

“ I have always understood that the principal object of the International Labour Office is to raise the standard of living in backward countries. I doubt whether that object will be served by the adoption of forty-hour week Conventions, because we cannot reasonably expect backward countries to ratify them. If we adopt forty-eight-hour week Conventions there might be a chance of backward countries adopting them, but there is no chance of them adopting Conventions which provide a forty-hour week. Such Conventions merely create difficulties for employers in countries where the conditions of employment are already favourable.”

The following is a summary of the voting on the draft Conventions dealing with reduction of hours of work :—

1. *Textile Industry*.—In the final record vote in the full Conference the draft Convention was adopted by 88 votes to 41, securing the necessary two-thirds majority by two votes—

- 51 Government delegates, representing 28 countries, voted for.
- 12 Government delegates, representing 6 countries, voted against.
- 36 Government delegates, representing 19 countries, abstained from voting.
- 2 employers' delegates—United States of America and Russia—voted for.
- 28 employers' delegates voted against.
- 3 employers' delegates abstained from voting.
- 35 workers' delegates voted for.
- 1 workers' delegate—Bulgaria—abstained from voting.
- The New Zealand delegation voted as follows :—
 - 2 Government delegates voted for.
 - The workers' delegate voted for.
 - The employers' delegate voted against.

The Convention passed dealing with hours of work in the textile industry, and a resolution modifying the Convention for certain countries where industrial conditions are backward, are attached as Appendices Nos. 1 and 2.

2. *Printing and Kindred Trades*.—In the final record vote in the full Conference the draft Convention was rejected. The voting was 72 in favour and 43 against, and the necessary two-thirds majority was therefore not obtained—

- 34 Government delegates voted for.
- 12 Government delegates voted against.
- 53 Government delegates abstained from voting.
- 2 employers' delegates voted for.
- 31 employers' delegates voted against.
- 1 Employers' delegate abstained from voting.
- 36 workers' delegates voted for.
- The New Zealand delegation voted as follows—
 - 2 Government delegates voted for.
 - The workers' delegate voted for.
 - The employers' delegate voted against.

3. *Chemical Industry*.—In the final record vote in the full Conference the draft Convention was rejected. The voting was 76 in favour and 42 against. The necessary two-thirds majority was therefore not obtained—

- 39 Government delegates voted for.
- 12 Government delegates voted against.
- 44 Government delegates abstained from voting.
- 2 employers' delegates—U.S.A. and Russia—voted for.
- 30 employers' delegates voted against.
- 2 employers' delegates—France and Bulgaria—abstained from voting.
- 35 workers' delegates voted for.
- 1 workers' delegate—Bulgaria—abstained from voting.

PROPOSED GENERAL CONVENTION.

The Conference had before it a Resolution proposed by the Belgian and French workers' delegates proposing the abandonment of the method pursued at the more recent Conferences of discussing reduction of hours of work industry by industry, and asking the governing body to revert at the 1938 Conference to the previous proposal for a general Convention.

The employers' group opposed that Resolution, but, as Resolutions require only a simple majority, it was adopted by the Conference by 66 votes to 39, and will come before the governing-body for consideration at its next meeting in October.

The two New Zealand Government delegates and the workers' delegate voted for the resolution, and the employers' delegate voted against it. A copy of the Resolution is attached as Appendix No. 3.

BUILDING REGULATIONS.

The Conference adopted a Draft Convention on safety provisions; four Recommendations dealing respectively with safety provisions, inspection, co-operation in accident prevention, and vocational education; and a Resolution on responsibility of manufacturers, &c., of cranes as regards safety devices.

In the final record vote in the full Conference the Draft Convention on safety provisions was adopted by 128 votes to 0. The Recommendation, including the model code, was adopted by 117 votes to 3.