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APPENDIX No. 1—SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, THE HON, MR. DOIDGE

Mr. DOIDGE (Minister of External Affairs, New Zealand).—I am delighted to have the opportunity of meeting this Conference, coming to you as the representative of New Zealand, and I am happy also that here to-day are four delegates from that Dominion. the delegates who will sit with you throughout the Conference and take part in your deliberations. My country has always been a firm adherent of the high principles of the International Labour Organization. We have regarded with the utmost interest and sympathy the movement of the Asian countries towards social freedom and security. As other speakers have said this morning, we are witnessing rapid internal changes in Asia, and we know that Asia cannot easily adjust itself to those rapid changes. That adjustment is a task that the I.L.O. is eminently fitted to undertake.

We in New Zealand are fortunate in the enjoyment of living standards and conditions which, we think, are perhaps the highest in the world. Improvement of social and labour conditions and standards have always been in the forefront of any and every Government's programme in New Zealand. Our governments in New Zealand have been pioneers in social and economic experimentation. That has been so since 1890, sixty years ago. It is sixty years ago since we in New Zealand produced factory, shops, and offices legislation, compulsory arbitration and conciliation, and many other innova-These innovations were startling at the time, but are comparatively commonplace now, particularly in those countries associated with the progress made by the I.L.O. in the present century. As many of you know, the Government that I have the honour to represent here to-day has just succeeded a Labour Administration after fourteen years. I want to tell you this morning that the advances made in labour and social matters by our predecessors will be maintained. Wherever and whenever possible it will be the endeavour of the new Administration to improve upon them. No Government in New Zealand, of whatever political character, would wish our country to fall behind in the efforts which have been made to increase and improve living standards.

In the light of something that was said a moment or two ago by my colleague Mr. Noel-Baker, I am prompted at this stage to make this observation. We have in New Zealand a system of social security which we think sets a model for the rest of the world. The continued success of that system depends upon what Mr. Noel-Baker just talked to you about. The continued success of that system depends on continuously increasing production. Without increased production, the stability of any social service system would obviously be imperilled. This is a factor, I am sure, that you will all appreciate, a factor that you will take into account in formulating improvements in your own countries.