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FEEDING SOVIET RUSSIA

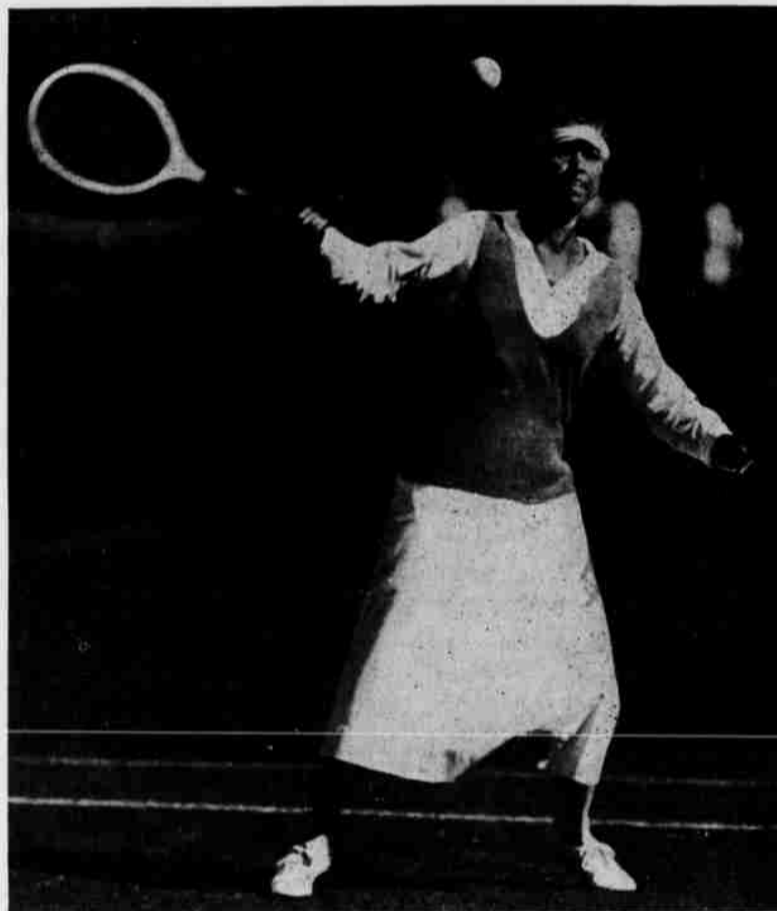
(Written for United Press.)

NEW YORK.—The problem of feeding Russia has always been a complex one for several obvious reasons. First, the vast expanse of Russia and Siberia forms the largest single territorial unit in the world; secondly, there are about 170 million people to provide for in this immense stretch of land, reaching from Vladivostok to Petrograd and from the Arctic to the Caspian sea. Thus there is an area of approximately six and one-half million square miles to be supplied with food-stuffs. During the reign of the Czars, when industry and railroads were presumably in good condition, whole sections were frequently reduced to starvation, and underfeeding proved almost as universal as the national samovar.

wheat and oats to feed himself, are fed each day.

Every ounce of food is distributed by card. The single ration or "pioke," as it is called, consists of a pound and a half of bread and a portion of meat or fish and tea. The system has been perfected to such an extent that the ignorant peasant who, in many instances, might have doubted the efficiency of the Soviet system, has become not only reconciled but, recollecting the poverty-stricken condition under the Czar's regime, is now convinced that the new form of government is equitable.

The headquarters of the Supreme Economic Council is in Moscow and employs 25,000 persons in that city alone; the total number of employees all over the country is near the million mark. The Council has adopted the simplest method of distribution possible. Surveys of the



Mrs. Molla Bjurstedt Mallory, National Champion

It is no cause for wonder, then, that with the breakdown of the industrial system and the disintegration of the railways as a result of the revolution, the problem should be aggravated a thousandfold, not to mention the Allied Blockade and foreign wars. The Soviet government has met this difficult problem in a sane and practical way. It created a central bureau for the equal distribution of the food supply on hand. This bureau is known as the Supreme Economic Council and is assisted by local councils all over the country. The Supreme Economic Council is directed by Professor Milutov, the well-known economist, and this body has first preference in the avenues and channels of distribution, including transportation. Since peace has been signed with Poland, this department in the Soviet government is considered the most important and in all matters is given the right of way. In this manner 170 million persons, with the exception of the small peasant farmer, who retains a sufficient quantity of

food on hand are made with the utmost exactness and then, when the fall harvest has been estimated, it is doled out on a basis of population all over the country. Making due allowance for the government's lack of experience and the demoralization of the arteries of distribution, the Soviet Government has succeeded admirably in feeding the population of Russia. What is notable about all this is the astonishing fact that never before in the long history of Russia has every element been fed. To be sure, the feeding is inadequate and is far from meeting the needs of the people; but there is no actual starvation. Mothers with babies at the breast receive a special allowance, as do all children, for the Soviet government holds that the future of Russia lies with the children. It is interesting to note that while the upper and middle classes in Germany are well fed, the laboring population is on the verge of starvation. In Russia there is absolutely no discrimination.