March 8 is International Women's Day

Women's Demands

The international working class are to-day confronted with the gigantic task of combatting the vicious capitalist offensive that marks the rapid decline of world capitalism. In every capitalist country the world crisis is taking its toll of millions of working lives. The vilifying away of formal living standards, a vast army of unemployed, an intense speeding up and increased exploitation of the workers within industry, have raised the class struggle to an unprecedented pitch. Under drive, the workers lots a more solidly organized bloc than ever before has developed their determination, courage and initiative to an unparalleled degree.

At the same time the crisis has clarified the position of the former social-reformists, has exposed their true role as agents of Capitalism, has revealed their treachery and shown indisputably that the camp of the capitalists is their choice, their headquarters. The position in Germany is no different from elsewhere—the triple alliance of capitalists, governments and social democrats, every ready shoulder to shoulder against the rising tide of militancy of our class that is slowly overcoming itself in new forms of organisation, new tactics of struggle.

Every treacherous scheme for dividing the forces of the working class for crippling the revolutionary leadership, for sidetracking the struggle and hamstringing militant action, is being put forward by the "leaders" of Labor. International Women's Day, the day of the women of our class the world over, is the means of dealing a mighty blow against Capitalism and its agents.

The bonds of unity between the women and men workers of our class must be strengthened and extended. The drawing into the working class movement of the thousands of women workers, who are in this period of declining Capitalism being more ruthlessly exploited than their men comrades, is the daily task of the revolutionary movement, and the organisation of successful demonstrations, meetings, and campaigns on International Women's Day is a vital step towards the accomplishment of this task.

Not only the growing proportion of women workers (where in industry, too, also the tremendously important role of women in time of war, makes the task of the militant Revolutionary organising the ranks of the working women upon militant class lines a task that can brook no delay.

The significant development towards socialist economy in the Soviet Union taking place in a period of rapidly declining world capitalism, is causing the Imperialist war-mongers to turn with increasing vigor to an attack upon the U.S.S.R. Never was the Soviet Fatherland in such need of the support of the International working class—support that was given in a splendid spirit of determination and self-sacrifice in 1919 by the army, and without which there would not have been and cannot be a successful World October.

The internationalism of the class struggle, and of the struggle against the disintegrating capitalist economy against the developing Soviet Union, places for women in particular upon the self-sacrifice and courage of the International working class than ever before. The support of the masses of women workers has yet to be won for the Soviet Union—it must be won if the machinations of Imperialism are to be smashed once and for all. International Women's Day 1931 shall be provide a mighty women against Imperialism's most capitalist country of the world, where the women workers are rallied behind the revolutionary banners of the revolutionary movement, where the women workers are drawn into active participation and into the leadership of the struggle of our class against Capitalism and against its agents.

Women workers of Australia! Forward to International Women's Day! Forward into the fight against the offensive of Capitalism! Forward to the emancipation of our class!

Rally to the banners of the Communist Party, that organises and leads our class against the forces of Capitalism that would thrust upon our shoulders the burdens of declining Capitalism and the world crisis.

Organise and struggle—

For the seven hour day and the five-day week!

For equal pay for equal work.

For full social insurance!

For unemployed relief on the basis of £2 per week for unemployed women workers, to be obtained from taxes upon industry and administered by women's committees!

For free meals in the schools for our children!

Against further wage cuts and slashing of our conditions!

Against war on the Soviet Union!

Against war on the rising revolutionary masses in the colonial countries!

Against Capitalism!

It's History

On March 8th, 1931, we celebrate the 21st anniversary of a day whose history is a index of the development of the Labor Movement.

International Women's Day had its origin in the early movement in Europe primarily as an agitation for votes for women—universal suffrage.

In 1891 the German Social Democratic Party (in those days a party well in the vanguard of the working class movement) for the first time included the demand for votes for women—all women—in its program.

The demand was not at yet made an clear-cut working-class lines. It was believed that it was better to have the matter as a woman's matter in which women of the bourgeoisie were then able to take a part.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

In 1907 a first international conference was held at Stuttgart and there the question was fully discussed and with no final decision was reached as to whether the movement should be merely for the vote or to organise women of the working class for the class struggle.

But by 1910 the new tendency had crystallised. Women were to use a strong weapon in their trade unions and in industry. Also, the conflict and ideas of the middle-class women made the proletarian women realise that they were merely being used in turn for the personal ambitions of women of the bourgeoisie.

So, at the Copenhagen Conference, in 1910, a split was reached, the feminists going in with their agitation for merely a vote in the bourgeois parliamentary, and the others under the leadership of Clara Zetkin, declaring for the militant organisation of women of the working class.

The demand for universal suffrage was not dropped, but considered alone working class lines, and a resolution was carried that each year on 8th March working women should demonstrate to show the ever increasing numbers of the army to oppose Capitalism.

On 8th March, 1911, brilliant demonstrations were held in Germany. The movement, freed from the bourgeoisie, women, began in tremendous leaps.

When the Social Democratic Movement, with its banal reading of the active struggle, decided to hold May Day and International Women's Day on the same day—that day to be a holiday.

This took the spirit out of the thing and results went down at once and the Social Democrats thought themselves justified in dropping it altogether.

Then came the war, which completely scattered these people as and working class.

And, apparently, the only activity which went on from the old Women's Movement was that of the rich women of the vote.

But the working class, recovering from the blow dealt it by traitorous leaders, rallies again to the struggle, strikes were now the order, and once more on 8th March, the working class and women, celebrating International Women's Day, remember the words of Clara Zetkin to the bourgeoisie at the Copenhagen Conference:

"Even with a vote, we, as workers, can never be free under Capitalism."

International Women's Day: Our Task

The 8th March is International Women's Day, when women of the working class the world over demonstrate in their ever increasing numbers against Capitalism.

Why do we celebrate International Women's Day? We have only to look back over the past year in Australia, at the demonstrations of the unemployed workers, at the strikes and lockouts, to realise that women are taking their place in the fighting line of their class.

Women, brought closer to production now than ever, are making up to the same factors that have drawn men into the revolutionary movement.

Not one single, the proportion of women in each and of unskilled or skilled women workers is necessary, which means that the income of the working class family is falling.

Also, their wages are now often the only wage that the family receives. Once the wage is the standard of living of the male, it now represents a tremendous fall in the standard of living of the worker.

Here men as well as women workers can realise the importance of the Communist Party's slogan for "Equal Pay for Equal Work."

Then, again, the fact that almost every factory and workshop of the present time is cutting down its employees, due to the intensification of the struggle between rival concerns. This means that unemployment and want are the lot of thousands of workers.

Even when a woman is "lucky" enough to get work, the rate at which she hoes exploits her, the bad labor conditions (for the boss rates nothing for our health or safety), the insecurity, all awaken the spirit of revolt, and bring home to the woman worker that her class has nothing to lose but its chains.

BUILDING SOCIALISM IN RUSSIA

And what have the women workers now as a result of the revolution in Soviet Russia?

There she took her place with the men in overthrowing Czarism and Social Democracy and in establishing a workers' rule under the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets."

The first act of the Revolution was to give women equal rights and equal pay with the men, special rates and concessions during childbirth, and in return, called on the women to help in building Socialism on an equal footing with men.

OUR TASKS

Here, in Australia, the unemployed women, the wives of the miners in the New South Wales coalfields, the wives of men who have been thrown out of work, and who have to scrape along on starvation wages, the women working in industry on a wage which allows for no pleasures, or care in sickness, surely there is nothing they can find to uphold the conditions which the workers of Russia have overthrown, nothing with no paralise class to support to idle luxury, are paradise indeed.

But such a system is possible, not for us, but only possible for our class, men and women together, organise to fight for it.

And looking at crisis during the past year, there is no doubt women are coming more and more into the fight, and showing a wonderful determination to fight against the present damnable conditions.

And it is our task to see that this energy and determination is not wasted and discouraged, but directed along lines which will bring ultimate victory to our class.

OUR SLOGANS ARE—

"For a united front of all workers, men and women, housewives, unemployed and agricultural workers, employed and unemployed, organised and unorganised, youth or adult workers, against the attack of the