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Fatherless families of Soviet Union

From Gerard Loughran
MOSCOW.—Every sixth or seventh Soviet family is now fatherless, and the declining birthrate eventually will have its effect on the country's economy, according to a family care expert.

Ivan Ryurikov, writing in the newspaper *Sovietskaya Estonia*, said the main reason for the decrease was the stress and tension a woman knows she will face when she goes out to work and brings up a family, too.

Shortage of housing, poor wages, lack of pre-school facilities, increasing divorce and a desire for greater comfort were additional reasons.

Shortfall

Ryurikov said demographers were forecasting that, in the last 15 years of this century, the Soviet Union would have only an additional 5,000,000 workers, six times less than the increase in the previous 15 years.

"And though part of this shortfall will be covered by machinery, it will have its effects on our economy," he said.

"The way of life for women is being changed," Ryurikov said. In 1936 there were 19 million women workers. By 1974 there were 51 million—indeed, only 6,000,000 stayed at home—and nine-tenths of women of prime child-bearing age—25 to 45—went out to work.

The result was a double working day for the majority

of women, and their tendency was to lighten the burden by having fewer children.

Additionally, nurseries and kindergartens provide places for only one-third of all pre-school children.

"The price of a child becomes more expensive due to the increase of divorces, the number of persons who have children without getting married, and the appearance of a new type of family—that which has no father," Ryurikov said.

He said the latter phenomenon came into being at the end of World War II when there were 20 million more women than men. "Recently, there has been an increase in the number of fatherless children from 700,000 to 800,000, which means every sixth to seventh family is brought up by mother only."

Ryurikov also blamed sexual ignorance, the "low prestige" of being a parent, and lack of participation by fathers in family life as a reason for unhappiness (UPI)

Rhodesian 'war' cooling down

RHODESIA'S Minister of Information Mr Ely Broomburg, claimed in an interview that the much publicised "psychological war" allegedly being waged against Rhodesia is subsiding.

But he added that it would not disappear and said a resurgence of an intensified propaganda campaign could be expected in the overseas Press.