

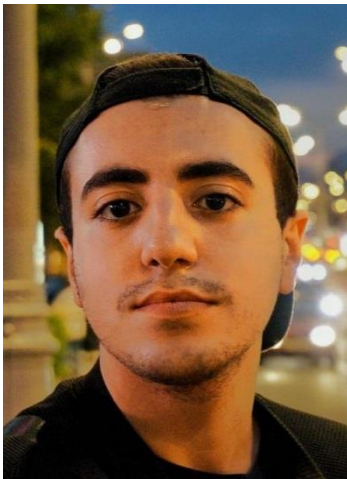
Individual essay contest

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

«What being the First Lady is like. Social activities of Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill»

«Быть первой леди. Общественная деятельность Надежды Крупской и Клементины Черчилль»

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Abstract

First Lady is the wife of the elected head of the state and the hostess of the White House. The term "First Lady" was first used under the fourth President of the United States, James Madison, to refer to the spouse of the president.

There are no rules that could help to fully understand this issue to define some specific duties and obligations, nevertheless the biographies of the most popular and famous housewives of the White Houses in history will always help to grasp the idea of "how to be the First Lady".

Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill are illustrative examples of the different types of "First Ladies".

Nadezhda Konstantinovna was a Russian revolutionary, devoted to communism, ideology and her husband, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Nadezhda Konstantinovna became one of the founders of the Soviet system of public education. Being childless, Nadezhda Konstantinovna surrounded other people's children with care and love.

Krupskaya was not the First Lady of the country, but a full-fledged member of the RSDLP, a revolutionary and a politician, and only then the First Lady of the country and Lenin's wife.

Clementine Churchill was Winston's main support throughout his life, and before becoming the First Lady of Great Britain. Clementine was the president of the Aid to Russia Fund, which operated from 1941 to 1951 and provided great assistance to the Soviet Union with medicines, medical equipment for hospitals, and food.

It is a well-known fact that Winston Churchill's wife Clementine was the only person whose opinion Winston always listened to.

Using the example of Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill, one can understand what kind of approach the first lady can have to solving state affairs and participating in public life.

In 1955 and 1956, Clementine destroyed three of Winston's portraits, because she felt that the portraits convey a false image of Winston Churchill.

The First Lady has the right to decide for herself what image to leave in the world history: either an active public figure, or a quiet and not eager for attention, the hostess of the White House.

"Behind every strong man there is a strong woman" - it is with this quote that I want to start an essay dedicated to First Ladies.

Who is First Lady? In terms of terminology, this is the wife of the elected head of the state and the hostess of the White House. However, if we speak globally, then we can understand that often the first lady of the state plays a significant role in the life of the country, and sometimes even a key one. There are a lot of famous first ladies in history, who did not only devote their love to their husbands and the state, but also used their courage, strength and strong-willed personality, authority and popularity among the inhabitants by engaging in social activities of the state for the good of its people and future.

Initially, the term "First Lady" was first used under the fourth President of the United States, James Madison, to refer to the spouse of the president, and later this term passed into other languages and is now used to refer to the spouse of the head of any state, if the head is not a monarch. As far as we know, the monarchy has its own history and its own terms.

How to be first lady? There are no rules that could help to fully understand this issue to define some specific duties and obligations, but nevertheless the biographies of the most popular and famous housewives of the White Houses in history will always help to grasp the idea of "how to be the first lady". The First Ladies of one generation are the inspiration of the future bearers of this title and so on in a circle. One generation imitates the other and complements its activities in order to go down in history and become an example for future hostesses of the state's White House.

One thing I want to say for sure: each First Lady has her own approach to her husband, the president, and, consequently, to the policy of the state. Some First Ladies were defined by their radicalism, courage and incredible charisma, while others, on the contrary, were very careful, even prudent and preferred a "soft" approach in solving various state affairs.

Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill are illustrative examples of the aforementioned types of "First Ladies". Completely different, with their own traits in their personalities, and both wives of the most famous and the strongest politicians of their time. Why were Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill so different in their approach to solving state affairs?

Let us start with the First Lady of the USSR - Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya. Nadezhda Konstantinovna was a Russian revolutionary, devoted to communism, ideology and her husband, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Krupskaya was born on February 14, 1869 in St. Petersburg.

At a time when Nadezhda Konstantinovna's peers were concerned about their personal and family future, she was interested in Marxist circles, the Socialist Revolutionary Parties from whom she learned how to use the weapon, explosives and the future of the country. In 1894, Krupskaya and her future husband and creator of the first socialist state in history - Vladimir Lenin – come together over common revolutionary views and Marxist interests.



Fig. 1 Nadezhda Krupskaya in her youth

In the RSDLP, the member of which she was, Nadezhda Konstantinovna distinguished herself by the fact that "there was no smarter and more dedicated believer than she was in the party." A similar characteristic was assigned to the First Lady of the USSR for life.

Regarding her social activities, since 1917, Krupskaya was a member of the Vyborg District Council of Petrograd and the State Commission on Education. The duties of Lenin's comrade-in-arms included work with children and the youth. Being familiar with the basics of the European scout movement, she took it as the basis for a future pioneer organization, where the ideas of communism were promoted.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna became one of the founders of the Soviet system of public education, formulated the main goal of the new education: "The school should not only teach, it should be the center of communist education." She was awarded the degree of Doctor of Pedagogy.

Being childless, Nadezhda Konstantinovna surrounded other people's children with care and love. She did not divide them into groups by origin and nationality. She was also worried about the fate and life of young mothers.

When, in the 1930s, repressive methods against "enemies of the people" began to affect the fate of their children, Krupskaya criticized such a policy and even threatened to publish her husband's suicide letter about the danger of Joseph Stalin coming to power. The country's leaders could not calmly take such 'excesses'. It was impossible to get rid of Krupskaya openly, and therefore she was removed from leading positions and transferred to archival work.

The rest of her life she dedicated to literary activity, was a member of various committees for children and youth affairs, contributed to the creation of new museums, and immortalized the name of her husband, writing various articles and books about him.

To conclude, the contribution of Nadezhda Konstantinovna not only to the emergence of the state of the USSR, but also to its further development, is difficult to overestimate. First and foremost, Krupskaya was not the First Lady of the country, but a full-fledged member of the RSDLP, a revolutionary and a politician, and only then the First Lady of the country and Lenin's wife.

Therefore, understanding the ideology of the party, of which Nadezhda Konstantinovna was a member, one can understand why the actions of the First Lady were sometimes radical and tough, and Krupskaya herself was a courageous and strong-willed woman who was an example not only for the women of their time, but also for men of the USSR. She devoted her entire life to her state and was an endlessly hardworking person who dedicated to her work.

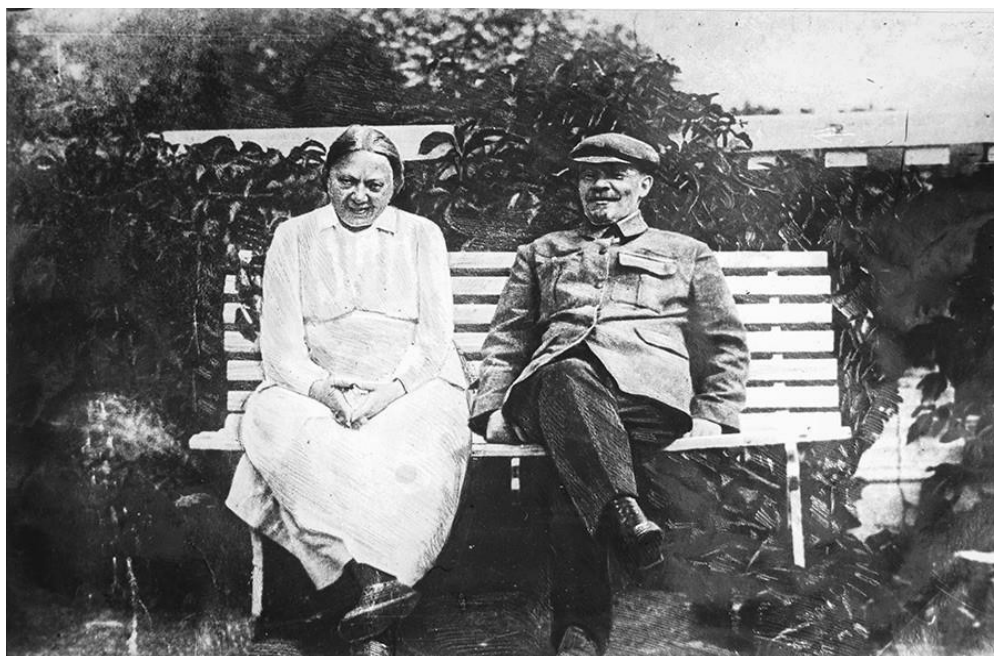


Fig. 2 Nadezhda Krupskaya with her husband V. I. Lenin at their summer country house

As for Clementine Churchill, she differed dramatically from Krupskaya and was completely another person. The First Lady of Great Britain was born on April

1, 1885, and since 1908 has been the wife of the greatest British in history according to the BBC,.

Clementine was Winston's main support throughout his life, and before becoming the First Lady of Great Britain, they had lived together for thirty-two years and were ready to go through all the political ups and downs together.

Public activities of Clementine Churchill made a great contribution during the Second World War: she was the president of the Aid to Russia Fund, which operated from 1941 to 1951 and provided great assistance to the Soviet Union with medicines, medical equipment for hospitals, and food. In total, over the years of the war, the First Lady of Great Britain's "Aid to Russia Fund" raised more than £ 8 million (about 200 million in modern money).

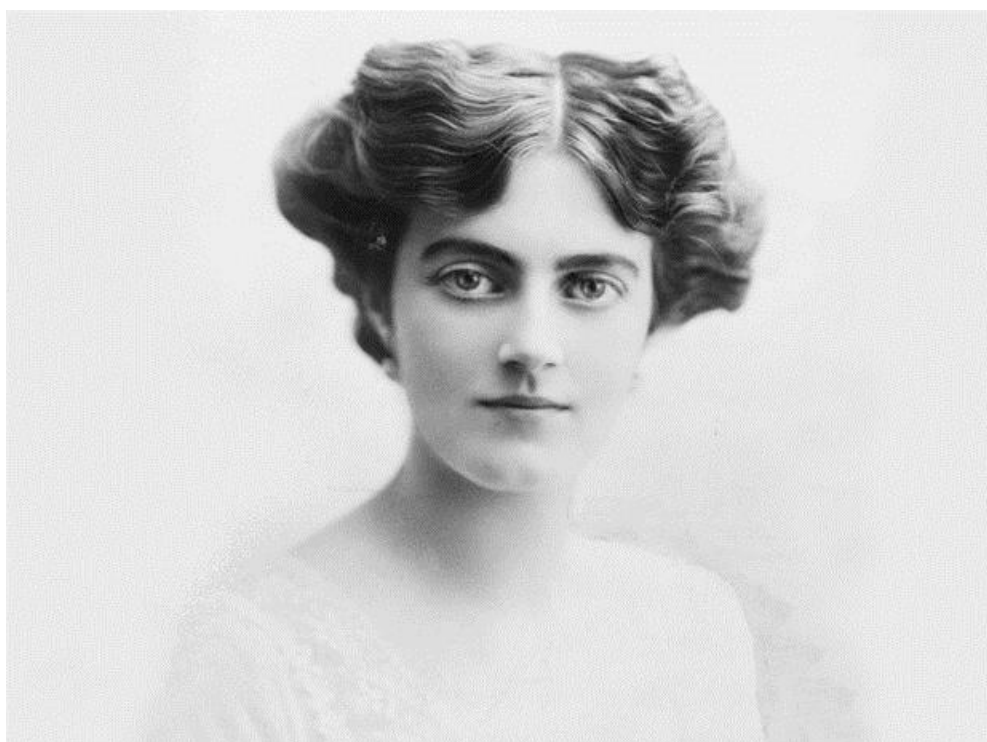


Fig. 3 Clementine Churchill in her youth

In March 1945, at the invitation of the Soviet Red Cross, Clementine arrived in the USSR and visited many cities in the country. In Moscow, she was awarded with the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, where she also celebrated the Victory's Day, and on May 9, Clementine delivered a message from Winston Churchill to Stalin on Moscow radio.

Thus, thanks to her generosity and charm, as well as her immense popularity in the Soviet Union, the First Lady of the Great Britain was the person who kept the peace between the two nuclear powers - the USSR and the Great Britain.

It is an open secret that Winston Churchill went down in history as an emotional and tough speaker. However, it is a well-known fact that his wife

Clementine was the only person whose opinion Winston always listened to and willingly followed his wife's advice concerning state affairs.

However, the most famous act of Clementine is her desire to protect the honor and dignity of her husband. In 1955 and 1956, the first lady destroyed three of his portraits, painted by major British artists and included in the family collection. She felt that the portraits convey a false image of Winston Churchill, thereby discrediting the magnitude of the personality of the British Prime Minister.



Fig. 4 Clementine Churchill with her husband Winston Churchill

Summing up all of the above, we can conclude that the social activities of Clementine Churchill and the contribution of her influence on her husband forever made her one of the greatest First Ladies in history.

Using the example of Nadezhda Krupskaya and Clementine Churchill, one can understand what kind of approach the first lady can have to solving state affairs and participating in public life. If Krupskaya did all her public affairs independently of her husband, Churchill preferred to engage in social activities behind her husband's big back.

As for other popular First Ladies in the world history, it is impossible not to mention the legendary Eleanor Roosevelt, who was actively involved not only in public, but also in political activities, and in 1939 surpassed her husband, the 32nd President of the United States Franklin Roosevelt, in popularity.

In Great Britain, from 1979 to 1990, the title of First Lady was not used, since a woman became the prime minister of the state for the first time - insanely strong, infinitely smart and courageous Margaret Thatcher. Margaret has left her mark in the world history, and for her character, she received the nickname "Iron Lady".

With regard to the USSR, the First Ladies were not particularly popular and were not famous for their active social activities, with the exception of the aforementioned Nadezhda Krupskaya, as well as Raisa Gorbacheva, who was nominated among the activists of a European scale, became a laureate of a number of public awards and therefore enjoyed worldwide popularity and respect.



Fig. 5 Margaret Thatcher on the left, Eleanor Roosevelt from above and Raisa Gorbacheva from below

Summing up all of the above, we can say one thing: how to be the First Lady is not fully known, but there are examples of what she can be. The First Lady has the right to decide for herself what image to leave in the world history: either an active public figure, or a quiet and not eager for attention, the hostess of the White House - the choice is hers.

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