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BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

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I. During the period in question, events of paramount importance took place in the lives of the Soviet people which clearly demonstrated the indisputable truth that in the Soviet Union as a whole and in each Soviet republic steady progress is being made in the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

In April 1970, the peoples of the Soviet Union and all progressive mankind solemnly observed the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, under whose leadership the corner-stones of a new social structure were laid and the plan for the building of socialism began to be implemented. V. I. Lenin was the inspiration behind the foundation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In March-April 1971, the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which became an event of world-wide significance, was held in Moscow. The Congress approved the guidelines for the five-year plan for the economic development of the USSR for the period 1971-1975. The main task of the ninth five-year plan consists in ensuring a significant increase in the material and cultural living standard of the people on the basis of high rates of development of socialist production, enhanced efficiency, scientific and technical progress, and accelerated growth in the productivity of labour.

December 1972 marked 50 years since the foundation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. As the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, L. I. Brezhnev, noted on 21 December 1972 in his report on the occasion of that anniversary, the main result of the fraternal co-operation among the peoples united in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has been the construction in the USSR of the first developed socialist society in the history of mankind.

In a report "On the fiftieth anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" of 15 December 1972, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia, P. M. Masherov, emphasized that:

"All the vast economic power of advanced socialism has been placed at the service of society and directed towards the improvement of standards of living and the improvement of standards of living and the creation of the most favourable conditions for all-round development of the capacities and creativity of the Soviet people. No other system has done or could do as much for mankind and in the name of mankind as socialist society has done. For the first time in history, social production is not a means of profit-making by the parasitic classes, but a means of ensuring the fullest possible satisfaction of the needs of the working people. For the first time in history, labour has become the basis and the main criterion for the individual's social prestige and status in society".

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The experience of the Byelorussian SSR shows that in conditions where radical economic and social reforms have been implemented and where the predominance of private ownership and the exploitation of man by man have been abolished, it is possible to overcome centuries-old backwardness rapidly and to ensure progress in achieving the most important economic, social and cultural reforms.

The Twenty-seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Byelorussia, which took place in February 1971, noted, in a resolution which it adopted, that during the period of the eighth five-year plan (1966-1970), major successes had been achieved in developing the economy and raising the level of material well-being and culture of the workers. The Congress unanimously approved and warmly supported the draft guidelines of the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for the five-year plan for the development of the national economy of the USSR for the period 1971-1975.

In December 1971, the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR adopted the Act on the State Plan for the development of the national economy of the Byelorussian SSR for the period 1971-1975.

During the first three years of the current, ninth, five-year plan, significant progress has been achieved in the development of the economy, of science and of culture in the Republic, and the programme for raising the level of well-being of the people has been consistently implemented.

In Byelorussia, the volume of industrial production increased by 35.1 per cent during the years 1971-1973. The annual average output of agricultural production during that period increased on an average by 12.7 per cent. The national income rose by 27.7 per cent.

During the period 1969-1973, a number of important legislative enactments were adopted in the Byelorussian SSR, many of which concern social relations, the well-being and health protection of the population, the strengthening of the family and the protection of the environment. Of these, mention must be made of the Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR (1972), the Code on Marriage and the Family of the Byelorussian SSR (1969), the Land Code of the Byelorussian SSR (1970), the Water Code of the Byelorussian SSR (1972), the Law of the Byelorussian SSR on Public Health (1970), the decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR "On the present state and further improvement of mass cultural work among the population" (1973) and others.

Socio-economic, socio-political, cultural and other rights are embodied in the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Byelorussian SSR, adopted in 1937, in the Codes and in other legislative enactments. The most important feature of such legislative enactments lies in the fact that the socialist State not only proclaims, but also guarantees to all citizens, the protection and realization of those rights.

II. The Byelorussian SSR has taken and still takes an active part in the elaboration in the United Nations and in other organizations of effective international instruments aimed at ensuring the realization and protection of fundamental human rights, and it is a party to many such instruments.

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In particular, the Byelorussian SSR was one of the first to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which entered into force with respect to the Byelorussian SSR on 8 May 1969.

Byelorussia was one of the sponsors of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its twenty-fourth session designating 1971 as International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, and it supported the programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination for the years 1973 to 1983.

In October 1973, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. At the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1973, on the initiative of the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR, an amendment was adopted to the draft resolution on the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in which States which had not yet done so were invited to ratify the international instruments concluded in the field of human rights, in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

It should be noted that the provisions of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR and of all other legislative enactments in force in the Republic go much further than the provisions of the international instruments adopted in the United Nations.

III. Presented below are specific details concerning the realization of economic, social and cultural rights by the citizens of the Byelorussian SSR.

A. Article 93 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR establishes that "citizens of the Byelorussian SSR have the right to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality. The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment".

In the Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR, great attention is paid to strengthening the legal guarantees of constitutional labour law. Article 2 states that "manual and non-manual workers shall exercise their right to employment by signing a contract of employment at an enterprise, institution or organization".

The Code categorically prohibits unjustified refusal to give employment as well as any direct or indirect limitation of rights or the giving of direct or indirect privileges in admitting a worker to employment, on the basis of sex, race, nationality, or attitude towards religion (article 16).

With regard to individual categories of citizens, whose placing in employment requires special attention on the part of society, the Code provides additional legal guarantees of their exercise of the right to work. Thus, according to

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article 170, "it is unlawful to refuse to employ a woman or to reduce her remuneration on account of her pregnancy or the fact that she is breast-feeding an infant". The same article makes it unlawful for the management to dismiss a pregnant woman, nursing mother or a mother of children under one year of age, except in the case of total liquidation of the institution, enterprise or organization, in which case dismissal is permitted, but with the obligation to find alternative employment.

The Code also provides special legal guarantees of the exercise of the right to work by young persons. In particular, district and town Soviets of Working People's Deputies approve plans for the placement in employment of young persons who have completed their general education, and ensure that those plans are implemented by all enterprises, institutions and organizations (article 183). A quota of posts is established for all enterprises, institutions and organizations for the employment and industrial training of young persons (article 182); young workers who have completed their training at vocational schools and young persons who have been trained in special skills are provided with employment in keeping with the skills and training they have acquired (article 184).

One of the legal guarantees of respect for the right to work is provided in article 35 of the Code, which states: "Annulment of a contract of employment on the initiative of the management of an enterprise, institution or organization is prohibited without the prior consent of the factory, works or local committee, except in cases provided for by USSR legislation". Breach of a contract of employment in violation of the terms of that article is unlawful and the worker thus discharged must be reinstated in his post.

Manual and non-manual workers discharged on the initiative of the management, even with the consent of the trade union committee, have the right to apply to the People's Courts within one month following the date on which notice of dismissal is served (article 215).

In the Byelorussian SSR there is no unemployment. Planned management and high rates of economic development ensure full employment for the able-bodied population. On 1 January 1974, the population of the Republic was 9.3 million. In 1973, the number of manual and non-manual workers amounted to approximately 3.4 million and increased by 3 per cent over the year. The number of collective farm workers engaged in communal production in the collective farms was approximately 1 million.

Free choice of the type of employment is guaranteed by the large-scale vocational guidance offered to young people and by free specialized and vocational technical training. Among the fundamental labour rights enjoyed by manual and non-manual workers, the Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR includes, inter alia, the right to free occupational and advanced training (article 2). A special chapter of the Code is devoted to the most important guarantees of the exercise of that right; in that chapter are listed the privileges granted to manual and non-manual workers who combine work with study: they are entitled to a shorter working week or shorter daily hours of work, while drawing their normal statutory pay (articles 192, 193, 200); they are granted special paid leave in connexion with their studies, in accordance with the established procedure (articles 194, 197,

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198, 201-203); they receive partial payment of travel expenses to and from the educational establishment (article 204); it is unlawful for manual and non-manual workers to be employed on overtime work on days on which they are engaged in part-time study in schools providing general education or in vocational and technical schools (article 196); workers directed into advanced part-time training are entitled to retain their posts and to receive the remuneration established by legislation (article 112).

This chapter also sets out the basic obligations of the management regarding the organization of training (articles 187 and 188), the utilization of workers who have completed their training in keeping with the qualifications they have obtained and the degree of skill they have acquired (article 189), and the establishment of the necessary conditions to enable workers to combine work with study (article 190).

In 1973, there was extensive training and advanced training of manual and non-manual workers and collective farm workers. Vocational and technical training schools trained 63,700 young skilled workers. By means of individual, group and class instruction in enterprises, institutions and organizations and in collective farms, 720,000 people were trained in new occupations and improved their skills.

In the Byelorussian SSR a great deal of attention is paid to questions of ensuring just and favourable conditions of work for manual and non-manual workers and the strict observance of industrial health and safety standards. In this connexion, legislation places on the management of enterprises, institutions and organizations an obligation to introduce modern safety techniques to prevent industrial accidents and occupational diseases (article 139 of the Labour Code). It also specifies the need for strict observance of industrial safety standards in the design and construction of factories, plant and equipment. It is unlawful to bring an enterprise into operation or to put a new model machine into series production unless it meets industrial safety standards (articles 140-142).

The Code requires the management to work out appropriate safety rules and instructions, to train and instruct manual and non-manual workers in the industrial safety rules, and, jointly with representatives of the trade union committees and, in cases specified by legislation, with the participation of representatives of other organs, to carry out at the proper time an investigation into industrial accidents and to report on them, to take the necessary measures to prevent such accidents, and to allot and expend in a proper manner the material and financial resources allocated to industrial safety (articles 143-148).

Legislation provides for a broad system of measures to neutralize unhealthy conditions of work: additional leave, the distribution of free milk and special foods to prevent and cure disease, and the issue of special clothing, special footwear and other protective gear (articles 68, 149, 150, 151). Provision is also made for the full material liability of the enterprise, institution or organization for any prejudice caused to the health of manual and non-manual workers (article 159).

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In the Republic, systematic control is exercised (with the participation of the trade unions) over the observance of labour legislation and working conditions.

Manual and non-manual workers in the Byelorussian SSR are ensured just remuneration for their work and equal pay for equal work. The Labour Code guarantees remuneration for work according to quantity and quality and prohibits any reduction in the rates of remuneration on account of sex, age, race or nationality (article 77). The monthly earnings may not be lower than the minimum rate fixed by the State (article 78).

The average monthly earnings of manual and non-manual workers in the Byelorussian SSR in 1973 increased by 3.7 per cent by comparison with 1972. The remuneration of collective farm workers increased by 6.4 per cent. Payments and benefits received by the population from the social consumption funds amounted to 2,600 million roubles, or 6.5 per cent more than in 1972. The real per capita income rose by 5 per cent over the year.

During the eighth five-year plan (1966-1970), the earnings of almost 1.5 million people increased. During the period of the ninth five-year plan, it is envisaged that the average earnings of manual and non-manual workers will increase by 24 per cent, and the remuneration of collective farm workers by 40 per cent.

The Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR further develops the rights of workers to leisure and to the limitation of the length of the working day and working week. The normal hours of work may not exceed 41 a week. A shorter working week is stipulated as certain economic and other conditions are established (article 42). For a number of categories of manual and non-manual workers, a reduced working week of 36 or 24 hours has been introduced (articles 43-45).

An important feature of the Code is the reduction of the hours of work on the night shift by one hour and the extension of the range of persons who may not be employed on night work (article 48). The right of the administration to establish part-time working hours at the request of manual and non-manual workers has been considerably expanded. This does not involve any reduction in the length of annual leave, the calculation of length of service and other labour rights (article 49).

The Code categorically prohibits the assignment of manual and non-manual workers to work two consecutive shifts (article 51) and strengthens the legislative restrictions on over-time work (articles 54-56). Such work is prohibited as a general rule and is allowed only in exceptional cases provided for in the Labour Code, and then only with the consent of the trade union.

For the overwhelming majority of workers, a five-day working week has been established with two rest days (article 58).

All manual and non-manual workers are granted annual leave of at least 15 days (article 67). A number of categories of workers are granted additional leave amounting to 24 to 48 days.

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In accordance with the Constitution, the Code guarantees the right to associate to form trade unions, which act in conformity with the rules and statutes they themselves adopt and are not obliged to be registered with State organs (article 228). The trade unions represent the interests of manual and non-manual workers in the field of production, labour, welfare, living conditions and culture; they participate in drawing up and implementing the State economic development plans and in the solution of questions bearing on the distribution and utilization of material and financial resources; they enlist manual and non-manual workers in the management of production and organize socialist competition and mass technical development efforts; they exercise supervision and control over the observance of labour legislation and industrial safety regulations, control the housing and welfare services provided for manual and non-manual workers, and administer the State social security system and the sanatoria, prophylactic institutions and rest homes for which they are responsible as well as cultural and educational, tourist and sports establishments; and they have the right to submit draft legislation (article 229).

In order to discharge these tasks and exercise control over the execution of collective agreements, representatives of trade union organs are entitled to visit and inspect without hindrance places of work in enterprises and organizations; to request relevant information, explanations and documents from the administration; and to check the work of enterprises engaged in trade and public catering, polyclinics, kindergartens and day nurseries, hostels and other enterprises providing consumer services (article 234).

To enable work in the cultural, educational, health, physical culture and sports fields to be carried out among manual and non-manual workers, the Code provides that buildings, premises, installations, gardens and parks at the disposal of enterprises, institutions or organizations should be made available for the use of trade unions free of charge (article 237).

For manual or non-manual workers who are elected to a works, factory, local or shop committee and are not released from their employment in production, the Code provides additional guarantees. They may not be transferred to another post or have any disciplinary sanction imposed on them without the prior consent of the trade union organs (article 238).

Manual and non-manual workers have the right to participate in the management of production. This right is exercised by the workers through the trade unions and other public organizations, the organs of popular control, general meetings, production committees, conferences and various other forms of collective independent action by manual and non-manual workers (articles 230 and 231).

In the Byelorussian SSR, more than 3.7 million people were members of trade unions in 1973.

In the Republic, almost 150,000 workers are members of permanently operating production committees and tens of thousands are members of societies of rationalizers and inventors and of scientific and technical societies.

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In the Byelorussian SSR, there are more than 180 innovators' councils. Approximately 100,000 manual and non-manual workers participate in the work of public design and technology bureaux, economic analysis bureaux and groups, technical standards bureaux, and so on.

B. In accordance with article 95 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR, citizens of the Republic have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or disability. This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance for manual and non-manual workers at the expense of the State, by free medical service for the working people and by the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

Accordingly, all manual and non-manual workers, as well as members of collective farms, are covered by compulsory State social security which is provided at the expense of the State. Social security contributions are paid by enterprises, institutions, organizations and collective farms without any deduction from the remuneration of manual and non-manual workers. If an enterprise fails to pay the contributions the workers are not thereby deprived of the right to State social security coverage (articles 239 and 240).

In the Byelorussian SSR workers are provided with the following types of State social security benefits:

1. Temporary disability allowances and, additionally, in the case of women, maternity allowances;
2. Birth grants and burial grants;
3. Old-age and disability pensions; pensions for loss of breadwinner, and length-of-service pensions in the case of certain categories of workers.

State social security funds are also used to defray the costs of treatment at sanatoria and health resorts, services rendered to workers at prophylactic institutions and rest homes, prescribed (dietary) foods and the maintenance of Pioneer camps and the like (article 241 of the Code).

Temporary disability allowances are paid in the event of sickness or injury, temporary transfer to another post as a result of sickness, where a worker has to take care of a sick member of the family, in the event of quarantine, treatment at a sanatorium or health resort and the fitting of a prosthetic appliance; these allowances may amount to the full earnings of the worker concerned. In the case of sickness or injury, allowances are paid until ability to work has been restored or the disability is declared to be permanent (article 242).

Maternity allowances are paid for the entire period of maternity leave (56 calendar days preceding and 56 days following the birth of the child) at the full rate of remuneration.

Old-age pensions are awarded to men attaining the age of 60 years with not less than 25 years' service and to women attaining the age of 55 years with not less

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than 20 years' service. For several categories of manual and non-manual workers employed in arduous work or in places with difficult climatic conditions, the pensionable age is reduced by a further 10 years in the case of men, and 5 years in the case of women. The pensionable age for women (with not less than 15 years' service) who have had five or more children and have reared them until the age of eight is reduced by 10 years.

Disability pensions are awarded as a result of an industrial accident, occupational disease or ordinary disease, taking into account the length of service and the seriousness of the injury or disease.

Pensions for loss of breadwinner are awarded to members of the family who are unable to work and who were dependent upon the breadwinner for maintenance.

Social security for collective farmers is provided in accordance with the Act on pensions and allowances for members of collective farms which covers old-age and disability pensions, pensions for loss of breadwinner, and maternity allowances. In accordance with this Act, a centralized social security fund for collective farmers has been established, financed by deductions from the earnings of collective farms and yearly appropriations under the State budget.

During the period 1969 to 1973 measures were adopted to improve pension coverage for workers. For example, the minimum old-age pensions for manual and non-manual workers and for members of collective farms were significantly increased as of 1 July 1971. Disability pensions for members of collective farms and the families of collective farmers were also increased. An important step forward was the extension to members of collective farms of the procedure for the calculation of pensions which is in effect for manual and non-manual workers. In practice, the pension coverage for collective farmers fully corresponds to the pension coverage for manual and non-manual workers. Thus a major social problem has been resolved in the interests of the working people, by the establishment of a unified system of social security. As a result of these measures, the pensions of nearly 900,000 pensioners in Byelorussia have increased.

In November 1973 decisions were taken that provided for a further increase in pensions for disabled persons and families which have lost their breadwinner.

Concern for the disabled and for old-age pensioners is not limited to providing them with pension benefits. Great importance is attached to the problems of employing their labour rationally. In September 1973 consideration was given to the question of further improving the use of the labour of old-age pensioners and disabled persons in the national economy. Important measures were outlined to provide further incentives for the employment of this category of the population and additional benefits (such as a shortened working day, extended annual leave, lower output standards, and so forth) were provided in this connexion for disabled persons working at enterprises, workshops and sections created especially for them.

At the beginning of 1974 there were 1,700,000 pensioners in Byelorussia. In addition to the pensions which they receive under the social security system, all pensioners have the benefit of additional and constantly increasing income from

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the consumption fund. Among the benefits provided are: free medical services, education, child-care benefits at pre-school establishments, treatment at sanatoria and health resorts, subsidized medication for the war disabled, reduced fares on public transport, provision of means of conveyance free of charge and other benefits. War disabled persons in groups I and II were exempted from paying income tax on all income received by them, including wages, as from 1 January 1972.

In the Byelorussian Republic, 76 residential homes have been opened to cater for persons requiring continuing care because of their state of health; some 16,000 persons are fully cared for by the State in these facilities.

C. The successful fulfilment of the eighth five-year plan and of the first three years of the current ninth five-year plan has laid a firm foundation for continued growth in the welfare of Soviet citizens. Measures to ensure growth in the incomes and consumption of the population and to narrow the gap between the levels of living of various groups of workers are being strictly implemented. The standard of living of the people is rising in various ways - higher wages accompanied by increased payments and benefits from social consumption funds, a scientifically-based policy of retail prices, expansion of housing construction, a higher level of social, cultural and household services to the population, etc.

The achievements in the field of social development are reflected first and foremost in the growth of national income. In 1970 the national income of Byelorussia was nearly 10 thousand million roubles, exceeding the level of 1965 by more than 150 per cent. More than two thirds of the national income is spent for personal consumption.

As was pointed out earlier, during the period 1971-1973 the national income rose by a further 27.7 per cent, exceeding the plan targets.

The basic source of income for the working people and the most important factor in improving their material well-being is the distribution of the national income. In the period 1971-1975 it is planned to devote three quarters of the entire growth in real income to increasing the remuneration of labour.

In the eighth five-year plan the minimum wages of manual and non-manual workers were increased. The remuneration of middle-income workers employed, in construction and at building materials enterprises rose, and the tariff rates for machine operators were increased. All told, nearly one and a half million persons in the Republic received an appreciable increase in earnings as a result of a direct rise in wages.

During the first two and a half years of the ninth five-year plan, important measures have been carried out. The minimum wage has risen and the wage and salary rates for middle-income manual and non-manual workers in railway transport have been increased; the tariff rates of tractor operators on State farms and other State agricultural enterprises have gone up; the earnings of doctors, teachers and child-care personnel in pre-school establishments have risen; the minimum old-age pension benefits for manual and non-manual workers have increased and the pension benefits

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for collective farmers have been improved. Grants for students at higher educational establishments have increased by 25 per cent and for students at tekhnikums, by 50 per cent

Social consumption funds account for a growing proportion of income and are of great importance in increasing the standard of living of the population. Free education, including higher education, free medical care, allowances, pensions, free and subsidized travel to sanatoria and rest homes and other social benefits substantially enhance the standard of living of the population. Moreover, these fringe benefits are constantly growing. Per capita payments and benefits from social consumption funds increased from 24 roubles in 1940 to 223 roubles in 1970 and 295 roubles in 1972. By 1975 they will amount, on the average, to 353 roubles.

Real income is also increasing as a result of tax cuts or exemptions in respect of the wages of manual and non-manual workers, as a result of the stability of State retail prices for consumer goods and lowered prices for certain types of goods.

The structure of consumption is also improving each year, with the proportion of foodstuffs high in nutritional value increasing and with the constantly improved quality of manufactured goods. During the period 1966-1970, sales of meat and meat products increased by 180 per cent, milk and milk products by 170 per cent, eggs by 200 per cent and vegetables and fruits by more than 150 per cent. In 1970 the population bought 180 per cent more textiles, clothing and knitted goods, 170 per cent more footwear, 370 per cent more refrigerators, and 180 per cent more television sets than in 1965.

During the ninth five-year plan, a further improvement will be registered in the structure of food intake by the population as a result of increased production and consumption of meat, milk, eggs, vegetables and fruits. There will be a significant rise in the sale of textiles, clothing, footwear and knitwear, as well as furniture, refrigerators, television sets, cars and other goods.

Considerable attention is being given to housing construction. In the Byelorussian SSR each year from 1966 to 1970 more than 80,000 new apartments were brought into occupancy using funds from the State, collective farms and the population. During this period some 2 million persons improved their housing.

In the years 1971 to 1973 more than 13 million square metres of living space were constructed. At the present time every year more than 400,000 persons in the Republic (in 1973 the figure was 449,000) move to new accommodations or improve their housing.

By 1975, 23 million square metres of living space will be constructed in Byelorussia, using all sources of financing. Approximately one person in four will move to a new dwelling.

In the Byelorussian SSR great care is taken to protect and improve the human environment.

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The State Committee on Nature Conservation of the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR, which has been in existence since 1960, exercises interdepartmental control on behalf of the State to ensure that environmental protection legislation is observed by enterprises, organizations, ministries and departments. Control is exercised at the stage of selecting building sites for new enterprises, at the stage of designing installations and while such installations are in operation. Soviet legislation makes it unlawful to bring into operation new enterprises or reconstructed units which do not meet the requirements that provision be made for effective purification, the trapping of noxious substances and the treatment of aqueous and gaseous wastes so as to render them harmless. In 1970, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR enacted a decree entitled "Increased criminal responsibility for water and air pollution" which provides incentives for the management of enterprises already in operation to install purification equipment.

In the Republic work is proceeding according to plan to protect the air basin, in particular the layer of air at ground level in large towns, from pollution by the industrial wastes of enterprises and by vehicular exhaust gases. As a result of the centralization of the heat supply system, a large number of small-capacity boilers has been eliminated. Many enterprises have switched over from solid to liquid fuels and to natural gas. Filtering devices have been installed at plants which give off harmful wastes. For the same purposes and in order to reduce noise in large towns, bypasses have been constructed, and inspections to ensure that automobiles are in proper working order have been intensified everywhere.

In December 1970 the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic adopted an Act confirming the Land Code of the Byelorussian SSR which states, inter alia, that a scientifically-based and rational utilization of all land, its conservation and a maximum increase in soil fertility are the goals of the whole people. The Land Code plays an important role in limiting the diversion of lands to non-agricultural uses and in ensuring fuller utilization of agricultural lands.

In July 1971, the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR considered the question of "Measures to increase soil fertility and to improve land utilization" and adopted a decision on that subject. In the Republic, measures have been devised to combat water and wind erosion of soils until 1980. A comprehensive scheme for the utilization of land resources until 1990 is being prepared.

In December 1972, the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR adopted an Act confirming the Water Code of the Byelorussian SSR. The purposes of water legislation in the Byelorussian SSR are to regulate the management of water resources in order to ensure their rational utilization for the needs of the population and the economy and protect them from pollution, contamination and depletion, prevent and eliminate water hazards, and improve the condition of water facilities. The Code entered into force on 1 July 1973.

In April 1973, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia and the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR adopted a decision on

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"Strengthening nature conservation and improving the utilization of natural resources". The decision defines the purposes, responsibilities and functions of ministries and departments which utilize natural resources regarding environmental protection, and also those of the State Committee on Nature Conservation of the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR in exercising interdepartmental control over the implementation of directives regarding the environment. The most important provisions of this decision are as follows: with effect from 1974, economic development plans will provide for measures to prevent water and air pollution and to ensure the rehabilitation (recultivation) of land disturbed by exploitation, as well as a series of measures for the rational utilization of natural resources; technological processes will be improved with a view to minimizing solid wastes resulting from production operations, reducing the consumption of fresh water in production processes through the introduction of recycling systems and preventing future water and soil pollution by unpurified, untreated waste water; certain enterprises will be moved from towns where it is not feasible to bring about any substantial reduction in the volume of harmful wastes which they release into the atmosphere. Steps will be taken to rebuild existing, and install new, gas and dust traps at enterprises which are already in operation in order to eliminate the high level of air pollution in Minsk, in regional towns, and in other industrial centres of the Republic; in 1974 the Academy of Sciences of the Byelorussian SSR and other scientific institutions will complete the preparation of a scientific and technical study of possible future changes in the biosphere resulting from the development of economic sectors over the next 20 to 30 years, which will outline measures to minimize the adverse effects of economic activities on the natural environment.

At the Academy of Sciences of the Byelorussian SSR, the V. I. Lenin Byelorussian State University, and sectoral scientific research institutions of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Irrigation, Drainage and Water Management, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, scientific research is being conducted into the complex problem of the Protection of the biosphere and the improvement of the environment. This research is being co-ordinated by the Scientific Council on the Problems of the Biosphere of the Academy of Sciences of the Byelorussian SSR.

Knowledge of the environment and an awareness of the need to protect it from possible sources of pollution are constantly spreading at all levels of education and among all workers. Extensive publicity efforts are being made by the Byelorussian Society for Nature Conservation, which currently has 2.3 million members or one quarter of the entire population of the Republic.

Local Soviets of Working Peoples' Deputies and their Standing Commissions of Deputies on the Conservation of Nature show great concern for the protection of the natural environment. They ensure that officials comply with decisions on matters concerning the improvement of the environment and the rational utilization of natural resources.

The work carried out in the Republic, as well as the legislative instruments adopted, reflect the constant concern of Soviet society for the creation of the most favourable conditions for the life and health and for the welfare of the working people at work and at leisure.

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D. The Act of the Byelorussian SSR on Public Health defines the aims and purposes of the system of protection of the health of the population as follows: to ensure a harmonious development of citizens' physical and spiritual strength, their health, and a high level of fitness for work and long active life; the prevention and reduction of morbidity and further reduction in infirmities and lowering of mortality; and the removal of factors and conditions which have a harmful effect on the health of citizens (article 1 of the Act).

The Act emphasizes that "the protection of the health of the population shall be an obligation of all State agencies, undertakings, institutions and organizations" (article 3). Article 5 establishes the fundamental principles of Soviet health protection: all citizens are entitled to free, professional medical care, provided by State health institutions and accessible to all.

The Act envisages (article 6) specific measures designed to protect the health of the population: carrying out extensive health-improvement and prophylactic measures, particular attention paid to the health of the younger generation; the creation of the appropriate sanitary and hygienic conditions in industry and everyday life, and the elimination of causes of industrial accidents and occupational diseases and of other factors having an adverse effect on health; carrying out measures designed to improve environmental hygiene and to ensure the sanitary protection of bodies of water, the soil, and the atmosphere; the planned development of a network of health institutions and medical industry undertakings; satisfying the needs of the population for all forms of medical care, free of charge; improving the quality and standards of medical care; a gradual extension of the system of referral to clinics; and the development of specialized medical services; the free supply of therapeutic and diagnostic products within the framework of in-patient care, with a gradual extension of the free supply of therapeutic products (or their supply on favourable terms) in other forms of medical care; an extension of the network of sanatoria, preventive clinics, rest homes, boarding-houses, tourist establishments and other institutions for the treatment of workers and for their recreation; the physical and hygienic training of citizens, and the development of physical culture and sport on a mass scale; the development of science, the planned conduct of scientific research, and the training of scientific personnel and highly qualified specialists in the health field; the utilization of the achievements of science, technology and medical practice in the activities of health institutions, and the provision of the latter with the latest equipment; the formulation of scientific and hygienic principles for the nutrition of the population; the broad participation of public organizations and of teams of workers in the health protection of the population.

The Act of the Byelorussian SSR on Public Health also deals with other very important questions concerning the health protection of the population, such as: arrangements for the practice of medical and pharmaceutical activities and permission to practise such activities, rights, obligations and privileges of medical and pharmaceutical workers; provision of sanitary and epidemiological service to the population; therapeutic and prophylactic care for the population; protection of motherhood and childhood; treatment at sanatoria and spas, organization of leisure, tourism and physical culture; medical examinations; medicines and prosthetic appliances; and other similar questions.

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In the period from 1966 to 1970, 26 hospitals, 17 polyclinics and 79 pharmacies were built in Byelorussia. During the five-year period, the number of hospital beds increased by 14,000 or 18 per cent, the number of physicians increased from 19,000 to 24,000 and the number of intermediate medical workers increased from 57,000 to 72,000. In 1973 there were over 25,000 physicians and over 75,000 intermediate medical workers in the Byelorussian SSR.

In 1973, there were in all 5,500 public health institutions in the Republic, including over 960 hospitals, about 600 of them in rural areas.

A series of new specialized departments (centres) has recently been organized in hospitals in Minsk, regional centres and large towns. A Republican consultation centre has been set up in order to make highly skilled specialized care more easily accessible to the population.

There is an extensive programme for the prevention and sharp reduction of disease, the elimination of mass sources of infection and the further increase of longevity. These goals are being achieved by widespread prophylaxis and health-improvement measures covering the entire population. In 1972 alone, 6.3 million people were examined for tuberculosis, 4.3 million people were examined for malignant tumours and 2.2 million people were examined for skin diseases.

Each year there is a reduction in morbidity and in general and infant mortality. For example, infant mortality per 1,000 births declined from 19 in 1969 to 16 in 1973.

During the years of Soviet rule, the mean length of life has more than doubled. It now stands at 72 years in Byelorussia.

There are 45 sanatoria and 16 rest homes in the territory of the Republic. Under the ninth five-year plan, there will be a considerable expansion in the network of therapeutic and prophylactic institutions, health-improvement institutions and sanatoria and spas. The number of hospital beds will increase by 12,300. Forty hospitals, 21 polyclinics, and other medical institutions will be constructed. They will be provided with modern equipment and staffed by skilled workers.

Sanitary and epidemiological service is provided to the population of the Byelorussian SSR by the implementation of comprehensive hygienic and epidemiological measures and the system of State public health inspection. It is the obligation of all State agencies, enterprises, institutions and organizations, collective farms, trade unions and other public organizations to take such measures aimed at eliminating and preventing environmental pollution, making the conditions of people's work, everyday life and leisure more healthy and preventing disease. The organs and institutions of the sanitary and epidemiological service which carry out the State public health inspection do a considerable amount of work each day to provide sanitary and epidemiological service to the population of the Republic. This has made it possible considerably to reduce the incidence of infectious, occupational and other diseases.

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E. "The care of the Soviet family, harmoniously combining the interests of society and the personal interests of citizens, is one of the most important duties of the Soviet State", as is emphasized in the Code on Marriage and the Family of the Byelorussian SSR. The best possible conditions have been created in the Republic for strengthening the family and enabling it to prosper.

The Code states that "Men and women have equal personal and property rights in family relations" (article 3). This equality of rights in the family is based on the equality of men and women in all aspects of the government, social, political, economic and cultural life of the country confirmed in the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR (article 97). Article 4 of the Code on Marriage and the Family states "All citizens, irrespective of their nationality, race or attitude towards religion, shall have equal rights in family relations".

Motherhood in the Byelorussian SSR is universally honoured and respected and is protected and encouraged by the State (article 5 of the Code).

The protection of the interests of mothers and children in the Byelorussian SSR is assured through the organization of a wide network of women's and children's consultation centres and polyclinics, maternity homes, sanatoria and rest homes for expectant mothers and mothers with children, crèches, kindergartens and other children's establishments; by the granting of paid maternity leave; by allowing nursing mothers time off during work to enable them to nurse their children; by the payment, in accordance with established procedures, of a grant on the occasion of the birth of a child and of allowances to compensate for absences from work while a sick child is cared for; by prohibiting the employment of women in arduous occupations or occupations dangerous to health, and by transferring pregnant women to easier work without any reduction in their average wage or salary; by the improvement, from the hygienic and other standpoints, of working and living conditions; by the payment of grants to single mothers and mothers with many children; and by other State and public assistance to the family. In addition to maternity leave, a woman may, at her request, be granted additional leave without pay until her child reaches its first birthday. Since 1 December 1973, female manual and non-manual workers, including those who are not trade union members, and female collective-farm workers have been paid a maternity allowance equal to their total wage or salary, regardless of their length of service.

In 1969, there were 537 women's and children's consultation centres; by 1973, the number had risen to 575.

The creation of the necessary social and living conditions enables the women of Soviet Byelorussia to combine motherhood with an increasingly active and creative part in production and in social and political activity. Women account for 36 per cent of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR. At the elections to the local Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Republic held on 17 June 1973, over 80,000 deputies were elected, of whom 46.2 per cent were women. Women accounted (in 1972) for 52 per cent of the manual and non-manual workers in industry in the Republic, 53 per cent of the agricultural workers, 21 per cent of the transportation workers, and 66 per cent of the communications workers. Women

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account for over 80 per cent of all workers in the fields of public health, physical culture and social security, about 50 per cent of all scientific workers and over 70 per cent of all workers concerned with education and culture.

All matters concerning family life and the upbringing of the children are decided jointly by the spouses. Socialist society devotes considerable attention to the protection and encouragement of motherhood and to the creation of the prerequisites for a happy childhood. In Byelorussia, over 3,500 mothers who have borne and raised 10 or more children have the honorific title "Heroine Mother", over 77,000 women have been awarded the order "Maternal Glory" and over 285,000 women have been awarded the "Medal of Motherhood".

The upbringing of the rising generation and the development of its physical and spiritual strength are the most important obligation of the family. The State and society help the family in every possible way in the rearing of children, and the network of kindergartens, crèches, boarding-schools, pioneer camps and other children's institutions is being constantly developed. For example, in 1966-1970 children's pre-school institutions were constructed in 81,000 places. In 1973, about 330,000 children attended full-time pre-school institutions. In the summer of 1973, about 860,000 children and young people spent the summer at pioneer and school camps, children's sanatoria and holiday and tourist centres, or went on summer outings with children's institutions.

It is the goal of the new five-year plan to give Soviet women new opportunities both for child-raising and for greater participation in public life, leisure and studies and for greater access to the benefits of culture. In particular, in 1971-1975 pre-school institutions providing a total of 67,300 places will be constructed in Byelorussia. Enrolment at such institutions will increase 1.3 times.

F. Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal compulsory eight-year education, by the extensive development of secondary general polytechnical education, vocational technical education, secondary specialized education and higher education on the basis of the link between education and life and production, by the development in every possible way of education through evening and correspondence schools, by free education in all types of schools, by a system of State grants, by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, State farms and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people (article 96 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR).

The basic principles governing public education in the Byelorussian SSR and in the other Union Republics are set out in the Fundamentals of the Legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Union Republics concerning public education, adopted in 1973. These principles are the equality of all citizens in obtaining an education, irrespective of race, nationality, sex, religion or property or social status; compulsory education for all children and young people; the governmental and public nature of all educational institutions; freedom to

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choose the language of instruction: instruction in one's native language or in the language of another people of the USSR; free education at all levels, full State support of part of the student population, and provision of stipends and other types of material aid to students; a unified system of public education and continuity of all types of educational institutions which afford an opportunity to proceed from lower to higher levels; unified instruction and communist upbringing; co-operation between the school, the family and the public in the upbringing of children and young people; linking education and upbringing with life; the scientific nature of education and the constant improvement of education on the basis of the latest advances in science, technology and culture; the humanistic character and high moral level of education and upbringing; coeducation; and the secular character of education, which excludes any religious influence (article 4 of the Fundamentals).

The system of public education in the Byelorussian SSR and in the other Union Republics includes: pre-school education (see section E of this report); general secondary education; extra-scholastic education; vocational-technical education; secondary specialized education; higher education.

In conditions of advanced socialism and the scientific and technical revolution, there is a constant rise in the requirements for the educational level of the working people and an enormous increase in the role and significance of the whole system of public education in the training of highly skilled specialists capable of carrying out complex tasks in the all-round development of the national economy, science and culture and of actively participating in the life of the community and the State.

The Soviet system of public education successfully deals with the education and upbringing of the younger generation and the training of skilled workers and specialists for various branches of the national economy.

Byelorussia, where prior to the October Revolution 80 per cent of the population was illiterate, is now a Republic where there is universal literacy. More than three quarters of the employed population in the towns and more than 40 per cent of the rural population now have higher or secondary education. In 1973, one inhabitant of the Republic in three was engaged in some type of education.

General secondary education

During the period 1966-1970, universal compulsory eight-year education was put into effect and secondary education was further developed. Approximately 1.4 million young men and women completed secondary or eight-year schools. More than 84 per cent of those graduating from eight-year day schools in 1970 continued their studies in various educational establishments providing secondary education. Approximately 900 new school buildings were constructed with places for 277,000 pupils.

At the present time, one of the main tasks is being carried out - to involve all young people in various forms of secondary education. The ways of achieving this important goal are laid down in the decisions of the Central Committee of the

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Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Council of Ministers of the USSR concerning completion of the transition to universal secondary education for young people and the further development of the general education school (1972) and measures for the further improvement of the conditions of work of rural general education schools (1973). In 1972, the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR considered the question of the full transition to universal secondary education for young people in the Byelorussian SSR.

Certain definite successes have already been achieved. During the school year 1971/72, 82 per cent of the pupils who had entered the first class 11 years previously were receiving secondary education. During the first three years of the ninth five-year plan, 432,000 young men and women received secondary education. More than 90 per cent of those completing eight-year schools in 1973 continued their studies in secondary schools and other educational establishments providing secondary education.

In 1973, there were 9,380 day schools (primary, eight-year and secondary) in Byelorussia, 371 evening (shift) and 70 correspondence schools, with an enrolment of more than 1.8 million students.

At the present time, in rural areas, the school network is being rationalized and the number of small incomplete schools is being reduced. Thus, during the period 1974-1980, under the state budget alone, there are plans to construct rural schools in Byelorussia for 372,000 pupils; this will make it possible, in general, for each state farm and each major collective farm to have a general secondary school. During this period, boarding houses for 55,800 pupils and 234,000 square metres of living space for teachers will be constructed for rural schools.

During the ninth five-year plan the transition to universal secondary education for young people will be completed in Byelorussia.

Vocational-technical education

During the period 1969-1973, significant work was done in the Republic to develop vocational-technical education. At the present time, 168 educational establishments are in operation, including 48 rural and 89 urban vocational-technical schools and 31 technical schools. The total number of students is more than 102,000. During the period 1969-1973, the network of educational establishments was expanded by 20 schools and the number of students rose by more than 20,000. In 1969, 58,600 students were accepted for training, and in 1973 approximately 76,000. The number of skilled workers who graduated in those years was approximately 55,000 and more than 63,000 respectively.

In 1969, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia and the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR adopted a decision on measures for the further improvement of the training of skilled workers in educational establishments of the system of vocational-technical education of the Byelorussian SSR. This decision provides for the gradual transition of vocational-technical educational establishments to vocational-technical schools with a three- to four-year course of

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instruction for the training of skilled workers with secondary education from among the young people who have completed eight-year general education schools. Such vocational-technical schools are called secondary vocational-technical schools. At the present time, there are 51 secondary vocational-technical schools in the Republic (36 in the towns and 15 in rural areas), in which more than 21,000 students are being trained in 76 trades and occupations. Those who have completed the course in such schools are given a diploma stating that they have acquired a trade or occupation and completed general secondary education.

In 1971, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia and the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR adopted a decision on measures for the further development of vocational-technical education for young people, which set the goal of at least 82 secondary vocational-technical schools in the Republic by 1975.

In 1972, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia and the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR adopted a decision concerning the further improvement of the system of vocational-technical education, which recognized the need to expand and strengthen secondary vocational-technical schools as the best long-term instrument for training the rising generation of the working class; to develop technical schools providing work skills for young people who have completed the secondary general education course; to improve the work of vocational-technical schools offering one- or two-year training courses for future workers in the mass occupations and to establish the necessary conditions for students to continue their general education in evening (shift) schools for working young people. The decision envisages the preparation of a long-term plan for the development of the system of vocational-technical education up to 1980 to ensure that there is a rural vocational-technical school in each rural administrative district.

During the ninth five-year plan, the training of skilled workers in the system of vocational-technical education will be expanded significantly. New schools will be constructed with places for 24,000 students.

Secondary specialized and higher education

Higher and secondary specialized education in Byelorussia is developing at a rapid rate. During the eighth five-year plan, approximately 82,000 people completed the course in higher educational establishments in the Republic and more than 150,000 in secondary specialized schools. In 1973, more than 250,000 specialists with higher education and more than 360,000 with secondary specialized training were employed in the national economy of Byelorussia. During the school year 1973/74, 149,000 students were studying in 30 higher educational establishments and 152,000 in 131 secondary specialized schools.

For each 10,000 of the population of the Republic, there were 158 students in higher educational establishments and 164 in secondary specialized schools, including tekhnikums.

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During the period since 1969, the following new higher educational establishments have been created: Gomel University (1969) and the Mogilev Technological Institute (1973). The Novopolotsky Polytechnical Institute began to function on 1 January 1974. In the very near future, an institute of culture will be established in Minsk. A start has been made on training skilled workers in a whole range of new specializations, such as applied mathematics, the building and production of electronic computer equipment, automated control systems, the organization of mechanized processing of economic information, hydrogeology and engineering geology, multichannel telecommunications, agricultural construction, etc.

During the period 1969-1973, 11 secondary specialized educational establishments were opened in the towns of Borisov, Baranovich, Vitebsk, Grodno, Lida, and Minsk.

The expansion of the network of higher educational establishments and tekhnikums, the introduction of new specializations, and the increase in the enrolment of students in higher and secondary specialized educational establishments, not only make it possible to meet the constantly growing needs of the national economy and culture of the Republic for specialists, but also successfully solve the questions of expanding access to higher and secondary specialized education to an ever-increasing number of citizens who wish to receive it.

In recent years, measures have been taken to facilitate access to higher educational establishments for working young people. With that end in view, in 1969 preparatory departments were established which accept workers, collective farm workers and those demobilized from the Soviet Army, without any entrance examination. Students in these preparatory departments pursue a course of study for eight months, enjoying all the rights of students, including the right to receive stipends and places in hostels. Once they have passed the final examinations, they are enrolled in higher educational establishments hors concours. At the present time, there are preparatory departments attached to 23 higher educational establishments in the Republic. In 1975, the number of students attending preparatory departments will reach 20 per cent of the planned enrolment in the first courses of the day departments of higher educational establishments in Byelorussia.

In recent years, the material and technical basis of educational establishments in the Republic has been strengthened. New teaching and laboratory buildings and hostels have been constructed; laboratories have been fitted out with modern equipment, instruments and apparatus. All the major higher educational establishments in the Byelorussian SSR have modern electronic computers and a computer centre has been established in the Byelorussian State University. The network of scientific institutions attached to higher educational establishments has been expanded; these include scientific research institutes, laboratories for work on specific problems or in specific fields, and scientific research sections and departments, which plan the long-term orientation of research in mathematics, theoretical and nuclear physics, radiophysics, spectroscopy, chemistry and chemical technology, machine-building and metal-working, energetics, construction, woodworking and the modification of timber, automated control systems and the theory of information, etc.

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A clear manifestation of the concern of socialist society for the development of higher education was the decision adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Council of Ministers of the USSR on measures for the further improvement of higher education in the country (1972), which set a whole range of new and important goals for higher educational establishments aimed at raising the quality of training for specialists. In particular, provision was made for the establishment of councils of higher education and councils of rectors to improve the management of higher educational establishments and co-ordinate their activities. During the years 1974 and 1975, it is intended to transfer all higher educational establishments to the new curricula and to specify more clearly the type of training to be given to specialists to ensure that they meet the needs of modern production. In order to enable graduates of higher educational establishments to acquire the necessary practical skills, a one-year training period at the place of work to which they are allocated is being introduced. It has been recognized that it is essential to enhance the role of the universities in the system of higher education and to transform them into teaching-methods centres for higher education. Special attention is paid to re-equipping higher educational establishments technically and to providing them with modern means of technical instruction.

During the ninth five-year plan more than 121,000 specialists with higher education and approximately 185,000 with secondary specialized education will be trained in the Byelorussian SSR.

G. Mass cultural work among the population is constantly being improved in the Byelorussian SSR, and all conditions have been created for the true flourishing of the people's talents and gifts. The extensive network of cultural and artistic institutions, the press, radio and television afford the working people an opportunity to become acquainted with the greatest achievements of science, culture and the arts and to take an increasingly active part in cultural life.

A great deal of attention is paid to this by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia, and the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR, which in the last few years alone have adopted a number of important decisions on problems relating to the development of culture and the arts in the Republic. Thus, in June 1973, the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR considered the question of "The present state and further improvement of mass cultural work among the population of the Republic" and adopted a decision on that subject.

At sessions of the local Soviets of Working Peoples' Deputies such questions as the further development of culture and the improvement of cultural services to the working people are regularly discussed. The same problems are dealt with in the social development plans of towns, districts, enterprises and institutions.

Constant attention to questions of mass cultural work and annual increases in the appropriations for these purposes have made possible a considerable expansion in the network of cultural institutions and the strengthening of their material and technical base. During the period of the eighth five-year plan alone, three theatres, 860 clubs, houses and palaces of culture, 1,500 libraries, 11 museums and

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37 cinemas were opened. Some 10,000 different books and pamphlets were published in Byelorussia, totalling nearly 113 million copies. New newspapers, popular magazines and scientific journals appeared in print for the first time. The circulation of periodicals increased by more than 150 per cent. The establishment of a unified Byelorussian television system was completed.

While in 1965 the amount spent on the development and maintenance of institutions, organizations and enterprises within the system of the Byelorussian Ministry of Culture was 16.6 million roubles, the amount appropriated for this purpose in 1973 was 51.2 million roubles. Funds were increased for equipping and strengthening the material base of cultural institutions, as well as for mass cultural work among the population on collective farms and State farms. Substantial sums are spent each year for these purposes by trade union organs.

As of mid-1973, 14 professional theatres, two philharmonic orchestras, 49 State museums, more than 20,000 clubs and 6,600 cinemas and cinema installations were operating in the Republic.

Unions of creative artists in the Republic and the Byelorussian theatrical society had a membership of more than 4,000 writers, composers, artists, stage and film actors, architects and journalists in 1973. Artists who produced works which were of significant conceptual and artistic merit were awarded Lenin prizes and USSR State prizes, State prizes of the Byelorussian SSR, titles of distinction and prizes or awards at international contests, exhibitions and festivals.

Cadres of specialists for cultural institutions are trained at three higher and 22 secondary specialized educational establishments. Each year some 2,800 specialists are graduated, including more than 580 with higher education. In all regions of the Republic 10-month courses are conducted for leaders of amateur cultural groups. Approximately 3,000 cultural workers each year receive supplementary training to improve their qualifications through all-Union and Republican institutes and regional courses.

Byelorussian literature and art are promoted and enriched in close and fruitful co-operation with the literature and art of all nations and national groups in the Soviet Union. In this respect the period of preparation for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the USSR was particularly rich; at that time, 10-day and one-day festivals, days of culture, and celebrations of the arts were held on a large scale.

To cite but one example, at the time of the All-Union Festival of Soviet Youth dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the USSR, some 800 regional and district talent contests were held in Byelorussia. Six hundred thousand persons and 25,000 amateur groups took part in the Republic's amateur talent festival. In 1972 writers conducted some 8,000 public readings of their works in the towns and villages of Byelorussia. In the same year theatres and concert organizations in the Republic presented more than 17,000 stage plays and concerts, which were attended by approximately 6.5 million people.

The extensive network of cultural and educational institutions in the Republic provide a sound basis for meeting the constantly growing intellectual needs of the population. Readers at public libraries number more than 4 million, or one out of every two inhabitants of the Republic; and 360,000 workers are taking courses at people's universities where they broaden their knowledge in all fields of science, technology and culture. Widespread activities include public readings and lecture series, film lectures and theoretical conferences, oral journals and question and answer sessions, discussion meetings, dramatized presentations, mass holidays of friendship among peoples, etc.

Amateur cultural activities provide an aesthetic education for the masses. This is one of the forms of human social activities which clearly manifest the communal nature of socialist culture, in the development of which the working people themselves participate directly. In 1973, 600,000 lovers of the theatre, music, dance, applied arts and other forms of artistic expression took part in amateur cultural groups in Byelorussia. The best amateur cultural groups are given the honorific title of the "People's". There are more than 170 such groups in the Republic. Many of them have presented works of the Byelorussian people in Moscow, the fraternal Soviet Republics and abroad.

The Byelorussian voluntary society for the preservation of historical and cultural monuments has nearly 1.5 million members.

A great deal of attention is given to the aesthetic education of children and the development of their artistic talents. In 1973 there were 182 seven-year children's music schools in Byelorussia, including 22 schools and 45 branches in rural localities. By 1975, a further 45 schools and 83 branches will be opened.

The goal set for the ninth five-year plan is to improve the content of the work of cultural and artistic institutions, to raise it to the level of present-day needs, to ensure the further development of all types and genres of amateur cultural activities based on the best national traditions and the high standards of Soviet culture, to give greater attention to the training of cadres for cultural and artistic institutions, to expand the network of cultural and educational institutions and to strengthen their material base.

The press, television, radio, literature and the arts will be further developed. New clubs, libraries and cinemas will be established.

In the Byelorussian SSR the most important objective laid down by the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is being consistently implemented, that is, the formation of an organic link between the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution and the benefits of the socialist economic system.

In the eighth five-year plan the sectors which account for technological progress developed at a very rapid pace. More than 500 new products were put into production; more than 500 plants, shops and sections were thoroughly mechanized or automated; more than 1,330 automatic and continuous production lines were installed;

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16 computer centres were set up; and 12 automated control systems for production and technological processes were brought into operation. Labour productivity in industry increased by 39 per cent. During the five-year plan the number of scientific workers rose by 7,000 and in 1970 totalled more than 22,000.

In 1971-1973 all branches of the Byelorussian economy continued to implement measures in the field of scientific and technological progress designed to further the growth of public production, to increase its efficiency and to strengthen the material and technical base of the Republic. More than 600 new types of machines and equipment were brought into production; 1,200 automatic and continuous production lines were introduced; and more than 550 fully mechanized or automated plants, shops and sections were established. Labour productivity increased by 23 per cent. Scientific workers numbered more than 27,000.

Considerable attention is given to the co-ordination of scientific research and the expansion of international contacts by Byelorussian scientists. For example, an international centre to provide further training for scientists from socialist countries was set up at the Institute of Heat and Mass Exchange of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences. In the field of heat and mass exchange nine institutes of the Academy of Sciences had mutually beneficial scientific contacts with scientific centres in Bulgaria, Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, France, Sweden and other countries in dealing with 19 problems and topics.

In the remaining years of the ninth five-year plan, the objective is still further to accelerate scientific and technological progress and to devote greater attention to the intensive, qualitative factors in economic growth and to the quality of output. The national economy has fulfilled all objective conditions and prerequisites to exceed the targets established for the ninth five-year plan. In particular, the plan targets for the total volume of industrial production are expected to be achieved in four years and eight months, and it is anticipated that output will be increased by 62-64 per cent instead of by 58 per cent as planned, that labour productivity will increase by 42 per cent and that the national income will grow by 51-52 per cent instead of 47 per cent as planned.

Socialist ownership of the tools and means of production, the organization of public production according to plan and the active participation of the working people in the organization and management of the economy create conditions for the maximum utilization of the achievements of science and technology for the benefit of mankind. Economic, scientific and technological progress under socialism is subordinated to the objectives of the all-round development of the individual and the satisfaction in ever greater measure of the material and cultural needs of the people, and it serves the interests of society as a whole. The Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR states that "In the USSR scientific and technological progress is combined with full employment of the population and is used to make work fundamentally easier, to reduce the working week, to eliminate heavy physical labour and all forms of unskilled labour; with the development of scientific and technological progress, the process of forming an organic link between intellectual and physical labour in the productive activities of people is gradually taking place". In the legislation and decisions adopted in the Byelorussian SSR,

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particular stress is laid on the fact that scientific and technological progress must promote the creation of the most favourable conditions for the life, health, work and leisure of the working people and must be combined with careful attention to nature and natural resources. In the preceding sections of this report, the specific measures being implemented in the Byelorussian SSR in this respect have been indicated.

The Civil Code of the Byelorussian SSR, which came into effect on 1 January 1965, provides detailed regulations concerning copyright, which covers works of science, literature or art (articles 472-511), as well as rights to discoveries (articles 512-514) and inventors' rights (articles 515-521).

IV. One of the greatest accomplishments of Soviet power has been the elimination of every kind of manifestation of racial or national inequality and the proclamation and practical guaranteeing of full equality for all citizens, irrespective of racial or national origin, in all spheres, whether political, economic, social, cultural or other. This is a result of the very essence of the socialist system, where there is no exploitation of man by man and where there is not, and cannot, be any political, economic or social basis for oppression and discrimination on account of race or nationality or for any other reason.

The inadmissibility of discrimination was and is one of the principles of the legislation of the Byelorussian SSR. Thus, in the first Byelorussian Constitution of 1919 it was stated that the Byelorussian SSR, "recognizing the equal rights of citizens, irrespective of their racial or national origin, declares that the establishment or tolerance of any privileges or advantages on the basis of such origin, as well as any oppression of national minorities or limitation of their equality, is contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic" (article 15).

According to the current Constitution of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, which was adopted in 1937, "equality of rights of citizens of the Byelorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, State, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

"Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law" (article 98).

This fundamental constitutional principle has been further developed and elaborated in other legislative enactments which are in force in the Byelorussian SSR.

Article 71 of the Criminal Code of the Byelorussian SSR, for example, provides that:

"Any propaganda or agitation aimed at inciting racial or national enmity or discord, or any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality shall be punishable by deprivation of liberty for a term of six months to three years or by local banishment for a term of two to five years".

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The Labour Code of the Byelorussian SSR and the Code on Marriage and the Family of the Byelorussian SSR also include articles (quoted above) which prohibit any discrimination in hiring, in the remuneration of labour, upon entry into marriage and in family relations.

In the Byelorussian SSR the entire population is constantly educated in a spirit of internationalism, friendship and respect for other peoples. The work of all State and public organizations, the mass information media and educational establishments at all levels is directed towards this end.

V. The improvements in conditions of work and in everyday life and the increasingly greater satisfaction of the material and intellectual needs of the people are questions which have been and still are at the centre of attention for the Soviet State and socialist society. The full efforts of the Communist Party are directed towards the attainment of these goals. In recent years outstanding successes have been achieved in the political, social and economic spheres and in the implementation of the Leninist programme of peace and communist construction adopted at the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

There are also a number of unsolved problems in the economic development of the Byelorussian SSR. In this connexion, every effort is being made to increase further the efficiency of public production and to ensure the steady growth of labour productivity and improve the quality of output. Considerable work is being done to improve the organization and management of the economy, to make greater use of the achievements of science and technology and to establish more economic practices.

The fresh social and economic successes in the implementation of programmes under the ninth five-year plan will create a firm foundation for a further increase in the material and cultural levels of living of the Soviet people and will significantly contribute to the construction of a communist society.

JAMAICA

/Original: English/

/16 April 1974/

I. Development needs to be viewed in the broadest sense, as a general movement of growth, taking into account both the economic and social aspects. Thus, in drawing up Development Plans, it is necessary to outline in the basic framework of the plans and strategies, goals which are aimed at achieving balanced development leading to individual fulfilment, and guaranteeing rights provided for under the Constitution.

The policy as outlined by the Jamaica Government over the period covered has been aimed at developing employment opportunities, to go hand in hand with improvement in the skills and literate abilities of our human resources. The objectives have been that there should be work for all who are available for and seeking work, that there should be freedom of choice of employment and the fullest possible opportunity for each worker to qualify for and to use his skills in a job for which he is suited, irrespective of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion or social origin.

Accordingly, Government has intensified the skill training programme and literary efforts, strengthened and expanded the Tourist Industry, instituted training programmes in conjunction with the private sector to develop local expertise to replace imported labour and meet manpower requirements, and in addition, special emphasis has been placed on the development and expansion of agricultural education, which is aimed at enabling as large a percentage as possible of the country's growing labour force, to be retained in productive employment especially in the rural areas.

Efforts have been made to achieve a more equitable distribution of agricultural land consonant with the optimisation of social and economic goals, and to improve the living standards of the rural population, which implies, not only an increase in farm incomes, but also the provision of adequate infrastructure and social amenities.

The orderly and progressive development of land, cities, towns and other areas is provided for by the Town and Country Planning Law which is administered by the Town Planning Department, and by the Urban Development Corporation whose functions are governed by the Urban Development Corporation Act, 1968. Emphasis has been placed on the Government's Housing Programme on relieving over-crowding, and included in this programme is redevelopment, slum clearance, and water-front development of urban areas.

The Government's slum clearance and rehousing programme, which has been implemented in the urban areas, is aimed at eradicating slums, and replacing them with proper houses together with the necessary social amenities.

Additionally, Government has introduced an extensive programme in community water-supply development, and in an effort to eliminate congestion in urban areas,

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encourages where practicable, the distribution of industries to rural areas, by giving tax concessions and incentives to prospective entrepreneurs under the Industrial Incentives Law.

Free education at all levels was announced by Government in 1973 and a national literacy programme, which aims at eradicating illiteracy in five (5) years, was launched in 1972.

A Community Health Aide programme was also introduced in 1972 to provide opportunities for women to enter the para-medical field.

II. Jamaica continues to participate actively as a member of international organizations and the standards and the guidelines laid down in Instruments adopted, have greatly influenced in expanding and refining the laws and practices in this country.

III. Sections 13 and 23 of the Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council and the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Law, Cap. 356, make provision for protection from discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, belief, tribal association or trade union affiliation.

In addition, the Government from time to time adopts and applies appropriate labour standards and measures to improve the working environment and terms and conditions of employment and living standards of its people, Convention No. 111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) was ratified by the Government in 1973 and two other Instruments dealing with Employment Policy, and Equal Remuneration are being recommended for ratification. Between 1970 and 1973 amendments have been made to the Holidays with Pay Law and Minimum Wage Law to provide for wider coverage, and in the field of labour legislation active consideration is being given to a Labour Relations Act and Termination of Employment Bill.

A. The Government does not interfere with the free movement of persons seeking employment inside or outside of Jamaica. At the Government Employment Service the system is one of "first come, first serve".

Wage earners enjoy freedom to join trade unions of their choice and this freedom is protected by the provisions made in the Jamaica Constitution Order in Council.

Trade unions are very active in securing for their members higher wages and improved conditions of work. However, in cases where it is thought that wages are unreasonably low and where it is not altogether possible to organize certain workers, minimum wage advisory boards are appointed under the Minimum Wage Law to advise the Minister of Labour and Employment in the regulation of wages of these workers.

The Minimum Wage Branch of the Ministry of Labour and Employment ensures that employees who fall within the scope of the various minimum wage proclamations and orders, are paid rates in accordance with the minimum wage legislation.

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The safety, health and welfare of workers in factories, buildings and on docks are the concern of the Factory Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Every effort is made to see that requirements are met and a review of the present law to give Inspectors wider powers is being undertaken.

Since 1970, under the Holidays with Pay Law, all workers who were not previously covered are entitled to paid vacation leave of at least two normal working weeks.

The rights of trade unions provided under the Trade Union Law, e.g. striking and picketing, are not infringed upon by the Emergency Powers Law.

B. Employment injury benefits and invalidity and old-age benefits are contained in the National Insurance Act 1965 and its amendment of 1970.

LUXEMBOURG

/Original: French/

/18 April 1974/

A. Legislative measures enacted during the period 1 July 1969 to 30 June 1973:

- (1) Act of 9 July 1969 amending and completing articles 815, 832, 866, 2103 (3) and 2109 of the Civil Code.

This Act concerning the reform of the legislation governing succession to rural property was drawn up on the initiative of the Department of Agriculture. The main provisions relate to the temporary continuation of joint possession in order to prevent the breaking up into small holdings of land which constitutes an economic unit and the preferential allotment of agricultural land according to its productive value.

- (2) Act of 5 March 1970 on hawking and itinerant trades.

This Act brings up to date the regulations governing trade away from a fixed place of business and, in particular, allows exhibitions and displays. Responsibility in this field, which by an historical accident has hitherto been vested in the Ministry of Justice, was transferred to the Ministry of the Middle Classes.

- (3) Act of 11 November 1970 respecting voluntary transfer of and seizure by garnishment of remuneration for work and of pensions of all kinds.

In addition to introducing important simplifications in procedure, this Act

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establishes uniform regulations on the basis of provisions previously contained in many different acts.

- (4) Act of 4 January 1974 reforming the legislation relating to marriage contracts.

This Act, which establishes the complete legal equality of husband and wife, has obvious economic implications concerning the division, disposal and management of the property of one or both spouses.

- (5) Act of 22 February 1974 reforming the legislation relating to adoption.

This Act provides for wider possibilities of adoption and the more rapid integration of adopted children into their new families.

B. Legislative measures under study or in preparation

As in the case of marriage contracts, developments in other fields of the law relating to the family have economic and social consequences. Mention should be made of the draft legislation concerning the following matters: parental authority, the guardianship of minors, the lowering of the age at which a person attains his majority for civil purposes, affiliation, inheritance laws.

With regard to real estate law, there is a bill designed to organize on a legal basis the system of construction under joint ownership and to regulate the functioning of that system.

It has also been found essential to regulate access to ownership in order to protect buyers from builders or promoters who are unscrupulous or do not possess the required financial standing. That is the purpose of the bill relating to the sale of unbuilt real estate.

In co-operation with the Ministry of Works, a bill on expropriation for public purposes has been prepared with a view to revising existing legislation and introducing speedy procedures respecting the legitimate rights of owners, without needlessly delaying the developer's taking possession of the land.

The subject of unfair competition, which forms an integral part of penal law, has also received the Government's attention. At a time when competition is becoming increasingly aggressive, effective and prompt measures should be adopted in order to put an immediate end to unfair practices and to protect the rights of the consumer.

In the more specific field of company law, a special committee charged with the task of preparing texts for a general revision of legislation was established some time ago by the Ministry of Justice.

Legislative measures and administrative regulations relating directly to the family
(heading III of the outline annexed to the note referred to above)

- (1) Right of everyone who works to just and favourable remuneration ensuring a decent living for himself and his family.

As a result of the Act of 24 July 1967 amending the Act of 29 April 1964 concerning family allowances, the level of family allowances for three or more children was raised by the Grand Ducal Regulation of 14 December 1972 establishing new monthly family allowances. The allowances currently amount to 370 francs per month for one dependent child and 740 francs per month for two dependent children, the latter sum being increased by 1,000 francs per month for each additional child; these sums are all adjusted to the cost-of-living index with 100 taken as the base figure.

Maternity grants were recently increased from 4,200 to 6,000 francs (index No. 100).

- (2) The right to an adequate standard of living.

Right to adequate food.

Right to adequate clothing and housing.

Right to necessary social services.

No legislative measure was enacted during the period in question, but a revision of the Act of 28 May 1897 on emergency housing is currently envisaged.

- (3) The right of the family, motherhood and childhood to protection and assistance.

Broadly speaking, two important legislative measures deserve mention, namely, the Act of 12 November 1971 concerning the protection of youth, defining cases in which parental authority is forfeited and establishing certain measures regarding the custody, education and protection of minors, and the Act of 12 December 1972 concerning the rights and duties of spouses, which ended the legal disability of married women.
