

APPENDIX XVI

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

Canadian Statement, November 23, 1946

Canada is a country in which the establishment, development and responsible operation of trade unions are fostered by legal and political measures, and encouraged by public approval. For these reasons and because a considerable part of the Canadian trade union movement is affiliated with the W.F.T.U., we are naturally inclined to sympathize with the desires and objectives of that organization. On the issue specifically before us we wish to see the W.F.T.U. placed in a position where both it and the Economic and Social Council can obtain the maximum benefit from mutual cooperation.

For this reason we were glad to see that the W.F.T.U. was placed by the Economic and Social Council in category (a) of those non-governmental organizations with which the Council felt it essential to provide for cooperation. We entirely approved of the granting of this preferred position, a position that is shared by only three other non-governmental organizations

Clause 1 of the substantive part of the Soviet resolution¹ means that the W.F.T.U. would have the automatic right to place on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council at any time and in any form any proposition that it may choose. This is a right enjoyed by the specialized agencies, but by the resolution it would be extended to the W.F.T.U.

This clause further provides that representatives of the W.F.T.U. would have the right to appear at the Council table to "make oral communications"—in other words to discuss "all matters of interest to the Federation". This right of intervention is not even confined to subjects proposed by the Federation. It would mean in practice that the W.F.T.U. representatives would be at every meeting of the Council and would be entitled to speak on every subject under review. In other words the W.F.T.U. would have before the Economic and Social Council all the privileges of a specialized agency and all the privileges of a sovereign state except that it would not be allowed to vote.

We are not prepared to agree that the W.F.T.U. should be treated by the Council either as a sovereign state, or as a specialized agency. To do either of these things would be contrary to the provisions of the Charter, and I must confess to a mild surprise when I observe certain delegations, that on very recent occasions have expressed the most fervent indignation,

¹The substantive part of the Soviet resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly recommends the Economic and Social Council to give to the World Federation of Trade Unions:

1. the right to submit to the Economic and Social Council questions for insertion in the provisional agenda, in accordance with the procedure now applicable to specialized agencies;

2. the right to present written and verbal statements to the Economic and Social Council on all matters of concern to the Federation."