

Wages—

Miss L. Purcell.

Mr. J. Hanlon (employers) ; substitute, Mr. S. I. McKenzie.

Mr. L. A. Hadley (workers).

Employment Agencies—

Mr. H. Parsonage.

Mr. J. Hanlon (employers) ; substitute, Mr. S. I. McKenzie.

Migration for Employment—

Mr. H. Parsonage.

Vocational Guidance—

Mr. J. Hanlon (employers) ; substitute, Mr. S. I. McKenzie.

Finance Committee—

Mr. H. Parsonage.

DISCUSSION ON DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The Director-General's report is a comprehensive document covering, for the particular year, the world economic background, trends in social policy in the various countries, and the activities of the I.L.O. during the period. For 1948 it emphasized how expectations of rapid post-war reconstruction had not been fully realized, in spite of the fact that the rate of European industrial recovery still continued. The recovery in production and employment was still precarious, with balance of payment difficulties, particularly in the form of the "dollar shortage," a major and continuing element in this situation. The Director-General mentioned other aspects—political differences leading to expenditure on armaments, the still critical food shortage, and trends to economic regionalism. In the sphere of social policy he mentioned the man-power problem in various countries and outlined the steps being taken by such countries as regards employment service, migration policy, and vocational training. He showed how, throughout the world, measures for improving conditions of work were constantly being adopted. He outlined the present and proposed activities of the I.L.O. in these fields. He expressed concern at the fact that the rate of ratification of International Labour Conventions had slowed down appreciably as compared with pre-war years, and mentioned that experienced observers had suggested that certain Conventions were drawn up in too much detail, that the standards set were too high for the majority of States members, or that some instruments were drafted and adopted too hastily.

On the question of the future policy of the I.L.O., the most important feature of the report was his proposal that the work of the Organization be given a new emphasis on the executive side. While it should not neglect its legislative function in the creation of international labour standards, he proposed that it undertake greater activity in the field of "on-the-spot" technical assistance to member States.

The discussion on the report showed the deep concern of the delegates with the above-mentioned subjects. Ninety-five speakers took part in the debate, the greatest number on record for any Conference. Reasons for the slowing-up of the rate of ratifications were analysed by several speakers, particularly the South African Government delegate, and remedies proposed. Many delegates endorsed the suggested technical assistance policy and the projected United Nations expanded technical assistance programme. (N.B.—The Conference discussions on this question are set out in the next section.) Migration matters were emphasized, particularly by delegates from countries where underemployment is at present a problem. Several Eastern European delegates pressed for structural changes in the Constitution of the Organization, generally designed to lessen the representation of employers (see Resolutions section of this report). Some workers' representatives made allegations against their own and other Governments of persecution