

PROTECTION OF WAGES

It was also proposed in the conclusions presented to the Conference under this heading that international regulations be adopted in the form of one Convention supplemented by a Recommendation. A very wide definition was given to the term "wages," but reference was made to the desirability of the exclusion by the competent authority of categories of persons whose conditions of employment were such that the provisions of the Convention may be inappropriate or inapplicable to them. Several paragraphs dealt with the medium of wage payment, the principal points being the payment of wages only in legal tender, though the competent authority could permit payment by bank cheque or postal cheque or money-order in certain circumstances; partial payment in the form of allowances in kind to be authorized in collective agreements or national laws in industries in which payment in such form was customary or desirable, provided certain safeguards were provided; payment in general to be made directly to the worker concerned, whose freedom to dispose of his wages was not to be limited in any manner; freedom from any coercion to make use of works stores, and protection as to price where access to other than works stores was not possible because of the location of the work.

The addition of a specific provision prohibiting the payment of wages in the form of alcoholic drinks or noxious drugs, even with the consent of the worker concerned, was sought by the workers' members. The employers' members, while sharing the view that wages should not be in the form of alcoholic drinks or noxious drugs, considered that such a provision would be inappropriate for inclusion in the proposed convention and also unnecessary in view of the other proposed limitations. Consequent upon the rejection of their amendment, the workers' members reserved the right to bring this question up again at a later stage.

Deductions from wages are to be permitted only to the extent prescribed by national laws, and workers are to be informed of the conditions under which, and the extent to which, such deductions may be made. Any deduction in the form of a payment by a worker to any employer or his representative for the purpose of obtaining employment is prohibited. A special exemption in the Office text to meet the case of employment agencies authorized by national laws to charge fees was deleted as the result of an amendment submitted by the workers' members, who were opposed in principle to fee-charging employment agencies.

Protection in the case of attachment of wages and bankruptcy or judicial limitation of an undertaking was included in the proposals, as also were provisions requiring wages to be paid regularly on working-days only and at or near the work place, and prohibiting payment in taverns, except in the case of persons employed in such establishments. Notification of wage conditions is to be given to the workers, and provision is made for enforcement measures.

The proposed conclusions relating to a Recommendation concerning the protection of wages deals in some detail with wage deductions, periodicity of wage payments, and notification to workers of wage conditions and wage payments.

In the Committee the employers' members voted against the adoption of the text of the proposed Recommendation, since they considered certain of its provisions to be unsound. However, the employers' group voted in favour of the adoption of the resolution by the Conference, though they reserved their position as to the proposed recommendation.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

As stated in the report of the Government delegation to the Thirtieth Session of the I.L.O. which was held at Geneva in 1947, this subject was first considered at that session under the double-discussion procedure, following the request of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, which, on representation from the World Federation of Trade Unions and the American Federation of Labour, had been called