Mother And Child—The Main Concern of The Soviet Medicine

—Jedotova Valentina

A Man is born How much joy and happiness this little creature brings with him to the world !

To bring him up strong and healthy, to make his life not darkened by any kind of disease the Soviet medicians do their best.

The development of the Soviet public health is the part and parcel of the building of the socialist society. The main aim of our public health system is to study phenomena of prevention and treatment of diseases, maintaining and developing of the ability to work and achieving the longevity of people.

The full neglect of the interests of the public health protection in the pre-revolution Russia is confirmed by the figers of the extremely negligibile development of the public health network in the country as well as by the unsufficient number of the physicians and nurses in the cities and especially in the countryside.

If the basical socio-hygienic problems are not decided, the most developed and advanced public health system can not be effective.

From the very beginning the Communist Party and the Soviet Government took the following measures in the field of maternity and child protection:

1. Free of charge medical assistance was introduced.
2. The kindekgardens and nurseries at the mills and factories were established.
3. Female labour in those branches of industry, where it is harmful for the female organism and children labour were forbidden.
4. Medical inspection at the industry was introduced.
5. Working day for teenagers was limitted by 6 hours.

In czarist Russia women had been suffering from not only capitalist exploitation but from family rightlessness, as well.

There had been almost no establishments for maternity and child protection. According to statistics only 5% of women had received medical help during child delivery in 1911.

The absence of medical help for pregnant women resulted in high mother and child death rate. More than 30 thousand died every year because of post-delivery diseases, puerperal fever.

Infant death rate in 1911 was 300 per 1000 born alive.

Very high birth and death rate resulted in the fast change of generations which effected national economy.

The prominent Russian hygienist Prof. F.F. Frisman wrote: "Infant mortality causes irreparable damage to the country, since due to it and because of the fast change of generations the whole bulk of labour, care and material values, applied to its early dead members by the society, irretrievably loses.

The problem of maternity and child protection, the most important social problem had been solved after the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The Revolution freed woman from the age-long yoke, gave her the equal rights of member of the society, gave her the equal rights with man in society, cleared ways to the state, public and creative activity.

From the beginning the Soviet Power started establishing public system of maternity and child protection.

Obstetric- gynaecological and children medical-prophylactic centres were set up, the training of medical personnel was organized.

The Council of People's Commissars had passed a decree "On improvement of children dietary" in September 1918 under the difficult condition of the Civil War. Infants and mothers were first to be provided with milk sugar and bread.

In 1922 the scientific institutes for researches on the problems of the maternity and child protection were set up in Moscow and other cities.

The type of medical establishments - maternity and children consultation centres appeared for medical observation of healthy infants and for carrying out prophylactic.

By 1925 700 such consultation centres were organized, and by 1974 their number raised up to 19 thousand through out the country.

The number of medical personnel also increased steadily. At present there are more

than 70 thousand pediatricists and 35 thousand gynecologists in our country. (1 doctor for 344 patients).

The special attention was always paid to the questions of the comprehensive sanitation of children; summer pioneer camps, children's sanatoriums and play grounds were built. Children's sanatoriums were opened at the biggest resorts of the USSR: at the Crimea, Kislovodsk, Sochi, Odessa. The network of children's clinics has developed.

The special pediatric faculties were organized at the medical institutes. At present there are 33 such faculties. Beginning from the 30-s there was started establishment of nurseries, kindergartens at the expenses of public enterprises.

In 1936 the system of State grants to mothers of many children was introduced.

During the years of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) this grants were continuously distributed.

The network of 24 hour nurseries was even extended. In June 1944 the decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On increasing of State grants to pregnant women, mothers of many children, single mothers, on improvement of maternity and child protection, on introduction of the honorary title "Heroine-Mother", and on institution of order "Mother's glory" and medal "Maternity medal"- was proclaimed. Now there are 52 thousand women bearing honorary title "Heroine-Mother" and more than 5,8 million awarded by the orders and medals.

State measures on improvement of medical aid during delivery, introduction of constant observation of pregnant women made it possible as to lower the death rate of women in child birth more than by 15 times.

In 1956 the paid maternity leave (56 days before delivery and 56 days after) was introduced by the decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Since 1955 legal abortion were allowed in the country. The law envisages the right of a woman to make a decision about her maternity. She is guarded from all the danger of the illegal abortion.

The infant death rate which is one of the most important figures of the medical state of the population, decreased by 10 times and more. The figures of physical development of children, psychoneurological status have considerably exceeded of the pre war indications.

Birth weight is much higher, than before the Revolution and averages 3,5 - 3,7 kgs.

By the end of the first year of life baby weights more than 10 kgs, with a height of 75 cms in average. Average weight of children of 10-15 years increased by 1,5 - 8 kgs,

whereas height by 5 – 13 cms,

These figures reflect the high standard of living in our country and nutritious dietary.

The directives of the CPSU XXIV Congress held in 1971 envisaged the further development of the socialist national economy including the improvement of public health system.

The construction of new hospitals, clinics, nurseries, kindergartens will be continued.

The salary of medical personnel has been increased by 15% in average.

The achievement of the Soviet public health system in the field of maternity and child protection are striking illustration of the high humanity of the Soviet power.

On international congress of obstetrician-gynaecologists devoted to exploring and learning of the complicated processes which accompany the conception and development of the new life was held in Moscow in 1974.

There were good responses received about the organization of childbirth in the USSR. Women consultation checks and controls the pregnant who visit it 1-2 times a month. Even if pregnancy goes normal it is necessary to prepare the women for the maternity both physically and psychologically beforehand. At the consultations women undergo a course of psychoprophylactical preparation for the childbirth. They do gymnastics, get necessary information about individual regime and nourishment. Not only mothers but fathers and grandmothers too learn how to take care of the newly born. If first signs of sickness appear - small oedema, heightened arterial pressure, changes in urine test, etc. - such patients are sent to special sections of maternity hospitals. It enables to cope better with toxemia. Eclampsy has become extremely rare.

The position of the foetus can change whereas women may not even feel it. This is when the physician of the women consultation comes to help. Those pregnant who suffer from accompanying diseases i.e. diabetes etc. have very big foetus up to 5-6 kg. Urgent measures are in need then to protect the pregnancy. The second stage is a net of specialized maternity hospitals for those suffering from diabetes, heart diseases etc.

There are special sections for the prematurely born in many maternity homes where one can find every thing for saving that weak creature. Strict regime of comfort, heat, humidity, light, oxygen, nourishment and accurate nursing of every born child long before the necessary term with the minimum weight of 1 kg. 200 gr. and sometimes 1 kg.

A system of electronic childbirth control has been elaborated. Much in the childbirth depends on the contracting of the uterus, the disturbance of its activity often causes complications in the delivery, to premature or over carrying of the pregnancy. A miniature radiostation

is introduced in the uterus during the birth which gives valuable information. The signals are received by a radioset and transmitted to a recording device, the inter uterus pressure, the tone of uterus, information about the duration and intensity of the fits and pangs are registered. It gives the preciseness of the conclusions and direction to the actions of the obstetricians, shows the physician which profilactical measures, medical manipulations and medicines are preferable in the particular case. The computer can diagnose tumour of uterus and appendages. The computer can give conclusions even without seeing.

If a physician living in another town doubts own diagnosis he can consult the computer. For that one should fill the inquiry list and telex it to the centre. In few minutes a detailed reply follows.

Problems of labour pain relief were also discussed at the congress. According to the classical canons many of the obstetrician's operations i.e. forceps' fixing, turning of the foetus to the feet—were done without narcosis. Some thought it is even prohibitory. The Soviet medicians proved that narcosis is necessary. It not only decreases the mother's sufferings but in some cases saves the child's life.

In 1951 a new method of psychoprofilactical labour pain relief which received world recognition was invented in the Soviet Union. Electroanalgezy is a new kind of painrelief when mother is between unconsciousness and drowsiness. Many complications in the childbirth result from fear, pain and tiredness of the woman. Electroanalgezy removes excitation of the cortex. Many problems of interwomb development of the foetus were being solved at the congress. Many medicines have adverse effect on the embryo especially in the early period of pregnancy. Caution is necessary then.

Matters of girls' hygiene were also discussed at the conference: Many adults' diseases depend not only on the way of woman's life, the surroundings but also on the influence her organism had during the interwomb development and later in the childhood.

Clinical checking reveals the connection of some women diseases with genetic disturbances, birth trauma and infectious diseases.

All this factors influencing the nervous and other systems of the child's organism, make the background for the development of pathological processes in future. That's why gynaecological offices for children and juveniles are established in every town, where first of all checking of girls' menstruation disturbances and treatment are arranged. Besides polyclinical service specialized hospitals are established as well.

It has been found out that among the diseases which cause functional disturbances

of the sexual system in child and young ages are chronic tonsillitis, respiratory catarrh, influenza and adenovirus infections.

Children gynaecology is a rapidly developing field of Soviet medical Science:

Apart of that the Soviet scientists have found out that one of the reasons of preoncological diseases and malignant tumours among women are gormonal disturbances. Their treatment at the early stages helps to escape the surgeons scalpel.

The efforts of all the medicians of the entire world should be aimed at strengthening peoples' health and extending their longevity.