

**SPECIALIZED ACADEMIC AND SCIENCE CENTER
OF THE SOUTHERN FEDERAL DISTRICT**

Group essay contest
**“Unity in Diversity: Russia and the English-Speaking
World. Time for Equal Opportunities”**

Research work (essay)

**“What being the First Lady is like.
Social activities of Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine
Churchill”.**



Alyona Pozhidaeva

Пожидаева Алена



Angelina Popova

Попова Ангелина



Arina Marchenko

Марченко Арина

Supervisor: Tatiana Yurievna Odintsova

Руководитель: Одинцова Татьяна Юрьевна

Theses:

1. Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill as first ladies of their country. Women in politics.
2. The meaning of prime minister of the United Kingdom and a life peer in her own rights— Clementine Churchill in Winston Churchill's and politics lives.
3. Krupskaya dedicated her life to cultural reorganization of the younger generation of the USSR and carried out a lot of educational reforms.
4. Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill were indeed role models for their people.

"Behind every great man there is a great woman"

For many years' women have provided stability and progress in society. Initially, they took on solely the roles of mothers, family budget planners, family doctors, and cooks. Women did not use to have the right to interfere with medicine, education, or even participate in voting. However, over time, women began to become more independent in all spheres, especially in politics. In this essay, we are going to have a look at the lives of two women who played important roles in the politics of huge countries. Clementine Churchill and Nadezhda Krupskaya – the powerful women who were the wives of outstanding leaders – are the focus of our work.

To begin with, we need to define what the term “first lady” means. According to Cambridge dictionary, a first lady is “a woman who is married to the political leader of a country or a part of a country”. As it is mentioned in Britannica Encyclopedia, “although unpaid and unelected, her prominence provides her a platform from which to influence behavior and opinion, and popular first ladies have served as models <...>. Some first ladies have used their influence to affect legislation on important matters such as temperance reform, housing improvement, and women’s rights”. This is crucial for our essay.

It goes without saying that Clementine Ogilvy Spencer-Churchill (1885-1977) played a significant role in life of Winston Churchill. Having survived

lots of hardships in childhood (the divorce of parents, ultimate poverty, the elder sister's death of typhoid), she managed to become a charming lady who won Winston Churchill's heart and respect at a society dinner. No wonder that it happened, as Clementine had her own allowance and good upbringing by her aunts. In addition, the young lady was sincerely interested in politics.



The engagement picture of Winston Churchill and Clementine Hozier. (Credit: Bettmann Archive/Getty Images)

As a matter of fact, even though Clementine Churchill supported her husband in his professional activities, she didn't always agree with his political views. For instance,

she was a steadfast liberal and not once decried the Conservative party, of which her darling husband was the leader. She was the only person who dared to overtly resist Churchill's point of view and make him take her words seriously. Clementine had enormous authority over her husband and half-jokingly called herself his 'political conscience'. Under the influence of his wife the British Prime Minister went on several social reforms – including those geared at expanding women's rights.

Clementine was indefatigably devoted to numerous humanitarian projects during both World Wars, and received many honors and awards for her work. One of her biggest achievements was the Red Cross Aid to Russia Fund,

established in September 1941. In his memoirs, Ivan Maisky, the USSR ambassador to the UK, quoted Mrs. Churchill, who was deeply concerned by the drama that happened after Hitler's outbreak: "Once upon a time I received a



Clementine Churchill outside the Royal Academy in Piccadilly, London. (Credit: W. G. Phillips/Topical Press Agency/Getty Images)

letter from a group of women whose husbands and sons had served in the British army. They insisted on opening the second front. Then I thought: 'If these women demand the second front, so they ready to risk the lives of their loved ones, consequently, we must immediately help Russia'."

In total, over the years of its work, The Red Cross Aid to Russia Fund made approximately 8 million pounds of deliveries to the USSR. It helped with high-quality goods like: medicine, hospital equipment, X-ray machines, surgical instruments, food, blankets, clothing, prosthetics for the disabled people and many other things. Towards the end of the war, Clementine Churchill conceived the project to symbolize the solidarity of the two countries during the second World War. This showed the foresight of the woman because in 1950, when the USSR became a dangerous nuclear power, Winston realized that his wife was right and radically changed his anti-Soviet rhetoric.

The next great woman and a prominent public figure is Nadezhda Krupskaya (1869-1939). Being an adherent of Marxism and had strictly radical views, she took active part in the development of the political course of the

Bolsheviks. Her name was firmly tied to memories of the proletarian leader and



portrait of Nadezhda Krupskaya

her own spouse – Vladimir Lenin. However, she was much more than just Lenin’s wife. She dedicated her life to the cultural reorganization of the younger generation of the USSR. What is more, a lot of educational changes of post-revolutionary Russia took place on her initiative.

Thanks to Krupskaya, the concept of preschool institutions was established for proletarian’s kids so they could get free access to education. She

developed a system of polytechnic education in schools to help pupils to understand the basis of technology and to investigate the latest scientific achievements.

Moreover, Krupskaya was sure that every Soviet child should be introduced since their school years to all types of national economy. Thus, when they became adults, they were able to understand the structure of the entire economy of the country from



The picture of Vladimir Lenin and Nadezhda Krupskaya

the very first stages. It is important to note, that the pioneer movement in the USSR was also created on the initiative of Nadezhda Krupskaya. In November 1921, Krupskaya, during several public speeches, proposed to the Komsomol to create a new children’s organization based on the principles of the scout

movement, which originated in Britain. Her idea was initially rejected, but after a while the leaders of the Komsomol revised their decision and approved the initiative. They decided to make the children's communist movement, members of which was decided to call "pioneers". The attributes of movement were changed scout's symbolism: white shirt and a red tie instead of scout's green and red ties. From the very first days of the creation of the Pioneer organization, Krupskaya took an active part in its life. She considered that the Pioneer Organization should be a school of collectivism, a school of common activities for the good of the Socialist Motherland. Thus, we can conclude that Nadezhda Krupskaya, without a doubt, made a huge impact on the cultural development of Russia.

All things considered, we can highlight Churchill and Krupskaya's most prominent achievements: the help to the Red Cross by Churchill and educational work (scouts, schools) by Krupskaya. We believe that they were the women with powerful image and impressive contribution to history. Being the first lady means not only the status (the wife of the head of the country), but it also about being socially active and ready to help others. Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill were indeed role models for their people. They were the real first ladies. Each of them loved what they did. They lived in different countries, but were similar in their political views, they tried to help their state as much as they could. Both became great women for their people.

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