

"100,000,000 WOMEN"

In wartime women have always had to sacrifice the dearest treasure they possess - their children. Mrs. Talalikhin is proud of her son. He has just won the title of a Hero of the Soviet Union by ramming a Nazi bomber over Moscow when his ammunition ran out She is telling us how she heard the news while in an air-raid shelter and then suddenly realised - Why, that's my son! Happy the country with such sons and such mothers.

Women from the factories, women from the farms, enlist into the Soviet A.T.S. Hundreds of thousands train to be military nurses to go to the front.

Drugs, stored blood and medical supplies can go to the front line in 'planes. A special corps of parachute nurses learns jumping so that they can bring relief to any sector. This parachutist you see jumping here is a woman nurse.

Throughout the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics thousands of meetings were held at the outset of the war, to call upon every woman to make herself available for industry. Every man at the front needs ten pairs of hands to equip and sustain him. That is the message of total war to women.

And millions of women obeyed this call. Outside the threatened towns they helped to build fortifications and tank traps. They redirected rivers to form tank barriers. They set up artificial ravines and breast works.

But behind the tank barriers there lay the vast and fertile grain fields with crops waiting to be reaped. The enemy is approaching. The job has to be done by women. Millions of women brought in the harvest of 1941.

All over the U.S.S.R. schools for women tractor drivers sprung up. To the peasant girl of today a tractor is no unfamiliar sight. But to know how to drive and service one - this hundreds of thousands had to learn from skilled teachers. There's a thrill of knowledge that one is doing something useful, in driving the big machine quite by oneself for the first time.

Ivan Gubov instructs his wife how to take his place at the wheel of the combine. He can go to the front now with the knowledge that his job will be well done.

In every factory, schools were opened for new women workers. Here they could learn how to take up a post at lathe or bench. And when they get into the workshop, they soon pick it up. Here is Semion Belkin, teaching a beginner; the skilled men left in the shop pass on the 'tricks of the trade' as rapidly as possible.

The girl who is learning here, although such a youngster, is a mother, married to a soldier at the front. When such women enter industry, caring for their children becomes a problem.

Many factory creches already existed in the Soviet Union. Others had to be started by the initiative of the new women workers themselves. In this creche elder children do their bit by looking after the littlest ones. Here in calm and quiet sleeps young Ivan, while his mother works as a welder in the hubbub of a tank factory.

Indeed, there are few jobs even in heavy industry, that Soviet women do not fill. They have exactly equal standing with the men, the same pay for the same job, the same full membership of each appropriate Trade Union. In an industry run on modern lines there is much more need for skill and intelligence than for physical strength.

Eva Balabanova holds down a key job. She is getting 120% of the output of her predecessor, himself a shock-worker.