

INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEES

Social Conditions of Transport Workers in Germany

The Inland Transport Committee of the International Labour Organisation, at its first session (London, 1945) adopted a resolution recommending that the International Labour Office should pursue the study of wages, social security measures and other conditions of work obtaining in the inland transport industry in the different countries.¹ The following report based on information supplied to the International Labour Office by Mr. Hans Jahn, President of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Verkehr und Öffentliche Betriebe, Bielefeld, gives information on the, working and living conditions of workers in the German transport industry in the first quarter of 1947. In connection with the wage figures given by Mr. Jahn the statistics of earnings, hours of work and cost of living in Germany reproduced in the "Conditions of Work" section of this number² are of interest.³

RAILWAYS

Wages and Salaries

Since 1945 the wages of workers on the German railways have declined considerably. The causes of this decline are:

- (a) the reduction of time worked from between 60 and 54 hours a week to 48;
- (b) the elimination or reduction of extra payments for overtime and work on Sundays and holidays;

¹ International Labour Organisation, Inland Transport Committee: *Report of the First Session, London, December 1945* (I.L.O., Geneva, 1947).

² See below, p. 611.

³ For other information on social conditions in Germany during and since the war, see the three articles by René LIVCHEN: "Wartime Development in German Wage Policy", *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVI, No. 2, Aug. 1942, pp. 135-165; "Wage Trends in Germany from 1929 to 1942", *idem.*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 6, Dec. 1943, pp. 714-732; "Net Wages and Real Wages in Germany", *idem.*, Vol. L, No. 1, July 1944, pp. 65-72; and the article by Matthew A. KELLY, "Allied Policy on Wages in Germany", *idem.*, Vol. LV, No. 5, May 1947, pp. 351-371.

(c) the reduction of piece-work earnings consequent upon economic changed circumstances and conditions of work and the inevitable reduction, in present circumstances, of work paid on a piece-work basis.

During the war the German railways could do little in the matter of wage adjustments. Whereas private industry was able to adapt its wage-scales in various ways to the rising cost of living, the railways were able to make only specified wage adjustments and could not introduce any genuine wage increases, as they were bound by the wage regulations for public services. The more noteworthy adjustments made took the form of a considerable increase in the wage differentials between unskilled, apprentice, and skilled workers, and took no account of the lowest-paid group of unskilled workers.

Area Wage Scales.

The problem of German railway workers' wages and salaries is complicated by the system of area wage scales. Before the war the areas served by the railways were classified according to the cost of living of railway workers living in them, and a different wage scale was drawn up for each grade of "service area". This system has been retained, and there are at present 16 different area wage scales. From the beginning this system was considered by the workers to be unjust.¹ Today it is a cause of great dissatisfaction, since the classification of the service areas no longer corresponds in any way to present-day circumstances. There is no longer any great difference in the cost of living between the town and the country; even the rents of houses in the country, which at one time were considerably lower than rents in the towns, have today risen to the same level as those in the towns, owing to the overcrowding of the country districts by the influx of refugees. The cost of living is also affected by movements of population from the destroyed cities to the country, and it is no longer unusual for agricultural products to be brought from other districts, by way of the towns, to feed the population in the countryside. The system bears particularly hardly on workers who, in consequence of the shortage of manpower, have to be moved about from one area to another.

American and British Zone.

In the American and British combined zone, the net monthly earnings of a married railway worker with one child (including children's allowance) would be:

Wage Scale 16,	Group A (craftsmen):	142.32 RM.
	Group B (apprentice):	124.08 RM.
	Group C (unskilled worker):	114.10 RM.
Wage Scale 10,	Group B (apprentice):	136.00 RM.
	Group C (unskilled worker):	125.28 RM.

¹ A reduction of the original 28 area wage scales to 16, as urged by the German railways administration and finally adopted on 1 December 1939, was greeted by the railway workers as a great improvement, though they did not regard this as a final settlement of the question, especially as the upper and lower wage limits remained unaltered.

The following new regulations regarding women workers and workers under 18 came into force on 1 April 1947.

Women workers. (a) Stewardesses in express trains, sweepers, cleaners and attendants to receive the wages of unskilled workers (Wage Group C); (b) other women workers to receive the same wages as men.

Workers under 18 years. (a) Over 17 years: 90 per cent. of adult wages, but not less than 50 Rpf. an hour; (b) 16-17 years: 80 per cent. of adult wages, but not less than 45 Rpf. an hour; and (c) 14-16 years: 70 per cent. of adult wages, but not less than 40 Rpf. an hour.

Negotiations are at present (April 1947) in progress in this zone with a view to raising the lowest wage categories of railways workers, particularly those of women and minors. An application has been sent to the Allied Control Council in Berlin requesting the recognition of the German Railways as a "problem industry" and a request has also been made that the lowest of the 16 wage scales at present in force should be abolished, and a hardship allowance granted to workers of the two lowest wage groups performing: (a) heavy manual labour; (b) particularly dirty or unpleasant work; or (c) 60 or more working hours within a single 7-day period. The hardship allowance requested, a uniform bonus of 5 Rpf. an hour, would be a temporary measure only, to be discontinued as soon as the conditions (exposure owing to the wartime destruction of shops and installations, strenuous work caused by lack of loading gear and bad road surfaces, to be performed by workers inadequately clothed, shod, and fed, etc.) which led to its being granted no longer exist.

The additional cost of the proposed measures is estimated at 100 million RM. a year.

Working Hours

In the *American and British zone*, the eight-hour day and the associated 48-hour week were brought into general application at the end of hostilities. Hours worked can be extended to 54 hours for operational staff, track service personnel and, to a certain extent also, for station staffs.

In accordance with an order of the Railway General Management of Bielefeld, made in April 1946, working hours for operational and traffic personnel on particularly strenuous and responsible jobs were reduced for the duration of the food crisis.

In the *Russian zone*, the regulation working hours are 8 hours a day and 48 hours a week. Overtime work is to be restricted to urgent cases. Normal working hours and overtime are not together to exceed 10 hours a day.

In the *French zone*, working hours are also 8 hours a day and 48 hours a week.

Holidays

In the *American zone*, workers received 21 days' leave during the course of 1946. After one year's service, leave is as follows: railway workers, one week; lower grade officials, 12 days; middle grade officials, 14 days; upper grade officials, 18 days.

After ten years' service, holidays rise to the maximum indicated above (21 days). In 1946, workers were given their full leave up to 21 days, but officials only received three quarters of the leave due to them.

In the *British zone*, workers on a weekly wage receive from 6 to 18 days, officials from 16 to 31 days. Operational staff cannot be given their full allowance of leave, as there is not sufficient staff. Workers taking their leave between 1 November and 31 March are given additional leave of 3 working days.

Disabled workers, whether injured in the war, in the railway service, or by accidents, are given additional leave on the following scale:

(a) seriously injured workers with a reduction in earning capacity of not less than 50 per cent., and those drawing disability pay on Grades II and III: additional leave of 6 working days;

(b) injured workers with a reduction in earning power of not less than 25 but not more than 50 per cent., and those drawing disability pay on Grade I: additional leave of 3 working days.

If, owing to urgent service requirements, or owing to illness, it is not possible for the worker to be granted leave during the course of the current leave-year, he is to be paid leave compensation at the rate of his usual wage for the days of leave he has lost.

In addition to recreational leave on full pay, a worker may in *bona fide* cases be given up to one month's special leave without pay, provided that service requirements allow the worker to be released.

The same principles apply to the granting of leave to railway officials as to workers (disability leave, etc.).

In the *Russian zone* leave regulations were under review in April 1947.

In the *French zone*, workers have leave of 6-18 working days. Officials are given leave according to the previously existing regulations. A proposal to assimilate workers and officials for the purposes of leave was recently rejected by the French Military Government.

Social Insurance

In the *American zone*, social insurance payments are met by the German Railways Medical Fund. The contribution to the Medical Fund is 5 per cent. of wages, and in addition there is a sickness certificate charge of 25 Rpf.

Benefits paid by the Railways Medical Fund are as follows:

Sickness Benefit.

From the 4th day of sickness 50 per cent. of wages are paid up to 26 weeks. There is no lump sum payment for sickness.

Hospitalisation.

For members, full expenses are paid up to 26 weeks. For dependants, full expenses are paid up to 13 weeks.

Doctors' Fees.

For members and dependants, doctors' fees are paid in full without limit as to time.

Medical Supplies.

For members, payment is made in full. For dependants, payment is made up to 80 per cent. of the cost.

Prescriptions.

The cost of minor prescriptions is paid, up to 30 RM. in the case of members, and up to 50 per cent. of the cost in the case of dependants. For members and dependants, up to three quarters of the cost of major prescriptions is paid, with an upper limit of 100 RM.

Maternity.

For members, doctors' and midwives' fees are paid in full, with maternity benefit for 10 weeks at the sickness benefit rate and nursing benefit up to 12 weeks at 50 Rpf. a day. For dependants, doctors' and midwives' fees are paid in full, maternity benefit for 10 weeks at 50 Rpf. a day, and nursing benefit up to 12 weeks at 25 Rpf. a day.

Death Benefit.

For members, death benefit amounts to 30 days' earnings. For dependants (married wives only), the benefit is two thirds of the rate for members.

In the *British zone*, the contribution to the German Railway Medical Fund is 6 per cent. of wages. Benefits are substantially the same as in the American zone. The amount of death benefit is 20 days' earnings. There is no death benefit for dependants.

Provision for old age is available for workers in the American and British zone through their statutory Disability Insurance scheme; they are also insured under "Division B" of the pension fund. Pensions are payable on the basis of the contributions paid, that is to say the number of years contributed and the rate of contribution. From 1 January 1946 annuities calculated on this basis were reduced by 50 per cent. but there have recently been small improvements of from 5 to 30 per cent.

Permanent staff, who comprise only a small fraction of the total personnel of the German railways, are covered by the Staff Insurance Scheme, and can be additionally insured through the Supplementary Fund of the scheme.

Officials receive pensions in accordance with the regulations previously in force.

In the *Russian zone*, expenditure on social welfare has been greatly reduced. With regard to social insurance, railway workers come under general regulations providing for both compulsory insurance and voluntary insurance against sickness, disability, accident and old age.

In the *French zone* the Medical Fund contribution is 5 per cent. of wages. Benefits are paid as follows:

Sickness Benefit.

From the 4th day of sickness, 50 per cent. of wages. There is no lump sum payment for sickness.

Hospitalisation.

For members, full hospital expenses are paid up to 26 weeks. For dependants, payment of 1.90 RM. a day is made up to 13 weeks.

Doctors' Fees.

For members and dependants, doctors' fees are paid in full without limit as to time.

Medical Supplies.

For members, the cost is paid in full, subject to a deduction of 25 Rpf. receipt stamp-duty. For dependants, 50 per cent. of the cost is paid.

Prescriptions.

For members, minor prescriptions are paid in full, and up to three quarters of the cost of major prescriptions, up to 200 RM.

Maternity.

For members, doctors' and midwives' fees are paid in full; maternity benefit is paid for 10 weeks at the sickness benefit rate, and nursing benefit for 26 weeks at 50 Rpf. a day. For dependants, doctors' and midwives' fees are paid in full; maternity benefit is paid for 10 weeks at 50 Rpf. a day, and nursing benefit up to 25 weeks at 25 Rpf. a day.

Death Benefit.

For members, 20 days' earnings; there is no death benefit for dependants.

Old-Age Insurance.

As for the American and British zone.

Housing

In the *American zone*, accommodation of railway workers in houses owned by the railways has been severely limited by wartime destruction. Slight damage to houses owned by the railways has in part been made good, and the houses made habitable again; more severely damaged houses have also been brought into use owing to the extreme shortage of any alternative accommodation, though the greater proportion of these still need final repairs.

In the *British zone*, similar conditions prevail. Owing to the excessive burdening of the British zone with deportees and refugees, housing space is extremely short; houses owned by the railways are often occupied by refugees or deportees while railway employees have to be accommodated elsewhere. A small percentage of railway workers—deportees, refugees or persons bombed out of their homes—are still without housing at all; that is to say with no fixed abode, or with such unsatisfactory accommodation that they and their dependants are in serious danger to health or morals.

In the *Russian zone*, the housing problem is not so urgent, owing to the fact that most of the deportees and refugees were sent to the American and British zone and that as soon as the war was over a migratory movement set in from the present Russian zone to the west. Except for the heavily damaged cities such as Dresden, Berlin and Leipzig, housing conditions are more or less tolerable.

The *French zone* has been least affected by refugees, and for this reason housing conditions are still moderately satisfactory.

INLAND WATERWAYS

Wages and Salaries

Workers Employed by the State.

In the *American, British and French zones*, the salaries of officials and permanent staff of the Inland Navigation Administrations are sufficient to meet present-day living costs, whereas the wages of the workers are completely inadequate.

The trade unions concerned have applied to the Allied Control Council in Berlin for an increase by 20 per cent. of all full wage rates and for the payment of full wage rates to women and minors.

These claims would involve an additional expenditure of four and a half million RM. for the *British zone*.¹

Workers in Private Undertakings.

Wages for workers in private inland navigation undertakings are on an entirely different basis. During the war, wages were increased by 15 per cent.; the additional cost was contributed for the duration of the war by the Reich Labour Ministry. At the end of the war the Ministry's contribution ceased, and the undertakings therefore stopped paying the additional 15 per cent. It has recently been arranged with the Board of the Inland Navigation Central Administration that undertakings should continue paying the 15 per cent. bonus at their own expense.

Nothing is known of the position in the *Russian zone*.

Working Hours

In the *American, British and French zones*, working hours for workers, permanent staff and officials employed by the Administration are 8 hours a day and 48 hours a week.

In the case of those employed by private inland navigation undertakings, especially those working on board, no precise figures can be given for working hours.

In the *Russian zone*, similar working hours are to be established, but no precise details are known.

Holidays

For workers, permanent staff and officials of the Inland Navigation Administration in the *American, British and French zones*, leave is granted as follows:

¹ The trade unions have maintained that it would be possible to obtain the necessary funds for these measures if the Inland Navigation Central Administration were to stop selling the gravel and sand obtained by dredging to private agents at the rate of 0.60 to 1.20 RM. per cubic metre, and sell it direct to the consumer at the normal market price of 6 to 12 RM. per cubic metre. The middlemen would thus be cut out and marketing undertaken by a public agency.

Workers: 6-14 days, or up to a maximum of 18 days for workers with more than 10 years' service;

Permanent Staff and Officials: 18-47 days, according to length of service and service grade.

In the *Russian zone*, according to the latest announcement by the Soviet Military Authorities, new leave regulations have been established. The maximum for workers, permanent staff and officials alike will be 12 days.

Social Insurance

In the *American, British and French zones*, social insurance is provided by the industry's medical fund, the benefits paid by which are on the lines of those paid by other medical funds. In addition, workers are insured against old age by the disability insurance scheme and can subscribe to supplementary insurance with the Railways Old-Age Pensions Fund. Permanent staff are insured by the staff insurance scheme, and can also be insured through the supplementary insurance of the staff insurance scheme. Pensions are paid to officials according to the scales previously in force.

No information is available concerning the *Russian zone*.

ROAD TRANSPORT

Wages

In the *British zone*, wages for workers employed by the Road Transport Administration are in accordance with the "Wage Scale for Permanent Staff". Workers employed by private transport undertakings are paid in accordance with the "Wage Scale for Transport Workers" established on 22 May 1936 for the Westphalia-Lower Rhine Region.

Haulage undertakings generally pay a fixed weekly wage covering up to 60 hours' work a week.

In the *American, Russian and French zones*, wages are paid on similar lines.

Working Hours

In commercial road transport it is hardly possible to speak of regular working hours. The 8-hour day is recognised in principle, but hours of work are often extended to 60 in the week; more than 60 hours would not be possible on present standards of nourishment. In the Road Transport Administrations the 8-hour day and 48-hour week have been officially established.

The above regulations are the same for all the four zones.

Holidays

Workers Employed by the State.

Holidays for all workers employed by the Road Traffic Administrations are granted in accordance with the "Wage Scale for Per-

manent Staff", the "Wage Scale for Maintenance Workers" and the "Reich Salary Regulations"; the leave period varies according to age, length of service and salary grade.

Workers in Private Undertakings.

For transport workers in private undertakings, leave is regulated by the "Wage Scale for Transport Workers" and is as follows:

after six months' service:	6 working days;
after 1 year:	9 working days;
after 5 years:	12 working days.

Permanent staff in transport undertakings have leave as follows

age 18-21 years:	8 working days;
up to 25 years:	10 working days;
up to 30 years:	14 working days;
over 30 years:	18 working days.

As far as possible, leave is to be taken at slack traffic periods.

Since conditions are similar in all the four zones, there are presumably no differences in leave regulations.

Social Insurance

Social insurance is covered by the General Sickness Insurance Fund for the area or by a supplementary fund. Old-age insurance is covered by the disability insurance scheme or a staff insurance scheme. There is also an accident insurance scheme for the transport industry, which is compulsory for every driver or driver's assistant.
