

Why Crime Is Decreasing in the Soviet Union

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THE SOVIET UNION is converting into reality the age-long dream of the best minds of mankind: the building up of a classless socialist society. In solving this task, the Soviet Union, simultaneously with the abolition of classes and survivals of the past in the minds of people, is abolishing crime—one of the worst survivals of the past.

The October Revolution, which led to a radical break-up of old productive relations and to the elimination of private property in the means of production, could not but give rise to embittered resistance of all the forces of the old society, which were ready for any crime that might stop the victorious march of socialism. This resistance has found its expression not only in counter-revolutionary crimes, directly expressing the struggle of the remnants of hostile classes and their agency, but also in general crimes which equally reflect the traditions of the old order are a heritage of the past.

The tremendous successes of socialist construction could not but bring about a considerable limitation in the scope of crime. The improvement in the living conditions of the masses, the immense growth of culture, the abolition of unemployment and the elimination of poverty in the village resulted in a sharp reduction of crime.

Statistics conclusively substantiate this. Taking the number of persons convicted of criminal acts in the RSFSR during the first half of 1933 as 100, the number dropped in the second half to 93.1; at the end of 1934, the number of cases dropped to 69.9; in the first half of 1935 it fell to 60.7.

In the Ukraine, the number of persons convicted of criminal acts declined in the last quarter of 1935 to one-fourth the number in the first quarter of 1933. In Soviet White Russia, this number declined by 57.1 per cent. A similar picture of the reduction in crime is to be observed during the past three years in the other republics of the Soviet Union.

THE NUMBER of convictions in various categories of crime shows more clearly, perhaps, the sharp decrease in crime in the USSR. Thus, there has been a marked decline in the number of persons convicted for breaking the law of Aug. 7, 1932, on the protection of socialist property. Taking the number of convictions under this law during the first

half of 1933 in the RSFSR as 100, they dropped to 27.9 in the first half of 1934 and to 9.6 in the second half of 1935. In the Ukraine, the number of similar cases fell even more. A further drop is shown by statistics of succeeding periods.

Property crimes, particularly theft, which constitute more than 70 per cent of this category of crime, have declined equally sharply. Statistics show that convictions for theft declined 61.4 per cent in the first half of 1935 in comparison with the same period in 1933.

A striking reduction in the number of crimes against the person is also shown by figures. In 1926, the proportion of these acts in the total number of criminal convictions amounted to 26 per cent in the RSFSR. Beginning with 1929, the percentage decreased year by year until in 1934 it dropped to three per cent. The number of convictions for sexual crimes in the RSFSR today has dropped to 25 per cent of the number in 1929. During the same period, the number of cases of bodily assaults dropped 40 per cent and murder convictions 50 per cent.

The main sources of juvenile crimes were homelessness, neglect and adults' instigation and recruiting of children for criminal acts. The decision of the Council of Peoples Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Party of the USSR on the "Abolition of Child Homelessness and Child Neglect," and also the law of April 7, 1935 on the "measures of fighting against crimes among juveniles" played a colossal role in reducing children's crimes. The law is directed most sharply against adult instigators and against those juvenile law-breakers closely connected with a criminal environment.

In the courts of Moscow Province, 54 cases of juvenile crime were tried in May 1935, in November the number dropped to 23 and in December to 21. In Voronezh Province, 88 were convicted of juvenile crimes in the second quarter of 1935, 77 in the third quarter of that year, and 34 in two months of the last quarter. A similar reduction in juvenile crime is observable in other districts of the country.

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THUS, as a result of the decisive successive successes of socialism in our country, the enormous rise in the standard of living and culture of the masses, and the elimination of hostile class elements, the Soviet Union has achieved a

Defending the Workers and National Defense

Working men of England have their own idea of National Defense. In his maiden speech in the House of Commons, William Gallacher, representing the miners of West Fife, has this to say:

"There were over 1,000 men killed in the pits last year and nearly 200,000 injured. Have you defended them?"

"Come with me to the mining villages, day after day you can see the terrible tragedy of the pit, and the tragedy of the mines' homes.

"Have you defended the miners' families in Wales, Lancashire, on the North-east coast and in Scotland? Have you defended these places—go and look at them—which give the appearance of a country that has been devastated by the enemy? Have you defended the miners?"

"We say not a penny for armaments. It is a crime against the people of this country to spend another penny on armaments.

"Every penny we can get should go in wages for the miners, towards the health and well-being of the mothers and the children and adequate pensions for the aged and infirm. We require every penny we can get to make life better for the working class.

"If the seven billion pounds which we spent during the war in ruin and destruction had been spent in making life brighter and better for the workers of this country what a difference it would have made."

To hospitals of the big mines of the Philippines every day brings its train of ambulances bearing bleeding bodies of the maimed, the dying and the dead. Is our government defending these men and their families?

Socialists in England don't like to see school boys performing military drill. Since Socialists are now in control of the Council of the City of London military men are refused the use of elementary school buildings for company training.

They have abolished O T C and Cadet Corps from all schools under their charge. School children are forbidden to attend Navy League lecture. Also, when an Anti-air-craft Brigade planned a march to stimulate recruiting the Council refused permission to use Battersca Park for this purpose.

substantial reduction in crime. The decrease should be specially noted in the rural districts as an evidence of the rooting out of petty proprietorship habits resulting from the strengthening of the collective farm order and the whole process of remaking the minds of these people.

The sharp reduction of crime, however,