

SOVIET RUSSIA PAMPHLETS, No. 4

The Protection *of* Labor *in* Soviet Russia

BY

S. KAPLUN

of the Commissariat of Labor

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

The present essay is a study of the operation of the Labor Laws of the Soviet Republic, which were printed as the first pamphlet of this series.

The present pamphlet was originally printed at Petrograd in English in 1920, and the present edition is a reprint of the Petrograd copy, with only such alterations as were necessary from the standpoints of English and typographical correctness.



PROTECTION OF LABOR IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

1. Protection of Labor in Soviet Russia before the establishment of the Soviet Government.

The Soviet Government, the government of the workers and the poorest peasants, was the first seriously to raise in Russia the question of social protection of labor.

Under the Czarist Government, which was the embodiment of the whip and the fist, all the instructions and wishes of the landlord class and big manufacturers were faithfully carried out. Naturally enough, factory legislation was in a more backward state than in any other part of the world. In accordance with the Law of 1897, the working day officially was 11½ hours, while in reality the workman was compelled to work far longer than that; this was due to the great amount of overtime — compulsory and “uncompulsory”, the latter only on paper; — in actual life extreme destitution and the complete absence of rights of the workers compelled them fully to submit to all the proposals of the manufacturers. Children were permitted to go to work even at the age of 12; according to the law of 1882 youngsters up to the age of 15 were forbidden to be engaged at night work, whilst during the day their labor was not to exceed 8 hours.

Even these inadequate laws, however, soon appeared to be too great a compromise in the eyes of the “European gendarme”, and subsequently Czarism gave to the manufacturers a great number of loopholes and means to evade the law. The first step in this direction was the permission of uninterrupted 6 hour work instead of the former 4 hours work for children. When working two shifts children

were allowed to be engaged for 9 hours a day during the two shifts instead of the maximum 8 hour working day according to the law of 1882. Night work was permitted for children in the glass industry, although from a hygienic point of view this is one of the most harmful trades; yet this night work was permitted owing to the fact that it was demanded by the interests of the industrial magnates. Further, the factory inspection was given the right to permit Sunday and holiday work for children. Finally, night work, which was generally prohibited by law to children and women could be sanctioned by the factory and works managements, or by the governor of the gubernia, in all cases where such children were engaged in work together with their parents, that is to say, this night work became a general rule.

With regard to the protection of woman labor, nothing at all was undertaken. No care whatsoever was taken of the sanitary and hygienic state of factories or workshops. In the sphere of technical safety and safeguards from dangerous machines, the government acted very timidly, almost refraining from establishing any important rules or obligatory regulations.

Little can be said of the rights of the workers. Absolute rule of the employer, endless fines and impositions, dismissal of workers without serious reason, constant interference of the police, and armed force at the first signs of agitation of the workers, — such is the well remembered picture of Russian factory life. Equally little was done in the sphere of social maintenance of the workers in the event of loss of livelihood. Social insurance, which was established only in 1903, and was more or less developed by the legislation of 1912, provided only for cases of sickness and accidents. But in spite of the fact that the workers were heavily taxed for state insurance, unemployable men were given a most beggarly assistance. And even here insurance did not by any means embrace all the workers.

Especially important was the character of those organs which were charged with the enforcement

of the laws for the protection of labor. The direct agents of supervision were the factory inspectors — state officials who submissively carried out all the instructions of capital.

In accordance with the laws, instructions, and circulars, they were to work in the closest possible collaboration with the police and were even directly subordinated to the governor of the gubernia in question. One of their principal tasks was to prevent strikes and fight every strike that occurred. The leading local organ of factory supervision was the so-called gubernia board of administration for factories and mines. The composition of this board is quite characteristic: the governor presides and the entire upper local hierarchy are members of this board: the vice-governor, the public prosecutor, the chief of police, the chief factory inspector, and the district engineer. To endow this constellation with greater authority, another element interested in protection of labor was introduced, namely: four members of the local manufacturers and factory proprietors. It is obvious, therefore, that under Czarism protection of labor was actually turned into protection of capital against labor.

When Russian Czarism gave place to that miserable miscarriage — the Coalition Government, representing a mixture of the big industrial bourgeoisie with the anaemic middle class personified by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, protection of labor ceased to be a scarecrow. But it is plain enough that the vacillating Menshevik opportunist Ministry of Labor, ever apprehensive of encroaching upon the interests of the bourgeoisie, was not capable of serious work in this sphere. The result of this is that for the 8 months from February to October 1917, only pitiful attempts were made with regard to protection of labor, the most characteristic of which is the project of "labor inspection" consisting in the appointment of higher specialists and of workers who were to act only in the capacity of "assistants". In every other respect the old Czarist laws remained inviolate, and in ad-

dition to this, constant deviation was allowed in the interests of the bourgeoisie upon the first demand of the kings of "national" capital.

II. The Soviet Government and Protection of Labor.

The position radically changed when the revolutionary proletariat overthrew the political, and what is still more important, the economic domination of the propertied classes, and in alliance with the poorest part of the peasantry took the power into its hands. Protection of labor instantly became one of the most important and serious aspects of Soviet work. The importance that was attached to protection of labor by the Soviet Government can be judged from the fact that on the 29th of October, 1917,* four days after the proclamation of proletarian dictatorship, a decree was published on "the length and distribution of working time"; this decree instantly provided an introductory code of laws for the protection of labor, embodying all the old revolutionary demands of the working class, such as the eight hour working day, a number of measures in the field of protection of child and woman labor, and so forth.

Owing to the fact that our industry has been almost entirely nationalized by this time, and is administered by organs of proletarian dictatorship our protection of labor now takes place, not as formerly, in a struggle against the big employers, but on the contrary, in complete agreement and in close collaboration with the industrial organs. Our real achievements in protection of labor increase in proportion to the growth of the power of the Soviet Government and the improvement of its international, political and economic position. The Soviet Government's entire work on labor protection rests on the very effective creative activity of the masses of the workers. For this reason our state organs of

* November 11, 1917 New Style.

labor protection are established by the Trade Unions, and are elected by the Trade Union amalgamations, and their activity is carried on in close contact with the Trade Unions. Finally, labor protection in Russia embraces without exception all wage workers, contrary to the Western countries. Our labor protection laws are equally applied to large works and factories, as well as to crafts, to home industries, to transport and agricultural laborers, to clerks, shop assistants and domestic servants.

1. *Working Hours*

The laws passed as early as November, 1917, have legislated an 8-hour working day, a measure in its time carefully avoided by the compromising government of Kerensky. Subsequently this law was confirmed in the "Code of Labor Laws" issued on the 10th of December 1918.* Overtime is allowed only as an exception, in cases where production is of extreme social importance and when it is not possible correspondingly to increase the number of workers or to arrange the work in two or three shifts. In all such cases the sanction is required of the trade unions for tax on all overtime, in addition to which the confirmation of the inspector of labor is also required. All overtime work is paid for as time and a half. In accordance with the Code of labor laws the standard of night work for every worker is established as seven hours instead of eight, but is paid for as eight hours.

But not all workers work eight hours. All mental and sedentary workers, in view of the mental strain incurred, have a 6 hours working day. In exceptionally difficult or harmful work, such as tobacco manufacture, gas works, certain chemical works, and so forth, the working day is reduced to 7 and even to 6 hours a day.

During the working day an interval for dinner is

* The *Code of Labor Laws*, as published by the Commissariat of Justice, was reprinted, with several interpretative essays, by the Russian Soviet Government Bureau, Price Ten Cents.

established at every factory, lasting from 30 minutes to 2 hours, during which the worker can recuperate to some extent. Every worker is entitled to a weekly rest which is to consist of 42 hours continuous and uninterrupted. Therefore on the eve of all holidays factories are closed two hours before the usual time. In all work which cannot be stopped even for a single day (as in the case of nurses, engine-drivers, tramway, electric or gas workers, etc.), the workers are afforded a day's rest some other day of the week instead of the regular holiday.

Finally, in Russia for the first time in the history of industry, obligatory leave with the preservation of the full wage or salary has been introduced for all workers and employees. Every worker who has been employed either in one or in several places for six continuous months is entitled, according to the "Code of Labor Laws" to a fortnight's leave, those who have worked for a year to a month's leave. In view of the great economic crisis, only a fortnight's leave is permitted at the present time, with the exception of all workers engaged in harmful production, as well as children, all of whom are given an additional fortnight's leave.

2. Protection of Female Labor

One of the most important aspects of the activity of labor protection is the protection of women, which is an essential condition for the health of the children of the proletariat. In accordance with the Code of Labor Laws, all underground, night and overtime work for women in Russia is forbidden.

Particular attention is paid to pregnant women. Expectant mothers engaged in physical labor are liberated 8 weeks prior to confinement. Women engaged in mental labor, which has a smaller influence than physical labor, upon the child, during the mother's period of pregnancy, are liberated from their work 6 weeks prior to confinement. Every woman worker or employee is fully paid during the whole period of leave. Having given birth, all women are freed from work for another period of 8

weeks in the case of physical workers or 6 weeks in the case of mental workers, with full pay.

To give the mother an opportunity herself to feed the child, which is of great importance for its health and development, a half hour's leave after every three hours of work is granted to every woman who feeds her child by breast. Wherever possible nurseries are established at all large enterprises, where the mother is able to leave her child under proper care during her working hours and feed it during the intervals. In a number of towns special "Mother and Child" houses have been established where the woman worker can pass the last months of her pregnancy as well as the period of lactation and can learn the art of rearing her child. In addition to this, in order to raise the general level of the life of the mother who feeds her child by breast, every woman worker is granted an additional subsidy during the period of lactation; in Moscow this amounts to 600 roubles per month. Immediately after having given birth, a special grant is made to the extent of a fortnight's minimum pay (720 roubles for Moscow) for the baby's clothes and all other necessities.

All this greatly aids in preserving the health of the woman worker and her capacity to produce healthy, normal offspring for the proletariat, which forms an essential basis of the building of the future of the victorious class.

III. Child Labor.

In all countries the protection of labor and the protection of children from the heartless exploitation of capital met insurmountable obstacles in the shape of private profits. Only the Soviet Government has set itself to the task of actually saving the young proletarian generation from premature degeneration, the effect produced by hard daily work upon the young and still weak organisms.

According to our laws children under the age of 16 are not allowed to engage in any work. In special cases children of 14—16 may be given work, only with the permission of the Labor Inspector and only in such cases where there is acute material need and where it is impossible to establish them in schools, homes and other State institutions. For all young children who have not reached the age of 16, and who are already working in factories, etc. a four hours working day is established. Minors (between the ages of 16 and 18) do not work longer than six hours a day. All minors who have not reached the age of 18 are forbidden overtime, night work and underground work.

Children of tender age (up to 14 years of age) who are found working in any enterprise are gradually withdrawn from the work; every care being taken that these children are not left idle or without means of existence and thus do not fall into the hands of street speculation. They are withdrawn from work only when it becomes possible to establish them in schools, in children's communes, or other educational institutions. At the same time, wherever a child gave financial assistance to its family, the latter is correspondingly recompensed. In the withdrawing of children from work as well as in protection of child labor, the League of Youth and the trade unions are participating.

Special care is also taken that children are not engaged in harmful, dangerous or hard work and that their work should at the same time serve as a school for their future occupations. The reduced working day for children and minors is paid fully according to the tariff scale.

IV. Sanitary and Technical Protection of Labor.

The problem of protection of labor is not only the struggle against the degeneration of the proletariat by establishing, by means of legislation, conditions of labor, protection against overwork, and especially against undue strain and exhaustion of its weaker elements, women and children, but also to effect real improvements and changes in the general conditions in which the workman lives. With this object in view special attention is paid to the sanitary and hygienic construction of enterprises, to the housing problem, hospitals, schools, nurseries and so forth. Measures are also taken to prevent accidents, by means of a proper construction of industrial buildings, machinery safeguards, inspection of steam boilers, lifts, and so forth.

It is of course impossible immediately to achieve important results in this sphere. The old form of production, which was mainly concerned with the profit of the owners, took no care whatsoever of the health of the workers. As a result of this we are left with a legacy from the bourgeoisie of close, filthy, dark and technically badly equipped enterprises, in which the worker daily ruins his health, and which have acquired the appropriate name of "exhausters". The Soviet Government has commenced a serious battle against dust, high temperature, poisonous fumes and gases and other industrial evils. A number of compulsory regulations of a sanitary and technical character, applying to all enterprises, as well as to individual forms of production, have been established. The organs of Inspection of Technical and Sanitary conditions of labor take all measures for every possible improvement as to safety, industrial hygiene and sanitation.

The housing conditions of the working class are closely connected with their conditions of labor, and

therefore the organs of the Protection of Labor pay particular attention to the housing question. Detailed regulations concerning the construction and furnishing, etc., of the houses in connection with the factories and works are issued by the People's Commissariat for Labor. This Commissariat has also drawn up model plans of houses and separate workers' dwellings, as well as of whole workers' settlements where the demands of hygiene fully coincide with comfort and economy. In the various localities every measure is taken to improve the sanitary conditions of the workers' dwellings and to reduce the prevailing lack of room. The entire working class is interested in taking part in the improvement of housing conditions, furnishing etc., through their factory committees. An extensive sanitary and educational activity is carried on among them for this purpose.

V. Other Questions of Protection of Labor.

The above questions exhaust by no means the many-sided legislative activity of the Protection of Labor organs in Soviet Russia: it is impossible to deal with them fully in a small pamphlet. I will point out in brief the following aspects of it. At present every worker engaged in physical labor is supplied free of charge with working clothing made according to the requirements of labor protection. In addition to these, in all factories which expose workers to a danger of poisoning, or where the workers are subject to dampness or filth, etc., special protective clothing is supplied. The standard and kind of such clothing and footwear, as well as the category of workers to be supplied, is defined by the People's Commissariat of Labor. All working men and women engaged in harmful trades are supplied with soap, free of charge, in spite of the acute shortage of soap in the Soviet Republic.

Protection of labor includes not only persons employed in the ordinary way but also those who are subject to labor service. The Soviet Government as a proletarian dictatorship which is based on labor makes an effort to assure normal and healthy conditions for the labor of those who have been mobilized for work. Special regulations regarding the application of the Code of Laws to labor service have been drawn up, in connection with which there have also been established special commissions for the proper utilization of labor. The question has now been put forward regarding the establishment of special organs of the protection of labor in connection with the labor armies. Notwithstanding the difficult conditions of the present moment, the People's Commissariat of Labor is carrying on scientific investigation of harmful trades. In accordance with the fundamental principles of the Soviet Govern-

ment the working masses themselves are attracted to this work. The Trade Unions in conjunction with doctors and engineers study in detail the circumstances and conditions of work of every individual trade. At the present time the Department of Protection of Labor of the Labor Commissariat is organizing a special institute for the study of labor; a number of experimental laboratories, clinics for trade diseases and cabinets for medical statistics have been established. This Institute is to serve as the first scientific establishment in Russia in connection with questions of the protection of labor, after the type of similar institutions in the largest centres of Western Europe and America. The People's Commissariat of Labor has, at the same time, established an experimental study of the questions of a hygienic labor efficiency. Fully recognizing the necessity of a scientific organization of production Soviet Russia cannot, however, completely accept the system of Taylor and other American engineers, who fail to take into consideration the interests and the health of the workers. The problem of the hygienic efficiency of labor is to unite all the scientifically correct and rational foundations of the Taylor system with the needs of physiology and labor hygiene.

It is necessary to mention the extensive cultural and educational work which is being carried on directly at the factories and works, and in the very thick of the working masses, by the organs of labor protection. One of the basic principles of our work is the effort to make of every workman, even of the most backward, an intelligent factor for his own labor protection. To this end the Inspectors of Labor and other workers in the sphere of the protection of labor continuously arrange lectures and reports on various subjects of labor legislation, of the history of the protection of labor, of hygiene, sanitation and safety.

VI. Inspection of Labor.

One of the chief questions of the organization of labor protection with which the Soviet Government was faced, is the establishment of an institution for the supervision of the proper realization of labor protection laws. The revolutionary elements of the proletariat of all countries have always put forward the demand that labor inspection should be transferred to the labor organizations. But even the so called "Revolutionary" Government of the first period of the Russian Revolution did not dare to take this measure. Like certain Western European countries, it considered it the maximum of radicalism to admit even as assistants in this inspection, workers who enjoyed no authority or rights. These assistants had no right to be connected with any labor organization and their whole business was to represent a semi-actual representation of the proletariat in the organization of the protection of labor. Only an assistant who had passed four months in this unenviable role of official and who had by this time completely estranged himself from the masses could become an inspector of labor.

The proletarian revolution, of course, instantly put an end to this system and realized the old revolutionary motto of elected labor inspection. By the decree of the 7th of May, 1918, the old labor inspection, hateful to the Russian working class, was abolished, and in its place was established a purely proletarian labor inspection. The principal decree was furthermore developed and supplemented with a number of orders, instructions and circulars.

Labor inspectors are elected at labor conferences of representatives of trade unions and of factory and works committees of those districts in which

they are to serve. Only where the convening of such conferences is impossible, do the elections take place at the local trade union councils. In this way the closest contact between the labor inspectors and the working masses by whom they are delegated is secured. The election process in itself is of the greatest educational and propaganda importance. At these elections working masses become acquainted with the general principles and practice of the protection of labor in Soviet Russia, as well as with the decrees and instructions, in connection with labor protection. The delegates visit their localities and make reports concerning the conference, and in this manner obtain the direct participation of the masses in the work of labor protection.

Upon his election, the Inspector of labor, though directly subordinated to the Labor Department works at the same time in close contact with all the local trade unions and also carries out all the instructions of the local council of trade unions, which is empowered to withdraw any inspector who may turn out to be inefficient. The supervision of the labor inspector includes all the workers and employees of his district, independent of whether they are engaged in small or large branches of industry, in private or state factories, in civil, military or militarized enterprises or institutions.

The labor inspector makes a systematic tour of all the industrial enterprises and institutions of his district, which he is authorized freely to enter at any time of the day or night, as well as to visit any place where work is carried on, as well as every kind of building in any way connected with the workers, such as dwelling houses, hospitals, baths, kindergartens, nurseries, homes, schools and so forth. During visits to the various enterprises the administration and owners of such are bound to afford every assistance to the inspector and must not refuse to give explanations on the plea of trade secrecy, which has been abolished by the proletarian revolution, along with the other secrets and privileges of the propertied classes. The labor inspector

is to discover all the deviations from and violations of the rules and regulations, whether with regard to the rights of the workers or with regard to technical and sanitary protection of labor. All inspection takes place in conjunction with the representative of the local factory or works' Committee or other analogous committees. If, during the inspection a careless or spiteful attitude on the part of an owner or administration of the enterprise in question, is observed towards the interests of the life, health and protection of labor of workers and employees, the Labor Inspector takes the guilty party before the court or imposes a fine upon the same through the local Labor Department.

According to the decree, the Labor Inspector should not only carefully supervise the enforcement of existing laws, but he is also given the right to take all necessary measures for the removal of any circumstance which may be a menace to the life and health of the workers, even though such measures be not provided for by the law. In special cases when serious defects are discovered, the Inspector of labor has wide powers, including that of stopping machines or engines or looms, or even of closing down certain workshops or whole enterprises. Generally speaking, the Labor Inspector is the executive factor in our legislation, adapting all our regulations and decrees to the actual conditions and local peculiarities of a given district. With the consent and official sanction of the local trade union organizations, the inspectors may permit, in the event of extreme necessity, deviations from the existing standard, and establish the order in which one or another measure cannot be realized in its entirety, is to be enforced.

The Labor Inspectors do not confine their activity to visiting enterprises alone. They are to set up inquiry offices, where the workers are given all necessary information with detailed instructions on all questions of labor and social welfare; they are to accept reports and complaints concerning violation of labor protection laws and to direct workers

who seek information to the respective institutions.

The Labor Inspectors take an active part in the activity of the organs of public economy, public health, food supply, public education, social welfare the housing question, and so forth; they raise here all questions in any way connected with labor protection, the health of the workers, and the improvement of their general conditions of life, and directly participate in bringing about all the measures of these organs. Furthermore, the Labor Inspectors attract to the work of labor protection all the local labor organizations, by reading papers on their activities, at the trade union sessions, at the general meetings of individual enterprises, among the women workers, among the working youth, as well as at specially convened general labor conferences. In addition to this, the Labor Inspectors periodically deliver lectures and reports, and supply the local press with articles on the protection of labor.

VII. The so-called Interlocal Inspection of Labor.

In every country of the world there are a number of individual groups of the proletariat who are not subject to labor protection laws. In reality in such countries the law includes only the industrial proletariat of factories and works which is best organized, most class conscious, and therefore most dangerous to the bourgeoisie. At the same time, there is everywhere a large mass of disjointed, unorganized, and backward workers working under bad conditions, with whom State protection of labor in capitalist society has no concern.

In Soviet Russia such a state of things is of course inadmissible. There are no pariahs in our midst; we are all one closely connected single labor family. General inspection of labor, usually consisting of the skilled workers of large industrial enterprises, cannot embrace all the small home industries, and disjointed enterprises, as well as those forms of labor, the conditions of which are distinguished by certain peculiarities.

For this purpose in Russia there has been established a so-called Interlocal Inspection. These Inspectors are part of the general system of State Inspection of Labor, but at the same time serve the needs only of workers of individual branches of industry, and are elected directly by the corresponding trade unions. In this manner the following special non-district inspections have been organized: of the railway and water transport workers, builders, employees of the post and telegraph, radio and telephone services, agricultural workers, shop assistants, and also the workers engaged in supplying food in the capitals. For separate districts where the peasant home industry is greatly developed, and also in large towns, where there is a large

number of various small concerns, such as work-shops, hotels, offices, cafes, restaurants, baths, barber shops, hospitals, drugstores, etc., there are special "small-industrial" inspectors.

VIII. Staff for Inspection of Labor.

The staff for Labor Inspection acquires particular importance in view of the difficult conditions of the period of transition to socialism, and of the particularly acute economic disorganization and civil war; the immediate and complete realization of all the demands of the working class in the field of labor protection is absolutely impossible, and the most complex and responsible task of adaptation to life of the general demands of legislation, and the realization of all that which can be realized, is demanded even at the cost of the greatest difficulties. The institution of labor inspection is very young. It has not even had two full years of existence. The political situation was such that the trade unions had to give their best men to the war to protect the revolution, and next, to organization of industry, establishment of transportation, food supply, organization of industry, organization of wage tariff activity, etc. Yet, in spite of the acute shortage of responsible men, the working class proved itself capable of providing a goodly number of businesslike and intelligent men for this field as well. And, what is most important of all, labor inspection almost entirely rests upon the proletariat itself, which makes us fully confident of the stability and power of this young institution.

According to statistics for the month of April, 1920, there were elected altogether 405 Labor Inspectors; of these, there were 319 district and 86 other inspectors. The latter are divided as to their unions as follows: Railway Transport—52, Water Transport—14, Builders—4, Communications—10, Interlocal inspection of agricultural workers and shop assistants has only just begun to be organized, and employs not more than 6 men at the present time. Of the Labor Inspectors, 375 are men and 30 women.

We thus see that in labor inspection a considerable number of women are represented, and it might be mentioned that both men and women can be equally true Proletarian Labor Inspectors and that an individual woman worker can freely become a general Labor Inspectress. The following is the distribution of Labor Inspectors according to trade:

Workers	232
Foremen and technicians.....	75
General clerks	60
Medical assistants	5
Teachers	6
Druggists	2
Students	6
Doctors	3
Lawyers	1
Engineers	2
Unknown	13

Altogether, including foremen there were 307 workers, making 75 per cent, 60 employees making 15 per cent, and 25 intellectuals making 6 per cent. The class composition of the Labor Inspection is obvious.

As to previous education, they are distributed as follows:

Higher Education	16
Secondary Education	38
Secondary Technical and Craft	49
Elementary Education	272
Domestic Science Education	13
Not known	17

The latter category really overlaps with elementary and domestic science education, in view of that fact that it consists mainly of workers.

Ages:		Local Interlocal Total		
Up to 20	years	..... 1	—	1
20—25	"	.....32	11	43
25—30	"	.....70	18	88
30—35	"	.....81	26	107
35—40	"	.....53	14	67
40—45	"	.....36	15	51
45—50	"	.....20	—	20
above 50	"	..... 8	—	8
unknown		.....18	2	20

The above table shows the greatest number of inspectors is of the most mature age and of maximum fitness, — from 25 to 35.

Party composition:

Communists	183	} 268 = 66%
Sympathizers	85	
Mensheviks	15	
Left Soc-Revolutionaries	6	
Anarchists	2	
Zionist Socialists	1	
Bund	1	
Non-Party	93	
Unknown	18	

I assume that the data given above is quite sufficient to enable us to say with confidence that Protection of Labor in Soviet Russia is in reliable hands.

IX. Special Inspections.

The Labor Inspectors who, as we have seen, are in the majority of cases class conscious workers of a domestic education are incapable of realizing fully all the tasks in the sphere of Labor Protection. Very often substantial special knowledge is required. For this reason, to assist Labor Inspection, the Soviet Government has secured the assistance of the medical and technical services. In August 1918 a technical inspection of engineers was instituted. In March 1919 Sanitary Inspection was introduced, all the inspectors for which were medical men. It has not been possible yet to put these two important institutions firmly on their feet, owing to the fact that at the present time the country is passing through a sharp crisis of lack of specialists. There are hardly enough engineers to go round for the work of reestablishing industry and transport, whilst the epidemics make felt the sharp need of doctors, in which Russia was at all times poor. At the present moment there are altogether 125 technical inspectors and 50 medical inspectors. According to the general principles of our policy, specialists, doctors and engineers are more of a consultative, auxiliary importance, assisting by their knowledge and special experience the Labor Inspector, who guides all their work, bearing the full responsibility for the condition of labor protection in his district.

The technical and medical inspectors make a systematic supervision of enterprises for the purpose of removing any defect or infringement of laws in the spheres of technical safety, sanitation and industrial hygiene. In addition to this they make

an extensive study of all harmful trades, trade diseases and accidents and investigate methods of combatting these. All their work, similar to Labor Inspection, is carried on in the closest contact with the trade unions under the latter's direct control.

C o n c l u s i o n s .

It is quite obvious that although our Labor Inspection is composed, chiefly of the working class, this class was incapable of realizing all the aspects of its activity. A Labor Inspector makes only periodical visits to an enterprise, gives orders and directions but is incapable of establishing a daily control for their actual execution. In addition to this, Labor Protection gives actual results only when it is carried out by the whole working mass during its usual labor processes. For its maximum success the constant utilization is necessary of that knowledge of the peculiarities of every branch of individual piece of work, which is possessed by the workers engaged at the lathes who feel the necessity of carrying out the protection of Labor. Furthermore, it is necessary to attract to the creative active work of labor protection those who most need this protection, the weakest elements of the working class—the women and the children. In order to achieve these tasks there are being established in Soviet Russia, side by side with Labor Inspection, special organs assisting and collaborating with the Inspection in its complex and responsible work. At every trade union from top to bottom, from the central committee to the lowest uyezd branch, special departments of labor protection have been established. At every factory and works, at every enterprise and institution numbering above 15 men, a commission of labor protection has been formed.

These organs vitalize the activity of the Labor Inspection by special knowledge of all the peculiarities and the demands of the industry in question. They also see to it that all the instructions and directions are not dead letters but are actually carried out in due time and without undue deviations. In the absence of the Inspector they carry

on the constant control of the supervision of legislation on Labor Protection, and of the sanitary-hygienic state of enterprises, housing, schools, hospitals, baths and so forth. Special attention is to be paid to attracting into active work in Labor protection the working youth, which in the person of its Communist League, represents a leading element, affording a great assistance to all the organs of the Soviet Government by presenting an example of energy and firm revolutionary faith in the righteousness of the workers' cause. In connection with all organs of the League there are economic legal departments which under the guidance of the Labor Inspectors carry on the Labor protection of minors. Moreover, in February of the year we laid the foundation of a special institution of assistant inspectors of labor from the midst of the League of Labor Youth. The best representatives of the proletarian youth, elected to these posts by the League in agreement with the Council of Trade Unions, are supported by the State and, thanks to this, are able to devote themselves fully to the work of Labor Protection. Whilst paying most attention to the protection of child labor, they at the same time assist the inspector in all the other aspects of its activity, thanks to which they continually gain experience as fully intelligent and efficient workers in labor protection.

Finally, every measure is being taken to draw women workers to the work of labor protection. The general meetings of the representatives of women workers of every district elect special delegates who constantly participate in the activity of the local sub-department of Labor Protection, visit the enterprises under the guidance of the Labor Inspectors, attend special lectures, and take part in discussions on labor protection which are arranged by the Labor Inspection, and also closely participate in the realization of Labor Protection for women and children.

Thus, thanks to persistent and detailed daily work, both of an organizing, agitational, cultural and edu-

cational character, we make sure that protection of labor in Soviet Russia does actually embrace il-limitably wide circles of working masses, who may be said fully to have become the "self-protectors" of the proletariat against all abnormal, difficult and harmful conditions with which the capitalistically organized public labor is connected, and which inevitably lead to a physical and mental degeneration of the working masses. We have not by far succeeded in fully realizing all the demands of labor protection. This is in the first place to be explained by the fact that, generally speaking, social measures can under no conditions be fully realized on a large scale within one or two years. In addition to the conditions prevailing in all countries, Russia was laboring under an uninterrupted three years' civil war and principally under a brutal and criminal blockade of the aggressive Entente, which prevented among other things the full realization of protection of labor. The armed counter-revolution supported by Anglo-French bayonets, bullets, and money, and at times even with human "cannon-fodder", compelled the Russian workers and peasants to strain all their forces for the defence of the Soviet system. At the same time the Western European capitalists, having economically isolated Russia from the whole world, contributed towards the extreme economic disorganization, tortured by hunger and cold the children of the proletariat, and it is clear enough that under such conditions not all the aspects of labor protection could be realized.

However, Soviet Russia is slowly but surely advancing along the road of extending and deepening real social Protection of Labor. However difficult the general position of the country is at the present time, the Russian workers nevertheless lay the cornerstone of the edifice of Labor Protection, whose problem it is to serve as the temple of healthy, beautiful and joyous labor.

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