

if the dispute is likely to lead to a strike. We consider that in the best interests of industry and of the Dominion generally compulsory arbitration will be in the future of greater value as a preventive of strikes than as a cure for it after the damage has been done.

The Chairman : I suggest that we have now had sufficient discussion on this matter. I have given delegates every opportunity to say what they want, and perhaps we had better get on with something else ; we have a little more yet to do.

Mr. Roberts : This paper has received some criticism, and before the discussion closes I want to make a few remarks, and then I will move a resolution, with the permission of the Conference.

Hon. Mr. Weston : I move, That Mr. Roberts be allowed to make a few remarks.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Roberts : My remarks will be chiefly directed to one matter introduced by Professor Belshaw, in connection with allowing optional or compulsory reference of disputes to tribunals. Professor Belshaw is not here, but I hope his friends will intimate to him what I tell the Conference now : that if he will read our paper on the two papers submitted by the other side he will find that it contains the very proposals he suggests—optional reference to the Court of Arbitration by some unions if they desire or by some employers ; and compulsory reference where they cannot agree to have optional reference. Our papers contained those two very proposals, and they were considered, I think, by the Committee. The only other matter I desire to reply to is contained in the remarks of my friend Mr. Acland, who told us that for years and years past the rural industries had not desired compulsory arbitration. The proof of the pudding is in the eating : they have taken their disputes before a compulsory tribunal in the Court of Arbitration. I do not know, and we cannot be expected to know, what is the private policy of Mr. Acland's organization ; we cannot be expected to know that ; we only take note of their public policy, the policy that we know of regarding the reference of disputes to that tribunal. I understand in many cases they have agreed to the hearing of a dispute outside the Court, and I can assure Mr. Acland, that if he and the association of which he is an officer desire the settlement of disputes outside the Court of Arbitration the shearing industrial workers of New Zealand will be only too pleased to agree in any manner and at any time desired. I wish to conclude by stating that the proceedings of the Conference since we have been discussing this very contentious problem as to the method of settling disputes have been exemplary. I am pleased that the Hon. Mr. Barr and some of the other parliamentarians are here. We have tried first to live up to the high ideals of parliamentary debates, and I think they will have a little bit of difficulty on the 28th of next month in rising to the ideals that have guided this Conference. I say with all sincerity that there has been a very high level of intelligence displayed on both sides, while the degree of restraint on the part of every one in the Conference has been remarkable. I think the members will agree with me in that statement. Regarding the deliberations in committees, I wish to say that I have served on many committees, both in New Zealand and in other parts of the world, where points of difference have been acute, where there were definite lines of demarcation upon which we could not agree, but on every occasion the spirit existing in our committees of this Conference has been of the very best. We differed, but still we acted as men, and we will not quarrel over our differences or the result. That spirit is one of the things that guides the human race along its course. There is nothing more to say. We have discussed these proposals fully, but we do not seem to be able to arrive at an agreement on the matter before us. The only thing to do is to pass them on to the Parliament of this Dominion, and I am of the opinion that if the whole of the statements made on each side are given full consideration to, and if the people of New Zealand generally will aid in bringing about the relations desired between capital and labour, the result will make for the prosperity of this country. I believe if the statements contained in the report, together with the papers by the workers' section and the employers' section, are carefully gone into by the Parliament it will be recognized to be an honest endeavour to place in the law of New Zealand a method of settling industrial disputes by which we will again lead the world in this matter. We know that our industrial law in New Zealand has been a pattern for the rest of the world, and possibly as the result of this Conference we may set another pattern, and, if so, we shall have done something to justify our little lives. I am pleased indeed at the tone of the discussion regarding this very contentious subject.

The Chairman : The discussion on these two papers now closes, and it will be my privilege, when the opportunity arrives, to hand them to the Prime Minister.

International Labour Conference.

Mr. Bloodworth : I wish to move a motion on a somewhat different matter to that which we have been discussing now for some time : I refer to the International Labour Office at Geneva in connection with the League of Nations. I wish to move, That this Conference desires to place on record its appreciation of the assistance it has received in its deliberations from the publications issued by the International Labour Office, Geneva, and suggests to the Government that it should take into consideration the desirability of being represented at future Conferences of the International Labour organization, as New Zealand is entitled to be represented as a member of the League of Nations. We are of opinion that such representation would be beneficial to New Zealand, and also that New Zealand's experience, given expression to at the Conferences, would be of great assistance to other countries in dealing with industrial and economic problems.

In explaining the resolution, may I call the attention of the Conference to the circumstances under which the International League Labour Office came into being, by virtue of the Peace Treaty, section 1 of which reads as follows :—

“Whereas the League of Nations has for its object the establishment of universal peace, and such a peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice ; and whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship, and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so