

Labour Office to obtain further information and the Governing Body to place once more the question of the reduction of hours of work on the agenda of the next Session of the Conference for the adoption of one or more Draft Conventions.

Mr. Hayday (worker, Great Britain) recalled the circumstances leading to the adoption of this resolution by the Conference after the failure to adopt the Convention. He felt that it was only the lack of a quorum and the number of abstentions which prevented the obtaining of a Convention so much desired by the workers' organisations. He held that at the next Session, with the experience and support of the United States delegates, success would be possible. He opposed the proposal to introduce the forty-hour week industry by industry and asked the Governing Body to place the reduction of hours of work on the agenda of the 1935 Conference with a view to the adoption of a general Convention.

Mr. Ruiz Manent (Government, Spain) proposed that the question of placing the forty-hour week on the agenda of the Conference should not be settled until it had been decided to what industries the reduction should apply.

Mr. Picquenard (Government, France) declared that his Government welcomed any practical proposal, and that therefore it was ready to support the suggestion for a Convention embodying the principle of a forty-hour week which would be applied by degrees to various branches of industry through international regulations for each particular case.

Mr. Anselmi (Government, Italy) recalled the fact that his Government's attitude on the question was well known. It was Mr. de Michelis who, when the last Conference reached an *impasse* with regard to a general Convention, proposed a Convention of principle applying successively to various branches of economic activity. That seemed to him a means of arriving at the practical solution which the Italian Government had always desired.

Mr. Jouhaux (worker, France) supported Mr. Hayday's declaration of the workers' principles on the problem. He recognised that the formula of a Convention on the principle of reduction, for application in successive stages, had been put forward in a spirit favourable to the forty-hour week. But he doubted whether it would fulfil the hopes placed in this reform as a remedy for unemployment. He did not think that it was practicable or easily realisable by national legislation. In view of what had occurred at the last Session of the Conference, it might be feared that if the question were put forward again in the same form, the result would again be negative. He felt, however, that the situation had developed since then, among other things, owing to the fact that the United States, where the forty-hour week is applied, is now a member of the International Labour Organisation. In concluding, he submitted a draft resolution urging that the question of the reduction of hours of work should be placed on the agenda of the 1935 Conference with a view to the adoption of a general Convention.

Mr. Bribosia, in the name of the Belgian Government, stated that it was favourable to the forty-hour principle, subject to the three conditions that he had explained to the Conference, regarding wages, ratifications, and the period of validity of

the Convention. Subject to these conditions, he supported the proposed formula of a Convention on the principle of reduction for application in successive stages.

Mr. Oersted, in the name of the employers' group (except Mr. Olivetti), opposed the placing of the question of the reduction of hours on the agenda of the 1935 Conference. The group had always been against a forty-hour week Convention, and had not changed its attitude since the last Session of the Conference. All the reasons for its opposition remained unweakened. He did not see how a partial realisation of the forty-hour week could have any better effect than the general realisation which had previously been proposed and had not been approved by the Conference. After repeating the economic and social arguments against a reduction of hours of work by international regulations, Mr. Oersted concluded by saying that these did not lead to a remedy for the unemployment crisis, which must be sought rather in a healthier economic policy.

Mr. Mannio (Government, Finland) stated that his Government was in favour of the treatment of the problem industry by industry, but he did not think that the Governing Body should place the question on the agenda of the next Session of the Conference.

Mr. Winter (Government, Czechoslovakia) said that economic conditions had been improving slowly during the last few months, but this improvement had not been accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the number of unemployed. Therefore, industrial countries must not delay further in facing the unemployment situation. The Czechoslovak Government was prepared to accept the proposed compromise or even a more radical proposal, should this have a chance of being adopted.

Mr. Leggett (Government, Great Britain) spoke against a procedure which would place the problem on the agenda of the 1935 Session of the Conference with a view to adoption of a Convention on the principle of reduction, for successive application to different branches of industry. In regard to the principle, the British Government could not accept a Convention which ignored the question of wages. As regards the proposal for gradual application, he did not feel that it would give effective results. The British Government wished the International Labour Organisation to continue to study the question. He did not think that the Governing Body was at present sufficiently informed to decide at once that the problem of the reduction of hours of work should again be placed on the agenda of the Conference.

Mr. Mertens (worker, Belgium) was surprised that, after so many years of discussion and enquiry, still further enquiry was demanded before taking a decision. He protested against the obstructionist attitude of the employers' group, and reminded the Governments that they all, at home, claimed to be in favour of the forty-hour week, but stated that it was realisable only by way of an international agreement. It was precisely for the purpose of obtaining that agreement that the question was again to be brought before the International Labour Conference. Now was the time for the Governments to show that they were in earnest in the attitude they had taken at home on the problem.

Mr. Lambert-Ribot (employer, France) felt that the discussion clearly showed that the difficulties

met with at the International Labour Conference last June still existed, and that there did not appear to be a possibility of a definite solution. From the legal point of view, as well as from that of practical efficacy in the fight against unemployment, he held that it was impossible to support a compromise proposal aiming at a Convention of principle, the method of applying which would be defined subsequently for the different industries successively. Whether regarded as a general question or regarded by branches of industry, the reduction of hours of work by international regulation would be an economic anomaly, and he asked the Governing Body not to support such an error.

Mr. Forbes Watson (employer, Great Britain) asserted, among other things, that the experience of the International Labour Organisation in the question of the reduction of hours of work had not so far been of a nature to encourage the International Labour Office to pursue the methods suggested to-day. He enumerated the various dangers that he felt such proposals entailed and stated that he would vote against them.

Mr. Jensen (worker, Denmark) protested against the attitude of the Employers' Group and supported the workers' proposal to place the question on the agenda of the 1935 Session of the Conference with a view to the adoption of a general Convention.

Mr. Serrarens (worker, Netherlands), in reply to the wages arguments of previous speakers, explained that the attitude of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions was the same as that of all the workers' group. The Federation had always maintained that the reduction of hours of work should be accompanied by measures to secure the maintenance of the level of wages. It recognised, however, that it was difficult to include clauses on wages in an international Convention.

Mr. Riddell (Government, Canada) was in favour of the proposal to adopt a Convention on the principle of reduction to be applied in successive stages and, in general, of a flexible formula allowing for the necessary adjustments.

Mr. Kupers (worker, Netherlands) laid special stress on the wages question. He stated that the workers' organisations were agreed on the necessity of maintaining wages, but were not in agreement that this question should be compulsorily bound up with that of a Convention on the reduction of hours of work. The wages question should not be used as a means of "torpedoing" the forty-hour week.

Mr. Picquenard (Government, France) supported the resolution submitted by himself and his Government colleagues of Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Mexico, Poland, and Spain, for a Convention on the principle of reduction, for application in successive stages, to different branches of industry. He referred to the fact that on several occasions British Government delegates had supported the idea of reducing hours industry by industry, and he therefore hoped that that Government would support the resolution put forward as a compromise.

After Mr. Jouhaux had replied to the employers' arguments, Mr. Harold Butler, the Director of the Office, explained certain points which had been raised during the discussion.

When put to the vote, the workers' resolution to place on the agenda of the 1935 Session of the International Labour Conference the question of

the reduction of hours of work with a view to the adoption of a general Convention was rejected by 13 votes to 10.

By 22 votes to 7, the Governing Body adopted the resolution submitted by nine Governments in the following terms:—

"The Governing Body decides:

"(1) to place the reduction of hours of work on the agenda of the Nineteenth Session of the Conference;

"(2) to instruct the Office to draw up a draft for a single Convention providing for the reduction of hours of work in all classes of establishments. The Conference shall determine at that Session and at subsequent Sessions, the classes of establishments to which this reduction shall apply and the methods of application for each;

"(3) to reserve until the next Session of the Governing Body—which will have before it reports to be prepared by the Office, including the information received in the meantime from the Governments—the final selection of the industries, establishments, or categories to which it is proposed that the Nineteenth Session of the Conference should apply the reduction of hours of work."

The Chairman, Mr. de Michelis, announced that in conformity with the standing orders, he would on his own initiative place on the agenda of the next Session of the Governing Body the question of workers' spare time in relation to the reduction of hours of work.

The Next Sessions of the International Labour Conference

The Governing Body decided that the Nineteenth Session of the International Labour Conference should open on Tuesday, 4 June, 1935.

It considered the reports prepared by the International Labour Office on the questions which come up for a first discussion during the Nineteenth Session. The reports on juvenile unemployment and on the recruiting of labour in colonies and other territories with similar conditions of employment were approved without discussion.

A proposal by the employers' group to amend the report on the question of holidays with pay by introducing in the draft questionnaire a preamble on the economic effects of the reform was rejected by 18 votes to 7.

The Governing Body decided that at its next Session it would consider the final agenda for the Session of the International Labour Conference to be held in 1936.

It discussed and approved the reports or records of various Committees: the Committee of Experts for the study of economical administration of medical and pharmaceutical benefit under sickness insurance schemes, the Committee on Standing Orders, etc.

The Extension of International Protection to All Workers

The Governing Body had before it certain proposals by Mr. de Michelis for extending the scope of international labour protection to all workers not at present covered. As a matter of fact, a