

2020t do : Pol. Inf. Center

Workmen's
Protective Legislation
in Poland

*20 Years Co-operation with the
International Labor Organization*

Preface by

JAN STAŃCZYK

Polish Minister of Labor

CONGRESS OF POLISH TRADE UNIONS
LONDON

sygn 93

Economics

Workmen's
Protective Legislation
in Poland

*20 Years Co-operation with the
International Labor Organization*

Preface by

JAN STAŃCZYK
Polish Minister of Labor

CONGRESS OF POLISH TRADE UNIONS
LONDON

PREFACE

At the closing session of the 25th Conference of the International Labor Organization held in Geneva on June 28th, 1939, Mr. John G. Winant, then the Director of the International Labor Office, speaking of the leaders in European politics declared: "I want to believe that their understanding of the cruelties and hardships of war and their love for their own people, will never permit them within this generation again to plunge the Western World into armed conflict—for war brings no victories, but only death and mutilation and destitution and personal sorrow."

Mr. Winant had thus already foreseen the approaching calamity, whilst at the same time he wished to believe that it might be avoided. Two months later war had become a reality on a scale never before experienced.

No country has suffered so much as my own. It was the first to experience the horrors of war when it dared to defy the Hitlerite expansion, and nothing, I venture to say, could exceed the heroism with which Polish men and women are standing up to the German aggressor.

I have no doubt that in the end those who fight for freedom and justice will be victorious and I therefore consider the discussion of the problem of organization of permanent peace and post-war reconstruction as topical. In order to avoid the fatal mistakes of 1914-1918 preparations must be made beforehand. How right were the words of Mr. Harold Butler, Mr. Winant's predecessor as Director of the International Labor Office, when he said: "Unless the implications of a real peace, and particularly its economic implications, have been thought out in advance, unless statesmen and people can see the issues with clear eyes when the critical moment comes, the chance may again be lost as it was lost in 1919."

The convening of the 26th Conference of the International Labor Organization in New York shows that this Organiza-



1385177

tion is alive and that its leaders are well aware of the tasks that confront them. This Organization, which was first put on its feet by the incomparable Albert Thomas and later so ably developed by Mr. Harold Butler and Mr. John G. Winant, has withstood the shocks of war. In his report to the 25th Conference of the International Labor Organization held in 1939 in Geneva Mr. Winant wrote: "The present international crisis calls not for concentration of activities but for an increasing effort and greater energy."

The very fact that the forthcoming Conference will take place in the United States of America is a good omen. For was it not Samuel Gompers, the distinguished leader of American workers who acted as Chairman of that Commission on the International Labor Legislation in 1919 which drew up "The Charter of Labor"? It was also in Washington that the First Conference of the International Labor Organization was held in 1919, under the chairmanship of Mr. William D. Wilson, the U.S. Secretary of Labor. Another link of the International Labor Organization with the United States is Mr. Winant, who acted as delegate to the I.L.O. Conference in 1936 and was its Director until his appointment as Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Mr. Carter Goodrich is Chairman of the Governing Body and Mr. Henry J. Harriman and Mr. Robert J. Watt are the representatives of the employers and employees on the Governing Body of the I.L.O.

Poland was always anxious for international co-operation, and particularly so in the field of International Labor. We were among the nine countries which sent their delegates to work out the ideological and legal thesis of the I.L.O. at the Commission on International Labor Legislation in 1919. During the past 20 years a representative of my country was invariably elected to the Governing Body of the I.L.O. We accepted a number of conventions and recommendations of the I.L.O. and in a number of cases our legislature went even further in defending the interests of the working classes. This was possible because the first Temporary Government of the Polish Republic in November, 1918, under the leadership of the eminent socialist

Daszynski had embarked upon a wide programme of Social Legislation which could not be entirely disregarded by the governments that succeeded it.

This progressive attitude was often voiced by Franciszek Sokal, the Polish member of the Governing Body of the I.L.O. who was elected Chairman of the International Labor Conference in 1931, and I myself had the opportunity of witnessing the respect and appreciation expressed towards him by other members of the I.L.O. who often entrusted him with important work on behalf of that Body.

The pamphlet for which I am writing these few words of introduction cannot claim to give an exhaustive picture of the part played by Poland in the work of the I.L.O. Its aim is rather to establish the fact that Poland was always deeply conscious in the past of the need for International co-operation. The Poland of to-day is no less aware of the benefits to be derived from such a co-operation, and it will certainly strive in the future to champion the cause of international solidarity.

The impending changes in the economic and social structure of the world will tend to increase and deepen the spheres of activity of the I.L.O. in the future. Human thought must be able to devise means which afford every man the chance of work and the possibility of satisfying his everyday needs. If it is possible to give employment and a living wage to the large masses of people in order to produce weapons of destruction, it surely must be possible to give them scope for the production of more useful things. Every country has at least some natural resources and the brains and brawn of its people. Proper planning for utilization of these resources on a world-wide basis can assure once and for all the disappearance of what President Roosevelt calls "the Fear of Want" and give to the people of the world the chance of peaceful co-operation towards material and cultural progress.

The I.L.O. is called upon to play its part in all this, by means of studying new problems arising out of the war and to prepare for post-war reconstruction. We are resolved to co-operate steadfastly and wholeheartedly in achieving the aims in view.

London, October, 1941.

JAN STAŃCZYK.

I

WORKERS' PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION IN POLAND

In the XIX Century when the idea of international protection of labor grew, developed and to a certain degree materialized, Poland had no separate existence as a State and hence she could not take part in Conferences convened for the purpose of solving the problem of international legislation on labor questions. The aims, however, of the pioneers of such legislation, such as the great social reformer and socialist Robert Owen, as well as Ashley, St. Simon, Blanqui, Daniel Legrand—to name only a few—found a ready echo in Poland where the working classes felt themselves closely bound up with the international workers' movement.

“This movement”—says Johnston*—“originated in a strictly historical sense in 1864 when the International Men's Association was formed in London for the purpose of unifying the workers of Europe and America.” At its first meeting at Geneva in 1866 a number of resolutions were adopted which formulated such principles as were subsequently incorporated in International Conventions and in national systems of legislation. These were—limitation of the duration of the standard working day and prohibition of the employment of children and of night work for women and others. Finally, the Association demanded that the Government should take steps to bring about international labor protection. Later, the so-called

* S. A. Johnston, *International Social Progress*.

Second International in the year 1889 in Paris adopted a programme including prohibition of the employment of children under 14 and in general of night work, the establishment of an eight-hour day, one day of rest in seven, and of an international minimum wage and health standard as well as the creation of a system of State-supported national and international factory inspection.

Afterwards, at the beginning of 1919, Polish representatives participated in the International Socialist Conference held at Berne, which devoted itself to the drafting of the detailed programme for a Labor Charter. This included an eight-hour day, a weekly rest period of thirty-six consecutive hours, the prohibition of female night labor, a six-hour day for children between 16 and 18 years of age, a system of social insurance, freedom of association, a system of employment bureaus and the creation of a permanent Commission for the application of international labor legislation. The Charter—according to Johnston—undoubtedly exercised a direct influence on the General Principles laid down in Article 427 of the Peace Treaty at the closing of Part XIII of that Treaty which has come to be popularly known as the Labor Charter.

Poland was among 9 nations to whom a seat was allotted on the Commission for International Labor Legislation established by the Peace Conference in January, 1919. This Commission, under the chairmanship of Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, drafted a Convention creating a permanent organization for the international regulation of labor questions. The aims and guiding principles of this Organization were laid down in the Preamble which in the first paragraph affirms the ideal of social justice and then

points out that the sentiments of justice and humanity were the motives for the creation of the Organization. This was in perfect accordance with the principles that always guided the Polish workers' movement, which was aware of the significance of the protection of labor on a world-wide scale and by means capable of ensuring its fulfillment. Influenced by such opinions, Mr. Patek, the Polish member of the Commission, pointed out at the meeting of March 15th, 1919, that although an eight-hour day and other social reforms had already been introduced in Poland, he hoped that the principal points constituting the Labor Charter would be inserted in the Peace Treaty, in a clear and binding form. At a later date sentiments which animated Poland were expressed by the Polish delegate to the Conference and Member of the Governing Body, Mr. Sokal, at the XI Session of the I.L.O. in Geneva in 1928, who said that without social justice there could be no peace.

Poland has not only ratified twenty Conventions (see Chapter II) and accepted a number of Recommendations, but has also taken an active part in all work of the I.L.O. Polish delegates have participated in all Conferences, presided over various Commissions and Committees set up by the Conferences and moved a number of resolutions. Mr. Sokal proposed the sending of a mission, composed of representatives of Governments, workers and employers, to Russia for the purpose of reporting on industrial conditions there.† Another Polish delegate at the XIX Session stressed the problem of unemployment by saying that "the centre of gravity must be the problem of unemployment, together with the economic and financial questions which are closely bound up with it."

† Y. E. Phelan; *Yes and Albert Thomas.*

II EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS

The Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of children to industrial employment, adopted by the I Session of the International Labor Conference at Washington on October 29th, 1919, provides that children under 14 shall not be employed or work in any industrial undertaking or in any branch thereof, other than an undertaking in which only members of the same family are employed.*

Poland ratified this convention on June 19th, 1924, but the principle had already become applicable by the Constitution of March 17th, 1921, Art. 103. Under legislation in force minimum age for admission of children to commercial and industrial undertakings, training and apprenticeship, or transport is 15. No exception is made in the case of undertakings in which only members of the same family are employed.

The Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of children to employment at sea, adopted by the II Session of the International Labor Conference at Genoa on June 15th, 1920, provides that the Convention prohibiting the employment of children under 14 shall apply to seamen.†

* This Convention was partially revised by the XXIII Session on June 22nd, 1937. The minimum age for employment of children was raised to 15, but so far this Convention is not effective.

† This Convention was partially revised by the XXII Session on October 24th, 1936. The minimum age was raised to 15, but so far this Convention is not effective.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924, but the age of 15 had been already fixed by the Constitution of March 17th, 1921, Art. 103. Under legislation in force this minimum is retained.

The Convention concerning the age for the admission of children to employment in agriculture, adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921, provides that children under 14 may not be employed in agriculture if their school attendance would suffer thereby.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924, but it had already become applicable by the Decree of February 7th, 1919, concerning compulsory education and by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of March 17th, 1921. Under legislation in force, primary education is compulsory for all Polish citizens and penalties are imposed for noncompliance.

The Convention concerning the night work of young persons employed in industry, adopted by the I Session of the International Labor Conference at Washington on October 29th, 1919, provides that young persons under 18 shall not be employed in industry at night (*i.e.*, in a period of at least eleven consecutive hours including the intervals between ten o'clock in the evening and five o'clock in the morning).

The Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924, but the principle had already become applicable by the Act of December 18th, 1919, relating to hours of work in industry and commerce. Under legislation in force, the night rest period must consist of at least 11 consecutive hours, including the interval between 8 p. m. and 6 a. m. in factories working a single shift, and between 10 p. m. and 5 p. m. in factories working two shifts. This legisla-

tion applies not only to industrial but also to commercial undertakings, communication services, transport and other undertakings carried on by way of trade even if not for profit. Exceptions are allowed in the case of young persons over 16 years in cases of emergency which could not have been foreseen or prevented and in some other cases within the general framework of the Convention.

The Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of young persons to employment as trimmers or stokers, adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921, prohibits the employment of young persons under 18 on vessels as trimmers or stokers.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924. Under legislation in force, work on vessels as trimmers and stokers, is included among dangerous and unhealthy occupations prohibited to young persons. The list of such occupations is very long and covers various kinds of work. A Navigation Inspector was attached to the Maritime Office at Gdynia to ensure the application of the Maritime Conventions ratified by Poland.

The Convention concerning the compulsory medical examination of children and young persons employed at sea, was adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921.

The Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924. Under legislation in force, all persons on entering employment at sea, must produce a medical certificate attesting fitness for such employment and signed by the Port Medical Officer. All young persons under 18, on entering any other employment, must produce a certificate attesting fitness for the work in question and signed by a doctor approved by the factory inspector. There are

no provisions which expressly provide for the repetition of such medical examinations at intervals of not more than one year. At the request of the Factory Inspector, however, the managements of all undertakings are bound to arrange at any time for the examination of young persons, in order to ascertain whether the work is beyond the physical strength of the employed person or injurious to his development.

No exception is made in the case of vessels on which only members of the same family are employed.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS AFFECTING JUVENILE LABOR

The Minister of Labor is empowered to issue orders fixing the percentage of young working people in relation to the total number of workers employed in any given branch of industry. Up to the present time such orders have been limited to the printing and glass-blowing industries.

In order to combat the exploitation of minors by employing them without wages under pretext of teaching them their work or training them in trade, a law forbids such practice and also the practice of taking money from them, or their parents or guardians, as payment for training.

Preventive medical attention and medical treatment as well as periodical examinations were carried out in quarters specially organized for that purpose in public insurance centres.

It was compulsory for young workers to attend trade finishing schools. Every minor had to be freed from work for a period of six hours a week with the object of final training in a trade school. This time was counted as working time and paid by the employer.

Overtime work was not allowed.

The employment of young persons as dockers at Gdynia was prohibited.

Supervision (see "Employment of Women"); Holidays (see "Holidays with Pay" and "Weekly Rest").

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Act of July, 1924, relating to the employment of women and young persons, amended and completed by the Act of November 7th, 1931. Act of November, 1931, restricting the employment of young persons in Upper Silesia.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of October 3rd, 1935, enumerating the occupations in which young persons may not be employed.

Act of December 18th, 1919, concerning hours of work in industry and commerce, consolidated text as promulgated by notification of the Ministry of Social Welfare of October 25th, 1933 with further amendments.

Decree of February 7th, 1919, concerning compulsory education in force in the Central Provinces of Poland.

Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 23rd, 1935.

Order of the Minister of Education and Public Worship of May 4th, 1935, concerning the organization of the school year.

German Seamen's Code of June 2nd, 1902, maintained in force and amended by the Act of March 17th, 1933.

Act of May 28th, 1920, concerning the Polish Mercantile Marine, amended by the decree of the President of the Republic, of March 6th, 1926.

Decree of the President of the Republic of November 24th, 1930, relating to the safety of ships, consolidated text as promulgated by notification of the Minister of Industry and Trade of June 13th, 1938.

Decree of the President of the Republic of October 27th, 1933, concerning the employment of dockers at Gdynia.

Order of the Minister of Industry of August 20th, 1936, concerning the fitness of persons employed on Polish merchant ships.

Order of the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare of December 31st, 1924, concerning the compulsory education of young persons.

WEEKLY REST.

The Convention concerning the application of the weekly rest in industrial undertakings, adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921, provides that the whole of the staff employed in any industrial undertaking shall enjoy in each seven days, a period of rest comprising at least twenty-four consecutive hours.

The Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924, but the principle was laid down by the Act of December 18th, 1919, relating to hours of work in industry and commerce. Under legislation in force, work on Sunday and statutory public holidays is prohibited, not only in industry, but also in all commercial undertakings, communication and transport and any other establishments, whether public or private, including those not carried on for purposes of gain. There are a few exceptions, the bakery trade, transport, hospitals, etc., but a worker employed on a Sunday or public holiday must be allowed a day of rest during the week.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Act of December 18th, 1919, relating to hours of work in industry and commerce, text as in the notification of the Minister of Social Welfare of October 25th, 1933, with further amendments.

Order of the President of the Republic of November 15th, 1924, concerning Public Holidays, amended by the Act of March 18th, 1925.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

The Convention concerning unemployment, adopted by the I Session of the International Labor Conference at Washington on October 29th, 1919, provides: (a) that reports on measures taken or contemplated to combat unemployment be communicated to the I.L.O. at intervals not exceeding three months; (b) that a system of free public employment agencies under the control of a central authority be established; (c) that arrangements be made whereby foreign workers shall be admitted to the same benefits of insurance against unemployment as those which apply to nationals.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924. Before the war: (a) reports were regularly dispatched to the I.L.O.; (b) a system of free public employment exchanges existed; there were also employment agencies carried on by social organizations which did not derive any pecuniary gain from these activities. Permits for fee-charging agencies could be granted only to persons who were already carrying on agencies when the Act of October 21st, 1921, came into operation; (c) Act of July 6th, 1923, laid down the principle of equality of treatment for foreign workers and applied to the nationals of all countries, the Council of Ministers being empowered, however, to restrict the rights of nationals of any country. Special agreements were concluded with certain countries, specifying mutual rights and mode of procedure. The above-mentioned Act extends to foreign workers the legal provisions in force respecting compensation for industrial accidents, invalidity, old age, and death.

The Convention concerning unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of the ship, adopted by the II Session of the International Labor Conference at Genoa on June 15th, 1920, provides that in every case of loss or foundering of a vessel, the seamen contracted for service on such vessel are entitled to an indemnity, for the days during which they remain actually unemployed, at the same rate as the wages payable under contract, but total indemnity being limited to two months' wages.

The Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924. Under legislation in force the principle of the Convention is applied.

The Convention establishing facilities for finding employment for seamen adopted by the II Session of the International Labor Conference at Genoa on June 15th, 1920, provides that the business of finding employment for seamen by any commercial enterprise for pecuniary gain, or of charging directly or indirectly by any person or company, should be abolished.

The Convention was ratified by Poland on July 21st, 1924. Under legislation in force such enterprises are entitled to find employment for seamen, and a Navigation Inspector has been appointed in the Maritime Office at Gdynia to supervise the application of the Maritime Conventions ratified by Poland.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

All paid intellectual workers in Poland—directors, controllers, clerks, medical staff, technicians, chemists, and some shop assistants, etc., irrespective of their rate of remuneration, were insured under the Insurance for Intellectual Workers' Scheme. Unemployment benefits were paid to those intellectual workers who had lost their employment through no fault of their own, provided they were insured for at least 12 months during the preceding two years. Payment was made over a period of 6-9 months and amounted to 23-35 per cent. of the average salary of the last year's employment with maximum for computation purposes of 725 zł. per month (\$29.20 a week). In addition a family allowance was paid amounting to a further 10 per cent. for each dependent member of the family. The contribution was 2 per cent. of salary, three-quarters of which was paid by the employer.

The Insurance for Manual Workers' Scheme covered all those working in undertakings employing five or more people, with the exception of agricultural workers and domestic servants. Benefit was paid for a period not exceeding 13 weeks to every unemployed person who had been insured for not less than 26 weeks during the previous year. Cash benefits amounted to 30 per cent. of his average weekly wage over the previous 13 weeks with maximum for computation purposes of 6 zł. (\$1.21) per day. Such benefit and allowances due to children were paid only if the insured person had lost employment through no fault of his own and was able and willing to accept fresh employment.



LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

German Seamen's Code of June 2nd, 1902, maintained in force and amended by the Act of March 17th, 1933.

Decree of January 27th, 1919, relating to the organization of Employment Exchanges.

Act of October 21st, 1921, relating to the fee-charging Employment Agencies.

Act of June 10th, 1924, respecting the Employment Agencies.

Decree of the President of the Republic of October 27th, 1933, relating to the abolition of State Employment Exchanges.

Decree of the President of the Republic of October 24th, 1933, concerning the amalgamation of the Unemployment Fund and Labor Fund.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of March 27th, 1935, concerning the finding of employment by the Labor Fund.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of March 27th, 1935, concerning the Employment Exchange for dockers at Gdynia.

Act of July 18th, 1924, relating to Unemployment Insurance for Manual Workers, amended by further enactments.

Decree of the President of the Republic of November 24th, 1927, relating to Insurance for Intellectual Workers, amended by further enactments.

THE RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION.

The Convention concerning the right of association and combination of agricultural workers, adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921, provides that workers in agriculture shall enjoy the same right of association and combination as industrial workers.

The Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924, but the Constitution of the Polish Republic of March 17th, 1921, had already guaranteed the right of association and combination to all citizens. Under existing legislation, agricultural workers have the same right of organization as industrial workers.

Trade Unions were treated as corporations. The registered Trade Unions had the exclusive power to conclude collective agreements with employers and their organizations. The Trade Unions submitted the panels of their nominees from which were selected the lay judges of the Labor Courts, members of the Arbitration Boards, etc. (See "Collective Bargaining, Arbitration, Labor Courts.")

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Decree of February 8th, 1919, relating to Trade Unions.

Act of October 27th, 1932, concerning Associations.

Constitution of the Polish Republic, April 23rd, 1935.

COMPENSATION FOR ACCIDENTS AND OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES.

The Convention concerning workmen's compensation for accidents, adopted by the VII Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on May 19th, 1925, provides that workmen who suffer personal injury due to any industrial accident, or their dependents, shall be compensated on terms at least equal to those provided by this Convention.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on November 3rd, 1937. Under legislation in force, the State General Compulsory Accident Insurance Scheme ensures an accident pension to manual as well as intellectual workers incapacitated by industrial accident—if earning capacity is reduced by at least 10 per cent. In case of total incapacity the pension amounts to 66% per cent. of the average wage or salary of the person concerned in the preceding three years. Where the incapacity is such that a permanent attendant is required, an additional 33⅓ per cent. is payable. In case of partial incapacity, the pension is reduced in proportion to the degree of incapacity. An insured person whose earning capacity is reduced by at least 66% per cent. is entitled to a bonus equal to one-tenth of the pension for each child dependent on him. An injured worker is entitled to medical treatment, medicines and dressing as well as to auxiliary appliances for deformities and infirmities. This assistance is granted for as long as it may be required. In fatal cases dependents are entitled to Widows', Orphans', and other survivors' pensions. A widow, until she marries again, is entitled to

a pension equal to 30 per cent, of the average wage or salary of the deceased person. Under the Scheme, contributions are borne solely by the employer. The rates of contributions vary according to the accident risk involved in the particular industrial undertaking concerned. For higher salaried workers a maximum salary of 725 zl. per month (\$29.20 per week) is counted for contributions and benefits. This Scheme also covers domestic servants with the exception of those employed only temporarily, *i.e.*, for less than two consecutive weeks, with the same employer.

The Convention concerning workmen's compensation for occupational diseases, adopted by the VII Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on May 19th, 1925, provides that compensation shall be paid for the occupational diseases enumerated in the Schedule.*

This Convention was ratified by Poland on November 3rd, 1937. Under legislation in force, certain occupational diseases are treated as industrial accidents and compensation for such diseases comes within the General Accident Insurance Scheme (see preceding Convention). The list of diseases considered as occupational is a long one. Contributions paid by employers under the Accident Insurance Scheme include cover for risk of occupational diseases.

The Convention concerning equality of treatment for national and foreign workers as regards compensation for accidents, adopted by the VII Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on May 19th, 1925, provides that foreigners shall have equality with nationals as regards accident compensation.

* The Convention adopted by the XVIII Sessions of the I.L.O. at Geneva on June 4th, 1934, partially revised the foregoing Convention and extended the list of occupational diseases. Most of them are covered by the list in force in Poland.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on February 28th, 1929. Under legislation in force, the legal provisions relating to industrial accidents are applicable, in so far as concerns the compulsory nature of insurance and the right to all benefits under the General Accident Insurance Scheme, to foreigners employed within the territory of the Polish Republic, as well as to their dependents, even when residing outside this territory.

The Convention concerning workmen's compensation in agriculture, adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921, provides that agricultural workers shall be included in the operation of workmen's compensation laws.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924. Under legislation in force, the General Compulsory Accident Insurance Scheme does not cover all agricultural workers.

The Polish Senate adopted on July 14th, 1938, a resolution inviting the Government to submit to Parliament within three years a Bill concerning compulsory invalidity, old-age and widows' and orphans' insurance for agricultural workers throughout Polish territory. Protection against the risks of incapacity to earn or death by industrial accidents will also be dealt with in this Bill.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Social Insurance Act of March 28th, 1933 amended by further enactments.

Order of the Ministry of Social Welfare of December 28th, 1933, concerning procedure relative to the benefits applicable in cases of occupational diseases.

Order of the Council of Ministers of September 28th, 1937, concerning the extension of the schedule of occupational diseases.

Act of July 6th, 1923 to extend legal provisions in force respecting compensation to nationals of other States.

INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE AND SAFETY.

The Convention concerning the use of white lead in painting, adopted by the III Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on October 25th, 1921, prohibits, with some exceptions, the use of white lead and sulphate of lead and all products containing these pigments in the internal painting of buildings.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 21st, 1924. Under legislation in force, the use of white lead, sulphate of lead and all other products containing these lead compounds, is prohibited in the internal painting of buildings. This prohibition does not apply either to the internal painting of railway stations, or industrial establishments in which the employment of these products is certified as necessary, or to the use of white lead pigments containing a maximum of 2 per cent. of pure lead.

In 1919 the Washington Conference adopted a recommendation requesting the Governments to ratify, as soon as possible, the diplomatic Convention drawn up at Berne in 1906 prohibiting the use of white phosphorus in match factories. In Poland the use of white and yellow phosphorus in making matches, as well as importation into Poland of any products containing white or yellow phosphorus, is forbidden.

Under legislation in force, measures are required to be taken in all workshops or places where work is carried on, with a view to ensuring the protection of the life and health of the workers. Adequate ventilation, lighting and heating must be provided and maintained, as well as suitable sanitary conveniences, and a general state of cleanliness. The protection of the worker from dangerous

machinery, fumes and fire, must be ensured. The regulations cover engines and motors, belting, shaftings, hoists, etc. A supply of drinking water, washing facilities and sitting accommodation must be furnished. Factory inspectors are empowered to give orders enforcing these regulations (see "Factory Inspection").

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Order of September 20th, 1920, concerning the notification of cases of poisoning by lead, zinc, etc., in industrial undertakings.

Decree of the President of the Republic of June 30th, 1927, concerning the manufacture, importation and use of white lead, sulphate of lead and all other lead compounds.

Decree of the President of the Republic of August 22nd, 1927, respecting the prevention of occupational diseases and the fight against these diseases.

Order of December 17th, 1928, issued in pursuance of the Decree of August 22nd, 1927.

Decree of the President of the Republic of March 16th, 1928, concerning industrial safety and hygiene.

Decree of April 22nd, 1927, concerning the prohibition of the use of white and yellow phosphorus.

Order of September 13th, 1930, concerning the measures which are obligatory in the preparation of paints, etc.

SEAMEN.

The Convention concerning seamen's articles of agreement, adopted by the IX Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 24th, 1926, provides that such agreement shall not contain anything which is contrary to the provisions of national law or to this Convention and deals with the conclusion of such an agreement, its clauses, termination or rescission, etc.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on August 8th, 1931. Under legislation in force, the agreement must not contain any stipulation contrary to the law. Every seaman must, at the time of engagement, be furnished with a copy of the Seamen's Code. The list of crew and the collective agreement include: the rate of wages, overtime rates, bonuses, holidays with pay, etc. The Seamen's Code and ministerial instructions cover conditions of termination of the agreement, and instantaneous dismissal.

The Convention concerning the repatriation of seamen, adopted by the IX Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 2nd, 1926, provides that any seaman who is landed during the term of his engagement or on its expiration, shall be entitled to be taken either back to his own country, to the port at which he was engaged, or to the port at which the voyage commenced, according as shall be determined by the national law. The expenses of repatriation shall not be a charge on the seaman if he has not been left behind by reason of an illness due to his own willful act of default, or discharged for a cause for which he can be held responsible.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on August 8th,

1931. Under legislation in force, the stipulations of the Convention are observed.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

German Seamen's Code of June 2nd, 1902, maintained in force and amended by the Act of March 17th, 1933.

Act of May 28th, 1920, concerning the Polish Mercantile Marine amended by Decree of the President of the Republic of March 6th, 1928.

Decree of the President of the Republic of November 24th, 1930, relating to the safety of ships, consolidated text as promulgated by notification of the Minister of Industry and Commerce of June 13th, 1938.

Instruction of November 28th, 1929, concerning the conditions of work of Seamen.

Instruction of October 18th, 1932, respecting termination of articles of agreement and the notice to be given.

German Act of June 2nd, 1902, concerning the obligation for merchant vessels to take on board seamen to be repatriated.

TRANSPORT.

The Convention concerning the marking of the weight on heavy packages transported by vessels, adopted by the XII Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 21st, 1929, prescribes that the weight shall be marked on any package of one thousand kilograms or more gross weight, for transport by water.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on June 18th, 1932, while the Act of January 31st, 1935, concerning the marking of the weight on goods transported by vessels is in compliance with the provisions of this Convention.

PENSIONS.

The Convention concerning the establishment of an international scheme for the maintenance of rights under invalidity, old-age and widows' and orphans' insurance, adopted by the XIX Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 22nd, 1935, provides that workers transferring their residence from one country to another shall retain their pension rights.

This Convention was ratified by Poland on January 8th, 1938.

III. HOURS OF WORK.

Poland did not ratify the Convention limiting the hours of work in industrial undertakings to eight per day and forty-eight per week, adopted by the I Session of the International Labor Conference at Washington on October 29th, 1919, nor others concerning the same question, since legislation was already in existence in Poland enforcing a working week of forty-six hours. It was only in 1931 that a working week of forty-eight hours was introduced. Even then there was an obstacle to the ratification of this Convention by reason of the fact that the working week was longer in German Silesia, and it might have been necessary to increase the hours in Polish Silesia where working conditions were analogous. As is well known, the German Reich's general attitude for some time before the war had been directed towards preventing many Powers from ratifying this Convention.

The eight-hour standard was applicable in Poland to all workers with the exception of agricultural workers. Non-compliance was permitted in exceptional cases of *force majeure*, in case of national emergency, in undertakings working continuously, in the case of persons employed as supervisors, in medical establishments, in tramways, and, to a certain extent, in transport. The conditions under which non-compliance could be permitted are stipulated in special regulations. In most cases the consent of the Factory Inspector was required. These regulations fix the maximum of additional hours in each instance. Some exceptions are allowed in preparatory or complementary work which must necessarily be carried

on outside the limits laid down for the general working of an establishment. The rate of pay for overtime cannot be less than time-and-a-quarter for the first two hours, and time-and-a-half for all subsequent hours, also for night work, Sundays and holidays.

The law provides that all agreements aimed at removing or modifying the limits to hours of work, or overtime rates fixed thereunder, are automatically null and void.

The law provides for a break of at least one hour in every six hours of work. A special law regulates the extension or shortening of the working day in Upper Silesia.

Other legal regulations have shortened the hours of work of underground miners working at a temperature of over 82°F, to 6 hours a day and 36 hours a week; to 7 hours a day and 42 hours a week for other particularly strenuous or unhealthy work, and to 7½ hours a day and 45 hours a week for persons permanently employed underground, with the exception of those above-mentioned and those engaged in continuous operations.

As regards hours of work for women and young persons, see "Employment of Women" and "Employment of Children and Young Persons."

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Act of December 18th, 1919, relating to hours of work in industry and commerce, consolidated text as promulgated by the notification of the Minister of Social Welfare of October 25th, 1933, with further amendments.

Various orders respecting hours of work—in bakeries (December 10th, 1920), in printing (August 10th, 1932), in hospitals (December 20th, 1933), in transport (December 13th, 1933), etc.

Act of November 17th, 1931, relating to the shortening and lengthening of hours of work in Upper Silesia.

Act of April 14th, 1937, relating to the shortening of hours of work in Coal Mines.

Orders of the Minister of Social Welfare of July 20th, 1937, in pursuance of the Act of April 14th, 1937.

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

Poland did not ratify the Conventions concerning employment of women during the night or employment before and after childbirth, adopted by the I Session of the International Labor Conference at Washington on October 29th, 1919, nor the Convention concerning employment of women underground in mines of all kinds, adopted by the XIX Session at Geneva on June 21st, 1935. Nevertheless in Poland the legislation on this subject is far-reaching and the principles of the Conventions are fully applied and even improved upon.

Working Hours for Women. The night rest period for women must amount to not less than 11 consecutive hours between 8 p. m. and 6 a. m. or between 10 p. m. and 5 a. m. Exceptions are allowed only when technical needs of production require it, either to preserve raw materials or products from certain loss (if such extension of work is sanctioned by a factory inspector), in cases of *force majeure*, for public services indispensable to meet the daily needs of the population, or in certain seasonal industries—with the factory inspector's permission. These exceptions apply only to women over 18 years of age. The 8 hours' working day is to be observed as regards female workers in general (see "Hours of Work").

Work forbidden to Women. Among the most important achievements are a complete ban on underground work, the carrying of heavy weights and working as dockers at Gdynia. Women are forbidden to work where they would come in contact with poisonous chemicals, such as white

lead, mercury, arsenic, etc. The list of occupations which are not allowed to women is very extensive.

Maternity Protection. A woman was allowed to leave her work if she produced a medical certificate stating that confinement would probably take place within six weeks and she could not be reemployed earlier than six weeks after confinement. A pregnant woman was entitled to absent herself for periods totalling not more than six days in a month. Where a woman was absent from her work in accordance with the provisions of law it was not lawful for her employer to give her notice during such absence.

Expectant mothers, especially after six months of pregnancy, are taken off certain kinds of work, *e.g.*, looking after machines in spinning mills.

All factories and workshops employing more than 99 women had to possess a creche for infants, and give all nursing mothers two half-hourly breaks in the working day to feed their children. These breaks were counted as part of the working day. Instead of creches there were Welfare Centres for mothers and children in many factories. There, each mother received a complete layette before the birth of her child. The children were under the constant care of the Centre's nurses. All these facilities were supplied free of charge.

Supervision and Enforcement. To safeguard the interests of women and young workers, special Labor Inspection was created. The General Inspectorate of Labor employed a woman inspector, who was the Director of this section of the Ministry of Labor (within the general inspectorate), entrusted with this work. Local women inspectors were actively engaged in dealing with all matters concerning women and young workers in

their district and were especially responsible for supervising the enforcement of legislation regarding maternity protection and the employment of children and young persons.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Act of July 2nd, 1924, relating to the employment of women and young persons amended by the Act of November 7th, 1931.

Act of December 18th, 1919, relating to hours of work in industry and commerce, consolidated text as promulgated by the notification of the Minister of Social Welfare of October 25th, 1933, with further amendments.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of October 3rd, 1935, enumerating the occupations in which women and young persons may not be employed.

Decree of the President of the Republic of June 30th, 1927, concerning the manufacture, importation, or use of white lead, sulphate of lead, etc.

Decree of the President of the Republic of October 27th, 1933, relating to the work of dockers at Gdynia.

FACTORY INSPECTION

A Decree, dated July 14th, 1927, concerning the uniform organization of Factory Inspection throughout the whole territory of Poland provides for a Chief Inspector to assist the Minister of Labor, Divisional Inspectors, District Inspectors and Special Inspectors for certain industrial centres (as regards women inspectors see "Employment of Women"). Their task was to ensure safety at work and observance of factory legislation, to mediate in cases of industrial disputes, etc. These inspectors were empowered to issue regulations with regard to the fencing of machinery and with regard to equipment and amenities; to forbid certain operations or the use of certain raw materials, and generally to enforce enactments concerning the social welfare and protection of workers, especially of women, children and young persons. The doctors attached to the Factory Inspection Dept. were charged with the medical supervision of working conditions in factories and workshops, analyses of products and raw materials harmful to the health of workers or suspected of being such, medical examinations of workers suspected of suffering from occupational diseases and examination of young persons before admission to industrial work, etc.

Employers guilty of non-compliance with the regulations issued by factory inspectors were liable to penalties, imposed either by the factory inspectors themselves or by the Law Courts. In the latter instances the inspectors appeared before the Courts as representatives of the Public Prosecutor. The employer could, if he considered the penalty unjust, apply to the Court for trial.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Decree of the President of the Republic of July 14th, 1927, concerning Factory Inspection.

Order of the Minister of the Interior of March 22nd, 1928, relating to the co-operation between the police and local government officers and the Factory Inspection.

Order of the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare of October 6th, 1928, concerning the relations between medical and other officers of the Factory Inspection.

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.

Two Decrees of March 28th, 1928, regulate the conclusion of an agreement between a worker and an employer. its validity and scope, the rights and duties of the parties, the payment of salaries and wages, the terms of notice, wrongful dismissal, termination of employment, etc. Both Decrees lay down that payment of wages must be in cash. The one applies to non-manual workers such as managers of industrial and commercial undertakings, clerks, commercial travelers, artists, journalists, some shop assistants, etc. The second Decree applies to manual workers. The period of notice for non-manual workers is three months, to date from the first day of the following month. The period of notice for manual workers is two weeks do date from the following pay day. In the case of wrongful dismissal an indemnity is payable equal to the amount which would have been paid if regular notice had been given. In case of illness a non-manual worker is entitled to full salary for a period of not exceeding three months. No notice can be given by an employer either to a non-manual or a manual worker during holidays with pay or a period of illness (not exceeding three months in the case of non-manual and four weeks in the case of manual workers).

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Decree of the President of the Republic of March 28th, 1928, relating to contract for the employment of intellectual workers.

Decree of the President of the Republic of March, 28th, 1928, relating to contract for the employment of manual workers.

HOLIDAYS WITH PAY.

Poland did not ratify the Convention concerning annual Holidays with Pay adopted by the XX Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 24th, 1936, nor the Convention concerning such Holidays for seamen adopted by the XXI Session on October 24th, 1926. (Neither of these Conventions has yet received sufficient ratifications to be effective).

In Poland, however, a law had already come into operation by 1922 which provided for holidays with pay for manual and non-manual workers on a very extensive and generous scale. The Conventions provide for at least 6 days' annual holiday with pay, after one year of continuous service, to all persons employed in industrial and commercial undertakings, at least 12 days' annual leave with pay to masters and officers and at least 9 days for seamen. The holiday pay is the average of the previous three months in the case of piece work and the last pay received in the case of time work.

The Polish law lays down for adult manual workers, an eight-day holiday with pay annually, and 15 days after three years' continuous employment. Intellectual workers are entitled to one month's holiday with pay annually. Young workers, including apprentices, without age distinction, are given 14 days with pay after a year's work. It is illegal to make any reduction in the length of these statutory annual holidays.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Act of May 22nd, 1922, concerning Holidays with Pay for persons employed in industry and commerce.

Order of the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare of June 23rd, 1923, in pursuance of the Act of May 22nd, 1922.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, ARBITRATION, LABOR COURTS.

Collective agreements could be concluded only by registered Trade Unions or Federations on the one hand and employers or their organizations on the other. It is forbidden to depart from the collective provisions by means of an individual contract of employment and it is stipulated that the clauses of a collective agreement automatically replace those of individual contracts of employment less favorable to workers. No item in any collective agreement may be excluded or modified, even with the consent of the worker. An employer bound by an agreement registered with the factory inspector, must apply it not only to union men in his employment but also to non-union men, both already employed or to be employed in future. The Minister of Labor has power to declare generally binding, wholly or partially, any agreement which is of predominant importance to the particular branch of production throughout the territory covered by the agreement.

The arbitrators are either nominated in the collective agreements or appointed *ad hoc*, but in the case of serious industrial disputes, involving the economic life of the country, the Minister of Labor is empowered to set up an Arbitration Board to deal with the dispute and to regulate the condition of work in the undertakings concerned. Such a Board is composed of representatives of employers and workers under the chairmanship of a person appointed by the Minister of Labor. The scope of such an award was identical with that of a registered collective agree-

ment and could be likewise extended by the Minister of Labor. Special Acts deal with disputes between employer and employee in agriculture. The Arbitration Boards were composed of representatives from each side and a chairman elected by the parties, or, if the parties failed to agree upon the choice, one appointed by the Minister of Labor. Any award regulating wages and conditions of employment for the whole of a district is enforceable throughout that district and forms the basis of individual contract of employment.

Individual disputes between workers and employers in industry, commerce, transport, etc., were dealt with exclusively by special Labor Courts, composed of a Judge, and two lay members, selected by the Minister of Justice from the panel submitted by the Trade Unions and employers' organizations. The costs of litigation in Labor Courts were about half the normal costs and proceedings were expedited since the judge was an expert on labor legislation. Before the actual hearing of a case the lay members, sitting alone, endeavored to reach agreement, failing which the assistance of the Judge was required.

Individual disputes between workers and employers in agriculture were dealt with primarily by the factory inspector, who intervened in his capacity of Conciliation Officer. If he failed to bring the parties to an agreement a special Arbitration Board was set up which included representatives of the Trade Unions and the employers' organization.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Act of April 14th, 1937, relating to Collective Agreements.

Seven Orders of the Ministry of Social Welfare of May 31st, 1937, on the same subject.

Act of August 1st, 1919, concerning the settlement of disputes between employers and workers in agriculture.

Act of July 18th, 1924, relating to the powers of the Minister of Labor to set up Arbitration Boards, etc.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of April 25th, 1934, concerning the Arbitration Board at Gdynia.

Decree of the President of the Republic of October 27th, 1927, concerning the Arbitration Boards for settlement of disputes between employers and workers in industry and commerce, consolidated text as promulgated by the notification of April 20th, 1937.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Poland did not ratify the Conventions concerning sickness insurance for workers in industry and commerce, domestic servants, agricultural workers and seamen, adopted by the X Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 15th, 1927, and by the XXI Session on October 24th, 1936, but in Poland a system of compulsory Sickness and Maternity Insurance was introduced by the Act of May 19th, 1920. Under legislation in force all manual and non-manual workers, outdoor workers, domestic servants, etc., if their wages or salaries do not exceed 725 zloty a month (\$29.20 a week) are subject to insurance. Civil servants, local government employees and some categories of persons engaged in temporary or casual employment are exempt.

Insured persons are entitled to medical benefit from the first day of sickness for not more than 26 weeks, such benefit to consist of medical treatment and attendance by a doctor and to include the supply of medicine and prescribed medical and surgical appliances. These benefits are uniform for all insured persons. Any charges where payable, are negligible (2c) according to the kind of benefit.

The dependents of the insured person, *i.e.*, the wife (husband) and children under 16 and under certain conditions up to 21 or 24 years of age are entitled to such benefits for not more than 13 weeks in a year. In some cases parents, brothers and sisters enjoy the same benefits.

A person who was insured for not less than 26 weeks during the preceding year, or where the incapacity is due

to an industrial accident or acute disease, is entitled, if disabled, to cash benefits payable for not more than 26 weeks. These benefits amount to 50 per cent. of the last wage or salary.

Insured women and the wives of insured men are equally entitled to medical treatment, attention of midwives and to medicines if they are in need of them in cases of pregnancy or confinement. Moreover, insured women are entitled during their absence from work through pregnancy or confinement, but not longer than 8 weeks, to cash maternity benefits which amount to 50 per cent. of their last wage or salary.

The contributions for health and maternity insurance amount to 4.6 per cent. for manual workers and 5 per cent. for intellectual workers. Half the contribution is paid by the insured person and half by his employer.

Agricultural workers were not covered by the compulsory Sickness Insurance Scheme (except in Upper Silesia), but these workers and members of their families were by a special Scheme entitled to medical assistance and, if necessary, to hospital treatment at the employer's expense.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Social Insurance Act of March 28th, 1933, amended by further enactments.

German Insurance Act of July 19th, 1911, in force in Upper Silesia.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of October 24th, 1933, concerning medical assistance for agricultural workers.

Order of the Minister of Social Welfare of December 29th, 1933, relating to the application of legislation on Social Insurance to persons employed in the Polish Mercantile Marine.

Decree of the President of the Republic of June 30th, 1941, on the same subject.

INVALIDITY, OLD AGE, WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' INSURANCE

Poland did not ratify six Conventions concerning compulsory invalidity, old-age, widows' and orphans' insurance adopted by the XVII Session of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 29th, 1933. The Schemes existing in Poland, however, cover manual and non-manual workers for invalidity and old age and provide benefits to their survivors. An insured person who became incapable of carrying on his occupation, irrespective of the cause of such incapacity, if not as the result of an industrial accident or occupational disease, or attains the age of 65 and has contributed to the Fund for at least 60 months, is entitled to an invalidity or old-age pension. For manual workers the qualifying period is 200 weeks in the preceding 10 years, but for miners and foundry workers this period is shorter under certain conditions. The Scheme provides that the age of 65 may be reduced to 60 and for women to 55.

The amount of pension for a non-manual worker is two-fifths of the pensioner's salary and is increased by a supplement for each month after 10 years' insurance. The other benefits provided for are: medical assistance for the pensioners, and widows', and orphans' pensions.

The contribution rates are 8 per cent. of salary in the case of non-manual workers and 5.2 percent. in the case of manual workers (5.8 per cent. for mines and foundry workers). For higher-salaried non-manual workers a maximum of 725 zloty per month (\$29.20 per week) and manual workers \$14.00 per week is counted for con-

tributions and benefits. Insured persons' contributions vary, according to their salary or wages, between 40 per cent. and 60 per cent. of the total contributions, the employer paying the balance.

LIST OF ENACTMENTS.

Decree of the President of the Republic of November 24th, 1927, concerning the insurance of intellectual workers, amended by subsequent enactments.

Social Insurance Act of March 28th, 1933, amended by further enactments.

IV.

The present survey has dealt only with the general outline of Social Legislation as it existed in Poland. This legislation was a most treasured possession, especially as it had not been easy of achievement in a country where economic conditions were unfavorable.

Poland had been the scene of war activities from 1914 to 1918 and again in 1920. During their occupation, the Germans had denuded the country of its factory plant and equipment, railway rolling-stock and raw materials and hewn down extensive tracts of forest land. To further aggravate the result of this widespread impoverishment, there was a large natural growth in the population which coincided with the almost complete cessation of emigration. The outcome was heavy over-population of the villages, the excess from which could not be absorbed into industry to any adequate extent because financial stringency was hindering the industrialization of the country. No relief was forthcoming from outside to help in the solution of these problems. Unemployment, especially after the economic depression of 1929-1931, became enormous. The standard of life of the workers fell so low that some measure of improvement was absolutely imperative. To achieve this, and, simultaneously, to effect a rehabilitation of the Polish economic situation, a change in the political regime, including the participation therein of the representatives of the working classes, was of the utmost urgency.

Poland was once again plunged into war, on a more terrible scale than ever before, by the German invasion of 1939. Once more there followed despoliation by the Ger-

mans, who filched everything on which they could lay their hands. The cruelties which they inflicted upon the people of Poland beggar all description. About one million men and women, mainly young persons, have been snatched from their homes and taken to work in agriculture and industry in Germany. Their clothing marked with the letter "P," despised and isolated from the local inhabitants, they are compelled to perform the heaviest of work for a beggarly wage from which, in addition to other taxes and charges, a special deduction of 15 per cent. is made for a tax which is charged only to the Poles. A further 2 per cent. is deducted for the Arbeitsfront, although no Poles may share in the benefits thereof.

Any association between Germans and these people of so-called "Tainted Blood" is strictly forbidden. In a few instances where German farmers have invited Poles to eat at their table, they have been severely punished. "The nobility of the blood is the most exalted nobility in the world," said Gauleiter Thiemann to the Leaders of the Nazi Party at Lippstadt (*Westfälische Zeitung*, June 9th, 1941). Later he declared "Political Leaders and Officers should, therefore, take particular care that a due aloofness toward foreign workers is maintained by our people."

In Western Poland, which, in defiance of all International Law, has been incorporated into the Reich, Polish workers not only receive a much lower wage than the Germans living there, but are deprived by law of many of the rights granted by tariffs and labor regulations. For instance, they are entitled to no allowances for children, no maternity benefits, no marriage bonus or death benefits. Again, whereas German workers are paid during absence from work owing to illness or accident, the Poles receive nothing. Neither do they enjoy an extension of

their holiday with pay after a certain number of years or above a certain age, as is the case with German workers. The working-day in agriculture is longer for the Poles than for the Germans. At the same time the food allotment per head to the Poles is considerably less by comparison than that of the Germans.

In Central and Southern Poland, now known as the "General Gouvernement," compulsory work has been instituted for every person between the ages of 14 and 60. "Tariffs" have been introduced by the German Authorities establishing a 60-hour working week, but in practice this has been extended to 72 hours or more.

Employers have been deprived of the right to engage or dismiss employees and the employees of the right to change their employment without the consent of the German Authorities. By maintaining wages at their pre-war level, despite a 500 per cent. increase in the cost of living, the standard of life has been reduced to the lowest point. At the same time, social insurance benefits have been greatly curtailed, Labor Courts and Arbitration Tribunals abolished and the making of collective agreements rendered impossible by dissolution of the Trade Unions, confiscation of their properties and execution or incarceration of their Leaders. The granting of holidays with pay is now at the discretion of the management of any undertaking, and management is either in German hands or under German supervision (Treuhand).

It is not proposed here to describe all the acts of violence and cruelty perpetrated upon the Polish and Jewish populations of the Polish State. These peoples have been ruthlessly exploited in fulfillment of Göring's famous programme for Poland, laid down in his order of January 25th, 1940. In consequence of this order, the industrial

and mining plants of Poland have been yoked to the German military machine and Polish agriculture is bled white in order to help feed the German Army and the population of Germany. The people of Poland have been reduced to a state of slavery. They are worked almost to death for the benefit of their German masters and the only alternative to complete submission is a lingering death from starvation or torture in the concentration camp. Speaking at a public meeting at Ozorków, in Poland, the German mayor of Łódź said, "On the German soil, reconquered by the gallant German soldiers, there can be but masters and servants—and we are the masters." The Poles must be perfectly clear on that point. We in the Lodz Raum stand in the very centre of the German Polish nationality struggle. To fight here inflexibly and to remain hard, is our task. No community of existence between Germans and Poles exists, nor ever will," (*Litzmannstaedter Zeitung*, September 23rd, 1941).

Such is the lot which awaits any country which is brought, either voluntarily or forcibly, within the sphere of Hitler's "New Order." The forces of democracy will undoubtedly annihilate this fiendish programme and restore the freedom of the world. The people of Poland, more than that of any other nation, understand that the victory of these forces must be followed, not only by the restoration of national independence, but also by complete social justice and by the establishment of a system of economic planning on a world scale. The Poles have adopted as the basis of their programme in a future free Poland, the words of President Roosevelt in his speech to Congress on January 6th, 1941: "Certainly this is no time for any of us to stop thinking about social and economic problems which are the root cause of the social

revolution which is to-day a supreme factor in the world. For there is nothing mysterious about the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy. The basic things expected by our people of their political and economic system are simple. They are: Equality of opportunity for youth and for others. Jobs for those who can work. Security for those who need it. The ending of special privilege for the few. The preservation of civil liberty for all. The enjoyment of the fruits of scientific progress in a wider and constantly rising standard of living. Those are simple, the basic things that must never be lost sight of in the turmoil and unbelievable complexity of our modern world. The inner and the abiding strength of our economic and political system is dependent upon the degree to which they fulfill these expectations."



Arch. Emigracji

Biblioteka

Główna

UMK Toruń

1385177

Biblioteka Główna UMK



300020872987

PRINTED IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Arch. Emigracji

Biblioteka

Główna

UMK Toruń

1385177



Biblioteka Główna UMK



300020872987

PRINTED IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA