

Employee-Benefit Plans Under Collective Bargaining, Mid-1950

Bulletin No. 1017

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

MAURICE J. TOBIN, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

EWAN CLAGUE, *Commissioner*



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[Reprinted from the February 1951 MONTHLY LABOR REVIEW.]

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Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS,
Washington, D. C., February 14, 1951.

The SECRETARY OF LABOR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a report on the status of employee-benefit plans under collective bargaining during mid-1950. The report deals primarily with the extent and financing of these programs by broad industry groups, major union affiliation, and specific types of benefits.

The report was prepared in the Bureau's Division of Industrial Relations by Evan Keith Rowe.

EWAN CLAGUE, *Commissioner.*

HON. MAURICE J. TOBIN,
Secretary of Labor.



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Employee-Benefit Plans Under Collective Bargaining, Mid-1950

At least 7,650,000 workers were covered by pension or social insurance benefits under collective bargaining by mid-1950. The extent of benefit coverage—more than double that found in 1948—reflects the widespread movement in the last 2 years on the part of employers and unions to establish new programs, or to bring existing programs within the scope of labor-management agreements.¹

By mid-1950, practically every major union in the country (excluding unions representing railroad and government employees for whom special Federal, State, or municipal legislation exists) had, to some extent, negotiated pension or "health and welfare" programs.

Labor's drive for "security programs"—health, insurance, pensions—first was given impetus during the war by the Government's wage stabilization and taxation policies, which made such programs feasible and less expensive to employers. Later, higher retirement annuities were sought because Federal old-age benefits, which had remained unchanged until 1950, proved increasingly inadequate in the face of rising prices.

Early in 1949, the legal obligation of employers to bargain on pensions under the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 was affirmed by the United States Supreme Court.² Later that year, organized labor received additional support by the Steel Industry Fact-finding Board, which held that industry had both a social and economic obligation to provide its workers with social insurance and pensions.³

Following these endorsements, organized labor accelerated and intensified its drive for pensions and insurance. In many instances, agreements on benefit programs were concluded peacefully. In a significant number of cases, however, severe and

prolonged stoppages preceded their establishment; for example, the month-long strike in the basic steel industry in late 1949, and the United Automobile Workers (CIO)-Chrysler Corp. dispute, which began in late January 1950 and was terminated in May.⁴

Finally, union pressures for more adequate pensions, combined with the negotiation of major plans integrated with Social Security, led to increasing employer acceptance of a higher level of old-age benefits. In August 1950, these factors, in conjunction with still rising living costs, resulted in substantial amendments to the Social Security Act.

Extent of Coverage⁵

Of the approximately 7,650,000 workers covered by some type of health, insurance, or pension plan under collective bargaining, about 60 percent were covered by plans which included pensions as

TABLE 1.—Workers covered by employee-benefit plans under collective-bargaining agreements,¹ mid-1950

Type of plan	Total covered		Major union affiliation					
			AFL		CIO		Unaffiliated	
	Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent
Total.....	7,652	100.0	2,683	100.0	3,631	100.0	1,338	100.0
Health and welfare ² and pension combined.....	4,599	60.1	884	32.9	2,830	78.0	885	66.1
Health and welfare.....	2,529	33.1	1,364	50.9	749	20.6	416	31.1
Pension or retirement.....	524	6.8	435	16.2	52	1.4	37	2.8

¹ Data based on information for 71 AFL unions, 29 CIO unions, and 31 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment.

² Includes one or more of the following types of benefits: life insurance or death; accidental death and dismemberment; accident and sickness (but not sick leave or workmen's compensation); cash or services covering hospital, surgical, maternity, and medical care.

well as social insurance benefits.⁶ Slightly over 33 percent were under plans providing social insurance benefits only, and almost 7 percent were covered by pensions alone (table 1).

Approximately 35 percent of the 7.6 million workers under benefit plans were under plans of unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.⁷ About 47 percent were included under benefit programs negotiated by affiliated unions of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and the remainder by unaffiliated or independent unions.

Individual unions have succeeded in negotiating plans for the workers they represent in varying degrees. Of the 79 national and international unions which provided information on both the total number of workers under all their agreements and the number covered by employee-benefit plans, 48 secured these benefits for a substantial majority of all the workers they represent. For 35 of these unions, the coverage ranged from 80 to 100 percent of all the workers under agreement (table 2).

Many of the programs were originally established by management and later brought within the scope of the collective-bargaining agreement. Such plans were frequently amended and liberalized, as for example, the pension plan of the Bethlehem Steel Corp., first adopted in 1923. In many instances, however, the plans were created through collective bargaining, no plan having

previously existed in the particular industry or establishment. Examples of this type are the United Mine Workers Welfare and Retirement Fund and the Ford Motor Co.—UAW (CIO) pension plan.

TABLE 2.—Distribution of reporting unions,¹ by proportion of workers covered by employee-benefit plans to workers covered by agreements, mid-1950

Workers covered by employee-benefit plans as percent of all workers	Reporting unions		Number of unions whose total agreement coverage (workers) was—					
	Number	Per cent	Under 10,000	10,000 to 24,999	25,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 249,999	250,000 and over
Total.....	79	100	18	14	14	11	12	10
80-100.....	35	45	10	5	6	4	4	6
60-79.....	13	16	1	5	1	2	1	3
40-59.....	17	22	4	2	5	2	4	.....
20-39.....	12	15	3	2	2	3	2	.....
0-19.....	2	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1

¹ Includes only those national or international unions for which data were available both on total number of workers covered by all their agreements and total number of workers covered by health, welfare, and pension programs under these agreements; single-firm unions were excluded.

Among the industries in which large numbers of workers are covered by some type of employee-benefit program under labor-management contracts, metal products (including steel, automobile, and machinery) account for nearly 2.5 million persons (table 3). Almost 1.5 million workers each are covered by plans in (1) textile, apparel, and leather, and (2) transportation, communications, and other public utilities (except railroads).⁸

TABLE 3.—Workers covered by employee-benefit plans under collective-bargaining agreements, mid-1950, by major industry groups¹

Industry group	Total covered		Type of plan					
			Health and welfare only ²		Pension only		Health, welfare, and pension	
	Workers (thousands)	Per cent	Workers (thousands)	Per cent	Workers (thousands)	Per cent	Workers (thousands)	Per cent
Total.....	7,652	100.0	2,529	33.1	524	6.8	4,599	60.1
Food and tobacco.....	205	100.0	118	57.5	10	4.9	77	37.6
Textile, apparel and leather.....	1,401	100.0	747	53.2	(³)	(⁴)	654	46.7
Lumber and furniture.....	102	100.0	88	86.3	.....	.....	14	13.7
Paper and allied products.....	191	100.0	51	26.7	33	17.3	107	56.0
Printing and publishing.....	63	100.0	46	72.4	(³)	(⁴)	17	27.0
Petroleum, chemicals, and rubber.....	460	100.0	99	21.5	30	6.5	331	72.0
Metal products.....	2,481	100.0	470	18.9	157	6.3	1,854	74.8
Stone, clay, and glass.....	128	100.0	62	48.4	4	3.2	62	48.4
Mining and quarrying.....	492	100.0	26	5.3	.....	.....	466	94.7
Transportation, communications, and other public utilities ⁵	1,389	100.0	365	26.3	141	10.2	883	63.5
Trade, finance, insurance, and services.....	299	100.0	228	76.2	5	1.7	66	22.1
Unclassified.....	441	100.0	229	51.9	144	32.7	68	15.4

¹ Data based on information for 71 AFL unions, 29 CIO unions, and 31 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment.

² Includes one or more of the following types of benefits: life insurance or death; accidental death and dismemberment; accident and sickness (but not

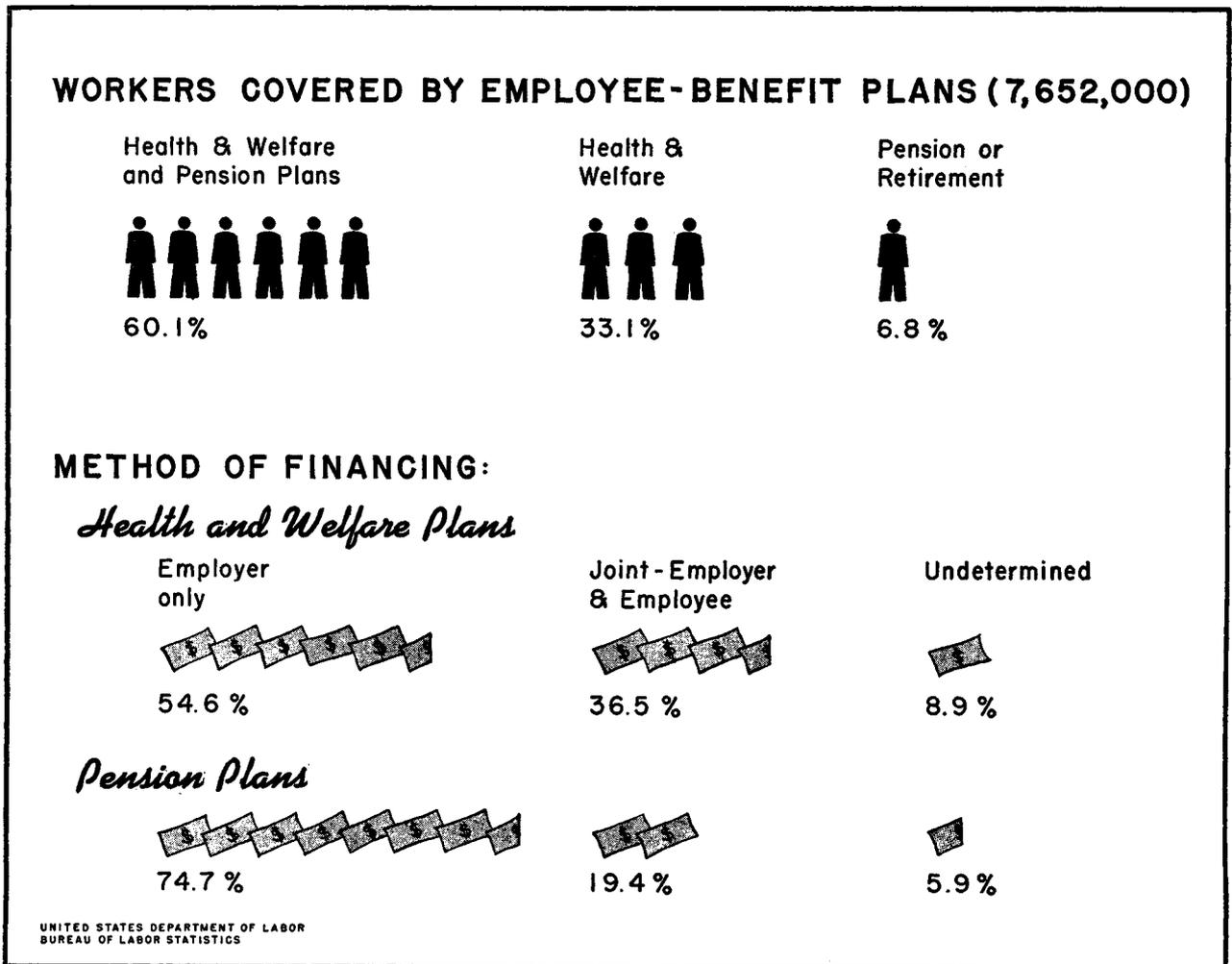
sick leave or workmen's compensation); cash or services covering hospital, surgical, maternity, and medical care.

³ Less than 1,000.

⁴ Less than 1 percent.

⁵ Excludes railroads.

Chart 1. Extent and Method of Financing Employee-Benefit Plans Under Collective Bargaining



Pension Plans

Stress on pensions during this period reflected organized labor's desire to round out the "package" of benefits—protection against the future hazards of old age, as well as against the current contingencies of death or serious and prolonged illness.

Pension plans within the scope of collective-bargaining agreements covered approximately 5.1 million workers in mid-1950 (table 4). This was more than three times the number reported 2 years earlier.

Industry Coverage. The increase in pension coverage in the past year is attributable in large part to

the establishment of pension plans in the basic industries, notably steel and automobile. Approximately 1½ million workers in these two industries alone were covered by pension plans negotiated through collective bargaining since the summer of 1949. The metal products group of industries (steel, automobile, machinery) thus leads all others in number of workers covered by pension plans, accounting for two out of every five workers so covered. (See table 5.)

Equally significant is the extent to which workers in certain industry groups are almost completely covered by pension plans in agreements. Better than 70 percent of all workers covered by employee-benefit plans in the following industry groups are covered by pensions:

TABLE 4.—Workers covered by employee-benefit plans under collective-bargaining agreements, mid-1950, by method of financing

Method of financing	Total covered		Major union affiliation					
			AFL		CIO		Unaffiliated	
	Work-ers (thou-sands)	Per-cent	Work-ers (thou-sands)	Per-cent	Work-ers (thou-sands)	Per-cent	Work-ers (thou-sands)	Per-cent
HEALTH AND WELFARE PLANS ¹								
Total.....	7,128	100.0	2,248	100.0	3,580	100.0	1,300	100.0
Employer only.....	3,890	54.6	1,509	67.1	1,491	41.7	890	68.4
Joint—employer and employee.....	2,600	36.5	440	19.6	1,837	51.3	323	24.9
Undetermined.....	638	8.9	299	13.3	252	7.0	87	6.7
PENSION PLANS ²								
Total.....	5,123	100.0	1,319	100.0	2,883	100.0	921	100.0
Employer only.....	3,828	74.7	771	58.5	2,342	81.3	715	77.6
Joint—employer and employee.....	993	19.4	495	37.5	338	11.7	160	17.4
Undetermined.....	302	5.9	53	4.0	203	7.0	46	5.0

¹ Includes one or more of the following types of benefits: Life insurance or death; accidental death and dismemberment; accident and sickness (but not sick leave or workmen's compensation); cash or services covering hospital, surgical, maternity, and medical care.

Data based on information for 70 AFL unions, 29 CIO unions, and 31 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment. Where data on coverage were available, but method of financing not specified, workers were included in the "undetermined" category.

² Data based on information for 52 AFL unions, 23 CIO unions, and 22 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment. Where data on coverage were available, but method of financing not specified, workers were included in the "undetermined" category.

paper and allied products; petroleum, chemicals, and rubber; metal products; mining and quarrying; and transportation, communications, and other public utilities (excluding railroads). (See table 3.)

Financing. One of the major, if not the most important, issues which arose in connection with labor's drive to establish or to bring employee-benefit plans under collective bargaining was the question of costs—whether these programs were to be financed by the employer alone, or by contributions from both employer and employee. The Steel Industry Board expressed the opinion that employers should bear the entire cost, but no uniformity on financing followed. Major settlements in the steel and automobile industries, for example, provided for employer-financed pensions and jointly financed social-insurance benefits. In such industries as longshoring, maritime, trucking, and building construction, in which bargaining is generally on a multiemployer or employer-

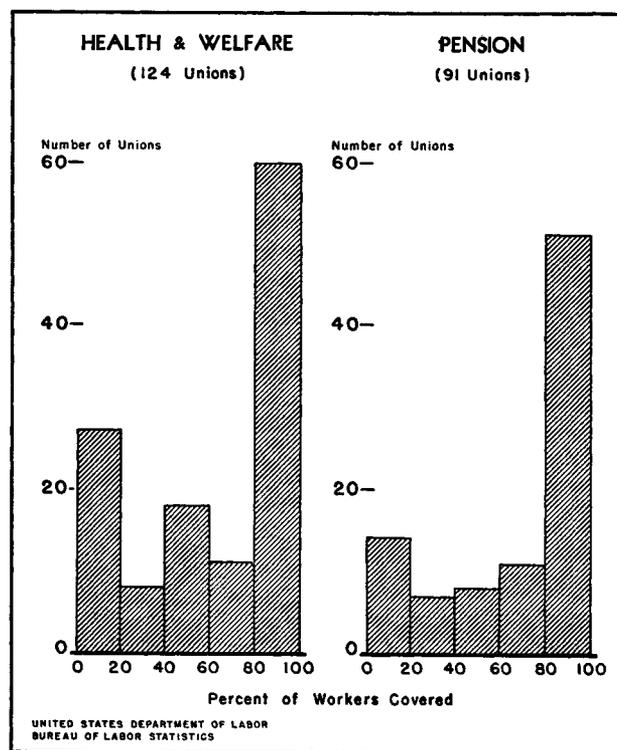
association basis, so-called industry or area benefit funds to which employers alone contribute have been the general rule.

The great majority of workers under negotiated pension plans do not directly contribute to their cost. Of the 4.8 million workers for whom data were available on the method of financing, four-fifths were covered by employer-financed pension programs (table 4). From 80 to 100 percent of all workers under pension agreements were covered on a noncontributory basis in 51 of the 91 unions for which data were available (table 6).

Employer-financed pension plans covered approximately 8 out of every 10 workers who were eligible for this benefit under agreements of CIO and unaffiliated unions, and 6 out of every 10 workers under pension plans in agreements concluded by AFL affiliates (table 4).

More than 90 percent of the workers in the textile, apparel and leather; printing and publishing; stone, clay, and glass; and mining and quarrying industry groups were covered by noncontributory pension programs. Over 70 percent of the workers in lumber and furniture; metal products;

Chart 2. Prevalence of Employer-Financed Employee-Benefit Plans Mid-1950



and transportation, communications and other public utilities were similarly covered (table 5).

Extent by Union Affiliation. The emphasis placed upon pensions during the last 2 years, particularly by labor organizations in the large mass-production industries (such as steel, automobile, rubber, and glass), is shown by the following: Of all workers under negotiated employee-benefit programs, about four out of five CIO workers, one out of every two AFL workers, and two out of every three employees in unaffiliated unions were covered by pensions.

Of the 5.1 million workers covered by negotiated pension plans, slightly more than 56 percent are under programs of unions affiliated with the CIO. Approximately a fourth are included under plans negotiated by AFL affiliated unions and the remainder—approximately 18 percent—by unaffiliated or independent unions (table 4).

Health and Insurance Benefits

Agreements providing health and insurance coverage afforded protection to some 7,000,000 workers, an increase of about 2½ times the number of workers covered in mid-1948 (table 4).

Equally significant is the fact that workers formerly covered by one or two types of benefits now receive closer to a full "package"; i. e., life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment, accident and sickness, hospitalization, surgical, and medical. More liberal benefit payments have also been agreed upon, in many instances. In addition, dependents of workers are also increasingly covered by hospitalization and medical- and surgical-care benefit plans.

Industry Coverage. Among those industries in which large numbers of workers are covered by one or more health and/or insurance benefits,

TABLE 5.—Workers covered by employee-benefit plans under collective-bargaining agreements, mid-1950, by major industry groups and method of financing

Industry group	Total covered		Method of financing					
			Employer only		Jointly financed		Undetermined	
	Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent
HEALTH AND WELFARE PLANS¹								
Total.....	7,128	100.0	3,890	54.6	2,600	36.5	638	8.9
Food and tobacco.....	195	100.0	146	74.9	41	21.0	8	4.1
Textile, apparel, and leather.....	1,401	100.0	1,268	90.5	37	2.6	96	6.9
Lumber and furniture.....	102	100.0	83	81.4	15	14.7	4	3.9
Paper and allied products.....	158	100.0	37	23.4	114	72.2	7	4.4
Printing and publishing.....	63	100.0	54	84.8	9	14.3	(²)	(³)
Petroleum, chemicals, and rubber.....	430	100.0	90	20.9	315	73.3	25	5.8
Metal products.....	2,324	100.0	350	15.1	1,678	72.2	296	12.7
Stone, clay, and glass.....	124	100.0	39	31.5	85	68.6	(²)	(³)
Mining and quarrying.....	492	100.0	474	96.3	15	3.1	3	(³)
Transportation, communications, and other public utilities ⁴	1,248	100.0	880	70.5	211	16.9	157	12.6
Trade, finance, insurance, and services.....	294	100.0	238	81.0	33	11.2	23	7.8
Unclassified.....	297	100.0	231	77.8	47	15.8	19	6.4
PENSION PLANS¹								
Total.....	5,123	100.0	3,828	74.7	993	19.4	302	5.9
Food and tobacco.....	87	100.0	56	64.4	17	19.5	14	16.1
Textile, apparel, and leather.....	654	100.0	617	94.3	30	4.6	7	1.1
Lumber and furniture.....	14	100.0	10	71.4	-----	-----	4	28.6
Paper and allied products.....	140	100.0	66	47.1	74	52.3	(²)	(³)
Printing and publishing.....	17	100.0	16	94.1	1	5.9	-----	-----
Petroleum, chemicals, and rubber.....	361	100.0	153	42.4	194	53.7	14	3.9
Metal products.....	2,011	100.0	1,499	74.5	277	13.8	235	11.7
Stone, clay, and glass.....	66	100.0	60	90.9	6	9.1	-----	-----
Mining and quarrying.....	466	100.0	462	98.2	4	(³)	-----	-----
Transportation, communications, and other public utilities ⁴	1,024	100.0	756	73.8	249	24.3	19	1.9
Trade, finance, insurance, and services.....	71	100.0	33	46.5	35	49.3	3	4.2
Unclassified.....	212	100.0	100	47.2	106	50.0	6	2.8

¹ Includes one or more of the following types of benefits: life insurance or death; accidental death and dismemberment; accident and sickness (but not sick leave or workmen's compensation); cash or services covering hospital, surgical, maternity, and medical care.

Data based on information for 70 AFL unions, 29 CIO unions, and 31 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment.

² Less than 1,000.

³ Less than 1 percent.

⁴ Excludes railroads.

⁵ Data based on information for 52 AFL unions, 23 CIO unions, and 22 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment.

metal products (including steel, automobile, and machinery) account for some 2.3 million, or almost a third of the total number of workers (7,128,000) covered by all health and insurance plans under agreement. Two other industry groups—textile, apparel, and leather, and transportation, communications, and other public utilities—each have between 1 and 1½ million so protected (table 5).

Financing. Data were available on the method of financing for nearly 6.5 million workers. Nearly 60 percent of these workers were covered by employer-financed health and insurance plans (table 4).

Of the unions for which data were available, about half had from 80 to 100 percent of all workers under health and welfare plans covered on a noncontributory basis (table 6). Such noncontributory programs were characteristic of the (1) textile, apparel, and leather, (2) lumber and furniture, (3) printing and publishing, (4) mining and quarrying, and (5) trade, finance, insurance, and service industry groups; and they applied to more than 80 percent of the workers under plans in each of these groups. Jointly financed health and welfare programs, on the other hand, were fairly prominent in the paper and allied products; petroleum, chemicals, and rubber; metal products; and stone, clay, and glass industries (table 5).

Extent by Union Affiliation. Of the more than 7,000,000 workers covered by health and insurance benefits under agreements, approximately 50 percent were under programs of unions affiliated with the CIO. Slightly less than a third were included under plans negotiated by AFL affiliates, and the remainder by unaffiliated or independent unions.

Specific Types of Benefits. Historically, a number of unions started largely as fraternal or benevolent associations, to provide sick, out-of-work, old-age, and mortuary benefits. Some of these programs were replaced later by more formal arrangements through group life and casualty insurance, underwritten in a few cases by union-sponsored insurance companies. Others retained essentially their original form—the self-insured union fund type. Still other benefits were dropped entirely from the union program—to be replaced by legislated programs—for example, unemployment benefits and old-age insurance. Many union programs, par-

ticularly after World War I, were revised or terminated because of rising benefit costs, financial instability, and, later, the enactment of the Social Security Act of 1935. Others have continued and are still in effect.

Originally, these union programs were frequently the sole source of worker protection. Later, however, industry established programs providing similar benefits, in many cases on a noncontributory basis. Until the mid-1920's, organized labor made little effort to bring these programs within the scope of the agreement. Only in isolated cases was this accomplished until the World War II period.

Currently, unions have sought, and in many instances, have obtained a "complete package" of insurance and health benefits, providing some protection against the costs, expenses, and loss of income resulting from death, illness, and injury.

Life insurance ranks first among the individual insurance benefits provided in contracts, in terms of the number of workers covered. It is followed

TABLE 6.—Prevalence of employer-financed employee-benefit plans, mid-1950

	All unions		AFL unions		CIO unions		Unaffiliated unions	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
HEALTH AND WELFARE PLANS¹								
Total.....	124	100	67	100	29	100	28	100
80-100.....	60	48	37	56	12	41	11	39
60-79.....	11	9	6	9	2	7	3	11
40-59.....	18	15	8	12	3	10	7	25
20-39.....	8	6	3	4	4	14	1	4
0-19.....	27	22	13	19	8	28	6	21
PENSION PLANS²								
Total.....	91	100	51	100	23	100	17	100
80-100.....	51	56	27	53	15	65	9	53
60-79.....	11	12	6	12	3	13	2	12
40-59.....	8	9	4	7	3	13	1	5
20-39.....	7	8	5	10	—	—	2	12
0-19.....	14	15	9	18	2	9	3	18

¹ Includes one or more of following types of benefits: life insurance or death; accidental death and dismemberment; accident and sickness (but not sick leave or workmen's compensation); cash or services covering hospital, surgical, maternity, and medical care.

² For 30 unions, data on method of financing these benefits were available for only a part of the covered workers. For 19 of these, the size of the unknown group was insignificant; even if known, it would not have affected classification of the union in a particular percentage range. In the remaining 11 unions, the size of the unknown group was sufficiently large to affect their classification; in each such instance, these unions were placed in the lower percentage range.

³ Excludes single-firm unions.

⁴ For 14 unions, data on the method of financing these benefits were available for only a part of the covered workers. For 9 of these, the size of the unknown group was insignificant and even if known, would not have affected the classification of the union in a particular percentage range. In the remaining 5 unions, the size of the unknown group was sufficiently large to affect their classification and in each such instance, these unions were placed in the lower percentage range.

TABLE 7.—*Specific health and welfare benefits in collective-bargaining agreements, mid-1950: Workers covered and method of financing*

Type of benefit	Number of unions reporting benefit ¹	Workers covered by specific benefit		Method of financing			
		Number ² (thousands)	Percent of total workers covered by all health and welfare benefits in 140 reporting unions ³	Employer only		Jointly financed	
				Workers (thousands)	Percent	Workers (thousands)	Percent
Life insurance or death benefit.....	139	4, 150	95. 6	2, 780	67. 0	1, 370	33. 0
Accidental death and dismemberment.....	101	1, 983	45. 7	1, 395	70. 4	588	29. 6
Cash payments for loss of time resulting from temporary sickness and accident (excluding sick leave and workmen's compensation).....	101	2, 781	64. 1	1, 640	59. 0	1, 141	41. 0
Hospitalization.....	110	3, 461	79. 8	2, 245	64. 9	1, 216	35. 1
Surgical and/or medical.....	101	3, 140	72. 4	2, 245	71. 5	895	28. 5

¹ Data on specific benefit coverage were available for 140 unions, including 38 AFL, 17 CIO, 20 unaffiliated unions. Also includes scattered AFL federal labor unions and CIO local industrial unions and unaffiliated unions confined to a single plant or establishment.

² Figures not additive since many workers are covered by more than one type of benefit.

³ These 140 unions reported slightly more than 4.3 million workers covered by their health and welfare plans.

by hospitalization care or reimbursement for hospital expenses; surgical and/or medical care or reimbursement; accident and sickness payments; and accidental death and dismemberment cash benefits, in that order (table 7).⁹

Over 95 percent (4,150,000) of all workers under health and welfare plans in the 140 unions reporting the distribution of workers by specific type of benefit were covered by life insurance. Between 3 and 3½ million each were covered by hospitalization and surgical and/or medical benefits, with approximately 2.8 million covered by accident and sickness (excluding sick leave and workmen's compensation) and 1.9 million by accidental death and dismemberment benefits. About 7 out of every 10 workers covered by life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment, and surgical and/or medical benefits received this protection at the employer's sole expense. A slightly smaller proportion received hospitalization and accident and sickness benefits at no cost to the employee (table 7).

¹ It should be emphasized that the increase from about 3,000,000 in 1948 to approximately 7,650,000 workers covered by collectively bargained benefit plans in 1950 does not represent a net increase in the total benefit coverage of workers in private industry. Many programs had existed for some time before they were brought within the scope of collective bargaining, and there are many other employer-sponsored programs which are not under collective bargaining.

² *Inland Steel Co.*, 77 N. L. R. B. 1, enforcement granted, 170, Fed. 2d 247 (1948), cert. denied, 336 U. S. 960, 69 Sup. Ct. 887 (1949).

³ Report to the President of the United States on the Labor Dispute in the Basic Steel Industry, by the Steel Industry Board, September 10, 1949 (pp. 7-8).

⁴ Over 26 percent of the 50,000,000 man-days of strike idleness occurring during 1949—the second highest on record—was caused by disputes in which pensions and insurance were the sole issues; an additional 29 percent of the total idleness was accounted for by disputes involving these issues in combi-

nation with wages. Thus, upwards of 55 percent (28,000,000 man-days) of all strike idleness during 1949 resulted from stoppages involving pension and insurance issues, including major strikes in steel and coal.

During the first 6 months of 1950, pensions and insurance alone or in combination with wages continued to dominate labor's demands. Lost time resulting from these issues amounted to more than 70 percent of the 24,000,000 man-days of strike idleness recorded through June.

⁵ Data on the extent and financing of employee-benefit plans in mid-1950 are based on a questionnaire survey of all national and international unions (AFL, CIO, and Independent) as well as a number of single-firm unions whose membership generally exceeded 500. Data developed through these sources were supplemented by field visits, materials in the Bureau's files, and other sources. The figure of 7,650,000 workers covered by employee-benefit plans in labor-management contracts should not, however, be taken to represent the total or maximum number of all workers covered by such plans in all current contracts. It falls short in two respects: Partial figures only were available for a few unions, while others failed to furnish any data. No attempt was made to estimate the number of additional workers covered by employee-benefit plans in the agreements of unions which furnished only partial reports, or which failed to provide any data on the coverage of these plans. The figures, however, are highly significant in that they are based on data for unions having an estimated total membership of slightly more than 13,000,000, exclusive of railroad and government unions.

⁶ Social-insurance benefits include life insurance or death, accidental death and dismemberment, accident and sickness (but not sick leave or workmen's compensation) cash or services covering hospital, surgical, maternity, medical care. The terms "social insurance" and "health and welfare" are used interchangeably in this report.

⁷ Many AFL affiliates as well as their locals have, for many years, maintained benefit programs financed entirely by membership dues or assessments. According to the Report of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to the Sixty-ninth Convention, September 18, 1950 (pp. 80-84), about 70 national or international unions maintain some type of benefit program for their members. Disbursements under these programs during 1949 totaled slightly over \$67,000,000 for death, sick, unemployment, old age, disability, and miscellaneous (including strike) benefits.

⁸ Precise interindustry comparisons must, of course, take into account, in addition to the extent to which these benefits have been incorporated into collective-bargaining agreements, such factors as the volume of employment in the industry, the degree of union organization (extent of collective bargaining), and the existence of unions' own benefit plans.

⁹ The relative position of accident and sickness coverage in this order is undoubtedly affected by the presence of paid sick leave plans under many union contracts. These plans, which are excluded from this study, often provide essentially the same protection as weekly accident and sickness insurance. The number of workers actually protected under union contract against loss of income resulting from injury or accident is therefore considerably greater than is indicated by this study. For a study on the prevalence of sick leave and accident and sickness benefits under union agreements, see *Sickness and Accident Benefits in Union Agreements, 1949*, Monthly Labor Review, June 1950 (p. 636).