The Social Objective
in
Wartime and World Reconstruction

The New York Conference of the International Labour Organisation

Representative Character of the Conference

The Conference of the International Labour Organisation which met at New York from 27 October to 5 November 1941, and held its concluding session at the White House, Washington, D.C., on 6 November, would have been regarded even in normal times as one of the most influentially attended meetings ever held under the auspices of the International Labour Organisation. In present circumstances it has had an importance which the future may dignify as historical. 34 States Members of the Organisation were represented at the Conference, 22 of them by delegations including representatives of Governments, employers, and workers. The representation of Governments was unusually strong. President Roosevelt addressed the Conference at the White House and the United States Government delegates were the Secretary of Labor and one of the Assistant Secretaries of State. The British War Cabinet was represented by the Rt. Hon. Clement Attlee, Deputy Leader of the House of Commons and Leader of the Labour Party. The Belgian, Bolivian, Canadian, Chilean, Czechoslovak, Greek, Luxemburg, Mexican, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norwegian, Polish, and Yugoslav Governments were all represented by Cabinet Ministers. Cuba was represented by the Under-Secretary of Labour, and Ecuador and Peru by their Directors of Labour; Argentina and Brazil by senior diplomatic officers; and Uruguay by the President of the Social Insurance Institute. Asia was represented by delegates from China, India, Iran, and Thailand, and Africa by delegates from Egypt and the Union of South Africa. The French Government was represented at the Conference, and speeches were
made by the Director of Labour of the Free French Movement and by the Minister of Denmark to the United States recognised as such by the United States Government.

AGENDA AND PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE

The agenda of the Conference consisted of two questions: the Report submitted by the Acting Director of the International Labour Organisation under the title *The I.L.O. and Reconstruction*; and the question of "Methods of Collaboration between Public Authorities, Workers' Organisations and Employers' Organisations". The Acting Director's Report was debated by the Conference in plenary sitting, while the question of methods of collaboration was referred to a Committee of the whole house. Technically the Conference was not a Session of the International Labour Conference. It accordingly had no power to adopt Conventions and Recommendations in the manner provided for in the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation, and the value of its work will be determined by the influence exercised by its debates and by the action taken to implement the important resolutions which it adopted.

DEBATE ON THE I.L.O. AND RECONSTRUCTION

The debate upon *The I.L.O. and Reconstruction* was one of the longest and most important which has ever taken place in a Conference convened by the International Labour Organisation. 66 delegates and advisers from no less than 27 countries took part, including 35 Government representatives, 14 employers' representatives, and 17 workers' representatives. The outstanding feature of this debate was the unity of purpose which inspired it. As the Acting Director pointed out in his reply to the debate, it might have been expected that a world conference of free peoples, "a Conference possessed of every freedom, including the freedom to disagree", would have expressed itself with a certain diversity at the present crisis in the world's affairs. It did not. An unaccustomed unity ran through all the speeches, a unity which the Acting Director in his reply attributed to a common faith in "the democracy of the International Labour Organisation", meaning thereby "a democracy embracing the Members of the Organisation, in contradistinction to the kind of world we should have if those principles were destroyed, and not only individuals but countries were compelled to shape their lives and institutions to an imposed pattern". This democracy between nations he described as a belief "that nations, like individuals, should, subject to their obligations to the community of which they are a part, be free to pursue, in the immortal
words of the Declaration of Independence, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness". United on this fundamental proposition the Conference repeatedly expressed, by its applause and by the resolutions which it adopted, its admiration for and its gratitude to "those who are defending the principles by which alone all nations can live, on battlefronts where ordinary men, women, and children share the risks and pay the sacrifices of battle as fully as disciplined and uniformed armies".

What is implied in the conception of a democracy between nations was aptly stated by Mr. Attlee, speaking for the British Government:

As against that conception of a world drilled and dominated by a self-styled master race to which all others are inferior and subservient, we stand for democracy among the nations. We wish to see free peoples freely co-operating to make their particular contributions to our common civilisation, but we recognise that just as, in a city or State, the freedom of the individual is secured by the enforcement of the rule of law, so in the modern world, so closely linked together, acceptance of a law superior to the will of the individual State is a condition of freedom.

There was universal agreement in the Conference that such a democracy between nations must be increasingly concerned with social objectives. The I.L.O. and Reconstruction describes the emergence of the social objective as the characteristic feature of current discussion of post-war policy.

This then, Mr. Phelan wrote, can be taken as the starting point, that future policy is to be directed to ensuring for the individual not only an improvement in conditions of labour but economic security without which, it is now recognised, there can be no fully effective implementation of social justice. Economic security, however, is not to be interpreted narrowly, and ... is not regarded as an end in itself but as the condition which enables men to build on the secure basis of an assured standard of mutual well-being a fuller, richer, and above all a freer life. Economic security could conceivably exist with a high degree of material prosperity in the slave State but at the price of slavery. What the Governments of the Members of the Organisation are determined to seek is economic security for all citizens, achieved in a manner which respects individual dignity and liberty, of which it is as we now perceive in modern conditions an essential element.

The Chairman of the Governing Body, Mr. Carter Goodrich, when opening the Conference, referred to "the daily life of working folk" having become the central concern of public policy. The same note was re-echoed throughout the debate, which confirmed the validity of the analysis formulated in The I.L.O. and Reconstruction that the social objectives now becoming dominant in public policy cover "not the comparatively narrow domain of conditions of work, but the infinitely more extensive area of conditions of life". Miss Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor of the United
States, who was elected President of the Conference, referred in her presidential address to the importance of developing "the limitless frontier of human need" and producing "for the market of the needy and unsatisfied". "Every country at war", she said, "now knows that unemployment is man-made and can be unmade by man. Faced by the necessity of mobilising all of our resources for purposes of destruction, we have realised that man-power is among the scarcest of our resources... Man-made unemployment ought not to exist and need not exist in the post-war world." To this end there must be a "great extension of public responsibility", especially in the "three outstanding fields" of public health, nutrition, and housing. The "broadening and deepening of objectives" foreshadowed by The I.L.O. and Reconstruction was welcomed or accepted in varying degrees by spokesmen of all three groups and from all parts of the world. As was to be expected, the point was specially stressed by the Workers' delegates. In opening the debate for the workers, Mr. Watt, United States Workers' delegate, urged that the social mandate designed to formulate post-war social objectives which is outlined in the Acting Director's Report "could well be enlarged to include the promotion of health, education, and welfare of all children". Mr. Hallsworth, Workers' delegate of the British Empire and Chairman of the Workers' group, spoke of the proposed social mandate in similar terms:

There is perhaps nothing in it which should not be there, but there are other things which, in my judgment, ought to be included—things which are problems of to-day as well as of to-morrow. I have in mind, for example, the integration of the volume and location of industry with the whole range of social amenities, the treatment of unemployment as a preventable disease, the immediate repair of bodies and minds, as well as of habitations.

But the Workers' delegates held no monopoly in the vigorous expression of this view. Sir Shanmukham Chetty, speaking for the Government of India, urged the importance of housing, nutrition, health, and education as elements in the standard of living in Eastern countries, and Mr. Santos Muñoz, for the Argentine Government, stressed the importance of the same subjects to the Latin American countries.

Constant reference was made throughout the discussion to the close relationship between social objectives and economic considerations. Early in the debate Mr. Oldenbroek, the Netherlands Workers' delegate, affirmed the proposition that: "In order to be able to perform its job, the International Labour Office will have to concern itself with economic questions even more than it has done in the past", and this conception of the relation between economic and social factors in world reconstruction received widespread
support. Mr. Spaak, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs and of Labour, stated the more advanced view of the subject in his eloquent enquiry whether the Conference was "ready to stress that the real problem to-day is not to draw up a social programme, on which we are all agreed, but first to study the economic transformation, or, if you like, revolution, which must be made if we are to be able to carry out this social programme?" "We must", he said, "decide that there is an essential obligation now to create—side by side with, or perhaps in, the I.L.O., in any case working in collaboration with it—the economic bodies which will enable us to study the economic world of to-morrow and to achieve our social programme."

Mr. van Zeeland, who was the other Belgian Government delegate, endorsed equally emphatically the view that "social reform must rest on solid economic reconstruction" and that the I.L.O. must therefore "pay the necessary attention to the economic factors". The Acting Director, he pointed out, had suggested in his Report that "purely economic research is not a part of the duties of the I.L.O." but he, Mr. van Zeeland, "would like the I.L.O. to view this task and this research in the widest sense". Though some of the employers' representatives expressed a certain hesitation regarding the tendency of the Organisation to move increasingly into the economic field, other employers strongly supported this tendency. Their view was stated with special force by Mr. Falter, the Polish Employers' delegate, whose previous experience of the Organisation was in connection with its work relating to the coal mining industry. Welcoming "the increasing understanding of the fact that there is no permanent peace and no healthy development of social progress without international economic co-operation", he said, "I realise that there are before us a great many barriers, where the question of jurisdiction in various organisations will come into play. Still, I think that the requirements of life cannot be adapted to the organisations, but the organisations must conform themselves to the requirements of life." The boldest of the proposals on the subject made in the course of the debate was that of Mr. Necas, the Czechoslovak Minister of Reconstruction and a former Chairman of the Governing Body, who said:

For years, the International Labour Organisation took up traditional questions of social policy, such as hours and conditions of work, migration, unemployment, etc. But experience has shown that all these questions are closely linked to economic life... Wages, hours, and other conditions of work are only partial aspects of the larger question of prices... Therefore, the International Labour Organisation must become not only a world parliament of social policy, but also a world parliament of economic policy.

Just as social reconstruction must be based upon a solid econ-
omic foundation, so also, it was generally recognised, does economic reconstruction presuppose a solid political foundation. "If, as I believe", Mr. Attlee said,

... it is a necessary condition for the establishment of continuing peace that its economic foundations should be well and truly laid, it is equally true that this cannot be secured unless the fear of aggression is removed. It is certain that until the crushing burden of armaments throughout the world is lifted from the backs of the people, they cannot enjoy the maximum social well-being which is possible. We cannot build the city of our desire under the constant menace of aggression. Freedom from fear and freedom from want must be sought together.

Mr. Van Zeeland struck the same note:

It has often been said that there can be no social security without economic security; but it is also true that there can be no economic security and economic organisation in international relations without an equivalent measure of political security, without a corresponding organisation of international political relations.

There were no more emphatic champions of the view that victory is an indispensable condition of the very survival of the International Labour Organisation than the Workers' delegates from the Latin American countries, who represented varied and indeed conflicting tendencies in the trade union movement. "Of what use would be the good resolutions of the I.L.O.", said Mr. Rodriguez, Uruguayan Workers' delegate,

... if the world is to groan under the Nazi heel? What would remain of all this apparatus for protection of labour? What good would the I.L.O. be in a Nazi world? To ask these questions does not mean that we are not interested in the problems of collaboration and reconstruction of the post-war period. But these questions lead us immediately to another, which is fundamental at the present time: Can the Conference of the I.L.O. play a decisive part in crushing Nazi-Fascism as quickly as possible? ... All the plans for a world of peace and of social justice will be useless unless Hitlerism is destroyed."

Mr. Fernandez R., Cuban Workers' delegate, spoke in the same sense:

It is now a supreme duty of all democratic countries throughout the world to give material assistance of every kind and without restriction to the valiant and heroic ally of the countries fighting Hitler. ... If the International Labour Organisation wishes to make a real contribution to social and economic reconstruction after the war ... it cannot close its eyes to these problems which are the key to all others. To assist with all our resources and with all our strength the countries which are carrying on a just war against Nazi-Fascism is a fundamental condition for achieving peace and securing respect for the independence of the nations and social security for the workers, for making social justice a living reality, instead of an empty phrase, for all the peoples of the world.

So also Mr. Ibañez Aguila, the Workers' delegate of Chile, in the following terms:
The Conference is taking place while war is going on. The Conference must therefore define its position towards the war and the belligerent parties. We are supporters of democracy because democracy enables us to be free and preserve our social institutions. That means we are hostile to Fascism. We are therefore all involved in the war against this reactionary force, and must decide how and by what collaboration to prevent its success.

We do not allow enemies in our own homes; and, similarly, the enemies of democracy should have no place in free countries. This is obvious. In America, they must be quickly deprived of any such place if the Western Hemisphere is not to suffer the fate of Europe.

Mr. Domenech, the Argentinian Workers' delegate, was equally unequivocal:

Here we have two systems confronting each other: on one side, the régime of the dictators, headed by Nazism and Fascism, and, on the other side, liberal and democratic opinion in the world. The workers of Argentina, although far away from the scene of the fight, have already energetically and clearly expressed their full and unconditional support of those who are fighting for democracy and liberty. This is not a merely sentimental expression on the part of the Argentine workers, but it is based on the whole tradition of our country and on the principles defended by the great men of the Republic, not only as concerns internal policy, but also in the international field.

Certainly a review of the speeches of the Latin American Workers' delegates fully justifies the account of the attitude of the American continent as a whole towards the war which was given by Mr. Suarez Rivas, the Cuban Under-Secretary of Labour, when he said in the course of the debate:

America, by the ineluctable exigencies of the eternal law of order and of her spirit of humanity and democracy, never has been, is not, and never can be, neutral in this war, because it is not a war waged for local objectives and interests of a secondary nature, as previous wars have been, but a war waged by barbarism against civilisation, a war of acquired social gains against their absolute negation, a war unloosed for the conquest of the world and the reduction of all races and nations to slavery by an armed philosophy which aims at the reversal of all the moral and legal values on which human society rests, which denies all rights of the individual, absorbs him, and sacrifices him pitilessly to the terrible Moloch of the totalitarian State.

It was indeed Mr. Attlee's challenge, "we do not envisage any end to this war save victory", which set the keynote of the common purpose of the whole Conference.

The spadework for what Harold Butler and John Winant described in a joint message of greeting to the Conference as "the new order of the Atlantic Charter" must, however, proceed concurrently with the winning of the war. Mr. Alured Kelly, the Australian Employers' delegate, who pointed out that Australia has under arms
a number of men equivalent to nine million in terms of the population of the United States, expressed the general conviction of the Conference when he said "... we were unprepared for war two years ago ... do not let us be unprepared for peace". Mr. Attlee, speaking with the unrivalled authority of a member of the British War Cabinet, used equally clear-cut language. "Action must be taken now", he said, "if the end of the war is not to find us unprepared."

A number of speakers, notably Mr. van den Tempel, the Netherlands Minister of Labour, emphasised the magnitude of the problem of the switch back from wartime to peace production which it will be necessary to organise at the end of the war, and adduced the prospective urgency of this problem as an additional ground for large-scale reconstruction planning now. In general it was the representatives of the occupied countries who laid the greatest stress upon the immediacy of the measures which will be required. Mr. Morawetz, the Employers' delegate of Czechoslovakia, evoked a general response when he said "... one thing is certain—everything must be done to secure food and labour for the population of Europe as quickly as possible. After the last war, it took a very, very long time until deliveries started upon a reasonable scale, and a great deal of starving and unemployment could easily have been avoided. That should not happen again, as we know what enormous social dangers are involved in such a situation."

There was general agreement that the necessary planning must be international in scope and character, and this was, indeed, emphasised with special force by the representatives of Great Britain and the United States. It is not enough, Mr. Attlee said, to "applaud" the objectives outlined in the Atlantic Charter ... "they must be attained. And if past mistakes are to be avoided, there must be the closest international collaboration, in which we in the United Kingdom will gladly play our part." He explained that Mr. Arthur Greenwood had been charged with preparing post-war plans for Britain and continued "... but the problems of the peace cannot be solved by one nation in isolation. The plans of a post-war Britain must be fitted into the plans of a post-war world, for this fight is not just a fight between nations, it is a fight for the future of civilisation." Miss Perkins expressed the same thought when she said in her presidential address: "All nations must stand ready at the conclusion of this war to make many resources available in the reconstruction of the world", and her view was further elaborated by Mr. Henry Harriman, the delegate of the United States employers.

Rapid means of travel, almost instantaneous communications, and the wide
domain of trade, he said, have bound the nations of the world together in a com-
mmon bond which we call modern civilisation. This unity of the nations of the
world makes it inevitable that when one suffers others will suffer, and that a
reasonable prosperity for all is essential. In my judgment, post-war America
will, for its own safety as well as for the welfare of mankind, have to take an active
part in world affairs, and recognise that it cannot live in splendid isolation on this
continent.

Then, this nation, as a great democracy, which has suffered the least in
the present world struggle and whose shores have not been seriously ravaged by
destructive attacks, will have its greatest opportunity for world usefulness. Its
resources will be great and its ability to give immediate aid to the sick, the suffer-
ing, and the hungry of Europe and Asia will exceed that of any other people.
It should give this succour and by its advice and co-operation aid in setting up a
world structure which can do much to ensure lasting peace.

Mr. van Zeeland raised the question of the parts to be played in
reconstruction by international and national agencies respectively.

In my view, he said, . . . world reconstruction must be based on international
collaboration or it will fail. If we return tomorrow to the narrow political and
economic nationalism which we accepted or tolerated during the last ten years,
well, then the outcome is not to be doubted. It means the end of a civilisation.
But when I speak of international organisation, I do not mean international
action alone, setting aside the national States or diminishing their status. The
national States will and must remain the basis of all international organisation.
We must delegate to international organs the work that national States cannot
do or are no longer able to do; but to the extent that the national States can act
within the framework of a better organised international order, they will be able
to discharge their own responsibilities more fully and effectively.

Much the same view had been expressed in The I.L.O. and Reconstruc-
tion:

There are, however, a growing number of matters to which the authority of
national government, however unlimited, cannot in the nature of things extend in
an era of world interdependence. The alternatives are therefore to leave without
any control or order matters of vital interest which are outside the range of
effective national action or to institute international control in spheres in which
the absence of such control is dangerous to the very existence of free nations . . .
international organisation properly understood is indispensable to the creation
of the conditions in which national freedom can be effectively and safely exercised.
To deal with the social and economic problems which will arise at the end of the
war existing national powers will be needed to the full for national measures.
Concurrently, international measures will have to be taken by the appropriate
international bodies if national action is to be effective and not to find itself
baffled and defeated by circumstances out of its control.

It was natural that special emphasis should be laid during the
debate upon the contribution which the International Labour
Organisation is peculiarly fitted to make towards world reconstruc-
Mr. Robert Watt, the Workers' delegate of the United States, dealt with the point at some length as follows:

Created as it was out of the throes of a peace conference which failed to establish peace, the International Labour Organisation for a long, long time seemed more a token of the conscience of uneasy men than a live and productive force. But now the International Labour Organisation has its roots well into the ground. To-day it survives and stretches above the devastated ruins of other international organisations which were killed by the searing heat of nationalistic cupidity.

There is good reason for the vitality of the International Labour Organisation. Partly by its composition, and partly by its gradual development, it has gained and earned inherent strength. It has grown as the need for it has grown, and it has grown because it consists not of political folks of rival nationalistic forces, but rather because it consists, too, of the international brotherhood of workers and employers which transcends by far the geographical sovereignties of the Governments which are likewise represented. . .

The tripartite character of the International Labour Organisation represents the essential constituent parts of any agency which can properly deal with economic problems. This is the representative, democratic way to regulate trade and industry and raw materials among the nations of the world which must, and I believe will, be undertaken as the foundation of economic and social reconstruction among the free nations of the world.

A similar view was expressed by the Chairman of the Employers' group, Sir John Forbes Watson. Sir John declared that there will be "a lot of bridges to be rebuilt when this war is won" and expressed his feeling "that the employers' and workers' organisations are going to play some part in the process of rebuilding." Among those who paid tributes to the value of the tripartite character of the Organisation were a number of Government delegates, including Mr. Attlee, Mr. Nečas, and Mr. Kosanovitch, Government delegate of Yugoslavia, who, speaking of the inter-war experiment in world organisation, said: "Of these institutions, only the International Labour Organisation still functions, maybe because, by the very structure of the Organisation, the spirit of solidarity transcended the frontiers of individual States, and because the Fascist influence was in time paralysed".

The Workers' delegates in particular, when discussing the role to be played by the Organisation in future world reconstruction, asserted in no uncertain terms their claim to be represented through the Organisation in any peace or reconstruction conference following the war. The claim was voiced from many quarters, but Mr. Hallsworth, speaking in his double capacity as British Workers' delegate and Chairman of the Workers' group, expressed it with unrivalled authority.

In my view, therefore, he said, the Governments should give us here and now certain precise undertakings. These should include: first, a pledge that they will
continue to support the I.L.O.; secondly, a pledge that they will make full and proper use of the I.L.O. when the time comes for peace-making; thirdly, agreement that not only those problems which must be covered by a peace treaty, but also our urgent problems to-day shall at once be submitted to tripartite international discussion.

The claim to peace conference representation through the I.L.O. was the most consistent and important demand made by the Workers' delegates at the Conference, and was subsequently embodied in a resolution unanimously adopted. Prior to the adoption of the resolution, the Acting Director summed up thus the gist of the debate upon the subject:

I would ask your indulgence to allow me to say just a few words on the suggestions made in the Report regarding the use of the machinery of the International Labour Organisation for implementing the social clauses of the Atlantic Charter . . .

Free organisations of workers and employers have become now an integral part of the machinery of democratic government. And it surely follows that we should build more surely, more effectively, and more solidly if they are associated with all the international decisions regarding the future peace and the economic well-being of the world.

I attach therefore particular importance to the suggestions which have been made to that end.

The Workers' delegates in particular have voiced with impressive unanimity their support for the views expressed in the Report. Many Government delegates have expressed support for the same general idea. The carrying of it into effect depends not on the I.L.O. but on the decisions which will have to be taken by Governments when the time comes.

Their decisions will doubtless be influenced by the advice which they will receive from the delegates to this Conference, and I trust therefore that delegates will convey to their Governments the view which has found such general favour here, that the International Labour Organisation should be made an integral part of any peace or reconstruction conference following the war.

And though it may be necessary to draw a distinction between emergency relief measures and measures of long-term reconstruction, it will be important to frame the emergency relief measures in such a manner as to facilitate the task of long-term reconstruction. With this end in view, it may be desirable that the International Labour Organisation should be associated not only with the peace or reconstruction conference, but with some of the measures which may be taken at an earlier phase.

At the conclusion of the debate on The I.L.O. and Reconstruction the Government, Employers', and Workers' delegations of the Central European and Balkan countries represented at the Conference (Czechoslovakia, Greece, Poland, and Yugoslavia) communicated to the Conference a joint declaration proclaiming their solidarity in the common struggle for freedom and solemnly assuring their peoples "that the struggle for their liberation, carried out jointly with the world's greatest democracies, shall be continued untiringly until the day of victory". In this declaration they
expressed "the firm conviction that the peace that will follow victory will bring to our peoples, as well as to all peoples throughout the world, enjoyment of the Four Freedoms defined in the Roosevelt-Churchill declaration" and the hope that the end of the war "will save 100 million inhabitants of Central Europe and of the Balkans from their present state of wretchedness by assuring them the possibility of stable employment, guaranteed by reconstruction and by the development of their industries, agriculture, and merchant marine, and that those people will be included within the sphere of international exchanges of goods and services." In replying to the debate the Acting Director referred to this joint declaration and expressed his confidence that the International Labour Organisation would co-operate in every possible manner in establishing the four freedoms in Central Europe and the Balkans.

Suggestions for the development of the work of the Organisation in other areas with special problems were made in the course of the debate. Mr. Santos Muñoz, Government delegate of Argentina, expressed a desire for an increase in the amount of technical assistance afforded by the Office to Latin American countries, and the Acting Director gave him an assurance that the Office, which has succeeded in meeting all the calls of this kind made upon it during the last two years, would do everything in its power to develop further this side of its work, whenever approached by the Argentine or any other Government. Sir Shanmukham Chetty, Government delegate of India, referred to the importance of "providing facilities by more vigorous international action for raising the standard of living of the workers of Eastern countries in respect of housing, nutrition, health, and education, including technical and vocational training", and welcomed the reference contained in The I.L.O. and Reconstruction to "the possibility of the development in the coming years of machinery for the regional requirements and the conditions of the Asiatic continent". Sir Shanmukham expressed his confidence that "any proposals that the Office may make in this direction will be sympathetically viewed by the Government of India", and the Acting Director in his reply acknowledged that "there is a real task for the International Labour Organisation in that field" and that "the time is clearly coming" when the services which an Asiatic regional conference might render "will be of importance not only to India and China and the other Asiatic countries but to the world as a whole". Mr. Shaw Kinn-Wei, Chinese Employers' delegate, made a plea for international co-operation with the Chinese Government in the reconstruction of China on the lines contemplated by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, and the Acting Director in his reply gave an assurance that "the Office will be happy to do everything in its
power which the Chinese Government thinks would be of assistance in carrying to success that momentous task”.

It was recognised that some decentralisation of the work of the Organisation might be necessary in order to enable it to meet future requirements. Mr. Hallsworth, for instance, urged that "there must be a considerable unit of the Office in London" on a scale sufficient to constitute "a nucleus research staff, able to act as the secretariat of a reconstruction committee working in Europe". The Acting Director acknowledged the case for Mr. Hallsworth's suggestion and pointed out that it might contain "the germ of something wider and perhaps more permanent" than a temporary adaptation to the circumstances of the present emergency.

**DEBATE ON COLLABORATION**

While the debate on *The I.L.O. and Reconstruction* centred mainly on post-war problems, seen against the background of the present war situation, the discussions of the Committee of the whole house regarding Government-employer-worker collaboration dealt more directly with the immediate labour problems of wartime. These problems were not reviewed in detail, but complete agreement regarding certain basic general principles emerged in the course of the discussion. The speeches which were made by Mr. Hallsworth on behalf of the British workers and by Sir John Forbes Watson on behalf of the British employers afforded a particularly dramatic illustration of the importance of the contribution which the collaboration of employers' and workers' organisations in the framing and application of wartime social policies can make towards securing unity in the war effort. Mr. Hallsworth described the understanding reached between employers and workers in Great Britain in order to avoid industrial disputes during the war and expressed the hope that that spirit might continue when the war was over, a remark which drew from Sir John Forbes Watson the observation that he wished to state in public that, so far as he was concerned, everything that he could do to foster that spirit would be done. Questions of organisation and of method were not considered in detail. Mr. Ralph Assheton, the Parliamentary Secretary of the British Ministry of Labour, and Miss Frieda S. Miller, Industrial Commissioner of the State of New York, took the view that the form of organisation adopted is of secondary importance as compared with the desire for a mutually agreeable solution of a common problem and the patience to work through to an acceptable plan. A number of delegates would have preferred that the Conference should have formulated more detailed proposals on the basis of the comparative
survey of worldwide experience made in the reports submitted to
the Conference. The resolutions adopted were, however, expressed
in general terms.

THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

The first fruits of the discussions of the Conference were crystal­
lised in a series of resolutions adopted during its concluding days.

The Conference unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing the
social and economic principles of the Atlantic Charter, requesting
that the fullest use be made of the machinery and experience of the
International Labour Organisation in giving effect to these prin­
ciples, and pledging the full co-operation of the International
Labour Organisation in their implementation.\(^1\)

The manner in which the machinery of the I.L.O. should be
utilised to give effect to these principles is indicated in greater detail
in a resolution sponsored jointly by the Government, Employers',
and Workers' delegates of the United States of America, which
was also adopted unanimously by the Conference. This resolution
recites that "the victory of the free peoples in the war against
totalitarian aggression is an indispensable condition of the attain­
ment of the ideals of the International Labour Organisation", that
the close of the war "must be followed by immediate action, pre­
viously planned and arranged" for relief and reconstruction, that
the accomplishment of these purposes will require "the fullest
co-operation between all nations in the economic field", and that
"the International Labour Organisation, which possesses the
confidence of the free peoples and includes in its structure the
representatives of workers and employers, is for these reasons
peculiarly fitted to take part in this work in such a way as to mini­
mise misunderstanding and unrest and to promote a stable and
enduring peace". The resolution accordingly requests the Govern­
ing Body: (a) to call the attention of Governments to the desira­
bility of associating the International Labour Organisation with the
planning and application of measures of reconstruction, and to ask
that the International Labour Organisation be represented in any
peace or reconstruction conference following the war; (b) to suggest
to Governments that they should, if they have not already done so,
set up representative agencies for the study of the social and econ­
omic needs of the post-war world, and that such agencies should
consult with the appropriate organs of the I.L.O.; (c) to set up from
its own membership a small tripartite committee, instructed to
study and prepare both measures of reconstruction and emergency

\(^1\) For the text of this resolution, see Appendix, p. 22.
measures to deal with unemployment, in co-operation where necessary with governmental, inter-governmental, and private agencies; (d) to make full use of the existing organs of the I.L.O., and set up such new agencies as may be needed, in order to meet the responsibilities implied in the resolution; (e) to direct the programme of work of the International Labour Organisation to fulfil the purposes of the resolution; and (f) to “report on the subject matter of the resolution to the next and subsequent meetings of the International Labour Conference so that the International Labour Organisation shall be in a position to give authoritative expression to the social objectives confided to it, in the rebuilding of a peaceful world upon the basis of ‘improved labour standards, economic advancement, and social security’.”¹

In view of the adoption of this resolution, sponsored by all the delegates from the United States, a number of other resolutions regarding reconstruction were withdrawn, but it was generally understood that the proposals contained in them would receive full consideration in the course of the action to be taken to give effect to the United States resolution. One such resolution urged that the International Labour Office should “do all in its power to further the immediate preparation of practical plans for the re-employment of workers who will be demobilised in thousands from the armaments factories at the end of the war, including plans for the conversion of war plants to peacetime purposes and for the retraining of workers in the skills required for peacetime reconstruction, and to promote international collaboration in the preparation of such plans”. Another requested an investigation of the probable nature and dimensions of the unemployment to be anticipated on the cessation of hostilities and a comprehensive study of the national and international measures to be taken as a matter of urgency in order to ensure the maintenance of employment by the resumption of peacetime industrial activity. Another recited that “in order ‘to afford the assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want’ it is essential that public policy should be directed specifically to the maintenance of the highest possible level of employment”, that “there are regions where employment opportunities could be greatly expanded by the development of natural resources if the necessary capital could be provided through organised international co-operation”, and that “in many regions economic progress could be stimulated by the resumption of migratory movements, on the basis of adequate organisation and financial provision”: for these reasons it requested the convocation of two bodies established by the I.L.O. during the

¹For the full text of this resolution, see Appendix, p. 22.
years immediately preceding the war, the International Public Works Committee and the Permanent Committee on Migration for Settlement, "in order to consider the measures of international collaboration necessary in their respective spheres in order to contribute, within the general framework of plans for post-war reconstruction, to the maintenance of a high level of employment and a rising standard of living for all". These withdrawn resolutions, together with the Acting Director's Report, The I.L.O. and Reconstruction, and the numerous suggestions made during the debate on that Report, some of which were formulated in resolutions that the Conference found it impracticable to consider in detail and therefore referred to the Governing Body, constitute an important part of the dossier on the basis of which the reconstruction work of the Organisation will be planned.

Regarding two typically international industries, shipping and textiles, special reconstruction resolutions were adopted. Prior to the adoption of the shipping resolution tributes were paid to the devotion to duty of the seamen who are keeping open the Atlantic lanes. The resolution authorises the Director of the International Labour Office to initiate consultations "in order that at the end of the war plans will be available for the immediate regulation of economic and social conditions in the mercantile marine" and "to consult the Joint Maritime Commission regarding the desirability of the inclusion therein of Government representatives". On 5 November the Governing Body authorised the convocation of a meeting of the Joint Maritime Commission at an early date. The textile resolution is designed to provide for the continuation of the work of the World Textile Conference held by the International Labour Organisation in 1937. The resolution requests the Director to begin immediately the preparation of a definite scheme for the establishment under the aegis of the International Labour Organisation of a World Textile Office, based on the tripartite principle, to be responsible for the international organisation of measures to secure prosperity and social justice in the textile industry; to this end it authorises him "to initiate consultations with all parties concerned to the fullest extent which circumstances permit with a view to such a scheme being put into effect with a minimum of delay after the termination of hostilities". This resolution was adopted by a majority, and the Employers' delegates of certain Latin American countries asked to have it recorded that they had voted against the resolution. An amendment that the proposed Textile Office should be responsible only for the study, and not for the organisation, of measures to secure prosperity and social justice in the textile industry was rejected. The Conference decided
to draw the special attention of the Governing Body to a similar resolution regarding the world transport industry.

The resolutions, like the debate, reflect the unanimous view of the Conference that while preparations for reconstruction should not be delayed, the only possible foundation for reconstruction is a democratic victory. The recital contained in the United States resolution that "the victory of the free peoples in the war against totalitarian aggression is an indispensable condition of the attainment of the ideals of the International Labour Organisation" is amplified in a fuller resolution adopted on the initiative of all the Workers' delegates. By this workers' resolution the Conference "expresses its deepest sympathy with the millions of human beings in China, Great Britain, Russia, and on the continent of Europe on whom the Axis war machine has inflicted indescribable sufferings and who are living at the present time in the most acute moral and material distress", "solemnly declares that it is only the victory of free nations the world over, who are fighting for democracy and for the maintenance of the inalienable rights of man, which can save the world from hopeless chaos", and "urges all free peoples to contribute to the uttermost limit of their power for the victory of China, Great Britain, Russia, and their Allies by supplying all the arms which their industry can produce". This resolution was adopted without opposition; the Argentine Government delegate explained that he did not in any way oppose the resolution but must abstain from voting on it in view of its political character.

The resolutions adopted by the Conference on the proposal of its Committee on Government-employer-worker collaboration indicate a method of approach designed to secure that all free peoples do contribute "to the uttermost limit of their power" to supplying the tools of victory. The leading resolution on collaboration recognises the permanent importance of effective collaboration between public authorities and employers' and workers' organisations and underlines the special importance of full collaboration in national defence and post-war reconstruction; it declares that real collaboration is possible only "within the framework of democratic political institutions which guarantee the freedom of association of workers and employers" and if in law and in fact the right of industrial organisations to represent workers and employers is recognised by the State and the workers' and employers' organisations recognise each other's right to represent workers and employers respectively. The resolution recognises that methods of collaboration must vary with circumstances, but a further resolution, adopted on the report of the Selection Committee, recommends "that in agencies set up by public authority which include among
their functions the planning and application of public policies which
directly or indirectly affect the interest of workers and employers,
the policy-making and administrative agencies should include
representative and responsible spokesmen of workers and employers
acting jointly with their Governments". A second resolution
adopted on the report of the Collaboration Committee requests the
Governing Body to take steps to ensure the fullest use of the
resources of the Organisation to secure the extension of the practice
of collaboration, and urges Governments to provide the Office with
adequate information on the operation of the machinery of colla­
boration.

The Conference did not neglect the economic impact of the war
upon areas not directly involved in hostilities, especially Latin
America. An illuminating discussion of the economic difficulties
of the Latin American countries, and of the political significance of
these difficulties, took place in the Selection Committee of the
Conference, where particularly valuable statements were made by
the Chilean and Mexican Ministers of Labour. In the light of these
statements the Conference adopted a resolution referring to the
effect of the restrictions imposed upon export trade between certain
American countries upon employment, and to the serious internal
situation resulting therefrom, and requesting the Governing Body
to take appropriate steps and to consider the appointment of a
committee for the purpose of encouraging the exchange of goods
between the American countries. The Conference also adopted,
on the initiative of the Argentine, Brazilian, and Uruguayan
delegates, a resolution requesting the Governing Body to instruct
the International Labour Office to co-operate with the Regional
Office of Economic Information and Studies set up by the Regional
Conference of River Plate Countries as contemplated by the Con­
vention establishing that Office. A number of other resolutions
submitted by delegates from the Latin American countries were
referred to the Governing Body for further consideration and
appropriate action. The importance of the issues raised by these
resolutions was fully recognised, but a number of them related to
economic and political questions of a difficult character, and it was
therefore decided to ask the Governing Body to provide for their
being more fully considered, either in connection with a future
conference of a general character or by the next Labour Conference
of American States. The Conference decided to draw the special
attention of the Governing Body to certain of these resolutions,
including a resolution regarding freedom of association on an
industry-wide basis and for agricultural workers, and a resolution
regarding the right of trade unions to affiliate with international
organisations.
The Conference culminated at the White House with President Roosevelt's historic address regarding the part to be played by the I.L.O. and its ideals in the winning of the war and in the winning of the peace. In this address he placed on record for the first time the part which he played in 1919 in making the necessary arrangements for the First Session of the International Labour Conference. Since then, he pointed out: "the I.L.O. has been tried and tested", and "when this world struggle is over, you will be prepared to play your own part in formulating those social policies upon which the permanent peace of the world will so much depend".

It is appropriate, the President said, that I recall to you, who are in a full sense a parliament for man's justice, some words that were written in this house by a President who gave his very life for the cause of justice. Nearly eighty years ago, Abraham Lincoln said: "The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds." The essence of our struggle to-day is that men shall be free. There can be no real freedom for the common man without enlightened social policies. In last analysis, they are the stakes for which democracies are to-day fighting.

After paying tribute to the heroic struggle of the common men and women of Britain, of China, of Russia, and of Europe, the President pledged that:

As far as we in the United States are concerned, that struggle shall not be in vain. The epic stand of Britain, of China, and of Russia receives the full support of the free peoples of the Americas. The people of this nation and of all the rest of the American Republics insist upon their right to join in the common defence... The American people have made an unlimited commitment that there shall be a free world. And against that commitment no individual and no group shall prevail.

The President acknowledged that: "There are still some who place the profits that they may make from civilian orders above their obligation to the national defence" and "still some who deliberately delay defence output by using their economic power to force the acceptance of their demands, rather than use the established machinery for the mediation of industrial disputes", but expressed his confidence that they "do not represent the great mass of American workers and employers." The American workman, he observed, "does not have to be convinced that the defence of the democracies is his defence." He knows full well that "labour under the Nazi system has become the slave of the military State" and that "at this moment Berlin is the principal
slave market of all the world." The Western Hemisphere is thus confronted with a choice, a choice which must be made immediately:

The choice we have to make is this: Shall we make our full sacrifices now, produce to the limit, deliver our products to-day and every day to the battlefields of the entire world? Or shall we remain satisfied with our present rate of armament output, postponing the day of real sacrifice—as did the French—until it is too late?

The first is the choice of realism—realism in terms of three shifts a day; the fullest use of every vital machine, every minute of every day and every night; realism in terms of staying on the job and getting things made, and entrusting industrial grievances to the established machinery of collective bargaining—the machinery set up by a free people.

The second choice is the approach of the blind and deluded who think that perhaps we could do business with Hitler. For them, there is "plenty of time". To be sure, many of these misled individuals honestly believe that if we should later find that we can't do business with Hitler, we will roll up our sleeves later—later—later. And their tombstones, the tombstones of those people, would, under such circumstances, bear the inscription "Too late".

After formulating in this manner with unrivalled authority the conviction underlying the work of the whole Conference that "the victory of the free peoples in the war against totalitarian aggression is an indispensable condition of the attainment of the ideals of the International Labour Organisation", and the determination of free men everywhere to contribute to that victory "to the uttermost limit of their power", President Roosevelt proceeded to give equally authoritative expression to the other recurrent note in the proceedings of the Conference, the conviction that the victory will be a barren one unless the post-war world is governed by the principles foreshadowed by the Preamble to the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation and developed more fully twenty-two years later in the Atlantic Charter.

In the process of our working and fighting for victory, he said, we must never permit ourselves to forget the goal that is beyond victory. The defeat of Hitlerism is necessary so that there may be freedom; but this war, like the last war, will produce nothing but destruction unless we prepare for the future now. We plan now for the better world that we aim to build.

If that world is to be a place in which peace is to prevail, there must be a more abundant life for the masses of the people of all countries. In the words of the document that you know of under the name of the Atlantic Charter, we "desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security".

There are so many millions of people in this world who have never been adequately fed and clothed and housed. By undertaking to provide a decent standard of living for these millions, the free peoples of the world can furnish employment to every man and every woman who seeks a job.
And so we are already engaged in surveying the immediate post-war require-
ments of a world whose economies have been disrupted by war.

We are planning not to provide temporary remedies for the ills of a stricken
world; we are planning to achieve permanent cures—to help establish a sounder
life.

To attain these goals you and I know will be no easy task. Yes, their fulfilment
will require “the fullest collaboration between all nations . . .” We have learned
too well that social problems and economic problems are not separate
watertight compartments in the international field, any more than in the national
sphere. In international, as in national affairs, economic policy can no longer be
an end unto itself alone. It is merely a means for achieving social objectives.

There must be no place in the post-war world for special privilege for either
individuals or nations. And again in the words of the Atlantic Charter: “All
States, great and small, victor or vanquished” must have “access, on equal
terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for
their economic prosperity”.

In the planning of such international action the International Labour Organi-
sation, with its representation of labour and management, its technical knowledge
and experience, will be an invaluable instrument for peace. Your Organisation
will have an essential part to play in building up a stable international system of
social justice for all peoples everywhere. As part of your great world organisation,
the people of the United States are determined to respond fully to the opportunity
and the challenge of this historic responsibility, so well exemplified at this historic
meeting in this historic home of an ancient democracy.

Towards Action

It is not enough to “applaud” these objectives. “They must be
attained. And if past mistakes are to be avoided, there must be the
closest international co-operation.” In the spirit of these words of
Mr. Attlee the Governing Body, on the eve of Mr. Roosevelt’s
speech, took certain preliminary decisions regarding the action to
be taken by the Organisation to implement the general resolution
concerning post-war reconstruction adopted in New York. It
authorised the Acting Director to call the attention of Governments
to the paragraphs of the resolution urging the desirability of
associating the International Labour Organisation with the planning
and application of measures of reconstruction, and suggesting that
Governments which have not already done so should set up repre-
sentative agencies for the study of the social and economic needs of
the post-war world and that such agencies should consult with the
appropriate organs of the International Labour Organisation.
It envisaged the preparation of the special reconstruction budget
which will be necessary in order to enable the Organisation to
develop its reconstruction work on the necessary scale. It recon-
stituted the Emergency Committee of the Governing Body and
composed the new Emergency Committee in such a manner that it
should be possible to hold meetings on either side of the Atlantic
as occasion may require. It decided that, if circumstances allowed, a meeting of the Emergency Committee should be held in London early in 1942 to consider further action. It entrusted the Acting Director with the preparation of proposals for consideration at this meeting.

Since the New York Conference the world crisis has continued to develop. The war has become in the fullest sense a world-wide war. The challenge which it presents has grown. The opportunity which it presents has grown. The response of the International Labour Organisation to that challenge and opportunity must and will grow. "We are going to win the war and we are going to win the peace that follows." President Roosevelt’s battle-cry to the people of the United States coincides with the firm resolve of the representatives of the Governments, employers, and workers of the free peoples everywhere who took counsel together at the New York Conference of the International Labour Organisation.

APPENDIX

Resolution Endorsing the Atlantic Charter

WHEREAS by the Atlantic Charter the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom have announced eight common principles in the national policies of their respective Governments on which they base their hopes for the better future of the world; and

WHEREAS these principles have been approved by all the Allied Governments; and

WHEREAS the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth of these principles are as follows:

Fourth, they will endeavour, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.

Fifth, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security.

Sixth, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.

1 For the composition of the Committee, see below, p. 66.
and

WHEREAS the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation proclaims that a lasting peace "can be established only if it is based on social justice";

THE CONFERENCE of the International Labour Organisation endorses the afore-mentioned principles of the Atlantic Charter, requests that the fullest use be made of the machinery and experience of the International Labour Organisation in giving effect to these principles, and pledges the full co-operation of the International Labour Organisation in their implementation.

General Resolution Concerning Post-War Reconstruction

WHEREAS the victory of the free peoples in the war against totalitarian aggression is an indispensable condition of the attainment of the ideals of the International Labour Organisation; and

WHEREAS the close of the war must be followed by immediate action, previously planned and arranged, for the feeding of peoples in need, for the reconstruction of the devastated countries, for the provision and transportation of raw materials and capital equipment necessary for the restoration of economic activity, for the reopening of trade outlets, for the resettlement of workers and their families under circumstances in which they can work in freedom and security and hope, for the changing over of industry to the needs of peace, for the maintenance of employment, and for the raising of standards of living throughout the world; and

WHEREAS the accomplishment of these purposes will require the "fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field"; and

WHEREAS such collaboration will set tasks of organisation and administration calling for the highest ability and for the most sympathetic understanding of the needs of peoples; and

WHEREAS the International Labour Organisation, which possesses the confidence of the free peoples and includes in its structure the representatives of workers and employers, is for these reasons peculiarly fitted to take part in this work in such a way as to minimise misunderstanding and unrest and to promote a stable and enduring peace:

THE CONFERENCE of the International Labour Organisation

Requests the Governing Body:

(a) To transmit this resolution forthwith to the Governments of all Member States, to call their attention to the desirability of associating the International Labour Organisation with the planning and application of measures of reconstruction, and to ask that the International Labour Organisation be represented in any Peace or Reconstruction Conference following the war;
(b) To suggest to the Governments of the Member States that they should, if they have not already done so, set up representative agencies for the study of the social and economic needs of the post-war world and that such agencies should consult with the appropriate organs of the International Labour Organisation;

(c) To set up from its own membership a small tripartite committee, instructed to study and prepare (i) measures of reconstruction and (ii) emergency measures to deal with unemployment, which should be empowered to enlist the assistance of technically qualified experts and authorised to co-operate with governmental, inter-governmental, and private agencies engaged in similar studies and with those agencies whose present activities in the social and economic field affect the conditions under which post-war programmes will be carried out;

(d) To make full use of such existing organs of the International Labour Organisation as the International Public Works Committee, the Permanent Agricultural Committee, the Permanent Committee on Migration for Settlement, and the Joint Maritime Commission, and from time to time to make such modifications in the composition of these agencies, and to set up such new agencies, as may be needed to meet the responsibilities implied in this resolution;

(e) To direct the programme of work of the International Labour Office to fulfil the purposes of this resolution; and

(f) To report on the subject matter of this resolution to the next and subsequent meetings of the International Labour Conference so that the International Labour Organisation shall be in a position to give authoritative expression to the social objectives confided to it, in the rebuilding of a peaceful world upon the basis of "improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security".