

The provision of adequate housing for workers is one of the main problems facing the industrial areas in Asian countries.

The fact that undernourishment and malnutrition are widespread in Asian countries has been brought out by research surveys, and though industrial canteens can be only a partial solution to the general problem of workers' nutrition, they are generally recognized as making a useful contribution to that solution.

The employment of working mothers under the present social and economic structure of Asian countries brings into prominence the necessity for the provision of crèches and day nurseries in such countries.

The necessity for adequate recreation, particularly for young workers, who are unused to the strain of continuous work and whose healthy physical and mental development needs the stimulus of sports and games, will be recognized by New Zealanders.

With these considerations in mind, the Conference Committee dealing with this item turned its attention to the six-point draft resolution prepared by the Office. The Committee held six sittings.

Two main points of view were expressed in the Committee. The employers' members considered that the improvement of conditions of employment and of workers' welfare was as much in the interests of the employers as of the workers and that close co-operation between the parties concerned would yield better results than Government intervention. The workers' members, on the other hand, expressed the opinion that action by the state was essential owing to the fact that workers' organizations in Asian countries were of recent development and were still weak. State intervention in favour of the workers was therefore necessary.

The Government members of the Committee suggested a reconciliation of these points of view which found general acceptance. Accordingly, the final resolution mentions that certain facilities should be subject to statutory regulation—viz., occupational health facilities, reasonable medical and maternity facilities, canteens and other feeding arrangements, and child care services—whereas, other facilities—adequate medical care, educational and recreational facilities, housing and other accommodation—should be ensured (by the State, employers, or by agreement between employers and workers) as a recognized object of public policy.

The workers' members secured an amendment to the original text requiring Governments to improve and co-ordinate medical services.

The resolution as finally agreed on by the Committee was unanimously adopted by the Conference. The text is found in Appendix 5 of this report.

11. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN ASIA

The Office report prepared on this subject mentions that among the various technical services of the International Labour Office there has from the outset been one whose duty it is to keep informed about all forms of the co-operative movement throughout the world. This service has paid particular attention to the co-operative movement in Asian countries and in those whose economy is predominantly agricultural.

The long-standing and persistent interest taken by the Office in the co-operative movement in Asian countries gained added significance at the New Delhi Conference, where a resolution was passed pointing out the part which the different categories of co-operatives are able to play in the economic and social betterment of the working populations of rural areas and industrial centres and calling for the development of co-operative organizations in Asian countries. The resolution also requested the Governing Body to consider what aspects of co-operation could usefully be considered by succeeding Asian Regional Conferences.