro women, the Methodist, Quaker, Baptist Churches of all denominations, the women's organizations. In three days, they collected 2,500 signatures on petitions — in 10 days, 4,000. Now, with close to 10,000 signatures, the ballots are addressed to the UN and urge: "Save The Peace, Outlaw the A-Bomb." The slogans, "Halt Production of the H-Bomb!" and "Negotiate With the Soviet Union

By CLAUDIA JONES

to Outlaw Atomic Weapons" are the key slogans of women in the U. S. A. who observe International Women's Day in united front meetings in 50 cities. This is the spirit of the day that originated in the struggles and traditions of America's working women!

The Response Was Overwhelming

In Eastern Pennsylvania, New York City, Cleveland, Gary, Chicago, Ohio, and Pasadena, California, women are forming Committees For Peace, similarly poll their neighbors particularly in the working class, farm, Negro and Nationality Communities. Hungarian and other nationality women are likewise polling their people for peace. "I want to raise my children in peace! I want to live," says their petition which urges outlawing of the bombs.

"Only timidity prevents us from getting more signatures," Boston women said enthusiastically when I congratulated them on the success of their peace ballot campaign. They told stories of the response to collecting the peace ballots in shops and markets. The ballots will be presented to the United Nations. Others will be presented to President Truman. In a Boston market, shopkeepers wary of women interfering with the plying of their trade soon quitted when the women indignantly protested attempts to stop them from collecting signatures there as at bus stops, theatre lobbies, in front of plant gates.

"Everyone is alert on the question of peace" they said. Knocking on the doors of women's organization, with some 110

persons present at a meeting, the 90 ballots of the petitioners were taken quickly. Notable women helped open doors where they were welcomed. Ministers, Negro and white, called their women committee heads, assigning them to work with the volunteer committee. "We are glad someone is doing something on the question of peace," they said.

Since then, these Minute Women For Peace have created a permanent organization. They plan a peace rally this month and will visit UN to add their protests against the war threat of American imperialism to the multitudinous voices of anti-fascist women round the world, united in the Women's International Democratic Federation — 81 million strong in 57 lands.

The Courage of French and African Women

These grass roots peace activities of women should be emulated in every city, every state, every village, every block of the nation. For the threat of war, the acuteness of the war danger grows by the day. The peace aspirations of the broadest sections of the women: working class farm women, housewives, especially the miners wives, professional women, women in the trades and services, were summed up for International Women's Day in the clarion call of the Women's International Democratic Federation: "Women of all countries: We bear a great responsibility to our children, to our peoples, to mankind, to history — and if all of us — and we comprise half of humanity — go forward with closed ranks against the instigators of war, there will be no war."

In these and other lands, anti-fascist women collect millions of signatures for outlawing the A-bomb, against the Marshall Plan and for world disarmament. In Greece, and Spain, in Argentina, women, men and children are killed for anti-fascist anti-war drives. In Tours, France, a few weeks ago, workers delayed a trainload of military tanks bound for Angouleme in Southern France. Part of the mounting campaign of French trade unionists against their government's part in the cold war and specifically the war against the Viet Nameese, French women simultaneously stretched out on the tracks to prevent the train from moving. In this action, Frenchwomen emulated African women who recently barricaded with their bodies imperialist attempts to take away their men who fight for better conditions.

In Eastern Germany over five million women signed petitions to outlaw the A-bomb and for world disarmament. In Italy over two million women led by the union of Italian Women and its dynamic leader, Maria Maddelena Rossi, led similar struggles. The women of New China, whose feudal bonds were forever severed as a result of the victory of the Chinese Peoples Revolution reflect this same spirit.

In Britain, 25 women, some pushing carriages, holding their children by the hand, marched in London's suburbs on International Women's Day in a silent protest against the hydrogen bomb. The women, who belong to all parties and come from middle class households carried banners with the words "Ban Bombs." "Deliver Us From Evil." They expressed the hope that their action would inspire women in the United States and the rest of the world to raise

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This Issue of The Magazine

International Women's Day, an American event originated by the Socialist Party in 1908 as a day of demonstrative action against the sweatshops and child labor in New York's East Side, is being observed throughout March this year. Inside this magazine are the following articles discussing the event:

- The World's Only Woman President.
- How Women Helped Liberate China.
- An Appeal to American Mothers.
- Harlem's Pioneer Communist Leader.
- Some Special Problems of Working Women.

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their voices for the preservation of peace.

American women are raising their voices. They are speaking out ever more firmly for peace! But ever more strongly, more demonstratively must this be done, particularly to strengthen demonstrative action being planned in many cities on the occasion of Mothers Day. Typical of their "shocked" reaction to the monstrous Truman-Acheson doctrine that war is inevitable was the statement of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. They demanded that Secretary of State Acheson "make clear by action as well as by words that the United States deserves negotiations and agreement" with the Soviet Union. This is necessary, the statement added, to avoid "bringing down upon this nation the condemnation of the world." The statement further expressed opposition to Acheson's suggestion that the United Nations clear the way for resumption of diplomatic relations between UN members and Spain and expressed opposition to the extension of the peacetime draft law.

On International Women's Day, large masses of women began to understand that atomic weapons and hydrogen bombs are instruments of civilian annihilation and that the United States is more vulnerable to them than the Soviet Union or China.

Spontaneity Not A Reliable Basis

But we cannot rely on spontaneity. The widespread peace sentiments of the people must be organized and given direction and effective militant expression. This is necessary since the monopolist rulers are doing everything to deceive the people and to paralyze their will to fight for peace. Particularly insidious agents of the warmakers are the reformist labor leaders, the reactionary Catholic hierarchy and the American agents of the fascist Tito gang. The main task of all these is to confuse, split and undermine the peace camp.

The warmongering agents of imperialism peddle the criminal lies that war is inevitable, that the Soviet Union and the capitalist states cannot live in peace, that the USSR threatens our security, that the lands of true Socialist and Peoples Democracy, where the people rule, are "totalitarian." Hence, a fundamental condition for rallying millions of women into the peace camp is to free them from the influence of the agents of imperialism and to arouse their sense of kinship and solidarity with the millions upon millions of their sisters the world over, who are in the forefront of the struggles for peace, democracy and Socialism.

The profound victories of anti-fascist women in the camp of peace, were achieved in united front struggle for peace and anti-fascism against the horror of a third world war. In our own land, the road to women's equality, particularly the real equality of working class, Negro, farm and nationality women, must be paved in joint united front struggle of men and women for peace and the burning demands of the people.

Attacks Against Women Increasing

It is because the would-be destroyers of civilization fear the social participation of women in the struggle for peace, that all-out attacks against women are an increasing feature of the offensive which accompanies the sharpening economic crisis. In the past year we have seen attacks against progressive and Commu-

nist women and their organizations, in the Denver, Los Angeles cases, in the deportation delirium, in the thought-control drive against schools and teachers, carrying with it the racist indoctrination of our children; in the false Dept. of Justice "foreign agent" attack against the Congress of American Women; in the attack against the leaders of the Communist Party, which Party's philosophy illumines for men and women the true nature of their relations to each other, to all social phenomena, and teaches them how to influence and change the world for the betterment of mankind, their children and themselves.

What do the billionaire rulers led by the Truman administration and the GOP offer to American women? They offer a perspective of death, a perspective of war psychology—a perspective of extermination for the oppressed Negro people, for Negro women, symbolized in the heroic figure of imprisoned Rosa Lee Ingram, who fight ever more militantly against lynch terror, degradation, and national oppression. The number of Negro women grow as "lynch widows" in every city and town North and South, despite the civil rights demagoguery by President Truman! The Trumans and American Century spokesmen offer no solution to the burning problems of women, 17½ million of whom are in industry, 3 million in unions—and upon whom the burdens of the sharpening crises and growing unemployment are falling most heavily.

Again Negro women are the worst sufferers from dwindling family income, brutal discrimination in employment, in social security, relief and medical treatment, in lack of opportunity for jobs and education for growing children and the devastating social problems that arise from these conditions.

Impoverishment of the American family is taking place as shown by recent government figures. Eight million families live on \$20 a week or \$1,000 per year, while one-third of all American families earn less than \$2,000 a year. Impoverishment has hit the farm women to an alarming degree. Almost 75 percent of farm families earned less than \$2,000 in 1948, with the agricultural crisis only in its first stage.

Asian Women to American Mothers

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against the imperialist executioners. What are you going to do to stop the crimes of your government in Asia?

Mothers of the United States! It is the tanks and aeroplanes made in your factories that come to burn and destroy our villages and meagre possessions, to kill our children and add still more to the indescribable horror of our lives.

It is with the money they make out of your labor that your governments pay for the wars in Indonesia, Viet-Nam, Malaya, Burma and China, for the iron repression in Iran, India, South Korea and other countries.

Dear sisters, never forget that a people which oppresses another can never themselves become free. Beware! For if you do not determinedly oppose this criminal policy of your own governments, your living standards will sink still lower and the danger of world war will grow and your own children will always be in danger.

Dear sisters, our interests are the same. It is our duty to unite side by side in the fight. The imperialists try

Women still employed find a wide gap between their wages and those of men doing the same work, while wages of Negro women are particularly depressed below the minimum necessary to sustain life. Thus, average annual wages of white men were \$2,678 a year, white women \$1,710 and for non-white, women who are predominantly Negro women workers, the average was \$928. The doors to the sciences and professions are being bolted more tightly against women. The sharpening crisis is already beginning to press upon the relatively few women in the professions. Clerical and office employment, in which young women predominate, notoriously pay hunger wages. The pressure of the idle labor force and of those coming out of business schools constantly threatens the job security and miserable wages of the employed.

Aims for the Month-Long Observance

The month-long observance of International Women's Day should be the occasion for developing the united front struggle for adequate maternity protection and child care, women's right to work, equal pay for equal work, more schools, recreational facilities, housing, jobs and adequate security covering the entire period of employment, an end to Jimcrow and for an FEPC with jobs in it; for wiping out discrimination against Negro women in jobs, the arts and professions; for lower prices and strict control of rents. It should be an occasion to rouse and organize the working class women and housewives. It should be considered a key task by labor-progressive men and women everywhere.

It is particularly urgent to draw large masses of women, actively into the important 1950 elections, and, as an important task in the struggle for peace, to expose the Truman demagoguery. Large masses of women can be brought into the third party movement, thus speeding its growth into a genuine, people's, anti-monopoly, anti-war movement, based upon the working class.

Let the keynote of these celebrations be: Hail International Women's Day, the Day of Unity of the Forces of American Women for Peace, Democracy and Social Progress!

to dig an abyss of hate between us. Expose their lies! We love our children as you love yours and desire their happiness as you do. That is why nothing will tear from our hearts the burning love of liberty and independence.

Women of the United States, Britain, France and Holland! We appeal to you. Ours is a bitter struggle. Strengthen your solidarity with us. Do not allow them to make our sons kill each other.

Stop all colonial wars. Insist that your governments withdrew their troops from Viet-Nam, Indonesia, Malaya and Korea. Oppose with all your might the intervention of your governments in the life of Asia. Support all proposals made at UNO in favor of popular independence. Insist on the reduction of armaments and military appropriations, and the outlawing of the atom bomb. Intensify the struggle for real democracy in your countries. Each victory you win over imperialism is also a victory for us.

Long live the unity of the women of the whole world!