

CREW ACCOMMODATION ON BOARD SHIP

The Conference sought to define a standard which should be aimed for in new vessels, also on those where major reconstruction occurs. There can be no doubt that ship-construction of previous years has been neglectful in the matter of provision for the crew of living-spaces that approach normal standards of decency. Thus this convention, which is one containing considerable detail of a technical character, should receive early consideration in the matter of ratification. It is understood that the Shipping and Seamen Act, 1908, contains certain supervisory powers in respect of approvals of vessels being built, also that it may be practice to follow the United Kingdom rules in this respect. We suggest that the code should be written into the New Zealand law, also that in respect of larger vessels being built overseas but for New Zealand registry power should be taken, if necessary, to require plans to be submitted to the Marine Department for approval. This convention contemplates that discussions with the workers' organizations should occur.

FOOD AND CATERING ON BOARD SHIPS

The two conventions adopted in respect of this subject aim to improve the standard of food and catering by imposing duties on the Administration to distribute information and arranging for the certification of ships' cooks. Those at present employed in the capacity of a cook can continue their vocation. There appears to be no reason why men aiming to cook for the crews of vessels should not undergo training courses. This is one occupation where the apprenticeship procedure has not been applied, and the training at present current is, to say the least of it, haphazard in the extreme. There is, in fact, a section in the New Zealand Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1909, providing for the employment of certificated cooks for foreign-going ships, a section that, as we understand it, has never been enforced.

SOCIAL SECURITY FOR SEAFARERS

Two conventions were adopted as a result of discussions under this heading. One is declaratory of the principle that seafarers (and the dependants of seafarers) should receive benefits equal to those enjoyed by workers in other employments. It also states the responsibility in respect of a seafarer who by reason of injury in the service of the ship or sickness not due to his own wilful act is left in a territory other than his own. This convention received the support of the New Zealand representatives, who, however, abstained from voting on the other convention, which seeks to provide pensions for seamen. This convention is really for use in those countries where no general pension scheme is in operation. Thus it has no application to New Zealand conditions and is, in any case, based on a principle that appeared to be repugnant to the basis of the Social Security Act, 1938—*i.e.*, it gives differential rights to seafarers as a class (pensions at an earlier age), and the New Zealand approach is on a universal-application basis.

SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA

(Provisional Records 29 and 32)

It is understood that an International Diplomatic Conference on this topic is to be convened. Presumably, it will have before it previous representations concerning the continuance of wartime requirements as to safety measures to be provided. Thus the Conference resolution that there be representation from the Joint Maritime Commission requires no action.

SEAMEN'S WELFARE IN PORTS

(Provisional Records 17 and 26 ; see Recommendation No. 48 of 1936)

This matter has been before the New Zealand Government for many years and the resolution drawing attention to it does not introduce new ground. It is understood from the comment that the aim of the workers is to gain welfare in ports as a right and to remove the provision of such facilities from social, philanthropic, or religious institutions.