

2390

Henry Sara.

MSS.15X/2/396/1

A YEAR
IN
SOVIET RUSSIA

Brief Account of the
Legislative Work of
1917-1918



Published by the PEOPLE'S RUSSIAN INFORMATION BUREAU
152 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

PRICE TWOPENCE

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Archive collection | Maitland Sara Hallinan collection |
| Archive file | Pamphlets: People's Russian Information Bureau |
| Document reference | 15X/2/396/1 |
| Title | A Year in Soviet Russia: Brief Account of the Legislative Work of 1917-1918 |
| Issuing organisation | People's Russian Information Bureau (London, England) |
| Author | Goikhbarg, A. G. (Aleksandr Grigor'evich), 1883- |
| Document date | 1919 |
| Year | 1919 |
| Decade | 1910s |
| Extent | 16 pages |
| Language | English |
| Description | "Translation of a chapter from the publication 'One year of proletarian revolution, ' issued by the All-Russian Central Committee of the Soviets. A well-known lawyer, named Hoichberg [sic] is the author"--Page [2]. |
| Subject | Soviet Union--Politics and government--1917-1936 ; Law--Soviet Union ; Soviet Union--History--Revolution, 1917-1921 |
| Theme | General conditions |
| Copyright status | Expired |
| Date | 1919 |

This description of the legislative work of the Soviet Government's first year's work is a translation of a chapter from the publication "One Year of Proletarian Dictatorship," issued by the All-Russian Central Committee of the Soviets for the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917. A well-known lawyer, named Hoichberg, who worked on the staff of Maxim Gorki's paper, the "Novaya Zhizn," is the author. He was an opponent of Bolshevism, but eventually went over to the Bolsheviki, together with Gorki [Gorky]. His account is only a summary, but is of great value as showing the variety and the general character of the legislative work carried out during the first twelve months of the Soviet regime.

ONE YEAR'S LEGISLATION

of the

RUSSIAN SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

How little have we lived, how much has been done! Were we to analyse fully the laws passed during the last twelve months in the interests of the workers, several volumes such as this would be found insufficient. Here, therefore, we can give only a short summary of what has been done.

On October 26th, 1917 (November 8th),* while in Petrograd itself the struggle of revolted Labour was still going on, on the very day when the Workmen's and Peasants' Government, in the persons of the Council of People's Commissaries, was brought into being and proposed to all the peoples and all their governments immediate negotiations for a universal, just and democratic peace — on that same day the Workmen's and Peasants' Government had already published the Land Decree. By this decree, immediately and without compensation, private property in landed estates was abolished, and all estates, all lands — private, imperial, monastic, ecclesiastical — with all their dead and live stock, with all buildings, appurtenances and offices, were handed over to the Volost (Canton) Land Committees and District Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. These Soviets and Committees were instructed to act on the general principles laid down by the Land Nakaz (Instruction) of the All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Soviets in August, 1917, which began as follows: "The most equitable solution of the land question must be on the following lines — The right of private ownership in land is abolished for ever. Land may not be sold, or bought, or leased, or mortgaged, or in any way alienated. The whole of the land — whether belonging to the State, to the Imperial family, to the Imperial household, to monasteries, to the Church, to private persons, to peasant committees or individuals, whether entailed or in free possession — is alienated without compensation and becomes the property of the people, for the enjoyment and possession of those who work upon it."

On the same day the death-penalty at the front, reintroduced by Kerensky, was abolished, and complete freedom of agitation at the front was proclaimed. All power belonged to the Soldiers' Councils, and the commissaries appointed by the Provisional (Kerensky's) Government were dismissed.

The following day regulations were published governing the suppression of newspapers inciting to open rebellion against, or insubordination to, the Workmen's and Peasants' Government, on the ground that newspapers in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the enemies of the labouring people, are weapons not less dangerous than bombs and machine guns.

* Two dates indicate new style and old style.

On October 29th (Nov. 11th) a decree was published — and brought into operation by telegraph — introducing a universal 8-hour day for all workers employed for hire; forbidding child-labour up to the age of 14; forbidding nightwork for young persons up to 16; forbidding underground and overtime work for women and boys up to the age of 18, etc.

On October 28th (Nov. 10th) municipal authorities were empowered to requisition empty buildings fit for habitation, and to introduce into houses already inhabited persons without any shelter, or living in overcrowded or unhealthy houses. It was also decreed that local Soviets were to form a Workers' Militia, entirely and exclusively under their control.

On November 3rd (November 10th) decrees were published establishing Volost Land Committees throughout the country, and instituting travelling commissioners for agrarian affairs. On November 8th (November 21st) it was decreed that none but the Workers' and Peasants' Government itself might publish paid advertisements. On November 10th (November 23rd) the pensions of workmen, disabled through accidents, was increased 100 per cent., as from January 1st (January 14th), 1917. On the same date a decree was published abolishing all civil grades, all official class distinctions of nomenclature (nobleman, merchant, esquire, peasant, etc.), all titles (prince, count, etc.), and all civil ranks privy, state, and other classes of councillors), and introducing one common title for all the population of Russia — that of citizens of the Russian Republic. On November 15th (Nov. 28th) was published a decree on the subject of speculation, threatening speculators with immediate arrest and confinement in the prisons of Kronstadt, and ultimate trial before a military-revolutionary court.

On November 16th (November 29th) a decree was published ordering the transfer without compensation of all medical establishments attached to factories to workers' sick benefit funds, or, in the case of their non-existence, the payment by owners of factories and workshops of adequate sums for the establishment of workers' hospitals. On the same date a decree was published on the establishment of workers' control in all industrial, commercial, banking agricultural, and transport concerns, and similarly in all co-operative and other associations for production which employ hired labour to give employment to people in their homes. All workers, through their representatives, were placed in control over the production, the purchase and sale of raw materials and manufactured articles, as well as over the financial side of the concerns in question. On the same date a decree brought to an end the granting of commissions in the army. On November 18th (December 1st) an early increase of separation allowances and equalisation of pay for officers and men were announced. On November 23rd and 24th (Dec. 6th and 7th) decrees were published fixing the salaries of People's Commissaries at not more than 500 roubles a month, with additions of 100 roubles for every member of their family unable to work; introducing the right of local Soviets to impose taxes; and establishing the right of electors to recall at will their representatives, delegates, deputies to the Constituent Assembly, etc.) at any

time.

On November 24th (Dec. 7th) a decree was published abolishing all the Tsarist courts of law. On November 28th (Dec. 11th) were abolished the so-called Nobles' and Peasants' Land Banks, as serving the interests only of the nobility. On the same date the Tsarist Admiralty Council was abolished, and all the Tsarist ambassadors, consuls, and members of embassies abroad were dismissed. On November 30th (Dec. 13th) all agricultural machinery and implements, manufactured or in the course of manufacture in the country, or imported from abroad, were constituted a monopoly of the State, in the interests of agriculture and the agricultural population. On December 2nd (December 15th) the appointment of superior officers by election was decreed, and all distinctions of rank in the army were abolished. On December 5th was created the Supreme National Economic Council.

On December 12th (25th) compulsory military service was abolished in the case of the Cossacks, and they were granted complete freedom of migration. On the same date a Council of Workers' Insurance was set up to control everything connected with the insurance of workpeople against illness, unemployment, and accidents. On December 13th (Dec. 26th) the Commissariat for Agriculture drew up a set of rules dealing with land committees, and published instructions for the latter; a decree was further issued on that day introducing insurance against unemployment throughout the Russian Republic for all persons employed for wages or salaries without distinction of age or sex, and independently of the nature of their work or of their employers, whether the latter were State, company or municipal, corporations, or private persons. Unemployment benefit, paid by the wealthy, was to be on the scale of the average daily wage of the district, but not exceeding the actual earnings of the person claiming it. Two million roubles were granted for needs of the international revolutionary movement. On December 14th (Dec. 27th) a decree was published raising the pay of railwaymen of various grades (from 155 roubles to 510 roubles per month as from September 1st (Sept. 14th), 1917, and establishing an 8-hour working day in all branches of the railway service.

On December 15th (Dec. 28th) decrees were published abolishing the Tsarist Council of the Empire and the Imperial Chancellery of State; discontinuing the payment of pensions to former government officials above the maximum of 300 roubles per person or family; transferring the duties of education from the Ecclesiastical Department to that of the People's Commissary for Education (in the case of all Church schools, training colleges, ecclesiastical colleges, missionary schools, and ecclesiastical academies). On December 16th (Dec. 29th) the sale of textile products direct from factories and workshops by private individuals was forbidden. On December 17th (Dec. 30th) decrees were published establishing the election of officers in the Army and equal rights for all performing military service (all ranks and titles were abolished, beginning with "ensign" and ending with "general," the Army of the Russian Republic being composed of free and equal citizens, bearing the honourable title of "soldiers of the revolutionary army"); covering the

payment of additional per cent. increases of pensions for disabled soldiers, and equalising officers' and soldiers' pensions; instituting in all provinces workers' insurance committees for the purpose of supervising the execution of the insurance laws; covering the transfer of all banks to the State, with the object of striking a decisive blow at financial speculation and of completely liberating the labouring population from exploitation by financial capital; directing the examination of all safes deposited in banks and their contents, gold, papers, jewels, etc.

On December 19th (Jan. 1st) a decree was published facilitating divorce, enacting that it take place in a civil court (not in an ecclesiastical consistory), and making it dependent on the consent either of both parties or one; another forbidding all transactions (sale, purchase, mortgage, etc.) in connection with all landed and house property in the towns, in view of the forthcoming socialisation of land; another establishing a revolutionary Press tribunal. On December 20th (Jan. 2nd) a decree was published introducing civil marriage, by Soviet, not Church, officials, giving equal rights to legitimate and illegitimate children, and directing that the registration of births and deaths should take place not in churches but in Soviet offices.

The independence of the Finnish Workers' Republic was recognised.

On December 21st (Jan. 3rd) decrees were published setting up a revolutionary tribunal for special crimes against the people and the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and authorising the use for cultural and educational purposes of all buildings and premises devoted to elementary, secondary, and higher education and to charitable purposes, during the free hours. On December 23rd (Jan. 5th), a decree was published reforming Russian spelling (abolishing superfluous forms of the letters "e" and "i," and abolishing the "hard sign" at the end of words). On December 24th (Jan. 6th) instructions were issued as to the method of organising local self-government, the rights and duties of Soviets, and the organisation of food committees in connection with the Soviets.

On December 29th (Jan. 11th) it was decreed that payment on coupons of shares and debentures should cease, and all transaction in securities was prohibited. It was also decided to create a revolutionary socialist army of workers and peasants. On December 31st (Jan. 13th) a decree was issued establishing sick insurance for all persons in the Russian Republic, without distinction of sex, age, religion, nationality or race, who were employed for hire in any branch of industry (factories, mines, workshops, building trade, commerce, transport, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, home industries, domestic service, liberal professions, etc.), independently of the nature and duration of the work, and of the nature of their employer — whether State, municipality, private or limited liability companies, or private persons. It was also decided to organise a Department of Motherhood and Child Welfare, and also a "Palace of Motherhood."

On January 3rd (Jan. 16th), 1918, 12,520,000 roubles were voted as a grant-in-aid to teachers. It was further decreed that district and local economic councils of national economy be set up in

order to organise and regulate the whole of economic life in accordance with the interests of the State and localities. On January 4th (Jan. 17th) a decree was published establishing a State publishing office for the purpose of providing the toiling population with books at special cost price, even gratis.

On January 9th (Jan. 22nd) was published a declaration of the rights of the toiling and exploited people ("the January declaration") adopted by the 3rd All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which was later incorporated in the Soviet Constitution of July. On the same date a decree voted by the Central Executive Committee was published dissolving the Constituent Assembly, the remaining portion of which could only serve as a cloak to a bourgeois counter-revolution with the object of overthrowing the power of the Soviets.

On January 12th (Jan. 25th) a decree was published democratising the Navy, in virtue of which the whole of the personnel of the fleet of the Russian Republic was to consist of free citizens enjoying equal civil rights, and known by one title, without distinction, as "Sailors of the Navy." It was also decided to hand over to the Soviets the whole administration of separation allowances, temporarily to hand over to the provincial land committee supervision of all forestry in the respective provinces, to forbid the importation of articles of luxury into Russia; to establish a Prisons Board to deal with matters affecting persons in prison, to resume and bring to a conclusion the hearing of cases which had not been completed in the now abolished Tsarist Court. On January 14th (Jan. 27th) a decree was issued establishing commissions for minors, and abolishing criminal prosecutions in the case of juveniles under 17. On January 16th (Jan. 29th) all military chaplains were dismissed. On January 19th (Feb. 1st) a Commissariat for Moslem Affairs was created. On January 20th (Feb. 2nd) a decree was published for the formation of a Workers' and Peasants' Red Army composed of the most class-conscious elements of the working classes, and an initial credit of 20 million roubles was voted to this end. On January 20th and 21st (Feb. 2nd and 8th) the functions of the following classes of officials were abolished: Directors and inspectors of elementary schools, directors, inspectors and similar grades in secondary schools, procurators of district educational organisations, chief and local inspectors, and other officials appointed by the Tsarist Government in order to hide from the working class the light of knowledge. On the 20th (Feb. 2nd) also was created a Commissariat for Jewish Affairs. On January 21st (Feb. 3rd) were drawn up the new rates of pay for employees in the postal and telegraphic services (from 190 to 800 roubles per month).

On January 23rd (Feb. 5th) a decree was issued separating the Church from the State and the school from the Church: all coercion in religious matters, as well as all special rights or disabilities consequent upon religious beliefs were abolished; the right of every individual to profess or not to profess any religion he pleased was established, and the clergy were deprived of all State authority.

On January 26th (Feb. 8th) the European calendar (new style) was introduced. The whole of the mercantile fleet was declared the common and indivisible property of the Soviet Republic. A decree was issued confiscating for the benefit of the Soviet Republic all share capital of former private banks, annulling bank shares, and forbidding the payments of dividends on such shares.

On January 31st (Feb. 13th) decrees were promulgated on the following subjects: The right of local Soviets to change the boundaries of their provinces, districts and counties. Labour Exchanges, with a view to the best distribution of labour; new and increased postal and telegraphic fees (for letters, telegrams, etc.); and a Working Class Board of Child Welfare.

On February 14th (March 1st, old style), decrees were issued on the subject of the Socialist Workers' and Peasants' Red Fleet, and Boards of Prices, designed to control prices and ensure the equitable distribution of various products amongst the population.

On February 15th a Commissariat for White Russian National Affairs was created.

On February 16th a decree was promulgated to issue, as currency for circulation, debentures of the Liberty Loan up to the value of 100 roubles.

On February 17th the posts of religious instructors in schools of all denominations were abolished; all traffic in articles made of gold was forbidden; and the registration of co-operative societies was handed over to the local economic councils or Soviets.

On February 19th all the largest grain elevators were declared State property; and on the same date the law on the socialisation of the land was published, abolishing for ever all rights of property in land, mines, waters, forests, and living forces of Nature within the boundaries of the Russian Republic.

On February 20th a second decree concerning courts of law was published, establishing district People's Courts to deal with cases involving more than 3,000 roubles in accordance with principles of equity and guided by the working class conceptions of right and justice. A special committee to cut down the expenses of government was set up.

On February 21st uniforms and badges of all educational institutions were abolished.

On February 22nd the revolutionary Press Tribunal was created for the purpose of combating crimes and offences committed against the people by the press. It was also resolved to award pensions to disabled workmen on the closing down of the concerns on which they were engaged. A decree was further issued establishing courts of arbitration.

On February 23rd all schools were handed over to the Commissariat for Education.

On February 24th the Court clergy were dismissed.

On February 27th the formation of special departments was directed in all Soviets to deal with the award of pensions to disabled soldiers.

On March 3rd were set up the Chief Gold Committee, the Chief Sugar Committee, and the Central Tea Committee, to supervise and control all matters affecting these products. On March 5th the Inland Water Transport Department was created to control the mercantile marine, the river fleet, and waterways; and Road Departments were decreed for all Soviets to organise road construction.

On March 7th a chief commissary was appointed for the petroleum industry; a State monopoly in matches, candles, rice, coffee, pepper and imported spices was established, and the manufacture of and wholesale trade in these articles were nationalised.

On March 8th a Workers' Commission for matters affecting imported (foreign) labour was set up.

On March 24th the Tartaro-Bashkir Soviet Republic was established (the transfer of the seat of government from Petrograd to Moscow occurred during the interval).

On March 26th a decree was published on the preservation of roads and their improvement for traffic.

On April 2nd State control of all forms of insurance, except social, was instituted; and a decree was issued dealing with the organisation of a direct exchange of products with a view to increasing the production of corn.

On April 4th the construction of food transport railways was decreed; also the payment of monthly wages to Government employees in two instalments — on the 15th and the last day of each month.

On April 5th a decree established free naturalisation of aliens.

On April 13th cantonal, district, provincial and regional commissariats for military affairs were instituted.

On April 14th the removal of monuments to Tsars and Tsarist servants was decreed, and the drawing up of plans for monuments of the Russian Socialist revolution was ordered. On April 16th a decree was published facilitating the admission of the poorest classes to the Consumers' Co-operative Societies.

On April 20th the compulsory registration in the People's Bank of all shares, debentures and other interest-bearing papers was ordered, and it was decreed that only such securities would henceforth be valid which have been registered in the name of their holders.

On April 23rd entire foreign trade was nationalised. In future commercial transactions relating to

purchase and sale of articles of all kinds with foreign Governments and foreign firms are to be made only on behalf of the Russian Republic.

On April 24th the Central Turf (Peat) Committee was instituted for the improvement and increase of the supply of fuel.

On April 26th a decree was published establishing compulsory military training for workers and such peasants as do not exploit hired labour, and, in addition, new regulations for filling military posts, establishing the period of service (not less than six months) in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army were issued.

On April 27th a decree was published concerning the provisions of agricultural industry with machinery and metals.

On April 30th railway fares were increased.

On May 1st a decree was published enforced by telegraph on April 27th, abolishing all rights of inheritance, at law or testamentary, and directing the transfer of the whole of the property of any deceased person to the Russian Socialist Republic while making provision out of the value of such property for the surviving consort and relatives in want or unable to work for their living.

On May 3rd all sugar refineries, together with everything belonging to such works were declared the property of the Russian Republic.

On May 12th a decree was published relating to punishment for giving or accepting bribes (not less than five years' imprisonment with hard labour).

On May 14th extraordinary powers were given to the Peoples' Commissary for Food to grapple with the village bourgeoisie hiding foodstocks. On this date the Board of Public Works was also set up.

On May 17th the Main Committee for Manures and Fertilisers was set up to develop the production and distribution of fertilisers. On May 18th the inspection of labour was decreed for the purpose of safeguarding the life, health, and strength of all persons engaged in any form of economic activity. On May 19th and 20th the Central Petroleum Committee and the Central Matches Committee were set up to develop the manufacture of matches and of the supply of the needs of the population in that article.

On May 24th it was resolved that wounded soldiers of the Red Army were to be given full pay for the period of their absence from effective duty.

On May 25th the right of citizens to change their surnames and other names was proclaimed.

On May 26th a Central Committee was created for the rubber industry, and 50 millions of roubles

were assigned to irrigation works in Turkestan.

On May 31st co-education was introduced in all schools, and compulsory instruction in Latin was abolished; the system of marks was also abolished.

On June 5th a sum of one million roubles was assigned to erecting a monument to Karl Marx in London. An order was made declaring the coupons of all State bonds bearing interest and falling due after December 1st, 1917, legal tender, on the same footing as bank notes.

On June 9th a decree was issued instituting preliminary arrangements for compulsory enrolment in the Workmen's and Peasants' Army; the right of asylum was established for all aliens persecuted in their native countries on account of their political or religious convictions, and a revolutionary tribunal was established attached to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

On June 11th and 13th a Forest Decree was published, abolishing all rights of private property in forests, and declaring the latter, with all important buildings contained in them, with their stock — live and dead — the common property of the Russian Socialist Republic, without compensation overt or covert. All deeds and acts of alienation (sale) of forests, whenever and with whomsoever concluded, were declared invalid.

On June 12th a decree was published relating to the organisation of the poorest peasantry, and its provision with bread, articles of primary importance, and agricultural implements free of charge or at cheap rates (below the established maximum prices).

On June 13th money gifts of more than 10,000 roubles were forbidden.

On June 16th the Council of People's Commissaries of the Moscow regions was abolished, and a decree was published concerning the administration of the railways. On June 18th the pay of soldiers of the Workers' and Peasants' Army was raised by a hundred roubles a month. A system of frontier guards was introduced.

On June 19th the Central Board of Forestry and Woodworking was created.

On June 22nd a Court of Cassation was established attached to the All Russian C.E.C. of Soviets; all petroleum concerns were nationalised, and a State monopoly in the sale of petroleum and its products was announced.

On June 23rd the Central Sugar Committee was created for the purpose of organising and increasing the sugar industry in Russia, and securing a supply of sugar to the population.

On June 26th a decree was published organising the system of popular education in Russia; a new increased scale of salaries for teachers was announced (from 300 roubles to 600 roubles per month, not counting quinquennial increases).

On June 28th a decree came into force according to which, with a view to coping with the disorganisation in the economic field and in the food supply, and to consolidate the dictatorship of the urban and village proletariat, the most important concerns in the following industries were declared the property of the Russian Socialist Republic: mining, metallurgical, textiles, electrical engineering, saw-milling, woodworking, tobacco, glass and pottery, leather, cement and other branches; besides steam flour mills, local public health undertakings, and railway transport.

On July 2nd it was resolved to bring under the control of the R.S.F.S.R. the whole of the supply of textiles within the frontiers of the Republic, and the whole of future output (for the purpose of equal distribution throughout the population). On the same day the scale of salaries for employees and workers in Soviet institutions was fixed — ranging from 350 roubles to 800 roubles per month.

On July 12th the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences was founded.

On July 19th was published the constitution (the first of its kind in the world) of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, adopted by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets at its session of July 12th. All the possessions of the Russian Emperor dethroned by the Revolution, and of members of the former Imperial family, were declared the property of the R.S.F.S.R.; and all breeding cattle belonging to non-labouring concerns were declared the common property of the R.S.F.S.R., without any compensation.

On July 20th was published a third decree concerning justice. transferring to local people's courts the cognisance of all civil cases up to 10,000 roubles, and of all criminal cases except those concerned in assault, rape, robbery with violence, manufacture of counterfeit money, bribery and corruption, and speculation, which remained within the competence of district courts alone.

On July 21st the People's Commissariat for Public Health, and the Central Committee for Dye and Colour industry were founded.

On July 23rd it was decreed that all textiles stored in warehouses and factories within the boundaries of the R.S.F.S.R. pass into the hands of the State.

On July 25th a law was published instituting compulsory non-combatant service behind the front for all individuals from 18 to 45, who are not engaged in work for a living and are exploiting hired labour; instituting also severe penalties for speculation (imprisonment for a term of not less than ten years, with hard labour, and confiscation of all property).

On July 30th a compulsory horse levy for military objects was introduced.

On August 4th the Institute of Science and Technology was founded.

On August 6th the payment of allowances was ordered to the families of soldiers who were

prisoners of war, missing, killed or totally disabled in the war; the preservation of employment for workmen voluntarily enlisting for the front or for food detachments was made obligatory; all higher schools (universities, institutes, etc.) were thrown open to the whole nation and to all seeking knowledge from the age of 16 and upwards, without distinction of sex; rules and regulations for attracting labour organisation to the task of loading foodstuffs [foodstuffs] and for the formation of protective and food supply detachments on the railways and waterways were issued: and instructions were published for the promotion of harvesting and requisitioning detachments in connection with the new harvest.

On August 3rd new maximum prices were fixed for corn of the 1918 (and previous) harvests, in general three times as high as the previous maxima; a scale of pensions and separation allowances for soldiers of the Red Army and their families was decided upon (varying from 450 roubles to 3,000 roubles per annum); and compulsory direct exchange of commodities was decreed in rural agricultural districts.

On August 13th a Polytechnical Institute at Ivanovo-Vaznesensk was founded with a view to satisfying the demand of the working masses for education, and especially the needs of the workers in the textile trade for higher technical education. Maximum prices for oilseeds were fixed.

On August 15th maximum prices were fixed for butter and fats.

On August 16th maximum prices were fixed for horned cattle, sheep, beef, mutton, lard, beef and mutton fats and eggs; also the Central Coal Committee was set up.

On August 17th in [it] was decided to set up a fund to assist the families of soldiers of the Red Army at the expense of their employers.

On August 18th maxima were fixed for vegetable oils and artificial fats.

On August 21st maxima were fixed for hay and straw.

On August 22nd a decree was published bringing all the armed forces of the public under the control of the People's Commissariat for War.

On August 24th private ownership of all real estate whether vacant or not, in urban districts, as well as in the case of towns with a population of over 10,000, private ownership in all buildings bringing in a rent higher than the one fixed by local Soviets was abolished.

On August 27th the Central Committee for the chemico-pharmaceutical industry was founded.

On August 28th it was decided what proportion of seed, corn and grain for human and animal consumption was to be left in private hands on the basis of the 1918 harvest; and maximum prices were fixed for textiles, flax and leather.

On August 30th regulations were issued for the execution of the decree separating the Church from the State and the school from the Church.

On September 5th maximum prices were fixed for barley, beans, maize and peas.

On September 6th a decree was published summoning the Circle of the Don Army in order to put an end to the deceptions and plots of the rebel Krasnoff and his supporters, and to carry out the decrees of the Central Government concerning the new labour and free organisation of the Don territory. Another decree forbade the unemployed to refuse work.

On September 11th the Moscow Mining Academy was founded "in view of the present demand of the workmen of the Moscow mining district for technical mining instruction."

On September 14th a decree was published introducing the international metric system of weights and measures (instead of the old arshin, pound, etc.).

On September 15th local statistical bureaux were established.

On September 16th the first code of laws of the R.S.F.S.R. was adopted dealing with the matrimonial, family and guardian laws, according to which no special force is attached to religious marriage ceremonies; equal rights are guaranteed to either wives and husbands, mothers and fathers; all children are placed on an equal footing without distinction as to their legitimacy or otherwise, and special facilities are set up for the realisation of this equality; and guardianship is organised not on a private, but on a social basis, as a transitional measure preliminary to the complete socialisation of all supervision of child welfare and of other classes unfit for work.

On September 17th was published a decree ordering an increase in the supply of food for children, as the Council of People's Commissaries, with the object of the protection of children and young persons from illnesses closely connected with underfeeding, has recognised the problem of feeding of children as being of primary importance.

On September 18th 25 million roubles were assigned to the labour communes and co-operative associations in the woodcarving industry, organised by Finnish workers, and for the assistance of Finnish refuge workers.

On September 19th the postal rates were considerably lowered.

On September 20th a decree was published instituting the Order of the Red Banner, to be awarded to all citizens of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic who have displayed conspicuous courage and determination in battle.

On September 22nd was published a decree fixing new scales of remuneration for labour raising the latter for all workers and employees by 50 per cent. to 23 per cent. on the principle of "the

smaller the previous wage the larger the increase." Wages were fixed on a scale ranging from 15 roubles 60 kopecks per working day in Moscow to 1,480 roubles per month.

On September 23rd a decree was issued prohibiting the export of works of art and antiques.

On September 24th the old official insurance bureaux were abolished, and their functions handed over to the labour sections of Soviets and to insurance funds; it was also decided to discontinue the compensation to Zemstvos, towns, and Cossack armies for the diminution in their revenue consequent upon the introduction (over 20 years ago) of the State monopoly of liquor.

National Labour Press Ltd.

8/9/10 Johnson's Court

Fleet St., E.C.4

and at Manchester