

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE

A Brief Summary of the First Year's Work

(The following official report on the activities of the League of Nations' labor body is so important that we print it in full.)

The International Labor Organization of the League of Nations is constituted under Part XIII of the Peace Treaty. It is composed of (1) the General Conference consisting of four representatives from each of the 49 States belonging to the Organization—two representing the State, one the employers and one the workers—and (2) the International Labor Office controlled by a Governing Body of twenty-four persons, twelve representing the Governments and six employers and six workers. The Governing Body meets every three months.

The functions of the Organization are fully set out in the Treaty. Briefly, they consist in carrying out, by means of international legislation, the principles laid down in the Treaty regarding the conditions of labor. These principles are:

- (1) The guiding principle... that labor should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.
- (2) The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.
- (3) The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.
- (4) The adoption of an eight-hour day or a forty-eight hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.
- (5) The adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, which should include Sunday wherever practicable.
- (6) The abolition of child labor and the imposition of such limitations on the labor of young persons as shall permit the continuation of their education and assure their proper physical development.
- (7) The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.
- (8) The standard set by law in each country with respect to the conditions of labor should have regard to the equitable economic treatment of all workers lawfully resident therein.
- (9) Each State should make provision for a system of inspection in which women should take part, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the employed.

The Conference, which meets annually, discusses and votes Draft Conventions embodying one or more of these principles which are afterwards to be submitted for ratification to the Parliaments of the various States. The first meeting of the Conference was held in Washington, in October and November, 1919.

The International Labor Office acts as the Secretariat and administrative machine of the Organization, and the numerous tasks to perform. It collects and distributes information on all questions relating to the international adjustment of industrial conditions of life and labor, and conducts such special investigations as may be ordered by the Conference. It is, moreover, responsible for seeing that the terms of the Conventions ratified are duly carried out.

The Office has now been established a little over twelve months. It began its career in London and was transferred to Geneva, in July, 1920. The formation of the staff was the first important question, and this was carried out by the selection, as far as possible, of persons who had experience both in administration and in connection with labor legislation and labor problems. Later on it was arranged that the staff should be recruited by means of examination, and examinations for this purpose have been held in London and Paris. There are now 210 members of the staff, 95 male and 115 female, representing 17 nationalities, namely: American, Belgian, British, Canadian, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Swiss.

Sea workers benefited

Before the Office had time to become properly organized, the work of arranging for the International Labor Conference at Genoa had to be undertaken. This conference dealt with the conditions of employment in the seafaring industry. Owing to the complicated and refractory nature of the problem, it was not possible to come to a definite conclusion on the chief question, that of the application of the principle of the 8-hour working day to seamen. Draft Conventions, however, were agreed to on the following questions:

- Minimum age for admission of children to employment at sea.
- Unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of ship.
- The establishment of facilities for finding employment for seamen.
- Recommendations were also passed dealing with:
- Limitation of hours of work in the fishing industry.
- Limitation of hours of work in inland navigation.
- The establishment of national seamen's codes.
- Unemployment insurance for seamen.
- A Joint Maritime Commission consisting of representatives of shipowners and seamen was appointed to consider the drawing up of an international seamen's code and other questions affecting seafarers.

Following upon the Genoa Conference the Office was requested by the International Seafarers' Federation to arrange a Conference of representatives of that Organization with representatives of the International Shipping Federation in order to discuss the various questions at issue and particularly that of the hours of work on board ship. A joint meeting of the two bodies was agreed upon, and it was held at Brussels, in January last, under the chairmanship of the Director of the Office, who explained that the meeting must be considered simply as a preliminary conference, the results of which would necessarily have to be submitted to a more representative and officially organized Conference. After a general discussion, two Committees were appointed to consider the details of the working conditions of seafarers and to draw up proposals for their improvement. These two Committees are now at work.

Washington conventions dealt with

The Office has also had to carry on negotiations with regard to the ratification of the Convention of November, 1919. These Conventions were six in number:

- (1) Application of the 8-Hours' Day and the 48-Hours' Week.
- (2) The prevention of, or provision against, unemployment.
- (3) The employment of women before and after childbirth.
- (4) The employment of women on night work.
- (5) The minimum age of employment of children in industry.
- (6) The employment of young persons on night work.

In addition to these, six Recommendations were agreed to—

- (1) Public employment exchanges.
- (2) Reciprocity of treatment of foreign workers.
- (3) Prevention of anthrax.
- (4) The protection of women and children against lead poisoning.
- (5) The establishment of Government Health Services.
- (6) The application of the Berne Convention of 1906 on the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches.

The progress of ratification, owing to the congested condition of most of the Legislatures of the world, together with the disturbed conditions prevailing in Europe, has been slower than could have been wished. Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made, as will be seen by the table published in the Official Bulletin of the Office, No. 15. Moreover, a large amount of legislation has been enacted arising out of the Washington Conventions and as a preliminary to their formal ratification. No opportunity has been neglected of impressing upon the leading States the importance of the work of ratification. During journeys taken by the Director and Deputy Director to France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Jugoslavia, Austria, etc., they approached the various Governments upon the matter.

Geneva Convention 1921

Preparations for the next meeting of the International Labor Conference to be held in Geneva in October, 1921, are well in hand. The chief business will be the consideration of the conditions of employment in agriculture. The following points will be discussed: Adaptation to agricultural labor of the Washington decrees concerning the regulation of the hours of work; adaptation to agricultural labor of the Washington decisions concerning measures for the prevention of, or providing against, unemployment and the protection of women and children; special measures for the protection of the agricultural laborer, including technical agricultural education, living in conditions of agricultural workers, guarantee of the rights of association and combination, and protection against accident, sickness, invalidity and old age. In order to provide the Conference with the necessary basis for discussion which should lead up to the framing of Draft Conventions elaborate questionnaires have been drawn up and issued, and reports are being prepared on the various aspects of the problem. This method is adopted in connection with all meetings of the Conference in order that the delegates may be in possession of all the facts relating to the questions they have to discuss. Another subject on the Agenda is the important one of the advisability of prohibiting the use of white lead in painting upon which acute differences of opinion are bound to arise. Other questions are the weekly rest day in industrial and commercial employment; disinfection of wool infected with anthrax spores; and the prohibition of the employment of any person under the age of 18 years as trimmer or stoker.

In addition to the business connected with the ratification of Draft Conventions and preparations for the sessions of the International Labor Conference, the Office has carried on other important activities. Investigations, world wide in extent, are being made into the urgent problem of unemployment, the results of which are being considered by a special Commission of experts. In the same way, reports are being prepared for discussion by a Commission on emigration, with the object of arriving at an international agreement for the regulation of emigrant traffic and the treatment of working class emigrants. A special section of the Office is concerned with the subject of Co-operation. Another branch is making enquiries and preparing reports on insurance against sickness, disablement, old age and accidents, and on widows', orphans' and maternity insurance. A Department, created by a decision of the Washington Conference, is engaged upon the question of industrial hygiene, for the purpose of drawing up Draft Conventions and recommendations to be submitted to future sittings of the General Conference.

Publicity on Labor Matters

An important part of the work of the Office is already mentioned, connected with the collection and dissemination of information. Already there have been issued numerous studies and reports in English and French, covering among other subjects: (a) Industrial relations (the activities of trade unions and employers' associations) and political activity in its relation to questions of labor, (b) Economic relations, (c) Employment and unemployment, (d) Conditions of labor, (e) Industrial hygiene, Co-operation, Agriculture, etc. The Legislative Series, which contains reprints in English, French and German of the texts of laws, decrees, orders and regulations affecting labor, issued in the different countries of the world, is being issued in continuation of the series published by the old International Labor Office at Basle. The International Labor Review, a monthly scientific organ, which surveys the world of industry from an international standpoint, has been published and will appear regularly. A daily publication, entitled "Daily Intelligence," which gives extracts relating to labor matters from the world's press, is also issued.

In addition, the Office also publishes a periodical Bulletin which gives an up-to-date account of its principal activities and records the action taken by Governments with regard to the ratification of Draft Conventions.

A special section of the Office is engaged in studying the conditions of labor in Bolshevik Russia. One report on this subject has been issued based on authentic material obtained from that country. A second report is in preparation which will contain the documents brought back from Russia by the English Labor Party, the Italian Socialist Mission and the two Czechoslovak Missions, which have been kindly placed at the disposal of the Office.

An Enquiry into the problem of Production is being carried on. An Introductory Memorandum relating to the Enquiry has been issued, and questionnaires have been distributed to Governments, Employers' Associations, Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies. This, it will be readily understood, has entailed a very large amount of work owing to the size and complexity of the problem.

An Enquiry has been made into the working of the Eight Hour Day in the French Mercantile Marine, and the results have been printed and published in the form of a Report.

An Enquiry has been instituted into working of the Three Shift System in the Steel Industry, the results of which will be issued shortly.

An International Directory of Employers' and Workers' Associations all over the world is being compiled, and, when complete, will be published in three languages. It will contain information with regard to Government Offices dealing with Labor Questions, and include a Directory of Co-operative Societies throughout the world.

An Enquiry has been conducted, at the request of the Hungarian Government, into the question of Trade Union Conditions in Hungary, and a Report consisting of documents collected by the Commission of Enquiry has been issued.

The library of the Office is growing rapidly. The nucleus of 50,000 volumes was purchased from the old International Labor Office of Basle, and this is being continually extended. In a short time it will be the most complete collection in the world of books and documents connected with labor questions.

Special attention has been paid to the labor aspects of the questions of the blockade and economic sanctions, and of mandates. The Office has also a direct interest in the subjects of the reduction of armaments and the private manufacture of munitions and war materials. On the invitation of the Council of the League of Nations, it has nominated three workers' representatives to an Advisory Committee concerned with these questions.

Contact with Labor Organizations

The Office has kept in close contact with the great Labor Organizations of the world, not only through correspondence, but by means of the various International Labor Conferences which have been held during the year, many of which have been visited by members of the Office for the purposes of exchanging information.

Finally, every effort has been made to create an international institution with a real homogeneous spirit capable of coping efficiently with the immense tasks and important duties placed upon the Office by Part XIII of the Treaty of Peace. The first year's record of the office indicates how far this has been attained.

A. F. of Labor Convention at Denver

On Monday, June 13th, the American Federation opened its 41st convention at Denver, Colo., with over five hundred delegates present. The report of the Executive Council consisting of over a hundred and sixty pages was presented at the morning session. The message of the Executive was that the progress of those who sought to destroy freedom through the annihilation of organizations of labor had been checked. The past year had been marked by an intensive anti-labor movement to reduce wages and destroy unionism through the open shop, individual contracts, legislative assaults and court decisions. It declared that the blight of reactionary effort had bitten as deeply as possible and now the tendencies were in favor of labor, and that labor had set its face towards the future with renewed courage and energy.

The financial statement shows receipts during the year of \$832,169.96. Of this amount the per capita tax produced \$541,360.69, the publication of the American Federationist \$145,722.96, defence funds \$81,547.62, initiation fees \$27,282.16, the balance being made up of incidental receipts. The expenditures amounted to \$837,887.70, general expenses being \$624,784.86, and the cost of publishing the Federationist \$139,995. The balance on hand at the end of the year was \$178,262.72, being a reduction of about \$25,000 from the balance of the previous year.

During the year 1919-1920, charters were issued to 943 labor bodies while in 1920-1921, 306 charters were issued.

During the past twenty-six years, the A. F. of L. has formed out of directly chartered local unions eighty-eight national and international organizations, the total number now standing at one hundred and ten. The Federation has 2,270 district organizers; as well as 36 paid organizers and the officers of 973 city central bodies that are ready at all times to respond to a call to assist the members of directly affiliated unions in the case of strike or lockout.

The voting strength in the convention in 1919 was 2,747, in 1920 16,425 and in 1921 21,906. In 1918, the voting strength

was 28,375, in 1919, 33,850, in 1920, 41,307 and in 1921, it is 40,410.

In 1897, the membership was 264,825, in 1907, 1,538,970, and in 1917, 2,371,131. In 1918, the membership was 2,726,478, in 1919, 3,250,068, in 1920, 4,075,740, and in 1921, it is 3,906,528. During the year, eight international bodies were suspended for refusing to comply with decisions rendered by the convention, whose membership totalled 115,425. These organizations are still intact and may soon be back in the Federation, which will bring the membership up over the four million mark.

The growth of the Federation has been remarkable. There has been a slight recession in membership which is accountable by the fact of the terrible depression through which industry has passed. It is estimated that five million workers are out of work in the United States and Canada. When industry recovers there is not the slightest doubt that the membership will continue its rapid growth of the past few years.

A review of the events of the year are given by the report. The main feature was the Labor Conference in Washington of February 23-24 last, in which organized labor accepted the challenge of the employers. Since that time the campaign to destroy the trade union movement has materially weakened.

During the year, the Federation withdrew from the International Federation of Trade Unions with headquarters at Amsterdam, Holland. The withdrawal was based on the three following grounds: the heavy contribution that the A. F. of L. would be under, the abolition of complete autonomy for each country, and the adoption by the International of the principle of the "socialization of the means of production."

The Executive reported that it had followed out the policy with regard to Soviet Russia which was laid down in the Montreal convention as follows:

"The American Federation of Labor is not justified in taking any action which could be construed as an assistance to, or approval of, the soviet government of Russia as long as that government is based upon authority which has not been vested in it by a popular representative national assembly of the Russian people; or so long as it endeavors to create revolutions in the well established, civilized nations of the world; or so long as it advocates and applies the militarization of labor and prevents the organizing and functioning of trade unions and the maintenance of a free press and free public assembly."

With regard to the problem of the railways and the resolution at the Montreal convention for their public ownership and democratic management, and suggested that a national committee be appointed upon which labor would have representation to investigate the present crisis and to make recommendations to congress for action.

With regard to the organization campaign among the iron and steel workers, the report states that an organizing committee is at work in full cooperation with the officials of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin workers.

With regard to disarmament, the Federation has gone on record in the conventions of 1913, 1914 and 1919 for the disarmament of all nations and calls upon the United States to take the lead in this matter.

In pursuance of the Montreal resolution to have text books used in schools which give an accurate history of industry, the organization of the workers and the results therefrom; to survey the textbooks at present in use in schools, and to prepare a textbook upon labor subjects, the Executive stated that the National Manufacturers' Association were carrying on a systematic campaign to have anti-labor matter in the hands of the children of America and that the Executive was taking advantage of every opportunity to press forward labor's educational campaign.

The report closes with the following call to action:

"We have concluded our report. We have told the story of the year. It is a magnificent record of dignified, militant struggle. The road has been rough and its way has been marked by deceit and treachery among the forces and powers of reaction.

"Each year we pause to recount the chapters, not for the sake of the past, but for the sake of the future. The book of yesterday is closed. Let us not dwell lovingly on its pages, but let us look at them merely for what service they render in preparing us for tomorrow.

"It has been a year of tense and bitter strife. It has been a year full of preparation for the future. Our closing word to the men and women of the convention and of our great movement everywhere is: Forward, now, for better, fuller lives, for more light on the lives and work of our people, for more of democratic conduct in the work of our great country, for more of justice and freedom for all. Our slogan is organization, our cause is humanity."

The principle issues before the convention are the condition of unemployment, the anti-labor campaign, the railroad problem, immigration, Russian affairs, the Irish question, the court decisions against labor, and disarmament. The first week of the convention has been largely given over to committee work. The credential committee and the committee on resolutions had duties to perform which took much time. The real work of the convention will begin next week.

POLITICAL POT BOILING

There are six vacant seats in the House of Commons. These are Leeds and Brockville, West York and Durham, in Ontario; St. Antoine's Division, in Montreal; Maple Creek, in Saskatchewan, and Medicine Hat, in Alberta.

If these bye-elections go against the government, we will have a general election. Labor must prepare itself for the battle. There should be several Labor candidates placed in the field in Quebec province.

The political pot has boiled and cooked for the employers. Is it not time for Quebec labor to have the political pot boil and cook for labor?

N'ACHETEZ que des PRODUITS portant l'ETIQUETTE de l'Union



Etiquette de la Fédération Américaine du Travail
American Federation of Labor Label



Etiquette des Travailleurs en Tabac
Tobacco Workers' Label



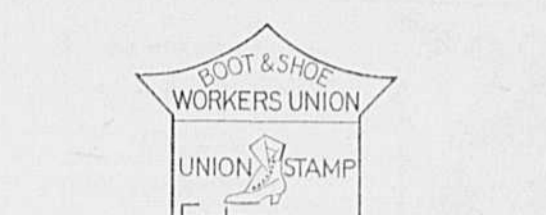
Etiquette Bleue des Cigarières
Cigarmakers' Blue Label



Etiquette des Chapeliers
Cloth Hat and Cap Makers' Label



Etiquette des Cordonniers, Ateliers de Réparages
Boot and Shoe Workers Repair Shops Label



Etiquette des Cordonniers
Boot and Shoe Workers' Label



Bouton Bleu des Commis de Bar
Bartenders Blue Button



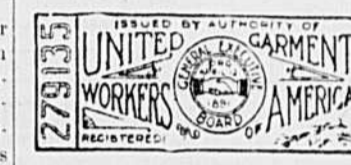
Etiquette des Peintres-Décorateurs
Painters and Decorators' Label



Etiquette des Charpentiers-Ménisiers
Carpenters and Joiners' Union Label



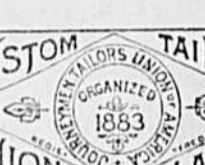
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



Etiquette des Travailleurs en Vêtements
United Garment Workers' Label



Etiquette des Métiers Alliés de l'Imprimerie
Allied Printing Trades' Label



Etiquette des Ferblantiers Couvresseurs
Sheet Metal Workers' Label



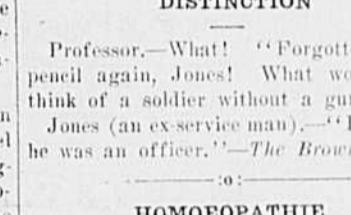
Etiquette des Boulangers
Bakers' Label



Etiquette des Ferblantiers Couvresseurs
Sheet Metal Workers' Label



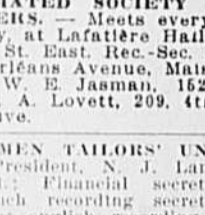
Etiquette des Barbiers
Barbers' Union Label



DISTINCTION
Professor, "What! 'Forgotten your pencil again, Jones! What would you think of a soldier without a gun!'"
Jones (an ex-service man). "I'd think he was an officer!"—The Brown Jug.



HOMOEOPATHIE
"J'oblige ma fille à travailler son piano cinq heures par jour."
—Mais vous allez l'en dégoûter! Elle ne voudra plus jamais s'asseoir devant un piano!
—C'est bien ce que j'espère...



AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS. — Meets every 1st and 3rd Fridays at La Fontaine Hall 1183 St. Catherine St. East. Recording Secretary, Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Cor., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Fin., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Treas., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Gen., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Adm., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Edu., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Prop., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Res., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Rec., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Inf., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Pub., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Lit., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Art., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Mus., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Theat., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Sport., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Am., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Ex., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Int., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Con., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Gen., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Adm., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Edu., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Prop., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Res., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Rec., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Inf., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Pub., Bro. F. J. Jones; Sec. Lit., Bro. F. J. 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