

ILO Conventions are formulated at annual Conferences of the Organization. A significant feature of these conferences, as indeed of other ILO meetings, is the fact that they are attended by representatives of employers' and workers' organizations as well as by government delegates from the various member countries. Non-government delegates participate in the framing of Conventions and other documents and vote on equal terms with government representatives.

International Labour Conventions are subject to ratification by member countries and by June 1952 a total of 1,301 ratifications had been registered by ILO member states with respect to the 100 Conventions so far adopted. By ratification a country assumes the obligation of maintaining in force the labour standards laid down by the Convention, generally by means of legislation, and of submitting annual reports on the manner in which it is applying the Convention, for appraisal both an international committee of experts and by the Conference.

The 100 Conventions so far adopted constitute an international labour code which serves as a target for social progress and which contains valuable technical information on labour standards. The experience which has gone into the construction of this code has helped ILO in undertaking a new role developing from needs of recent years. One of ILO's functions has always been to supply experts to member governments on request to help them draft legislation or set up administrative agencies. After the war this work was expanded, and when the United Nations embarked on its Technical Assistance Programme designed to help the less developed countries in their struggle against poverty, ignorance and disease, ILO was well equipped to do its share in this field of activity. Experts from Canada have been and will continue to be active in the ILO programme of technical assistance.

Since the emphasis is on helping under-developed countries to improve their productivity, ILO has concentrated its technical assistance efforts in the field of training. For 1953, 240 training experts will be employed and grants of 800 fellowships of trainees have been approved.

Apart from activities which are obviously of direct assistance in raising productivity, ILO is also helping under-developed countries to raise their labour standards by assisting in the framing of appropriate protective and social security legislation, in the improvement of Labour Department administration, and in the development of labour inspection services. The Organization is also giving assistance in the development of employment services and in programmes of industrial safety. The Director-General reported to the 1952 session of the International Labour Conference that ILO had at that time received requests for 277 technical assistance projects.

In the 18-month period from the beginning of 1951 to the middle of 1952, some two dozen ILO meetings were held, at most of which Canada was represented. In addition to the two regular sessions of the annual Conference, there were regional conferences for the Near and Middle East and for American states. There were meetings of committees dealing with the labour problems of special industries such as construction, coal, inland transportation, metal trades and iron and steel. Other committees dealt with the special problems