

LL
16 August 1951
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POLAND

LABOR

Every worker who has been working at least a year in the same firm is entitled to a two weeks' vacation a year. In theory, also a certain percentage of workers and employees are entitled to a "wczasy" or a vacation at holiday resorts, spas, etc. To get a "wczasy" one has to send in an application, present one's Trade Union booklet and receipts covering regular payments to the union. Actually, however, ZMP members and active Party members, or those with special connections, are given priority for going to these holiday places, with the result that others have a very small chance of getting such a vacation. Sometimes, stakhanovites get a "wczasy" as a premium for their good work, and as a way of encouraging others to work harder.

A worker can be excused from work only if he is seriously ill. He has to produce a doctor's certificate which, as a rule, is given only for three days. If a case is very serious, a consultation is called since one doctor alone is afraid to take the responsibility. The doctors who are overworked and aware that there is a lack of most medicines, examine their patients carelessly, prescribing only common medicines. It happened that three persons suffering from various illnesses were all prescribed the same pills. More expensive medicines are not given to workers at all, as medicines and doctor's care are free of charge.

When a fisherman falls ill, he receives 70 per cent of his average daily salary during the last 13 weeks of work. This sum is paid for a period of six months, and theoretically, in serious cases, the same amount of money may be paid to the patient by the Social Insurance Office for another six months.

Seasonal workers, such as masons, are not paid during the time of unemployment and receive no subsidies at all. Most old people get no pension.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Up to June 1951

EVAL. COMMENT: Source : usually reliable;
Information: confirmed by other sources.

Up to the 1st of July 1951 a physician was entitled, within his own discretion, to exempt a patient from work for six days. Since that date the period has been increased to 10 days (Ministry of Health Ordinance No.12, para 121.)