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CONSTITUTION OF THE U. S. S. R.

RIGHTS OF TRADE
UNIONS IN THE U. S. S. R.

By V. Yarotsky

SOCIAL INSURANCE
IN THE U. S. S. R.

By N. Yekorsky

TEN CENTS

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INTRODUCTION.

The dominating interest of the world was for a long time private property and profit. All legislative efforts of society evolved exclusively around these two poles of the axle of capitalism, private property and profit.

But since the world war the equilibrium of this system has been disturbed. Part of the globe has emancipated itself from the centrifugal forces of capitalism. This part began to rotate in a different direction.

The Russian revolution took one-sixth of the globe from capitalism.

While the capitalists maintain that the purpose of the world is to supply the highest possible profits even tho the workers may starve by it, the Russian revolution raised the principle that the world must supply the workers with the best living possible tho the capitalists may starve by it. And the howl of the "outraged" capitalists against this new principle is answered by the echo of a phrase which the capitalists themselves have invariably thrown into the faces of complaining workers: Why don't you work!

This new world of the proletariat, which was begun by the Russian workers, could not be finished in one day. Its upbuilding is a difficult process. The Russian workers are still alone in the work of accomplishing this process.

As a foundation for this new world the Russian workers have made themselves the ruling class. And as the ruling class they center their legislative efforts no longer on how to make and how to increase profits but on how to help and how to protect the workers.

The constitution of the Soviet Union supplies the structure of the workers' government in Russia. And the labor laws of the Soviet Union give a picture of the accomplishments of the workers' rule in the direction of the protection of the workers and their rights.

The constitution and the labor laws of the Soviet Union thus become matters of tremendous interest for the workers of the world. The accomplishments of the proletarian revolution in Russia cannot be judged alone

by the immediate changes in the economic well being of the Russian workers. Although a great change has taken place in this direction too, yet the general backwardness of Russian industrial life and the incomparably lower standards that the Russian worker was subjected to in old Russia must lead judgment on this basis only to unsatisfactory and incomplete conclusions. The main question is how far have the workers of Russia succeeded in building up their political power. Success in this line insures the speedy progress of the construction of the new society in every other line.

In order to enable the American workers to judge for themselves what progress the Russian workers have made in their revolution we submit to them in this little volume the most important portions of the constitution of the Soviet Union and of the labor laws.

We do not want to hide from the reader the limitations of franchise which this constitution provides. On the contrary. We call their attention to them. But we also point out that every constitution is in the last analysis an instrument limiting the rights of some people. The outstanding feature of the Russian constitution is whose rights it limits. And here we can state with the pride and satisfaction of a class conscious worker that the constitution of the Soviet Union supplies the franchise to the workers and limits the rights of the capitalists.

It is this fact which made the establishment of the labor laws possible which we include in this volume. A careful study will be very instructive.

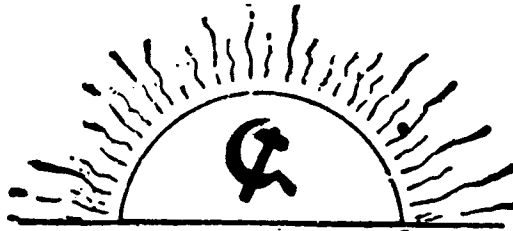
This little booklet is intended as a manual for American workers containing in the form of adopted laws all of the demands that they themselves must fight for in the United States. But it also shows what can be done in the way of protection of labor in a country where a child labor law cannot be declared unconstitutional because it interferes with profits. In Russia child labor is judged not from its effects on profits but on the health of the children.

We send out this booklet to make friends for the Workers' Government of Russia, and to remind the workers that only struggle will give and protect their rights.

CONSTITUTION

(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)

OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATED SOVIET REPUBLIC



SECTION I, CHAPTER I.

2. The Russian Republic is a Socialist State of Workers and Peasants which is being built up on the basis of the federation of national soviet republics. Within the precincts of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, all power is vested in the Soviets of workers, peasant, Cossack and Red Army deputies.

4. In order to guarantee to all workers real freedom of conscience, the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, and freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is bestowed on all citizens.

5. In order to guarantee to all workers real freedom of opinion, the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic abolishes the dependence of the press on capitalism and places at the disposal of the working class and the peasantry all the technical and material means for the publication of newspapers, pamphlets, books, and all other productions of the press and guarantees free circulation for them throughout the country.

6. In order to guarantee to all workers freedom of assembly the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic bestows on the citizens of the Soviet Republic the right to freely organize assemblies, meetings, processions, etc., and places at the disposal of the working class and the peasantry all the premises suitable for the holding of meetings.

7. In order to guarantee to all workers real freedom of association, the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, having destroyed the economic and political power of the propertied classes and having thereby removed all obstacles which the bourgeois social order prevented the workers and peasants from enjoying freedom of organization and action, gives the workers and peasants its full support for their unification and organization.

8. In order to guarantee to all workers real access to knowledge, the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic makes it its business to give them the benefit of free, full and many-sided education.

9. The Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic declares labor the duty of all citizens of the Republic.

10. In order to fully protect the achievements of the great workers' and peasants' revolution, the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic declares it to be the duty of all the citizens of the Republic to protect their Socialist country and introduces conscription. The honorable right to defend the Revolution by force of arms is bestowed only on the workers. Non-working elements have to carry out other military duties.

11. The Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic bestows all the rights granted by the constitution and the legislation of the Republic to the citizens of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic also on all the citizens of the other Soviet Republics who find themselves on the territory of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic.

On the strength of the solidarity of the workers of all nations the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic bestows all political rights on foreigners, domiciled in the territory of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic for the purpose of useful work and belonging to the working class, and also on peasants who do not employ hired labor, on the basis of the decisions of the supreme organs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

E. Subjects Within the Competence of Local Government Organs.

64. Regional, gubernia (state), district (county), uyezd (township), and volost (village or town) organs of the Soviet Government—the executive committees and their presidiums and also the deputies' soviets—must:

(a) Introduce measures for raising the cultural and economic level of the given territory.

(b) Draw up and endorse local budgets.

(c) Put into practice the decisions of the competent supreme organs of the Soviet Government.

(d) Decide questions of local importance to the given territory.

(e) Co-ordinate Soviet activity within the precincts of the given territory.

(f) Guarantee revolutionary justice and maintain law and order and public security within the precincts of the given territory.

(g) Discuss questions of national importance on their own initiative and also at the proposal of the higher executive committees.

65. The Congresses of Soviets and their executive committees exercise control over the activity of the lower local soviets and their executive organs.

PART IV.

ARTICLE VI.

SOVIET ELECTIONS.

A. The Active and Passive Vote.

68. The right to elect and to be elected to the Soviets is bestowed regardless of sex, religion, race, nationality, residence, etc. on the following citizens of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic not under 18 years of age on the day of the election:

(a) On all those who earn a living by productive and useful social labor and also on persons engaged in domestic work which enables the former to perform productive labor.

(b) On members of the Red Army and Navy.

(c) On citizens belonging to categories enumerated in paragraphs "a" and "b" of this article, who are unable (to some extent or other) to work.

NOTE: Among the persons who have not become citizens of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, the active and passive vote is bestowed on people designated in Article II of the present Constitution.

69. Persons who cannot elect or be elected even if they fitted into one of the enumerated categories are:

(a) People employing hired labor for the purpose of making profit.

(b) Persons living on unearned incomes such as: interest on capital, income from enterprises, receipts from property, etc.

(c) Private traders, trading and commercial middlemen.

(d) Monks and the clergy of various cults of all persuasions and denominations for whom this occupation is a profession.

(e) Employes and agents of former police, of the various corps of gendarmerie and secret service departments, members of the former ruling houses and also those persons who have conducted the activity of the former police, gendarmerie and punitive organs.

(f) Persons recognized in the established manner as mentally deranged or lunatics.

(g) Persons condemned for covetous and vicious crimes, for a period established by law or by the court sentence.

B. On the Holding of Elections.

70. Elections are held on the days established by the local Soviets or their executive committees.

71. A protocol is drawn up concerning the result of the elections signed by members of the electoral commission.

72. The order for conducting elections and also participation in them by the trade unions and other workers' organizations is determined by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee or its presidium.

C. On the Verification and Annulment of Elections and Recalling of Deputies.

73. Verification of the validity of elections to the Soviets is conducted by the electoral commission and verification of the validity of the delegates elected to the Soviet Congresses—by the Mandate Commissions.

74. In the event of the invalidity of the election as a whole, the question of annulling the elections is decided by the immediately higher organ of Soviet power. The supreme judge of the Soviet election is the All-Russian Executive Committee and its Presidium.

75. Electors who have sent deputies to the Soviets have the right to recall them at any time and conduct new elections.

The Code of Labor Law.

How and Through Whom Are the Rights of the Workers and Employes Protected in the Soviet Union?

It is the purpose of the present article to deal with the principles for the protection and labor among the workers and employes in State and private undertakings.

Two descriptions of organizations are concerned in the protection of the rights of the workers:

1. The organizations formed by the workers themselves—their trade unions and their broad mass organizations, the factory councils.

2. The State organizations—the people's Commissariat for Labor, social insurance, and organizations for social welfare.

The code of labor law now in force was drawn up by the People's Commissariat for Labor in conjunction with the Central Council of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union (W. L. S. P. S.) in 1922; and was accepted, after comprehensive debates in the separate districts, by the Central Executive Committee of the Union.

The "labor law" of the Soviet Union is thus the first code of labor law in the world issued by workers and peasants who have come into power.

The code is in every respect under the protection of the State; the carrying out of the labor laws is superintended by a labor inspection committee elected at the congresses and conferences of the trade unions.*

"The whole of the state organs are in duty bound to further the objects of the trade union (industrial) federations and their associated bodies, and to place at their disposal completely furnished premises for the establishment of 'labor palaces,' 'trade union buildings,' etc., and to accord them advantageous terms for the use of the post office, telegraph, telephone, railways, waterways, etc." (Article 155 of the code.)

1. The Trade Unions and the Protection of Labor.

The trade unions of the Soviet Union are based on the principle of voluntary membership. The financial resources of the trade unions are derived from the entry fees and from the monthly deduction to the amount of two per cent. From this reserves are formed for the requirements of the trade unions: 1. Unemployment benefit. 2. Medical aid. 3. Cultural and political work, etc.

The most subordinate trade union body to which the worker appeals in the works or factory, in the institution, or in the economic undertaking, is the factory council, represented in some cases by the shop stewards, in others by the delegate, the trade union functionary. The factory council is a court of appeal maintaining the closest connection with the masses of the workers, and as such it holds a uniquely important position not only in labor questions, but in the sphere of the social conditions of the workers. The factory councils are elected by the general meetings of the workers and employes, for a term of six months, and no difference whatever is made between workers or employes organized in trade unions and those not thus organized.

*The trade unions include only the workers and employes employed in the state and private undertakings.

The members elected to the factory council are released from all work except the work of the factory council, their wages are paid as before, and their professional qualification remains the same during the whole period of their membership of the factory council. (Art. 160.)

The works or factory undertakes to furnish the means for maintaining the factory council, and to put the necessary premises at its disposal.

The factory councils are responsible to the general meetings for their activities. In large works and institutions (employing no less than 200 workers) delegates are elected (1 to every 10 workers) for the purpose of maintaining close connection between the factory councils and the workers. These delegates are elected for the term of six months. It is the duty of these delegates to keep the workers informed regarding the decisions of the factory councils and the general meetings, and on the other hand to bring forward the wishes and trends of feeling among the workers. The delegates have to call a meeting twice monthly. The decisions of the delegates' meetings are binding on the factory councils.

Every factory council devotes its main attention to questions dealing with the protection of the economic interests of the workers and employes. At the same time it is incumbent upon the factory council to support the workers' and peasants' state in every respect, by means of inducing the workers to aid in the improvement of industry and in the building up of socialist economics. It must be emphasized that the proletariat, in realizing its hegemony, pursues interests of its own, opposed to those of the other strata of the population. Thus, for instance, the trade unions participate in the campaigns for the increased productivity of labor and for the economy regime, in order that prices of goods may fall, in the interests of the peasant consumers.

The Task of the Factory Councils.

The following are the tasks of the factory councils:

1. The protection of the interests of the workers (workmen, employes, and specialists).
2. The raising of the cultural level of the workers

(founding of clubs, training for responsible economic and trade union work, etc.).

3. The control of production in the interests of the proletarian state (production conferences, campaigns for the increased productivity of labor, for the economy regime, etc.). Exactly the same purpose is served by the commissions of professional qualification being formed, subordinate to the trade unions, for the improvement of the qualifications of the workers and for the training of specialists.

The whole of the activities of the factory councils are closely connected with the code of labor law.

Article 1 of the code states:

"The provisions of the code of labor law apply to all wage workers, and are binding on all workers and factories, institutions and economic undertakings (state and military undertakings, public and private undertakings, and undertakings employing homeworkers), and on all persons employing wage workers for remuneration." (Chap. 1, § 1.)

Thus the sphere of validity of the code extends equally to the work carried on in the factories and works, to the work done in offices and institutions, to domestic servants, and to agricultural labor, whether performed in a Soviet undertaking or for a private employer.

The worker is engaged on the basis of working and collective agreements determining the nature of his work and the amount of his wages.

"The work contract is an agreement between two or more persons, in which one party places its labor power at the disposal of the other in return for remuneration." (Article 27.)

The collective agreement is concluded on the one hand by the factory of each undertaking in its capacity as representatives of the workers and employes, and by the worker on the other, after every single point of the agreement has been previously discussed and accepted by the general workers' and employes' meeting.

The agreements determine certain conditions of work

and these cannot be altered by either party alone. The following condition is, however, imposed:

“Stipulations of an agreement should these involve a worsening of working conditions as compared with the conditions based on the code of labor law and other legally valid enactments, are invalid.” (Articles 19 and 28 of the code of labor law.)

From this it may be seen that the code declares all agreements to be invalid which run counter to the labor laws, and which worsen working conditions in comparison with the conditions laid down by these laws.

II. The State Organizations and the Mixed Commissions.

(a) The Standardization and Conflict Commission.

All agreements made are carried out by the parties to the agreement through the agency of the Standardization and Conflict Commissions (N. K. K.), composed of an equal number of representatives of both parties. Each of the parties chooses one representative and one secretary each, who have to carry out their duties alternately at the meetings of the N. K. K. Should at any meeting the representative be a representative of the management, a worker member of the N. K. K. is to be appointed as secretary.

The part played by the N. K. K. in the works, or factory is very great, and the N. K. K. is authorized to decide in a very wide circle of matters.

The code of labor law imposes on the N. K. K. not only the duty of carrying out the collective agreements, but also the following obligations:

I. The examination and confirmation of the division of work and duties according to tariff tables.

II. The confirmation of the standard outputs.

III. The determination of the forms of test and expert awards.

IV. The determination of the terms of holidays.

V. To deal with disagreements and conflicts arising from a violation of the labor law or of the collective agreements.

It sometimes occurs that varying interpretations of this or that paragraph of an agreement lead to conflicts; it is incumbent upon the N. K. K. to make a careful inquiry into the cause of the dispute and to decide whether the worker or the employer is in the right. In order to prevent any possibility of abuse of power on the part of the management, this commission is also entrusted with the important question of the dismissal of workers and employes. The code of labor law precisely specifies the cases in which a workman can be discharged (Art. 47), and the question of dismissal must be dealt with by the N. K. K., thus guaranteeing for the workman under threat of discharge the most unprejudiced decision.

Should a workman damage machinery or cause material loss as a result of carelessness or failure to observe regulations, the employer has a legal right to deduct the damage from the worker's wages, but the deduction must not exceed one-third of his monthly tariff wage. The decision as to whether and to what amount deductions are to be made, and whether the damage is to be partially or completely repaid, rests entirely with the N. K. K. (Art. 83).

All complaints made by workers or employes are to be submitted to the N. K. K. by the factory council or its delegates. The sessions of the commissions are public, and the decisions are determined by a majority vote.

Should any case be found impossible of decision by the Standardization and Conflict Commission, it is submitted to the arbitration chambers, to the boards of arbitration, and further to the Session of the People's Court for labor questions.

(b) The Arbitration Chambers.

The arbitration chambers are organs of the People's Commissariat for Labor. They are set up specially for each case, and have no permanent existence. After a case has been settled, the arbitration chamber is dissolved, and ceases to exist as such. The chamber is

composed of a chairman, to be selected by the People's Commissariat for Labor from the ranks of its responsible members, and of representatives of the conflicting parties. The chairman has no vote, his sole duty being to conduct the session, and to promote in every respect the pronouncement of an award. The representatives of the conflicting parties alone possess decisive votes. The arbitration chambers deal solely with cases which have already been submitted to the N. K. K. (Art 171), but could not be settled by this body; an additional condition here imposed is that the trade union takes part as representative of the workers.

Agreements arrived at by the conflicting parties are binding, and are carried out by the conflicting parties themselves (Art. 174).

(c) The Boards of Arbitration.

The boards of arbitration, like the arbitration chambers, are not permanent courts of appeal. The chairman is chosen by the agreement of the conflicting parties and possesses no vote; he has, however, the right of decision in cases where the disputing parties fail to come to an agreement. The separate cases can be passed on to the board of arbitration on the desire of the conflicting parties. An exception to this is formed by the cases known as "compulsory awards" for state institutions, that is, cases in which on the demand of the trade unions, the board of arbitration for the settlement of the disputes is appointed by the organs of the People's Commissariat for Labor; in such cases the state institutions and undertakings are not entitled to decline to participate in the board of arbitration. Should the conflicting parties not be able to agree on the choice of the chairman of the board, the authorities of the People's Commissariat for Labor are lawfully entitled to appoint a chairman according to their judgement.

(d) The Labor Sessions.

Labor conflicts involve certain specific peculiarities. One of the first of these peculiarities is the profound difference in the position of the conflicting parties, the

employer being economically stronger than the worker. The settlement of such disputes demands an extreme degree of careful attention on the part of the court, and it demands from the judge a high degree of ability to deal with workers; he must be familiar with the social conditions of the worker as to his duties and rights. For this purpose the people's courts are supported by sessions for labor questions and both penal and civil questions are submitted to these. The sessions are composed of representatives of the economic organs on the one hand and of representatives of the trade unions on the other.

The labor sessions composed of these collaborating elements accomplish an enormous amount of work and have gained a high degree of popularity among the workers.

The code of law places on the employer the entire penal responsibility for violations of the labor law. Wage workers, on the other hand are not penally responsible, or only in cases where they act as representatives of the employer; in this case they may be held penally responsible.

Should a works inspector, for instance, find that overtime has been worked in a factory without his knowledge or permission, he cannot make the workers penally responsible for this, but only the employer or management.

III. Juvenile Work.

In all questions concerning their work contract, juveniles possess the same rights as workers who have attained their majority. (Act. 31.)

Working hours are restricted to four hours for juveniles from 14 to 16 years of age, to six hours for juveniles from 16 to 18. The standard output is correspondingly reduced; the juvenile's output is fixed at three-quarters that of the adult worker. Juveniles are not permitted to do any night work or overtime whatever, and there are a number of branches of production in which juvenile labor is completely prohibited. The official lists give 139 of such trades.

Care is taken on the one hand that the developing organism of the juvenile worker does not suffer from excessive work, whilst on the other hand a staff of qualified workers is being trained. For this latter object there exist:

1. The "apprentice service," that is, the organizations ensuring individual training in the factories, works, and other institutions, under the leadership of qualified masters and workers, and, 2. the schooling of the youthful workers in the factory and workshop schools and in the trade union technical classes. (In the R. S. F. S. R., republics alone, without Ukraine and the other republics, there are 583 trade union technical schools and courses of instruction.) The apprenticeship training does not last longer than four years. Not more than one apprentice is allowed to every two workers.

Juveniles are legally compelled to undergo medical examinations at least once a year.

Besides the holidays customary for all workers, the juvenile workers have an additional fortnight's holiday, if possible in summer.

IV. Female Labor.

A number of special regulations have been issued for the protection of women and their work.

The code prohibits the employment of women in underground work, the carrying of heavy loads, and, with a few exceptions, night work. In 1921 (introduction of the Nep) the necessity of reducing unemployment among women caused women to be employed at night time or underground in some industries*).

Night work and overtime are prohibited, without exception for expectant and nursing mothers. Such women also enjoy various other advantages during pregnancy and after the birth of the child. From the fifth month of pregnancy onwards women may not, without their

*On the proposal of the trade union and of the department of the C. P. of the Soviet Union dealing with working among women.

agreement, be employed outside of one definite place (Sec. 133). The law provides that nursing mothers have not only the customary intervals of rest during work, but are permitted an additional half hour interval at least every three and one-half hours, so that they may nourish their children (this means at least three intervals, including the dinner hour, in the course of a working day). Intervals are reckoned as part of the working time and are paid for as such (Sec. 134).

Expectant mothers are given special leave in addition to their regular holidays. Women performing physical work have extra leave eight weeks before their confinement and eight weeks after, four months leave altogether; mental workers receive six weeks leave before and six weeks after confinement or three full months. During this period of leave the women receive their full wages from the sick club, and a lump sum for the newborn child, a sum amounting to half the average working wage. During the first nine months of the child's life the mother receives nursing allowance to the amount of one-eighth of the working wage. As a general rule it is impermissible to discharge pregnant women. Dismissal is only permissible when its necessity is proved to be absolutely unavoidable. (Thus for instance in cases of proved offenses against the penal law, or of closing down of the whole undertaking; if the undertaking is only partially closed, the expectant mother is given, with her agreement, other work in the same undertaking).

Women employes and workers dependent solely on themselves, or with children under 14 years of age to support, are exempt from taxation.

On March 8, on the occasion of the International Women's Day, the working women in all factories and institutions may leave work two hours earlier than the usual closing time.

V. Wages.

The wages of the workers are fixed by the collective agreements, or by individual work contracts (Sec. 58), that is, by agreement. The code of laws, whilst giving

the contracting parties the possibility of making an agreement as to the amount of the wages, provides that "the amount of the working wage must not be lower than the obligatory wage level prescribed by the competent state organs for the corresponding categories of work and for a certain given time" (Sec 59).

A tariff has been drawn up, dividing the workers into seventeen categories in accordance with their qualifications and the nature of their work. The wages laid down by the agreement are to be paid out at least fortnightly, whilst payment for single or temporary pieces of work has to be made immediately after the work is finished.

Should the worker have to perform work of various qualifications, the wage paid him is in accordance with that fixed by the tariff for the most highly qualified grade of his work.

VI. Protection of Health.

The workers and employes receive their full working wages during their regular holidays. After five and one-half months of work, every worker has a claim to a fortnight's holiday. In case of illness the worker receives a longer term of leave (two months and more), apart from his regular holiday. The sick benefit is paid from the health insurance fund, to the amount of the regular working wages. The law enacts that the places of workers or employes absent from work through sickness are kept open for them for at least two months—(Sec. 47 and 132). Trade union members requiring special treatment, baths, mineral waters, etc., are enabled to visit sanatoria or health resorts, either free of charge or at reduced fees by means of the trade unions.

Workers and employes requiring rest and recuperation are also enabled by the intermediation of the trade unions, to spend their holidays in convalescent homes by the sea, or in the so-called "floating convalescent homes," that is, in steamers making trips on the Volga and other large rivers.

The labor protection legislation of the Soviet Union

has as its main object the protection of the health and the personality of the worker.

Thus no industrial plant may be set running or change its position, without the previous permission of the labor protection inspector and of the organs superintending sanitary technics. The management of every undertaking is legally bound to take every measure for the prevention of accidents and to avoid the effects of work and working conditions tending to injure the health of the employes. Workers in professions especially dangerous to health are given special protective clothing and appliances.

The working hours are restricted to eight, the uninterrupted period of weekly rest is 42 hours (Sec. 109). This enactment is carried out in actual fact, it is not merely on paper. Office employes and mental workers, as well as workers employed below bank or in especially injurious professions (mining, chemical industry), and juvenile workers, work only six hours daily.

Overtime is prohibited, and is only permitted in a very few cases (Secs. 103 and 104), permission having to be granted on every occasion by the Standardization and Conflict Commission of the undertaking, and the agreement of the workers themselves obtained. The total number of hours worked as overtime may not exceed 120 hours per year for each individual worker, nor may more than four hours overtime be worked on two succeeding days.

VII. Social Insurance.

All contributions required for social insurance in the Soviet Union are charged exclusively to the employers. No deductions may be made from wages for social insurance.

Social insurance extends to all persons working for wages, alike whether the work is performed for private or for state or other public undertakings, or whether the workers are organized in trade unions or not. The social insurance of the Soviet Union is the sole insurance of its kind which extends to every case in which the in-

sured worker requires support (illness, unemployment, confinement, disability, death; see Sec 176).

The sick benefit is paid to the amount of the wages earned by the worker before losing his working capabilities. Should the employer have failed to pay the insurance contributions, the law protects the workers from losing his right to sick benefit by prescribing that the health insurance authorities have to pay the amount when the worker submits a certificate from the factory council, showing that he has been employed in the undertaking. The social insurance of the Soviet Union again comes to the aid of the workers when they have no earnings, not owing to lack of capacity to work, but from lack of opportunity, that is, in cases of unemployment. Every person who has been earning wages has a right to the unemployment benefit, provided he has no other source of income, such as some secondary trade of handicraft, etc.

“The amount of the unemployment benefit is fixed by the competent organs, to the amount of at least one-sixth of the average wage paid in the district in question, and in accordance with the qualifications of the unemployed worker and the length of time in which he was earning wages before becoming unemployed.” (Sec. 185.)

Juvenile workers receive unemployment benefit in accordance with their qualifications, without consideration of the length of time during which they were earning wages.

In cases of temporary incapacity for work unemployed benefit is paid until the working capacity has been restored, or until permanent incapacity has been certified by the competent authorities. In this last case the worker may claim a pension as invalid.

Sec. 187 of the labor code states:

“All persons who have been earning wages are entitled to benefit from the social insurance as soon as they have lost their working capacity in consequence of accident, illness or old age.”

It will be seen from this that a claim to an invalid

pension is only possible for those belonging personally to the working class, or to families which have lost their "breadwinner."

The sole restriction existing refers to the old age invalids. Old age invalids have a claim to old age pensions if they were working for wages or salary for at least eight years before becoming incapacitated (or are the widows or mothers of such persons).

The old age invalids receive either old age pensions or are placed in homes for aged people. Old age pensioners who are still robust, and desirous of working, are given the opportunity of learning a new profession adapted to their powers, and can be placed in suitable instruction institutions provided by the Soviet Union instead of being paid the old age pension.

Invalids who have lost their capacity as wage earners, but who wish to carry on some trade or handicraft (without employing wage earners), are freed from the handicraft tax, but receive no pension.

With regard to all other supplementary descriptions of social support, the invalids unable to work receive the same advantages as the other categories of the insured—care and support of children, burial of relations, etc.

War cripples and invalids are not supported by the organs of social insurance, but by the organs of the (state) Social Welfare.

The task which the labor protection system of the Soviet Union has set itself is to use every available means for preserving all working forces to the utmost, and this not merely in the interests of national economics, but in the interest of every individual person, for the aim of a socialist state of society is the organization of labor upon a basis securing to every single human being the most advantageous possible conditions for the development of his creative powers and faculties.

The Rights of Trade Unions in the U. S. S. R.

By V. YAROTSKY.

The history of the working class throughout the whole world has demonstrated that the workers have secured the right of organization only as the result of the most fierce and stubborn struggle. There is no need to recall that the first quarter of the 19th century was an epoch of the struggle of the British workers for the right to combine. Up to the '80s the French workers had to suffer the most intense persecutions for the slightest attempt to unite against their masters, nor need we recall the well-known fact of the complete prohibition of any workers' organizations whatsoever in former Russia prior to the first revolution of 1905. The subsequent law on societies (March 4, 1906) however, had for its object the stemming of the stormy growth of the trade unions, which task it fulfilled successfully.

All these historic facts are now well-known to every educated worker. More important, however, is the fact that after the formal recognition on the part of the bourgeoisie of the rights of the workers to form their own organizations, the working class was compelled by bitter experience to admit the truth of Lassalle's conception that every "constitution" (including the law on trade unions) is nothing more nor less than an "expression of the real correlation of forces." The offensive of capitalism against labor in present-day England quite definitely confirms this conception, in view of the policy of the Conservative government of Great Britain which is most definitely based on restricting the rights of the trade unions. And since under bourgeois rule the real correlation of forces always has the sharp end of the wedge directed against the working class, the precariousness of the entire system of legal norms which determine the framework of activity and the rights of the trade unions in capitalist countries becomes evident.

We find quite a different state of affairs under the con-

ditions of the proletarian dictatorship established in the U. S. S. R. after the October revolution. The result of the revolution was a radical shifting in the entire system of correlation of social forces: the rule of the bourgeoisie was replaced by the rule of the working class. This in the first place was bound to be reflected by a change in the very nature of the legislation on trade unions. Instead of the laws and legal standards which regulate the rights of trade unions being "scraps of paper" scrapped at every step by the organs of the bourgeois state and the employers, these standards in the U. S. S. R. are a part of the fundamental laws of the workers' and peasants' country in which the government is constructed on the basis of working class rule. Article 16 of the Constitution of the U. S. S. R. establishes on the one hand the social, and not state legal status of the trade unions, as workers' organizations constructed on the basis of independent activity. On the other hand this article definitely brings the trade unions in to the system of social relations, enjoying particular privileges in the workers' state. It implies the grant of premises at "labor palaces," "trade union houses," etc., rent free, reductions in fees for utilizing the post, telegraph, telephone, railway and water transport, etc.

Already from the mere fact of the inclusion of support of the trade unions being amongst the fundamental tasks of the state it arises that the rights and powers of the trade unions in the U. S. S. R. must be regarded as something quite different from those in bourgeois countries. Under conditions of proletarian dictatorship these rights are a system of social relations which strengthen the proletarian dictatorship itself.

This is the reason why the legislation on trade unions in the U. S. S. R. has a very broad structure and grants these unions rights unknown in the legislation of Western Europe or America.

First of all, according to the labor legislation of the U. S. S. R., the trade unions are the only lawful representatives of the workers in social, political and economic life. This conception is formulated in the "Code

of Labor Laws" in the following manner: the trade unions, which comprise citizens working for wages in state, social and private enterprises, institutions and businesses have the right to approach various organs on behalf of the wage earners as a party concluding collective agreements and also act as representatives on their behalf on all labor and social questions. Article 151).

In the system of the state structure, this representative nature of the unions finds its expression in two factors: in the factor of elections to the Soviets, and in the factor of representation on the Soviets. In the elections to the Soviet from the factories the participation of the trade unions in which the workers of the given enterprises are organized is obligatory. At the same time for those categories of workers for whom voting cannot be conducted in enterprises (commercial workers, Soviet employes, educational and art workers) the electoral meetings are summoned by electoral commissions in agreement with the unions and must take place under the chairmanship of a representative of the trade unions. Besides this, irrespective of this participation of the union in the election, there is representation on the Soviets themselves not only of the trade union masses, but also of the trade union apparatus in each electoral district (town, province, uyezd): two from every union and a definite number from the inter-union organizations.

In the supreme state organs (C. E. C. of the U. S. S. R., C. E. C. of the R. S. F. S. R. and other republics) we find a definite representation of the trade unions, although the elections are conducted by the congress of Soviets personally, and not according to representation of the separate organizations. The significance and role of the unions is so considerable that in all lists of candidates adopted by congresses there is included a definite number of trade union workers in order that the opinion of the workers may also be expressed through the apparatus of the unions. In the leading organs of the state and economic structure (such for instance as

the Council of Labor and Defense) there is a representative of the All-Union Trade Union Center (the A. U. C. T. U.) with full voting powers in appointing members of the Supreme Economic Council of the U. S. S. R. the representative nature of the trade unions is also taken into account and a definite number of members appointed from amongst trade union workers who upon appointment continue working in the trade union movement.*

In the economic field the trade unions are invested with no less, if not more rights than in connection with state structure. We have already pointed out that among the members of the Supreme Economic Council the trade union movement is well represented. Generally speaking, representation of the unions in the organ regulating economic life and establishing economic policy constitutes a substantial part of the work of the trade unions in the U. S. S. R. While not interfering in the direct administration of production, the trade unions take active part in the work of the leading organs of administration and construction in the national economic system. There is not a single union in the U. S. S. R. which does not devote a considerable amount of this time and energy to working out and testing the plans and projects of economic construction in the respective branch of national economy. One may cite as an example the metal workers' union which takes active part in elaborating plans for the entire metal industry of the U. S. S. R.

Therefore, the code of labor laws establishes for the lower organs of the trade union movement extremely wide powers for participation in the construction of na-

*There is no need to state here that the unions are an actual "reservoir" for the state and economic system and many workers in the trade union movement are gradually transferred entirely to economic and state work. What is more, the overwhelming majority of posts in the U. S. S. R. are occupied by those who have passed through the school of the trade union movement.

tional economy. Article 158 of the code formulates their rights in this field in the following manner:

“The object of activity of the committee (factory or local committee) is:

“(a) Representation and the defense of the interests of the workers and employers which it comprises, before the administration of the enterprise or institution on all labor and social questions concerning the workers.

“(b) Representation before governmental and social organizations.

“(c) Supervision of the accurate fulfillment of the administration of the enterprise or institution of the established laws on labor protection, social insurance, wages, rules of sanitation and technical safeguards, etc., also co-operation with the state labor protection organs.

“(d) Measures for improving the cultural and material life of the workers and employes.

“(e) Help in the normal process of production in state enterprises and participation through the respective trade unions in the regulation and organization of the national economy.”

In the various forms of economic organizations of a social nature (consumers co-operatives, housing co-operatives) in the insurance offices created on the basis of special legislation—the trade unions have no less important rights. In the field of consumers' co-operation for instance, organized within the U. S. S. R. by the Centrosoyuz, the leadership of the workers' co-operatives is in the hands of the special Central Workers Section, which is under the jurisdiction of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (A. U. C. T. U.) and the membership elected by congresses is appointed by the trade unions.

Such are the rights of the trade unions in the state, social and economic structure. As we see they are marked by considerable scope and make the trade unions active participators in socialist construction. But there is one field in which the unions not only participate, in which they are actually and juridically supreme. This is the field of labor regulation. The state apparatus of

labor regulation in the U. S. S. R. is organized and administered by the People's Commissariat for Labor. It is the latter which establishes the minimum wages for the entire country, organizes labor inspection, puts into force and elaborates the norms of labor legislation, etc. Everything that is put into force over and above the norms of labor legislation established on a general state scale, is established by agreement through collective agreements between the workers and the administration of the enterprise or institution. But in each of these fields the decisive word belongs to the trade unions. The People's Commissariat for Labor is a state apparatus. However, the candidature for the post of People's Commissar for Labor, sanctioned by the C. E. C. of the U. S. S. R., is the privilege by the All-Union Congress of Trade Unions and its decision is obligatory for the state: analogically, the most responsible workers of the Commissariat for Labor itself are also appointed by the trade union movement. And not a single labor legislative is passed without the consent of the A. U. C. T. U. With regard to collective agreements these are concluded and can be concluded in the U. S. S. R. only by the trade unions.

All this comprises a systematic order of rights and powers of the trade unions under the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship. The share of the participation of the trade unions in the political and economic life of the workers' state is so considerable by this system of rights of the trade union movement that at first glance it would seem that the trade unions, even though only partially, were the state apparatus. However, such an impression is absolutely incorrect. The state in the U. S. S. R. does not even control the formation of trade unions. The trade unions are not subjected to any kind of registration on the part of the state organs. They are strictly social organizations which themselves control their existence from the first moment of their formation. Article 152 of the code of labor laws establishes this quite clearly and definitely. This article reads:

“The trade unions organized on lines determined by

the respective congresses of these organizations are not liable for any registration in state institutions, established for societies and unions, and are registered in the inter-union organizations uniting them, in the manner established by the All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions."

In the most "liberal" of the norms regulating the trade union movement, in the British legislation on trade unions, it is established that the unions also need not register in the state organs. But if they want to have legal rights, i. e., the right to possess property, conduct judicial cases, or in general enjoy the rights of the trade union, they are obliged to register in the established order with the general registrar of societies and associations. In the U. S. S. R. the state authorities recognize as juridical units all organizations of workers registered as trade unions by the inter-union organizations and not by state organs and invests such trade unions (Article 154 of the Code) with the rights of "acquiring property and owning same; concluding all kinds of agreements, transactions, etc., on the basis of the existing legislation. . . ."

Thus the labor legislation of the U. S. S. R. the nature of trade unions as social organizations is emphasized.

The investment of extensive rights to such a free social independent organization, absolutely outside the control of state organs and on the contrary controlling the work of the said apparatus arises from the fact that the legislation understands the nature of the trade unions as organs expressing the social opinion of the working class, i. e., that social opinion on the support of which the entire state order of the U. S. S. R. is based. The workers' state based upon proletarian dictatorship cannot fail to see in the system of extensive rights of the trade unions a guarantee of its own stability and subsequent endurance. As we have pointed out above, the real correlation of social forces in the U. S. S. R. makes the trade unions a powerful social-political and economic factor and therefore pre-determines the wide scale and many-sided nature of the norms regulating the rights of the trade unions in this country.



Social Insurance in the U. S. S. R.

By N. YEKOVSKY.

I. Organizational System.

Contact with the T. U's.

The main distinction between the organizational system of Soviet Insurance from bourgeois systems is that Soviet Insurance organs are based from top to bottom on the principle of closest contact with the trade unions.

Central Social Insurance Administration and the Chief Social Insurance Department.

The work of social insurance in the U. S. S. R. comes under the People's Commissariat for Labor of the U. S. S. R. which directs it through the Central Insurance Administration. At the head of the latter is a director appointed to this position by the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions who is at the same time a member of the Collegiate of People's Commissariat for Labor. The direction of social insurance in the Soviet Union is carried out by the social administration of the respective republics attached to the People's Commissariat for Labor of the allied republics and also directed by persons nominated by trade union organizations. The Social Insurance Administrations are accountable to the Collegiate of the People's Commissariat of Labor on the one hand and to the responsible central inter-union organization on the other.

Councils of Social Insurance of the Union and Republics.

With the object of obtaining common regulation of all social insurance matters, direction of the activities of the Central Social Insurance Administration, examination and ratification of plans, budgets, etc., there is organized under the People's Commissariat of Labor an All-Union Council of Social Insurance, composed of four representatives from trade union organizations and four representatives from economic organs and departments with representative of the P. C. for L. (chief of the Central Social Insurance) at the head. For regulation of the work of social insurance in the allied republics, similar councils are organized under the P. C. for L. of these republics. Thus the trade unions are also ensured dominating influence in the Social Insurance Councils.

Insurance Offices.

The direct administration of social insurance locally is entrusted to the insurance offices. The local insurance offices are established on the territorial principle, embracing a district within a radius of not less than two versts and with not less than 2,000 insured persons. The local offices are headed by a committee elected for a definite term (one-half to one year) by the conference of trade unions of a given locality, provincial insurance office fulfilling the functions of local offices in the provincial town and dealing with the allotment of pensions for the whole province and the regulation of the insurance fund of the province as well as directing the activities of the local offices—are organized in all provincial cities. The committees of these offices are elected at the district sessions of the trade unions.

Both the local and the provincial insurance offices are accountable to the higher organs and to the local department of the P. C. for L. and corresponding organs of the trade unions.

For serving insured workers engaged in large enterprises and also in enterprises situated a long distance from the insurance offices, the latter set up their own branches in these enterprises.

Transport Insurance Offices.

The serving of railway and water transport workers and employes, in view of their specific forms of organization of labor, is entrusted to transport insurance offices organized on an extra-territorial principle and managed by a committee, members of which are elected at the sessions of transport workers' unions.

Auditing Commission.

For control of the activities of the insurance office committee at the same time as the election of the latter, auditing commissions are also elected, whose duties include the control of financial, operative and economic activities of the offices, inspection of accounts, moneys, etc.

II. THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM.

Social Insurance Expenditure at Expense of Employers.

The main difference in the financial system of Soviet insurance from the bourgeois lies in the fact that in the U. S. S. R. all the burden of expenditures for insurance of the workers and employes falls on the shoulders of the employers, whereas in bourgeois countries, the workers pay more than the employers. In accordance with the present code of labor laws, funds of the insurance organs are established from insurance contributions paid by enterprises and institutions on their own account without the right to deduct same from the pay of workers and employes.

Dimensions of Insurance Contributions.

Insurance scales are established by a special regulation of the Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissars of the U. S. S. R., obligatory for every locality of the Soviet Union. By the existing regulation of February 26, 1925, a tariff is established amounting for the entire mass of insured to about 14 per cent of their total wages.

Insurance Funds.

The contributions of insurers are entirely at the disposition of the insurance offices which allot from their

revenue 5 per cent for the All-Union funds, 5 per cent for the Republic funds and about 26 per cent for the medical fund, the remaining 62 per cent being expended on pensions and relief and also on organizational items. The all-union fund is expended on reinforcing the funds of the respective republic on the organization and maintenance of health resorts and sanatoria on an all-union scale, maintenance of social insurance museums, organizational expenses at the center, etc. The republic funds are expended on the corresponding requirements of a republican scale. As far as medical funds are concerned, these are transferred to the accounts of the health organs for the rendering of free medical aid to the insured and their families.

Order of Collection of Insurance Contributions.

All institutions and enterprises in which wage workers are engaged are obliged to present a declaration every month to the office and the amount due for the period fixed by the local insurance organs. In the event of non-payment of contributions by the established date, the insurer, no matter who he is, is obliged to pay a penalty to the extent of 2 per cent for the first and 3 per cent on every following month, while the amount owing together with the fine is collected by the agents of the office, directly without recourse to court—by a compulsory order for the confiscation and sale by auction of the property of the debtor. Apart from this, the individuals (owners or directors of government institutions and enterprises) guilty of not paying contributions in the course of three months consecutively, also of knowingly making a false declaration or communication are liable to summons before the criminal court and punishment by a fine (from personal funds) or imprisonment.

Amounts of the Insurance Payments Contributed.

During 1925, the insurance organs of the Soviet Union collected from the insurers more than 250 million roubles or nearly 95 per cent of the entire sums due and in the first half of the current year about 310 million roubles

which represents 96 per cent of the computed amount and a little less than 14 per cent of all wages paid in the U. S. S. R.

III. RELIEF FOR INSURED AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Sphere of Influence.

In accordance with the present code of labor laws, social insurance extends to all categories of hired labor, independent of the nature and period of the work, nature of payment or in which (state, individual, concession, etc.) enterprise their labor is employed.

The number of insured embraced by the insurance offices is illustrated in the following figures: On January 1st, 1923, 4,940,000; January 1st, 1924, 5,455,000; on January 1st, 1925, 6,062,000; January 1st, 1926, 7,732,000 and March 1st, 1926, 7,804,000.

IV. FORMS OF INSURANCE.

Forms of Relief.

The existing code of labor laws covers the following aspects of the insurance relief: (a) rendering medical aid; (b) granting of relief for temporary labor incapacity (illness, injury, quarantine, pregnancy, childbirth, nursing sick members of the family); (c) rendering support for nursing infants, purchase of articles for care of infant, burial of insured and of members of his family; (d) granting of relief for unemployment; (e) pension for invalids and (f) pension for members of families of wage earners in event of death of unaccountable absence of breadwinner (p. 176, Code).

Apart from the above-mentioned forms of aid, the insurance offices also provide the insured with sanatorium and health resort and places them during the compulsory two weeks vacation in rest homes.

Rendering Medical Aid.

The work of rendering medical aid to insured and their families is concentrated in the hands of special departments of the Health Commissariat organs directed by persons elected by the trade unions. Receiving from

the insurance organs about one-third of their entire income, these departments are obliged to render to the insured and their families clinical aid free of charge and are given first precedence, also hospital treatments, aid for invalids at home, maternity aid, inoculation of all kinds and also to undertake all kinds of special treatment (water, light, X-rays, etc.), with the free issue of medicine and the necessary medical appliances in all cases. The organs of health protection also organize creches for the children of insured working women.

The plans for rendering medical aid to insured and their families are discussed in special councils with the participation of representatives of the trade unions and insurance offices.

Relief During Temporary Disablement.

In the event of temporary incapacity for labor, on the part of the insured, certified by a doctor, the insurance office is obliged to pay the insured from the first day of disablement up to the time of recuperation or of the establishment of permanent incapacity, an income corresponding to the actual wage received prior to illness, but not exceeding seven roubles fifty kopecks per day.*

Pregnant women and nursing mothers engaged in physical labor receive the above mentioned income during eight weeks before and eight weeks after childbirth. Those engaged in mental work, six weeks before and six weeks after childbirth.

It is apropos to observe here that the fears of bourgeois legislators as expressed by them when workers present demands for the payment of complete wages during illness, that this system would "encourage laziness" is unjustified and an absolute slander on the working class: statistical data of Soviet insurance offices as in the co-efficient of illness of our workers (about ten days per year per insured) refute this calumny in a most convincing manner, for the co-efficient in bourgeois

*This maximum is temporarily established for persons with high salaries.

countries, where the worker is merely granted part of his wages during illness, is not only not lower, but even in some cases higher than ours.

In 1925, relief for temporary incapacity absorbed 30 per cent of the entire budget of the insurance institutions (not including the fund for treatment).

Supplementary Grants.

In addition to the above-mentioned grants to women in childbirth, a grant is made both to employed women and also to the wives of insured workers, for the purchase of necessary articles for the child for one month prior to birth to the extent of one-half of the average monthly wage in the given locality (for Moscow, this wage is about 80 roubles), and a grant for feeding the child to the extent of one-eighth of this wage during nine months after birth.

Grants for burial of the insured or members of their families, or their dependents amount to the monthly average wage of a given locality for the burial of persons of more than ten years of age, and to half this sum for the burial of persons below this age.

Supplementary forms of relief cost the insurance institutions about 15 per cent of their budget.

Unemployment Benefits.

Unemployment insurance covers all persons who formerly worked for wages irrespective as to the causes of their leaving work, on condition that they have no means of existence. The conditions for receiving this grant is registration in the employment bureau during the established time. For unskilled workers and employes there must be a one-year and three-year wage-earning status respectively. Skilled workers and employes and also men demobilized from the Red Army and fleet receive 30 per cent of the average local wage and other unemployed two-thirds of this sum during nine months of the year.

Besides this, unemployed have the right to receive supplementary forms of relief (see above) and also medical aid on a par with other forms of insured persons.

In addition to monetary aid, the unemployed also receive from the labor commissariat organs, labor aid in the form of collective and public work organized for this purpose. They also are trained at the expense of the social insurance organs in special workshop schools organized for raising their qualifications.

Side by side with this, the unemployed also enjoy a whole number of privileges in the form of exemption from all kinds of taxes, very low rents, reduced fares to place of work or on returning to native place.

Expenditure on rendering monetary aid to the unemployed comprised 10 per cent of the entire budget of the insurance institutions during 1925.

Relief for Labor.

Right to relief for disability is enjoyed by all wage earners who have lost their labor capacity from injuries, venereal ailments or old age, but in the latter case, they must have eight years wage earning status. Invalid's pensions are granted to an extent of two-thirds of the former wage of the invalid if he is absolutely incapacitated for labor but not in need of outside attendance (second group) receive two-thirds of the above-mentioned pension, but persons incapacitated for regular work at a trade yet capable of obtaining means of existence by temporary, casual or light work (third group) receive the full pension.*

In respect to invalids with partial loss of labor capacity (IV, V, VI groups) these get a pension to an extent of one-third, one-sixth, one-tenth of their wages respectively if their incapacity is the result of injury or trade illness.

Besides this, invalids have the right to supplementary relief and medical aid on a par with other forms of insured workers and may also receive instead of pension,

*The full pension for an invalid of the first group suffering from a trade illness are granted three-quarters of former wage and not two-thirds, and the pensions of other forms of invalids are raised accordingly.

complete maintenance in the hotels for invalids organized by the insurance organs. Invalids also enjoy the right to special reductions in taxes, rent, free training for children, etc.

Relief for Families of Deceased.

Persons having the right to receive pensions in the event of death of the wage-earning breadwinner (irrespective of wage earning status) are: minors or children incapable of labor, brothers and sisters of the deceased and incapacitated persons or parents caring for the children under eight years of age, or the husband or wife of the deceased. This pension is given from the time of presenting application: up to sixteen years of age for minors and to the persons engaged in caring for the children up to the time they attain eight years.

The families of insured workers deceased from general causes, receive: two-thirds of full pension (see above), in the event of there being three or more pensioners, half of the full pension for two pensioners, and one-third of full pension in cases of one member of the family having right to pension. The families of persons deceased through injury or trade illness receive an augmented pension to an extent of three-quarters, one-half and one-third of the wages of the deceased respectively.

Pensions to invalids who have lost their labor capacity through general ailments or old age, as also the families of persons deceased through general ailments, are granted if they have no means of existence. Pensions for persons suffering from injury or trade illnesses as also for their families are granted, independent of the property position of the pensioners.

Besides the grants mentioned above, families protected by the insurance organs receive supplementary grants from the medical aid and the tax, and other reductions mentioned above.

Expenditure on relief to invalids and members of their families, absorbed 21 per cent of the entire budget of the insurance organs during 1925.

Aid in Sanatoria and Health Resorts.

Besides the above forms of aid, the insurance organs also render treatment to the insured in sanatoria and health resorts and also place them in rest homes, upon which from 8 to 10 per cent of the insurance budget is expended. This aid is rendered in sanatoria, rest homes and health resorts situated in the beautiful palaces of the former bourgeoisie and the nobility, now handed over to the insurance organs by the government of the U. S. S. R. Besides free fare at the expense of insurance organs as also free treatment and maintenance, the insured receive complete wages from the insurance organs both during temporary disablement, during the time of their journey and also while in the sanatorium. The period of sojourn in the sanatoria fluctuates from five weeks for fatigue or nervous cases, etc., three and one-half months for tuberculosis, while in rest homes the periods from two to four weeks in accordance with the length of vacation received by the workers. In 1924, 200,000 workers passed through the sanatoria, rest homes and health spas. In 1925, 250,000 passed through and it is expected that during the present year there will be no less. Eighty per cent of the places are given to workers and twenty per cent to employes.

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The above is a general outline of the work of the social insurance in the U. S. S. R.

It goes without saying that besides the achievements in this work there are no small number of weak points. In particular in the matter of unemployment relief in the U. S. S. R., which is explained by the specific character of the unemployed, the overwhelming majority of whom are recruited from the peasantry and de-classed, who have never worked as wage earners. The main reason, however, is the poverty of our country ruined by the imperialist and civil wars.

But the workers of the Soviet Union are not discouraged by these defects, for they hope to overcome them by their energetic work of strengthening their national economy, the position of which is improving day by day.

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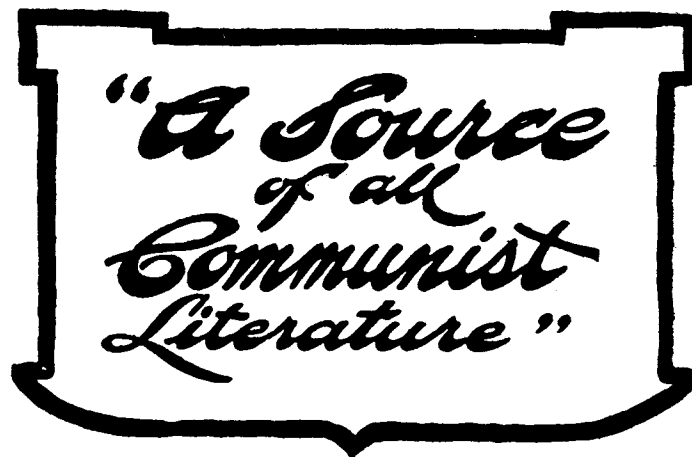
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