

COMMITTEE SET UP TO DEAL WITH REDUCTION OF HOURS IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY.

Composition of Committee.

Chairman.—Hon. Mr. Armstrong, M.P. (Minister of Labour, New Zealand).

Vice-Chairmen.—Mr. Ashurst, Mr. Shaw.

Reporter.—Mr. Picquenard.

Representative of the Secretary-General.—Mr. Mortished.

Secretaries.—Mr. Wubnig, Mr. Kohler.

Government Members.—United States of America, Mr. Hinrichs; Argentine Republic, Mr. Unsain; Belgium, Mr. Mommens; Brazil, Mr. Da Silva; British Empire, Mr. Leggett; Canada, Mr. Charpentier; Colombia, Mr. Caicedo Castilla; Cuba, Mr. Antiga; Denmark, Mr. Dreyer; Egypt, Mr. Assal Bey; Spain, Mr. Alvarez Alvarez (substitute, Mr. Azorin); France, Mr. Picquenard; India, Sir Firozkhan Noon; Japan, Mr. Kitaoka (substitute, Mr. Ohno); Luxemburg, Mr. Kayser; Mexico, Mr. Lenero; Norway, Mr. Störvold; New Zealand, Hon. H. T. Armstrong; Poland, Mr. Zagrodski (substitute, Mr. Moczarski); Portugal, Mr. Esteves Fernandes; Sweden, Mr. Nordin; Czechoslovakia, Mr. Kotek; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Markus; Yugoslavia, Mr. Yeremitch.

Employers' Members.—Mr. Berzins (Latvia); Mr. Forbes Watson (substitutes, Mr. Ashurst, Mr. Martin, Mr. Pogson, Mr. Scholes), (British Empire); Mr. Galliez (Brazil); Mr. Gérard (substitutes, Mr. Henen, Mr. Wilford), (Belgium); Mr. Harriman (substitutes, Mr. West, Mr. Menke), (United States of America); Mr. Ionesco (Rumania); Mr. Junoy Rabat (substitute, Mr. Junoy Aguiar), (Spain); Mr. Knob (substitute, Mr. Molnar), (Hungary); Mr. Lambert-Ribot (substitutes, Mr. Schlumberger, Mr. Catin), (France); Mr. Lamuraglia (substitute, Mr. Padros), (Argentine Republic); Sir Hormusji P. Mody (India); Mr. Molenaar (substitute, Mr. van der Muelen), (Netherlands); Mr. Nieh Kanyo (China); Mr. Tzaut (substitute, Mr. Steinmann), (Switzerland); Mr. Wistrand (substitute, Mr. Paues), (Sweden); Mr. Zen (substitute, Mr. Kawaguchi), (Japan). *Substitutes:* Mr. Curcin (substitute, Mr. Golja), (Yugoslavia); Mr. Erlandsen (substitute, Mr. Rachlew), (Norway); Mr. Pabedinskas (Lithuania).

Workers' Members.—Mr. Diaz Munoz (Mexico); Mme. Egorova (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics); Mr. Gorman (United States of America); Mr. Koizumi (Japan); Mr. Kupers (Netherlands), (replaced by Mr. de Jonge); Mr. Louhikko (Finland); Mr. Marti (Switzerland); Mr. Naidu (India); Mr. Nielsen (Denmark); Mr. Segier (Belgium); Mr. Shaw (British Empire); Mr. Vandeputte (France); Mr. Vidal Rossell (Spain); Mr. Weigel (Czechoslovakia); Mr. Wennström (Sweden); Mr. Yakomini (Yugoslavia). *Substitutes:* Mr. Carissiades (Greece); Mr. Chu Zang-Kang (China); Mr. Dielininkaitis (Lithuania); Mr. Egle (Latvia); Mr. Fluera (Rumania); Mr. Kocour (Czechoslovakia); Mr. Koscinski (Poland); Mr. Naess (Norway); Mr. Parra (Venezuela); Mr. Rebane (Estonia); Mr. Wood (British Empire).

OBSERVATIONS ON WORK OF COMMITTEE.

The work of this Committee was of special interest to the principal Government delegate (Hon. H. T. Armstrong) because the Committee did New Zealand the honour of making him its Chairman.

The work of the Committee was strenuous and progress slow, because of its large membership.

When one considers the size of the Committee and the number of languages spoken, and that at least two translations of each speech were necessary, it will be understood that the task of the Chairman was not an easy one. However, after many amendments, mostly making the Draft Convention more elastic for the purpose of meeting the objections of countries who were not prepared to go as far as America, France, or New Zealand, the work was completed within reasonable time and a report made to Conference.

The Textile Convention caused far more interest and discussion than any other question dealt with by Conference. It had been discussed at last year's Conference, and was referred to a special Conference of experts held at Washington early in 1937.

At the first sitting of the Committee after the election of officers, Mr. Ashurst, representing British employers, asked for a general discussion before proceeding to deal with the Articles of the Convention.

Mr. Vandeputte, French workers' representative, opposed a general discussion on the grounds that the matter had been well discussed last year and again at Washington this year. Besides, he contended, there would be ample opportunity given when the Committee reported to Conference.

Mr. Leggett, British Government representative, stated that his Government was convinced of the necessity of a general discussion. After further exchange of views, and upon the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to hold a general discussion which would be limited in duration to four hours.

Mr. Leggett, who was the first speaker in the general discussion, opposed the Convention on the grounds that the subject should be considered in relation to the circumstances of the particular industries. Above all, the reduction of hours of work should be taken simultaneously with measures for international regulation of wages. The British Government believed that to adopt the Draft Convention would lead to wage-reduction and unemployment.

Mr. Shaw, British workers' representative, in reply to the British Government representative, said that last year the Minister of Labour from Britain suggested that experts from all countries should assemble to consider all relevant problems of the textile industry. This had been done at Washington Conference. The result showed that there were no technical obstacles to prevent the introduction of a forty-hour week. The British Government had to make up its mind. Was it ready to vote for any Convention which would reduce the working-week below forty-eight hours? If the British Government refused to deal with the shorter working-week, it not only kept back improvements in its own country, but also retarded progress in France, United States, and other countries.