

## **DECREE REGARDING MARRIAGE (1931)**

Under feudal domination, marriage is a barbaric and inhumane institution. The oppression and suffering borne by woman is far greater than that of man. Only the victory of the workers' and peasants' revolution, followed by the first step toward the economic emancipation of men and women, brings with it a change in the marriage relationship and makes it free. In the soviet districts, marriages now are contracted on a free basis. Free choice must be the principle of every marriage. The whole feudal system of marriage, including the power of parents to arrange marriages for their children, to exercise compulsion, and all purchase and sale in marriage contracts shall henceforth be abolished.

Although women have obtained freedom from the feudal yoke, they are still laboring under tremendous physical handicaps (for example, the binding of the feet) and have not obtained complete economic independence. Therefore, on questions concerning divorce, it becomes necessary to protect the interests of women and place the greater part of the obligations and responsibilities entailed by divorce upon men.

Children are the masters of the new society. Under the old system little attention was paid to children. Consequently, special regulations have been established concerning the protection of children.

These present regulations are hereby made public and shall enter into force as of 1 December 1931.

(Signed)

Mao Zedong

Chairman of the Central Executive Committee