

"Finally, the Organization was confronted by the immense difficulties arising out of the political and economic dislocations and disturbances which the Great War left as its baneful heritage. It has never enjoyed a period of tranquillity. It has been beset by wars and revolutions, by economic disasters and social upheavals. That it should have survived at all in the turmoil of the post-war world is remarkable; that it should none the less have grown in strength and authority is astonishing. But, as we have been grimly reminded by the tragic pictures of China and Spain drawn by the Chinese and Spanish delegates, war and social degradation always go hand in hand. When the fruit of man's labour is turned to purposes of destruction, his last state is worse than the first. Social legislation goes by the board, hours are lengthened, and real wages are forced down as soon as war takes control of a society. The work of the International Labour Organization cannot hope to prosper in a warlike atmosphere and might be totally ruined in the chaos which another general war would not fail to bring. It can only live by peace. If peace cannot exist without social justice, still less can social justice exist without peace. It was therefore right that this Organization should have been conceived as part of the machinery of peace. I believe it has already made some contribution to peace, and I am sure that it is capable of making a much greater contribution in the future."

"Perhaps the principal reason for the troubles and upheavals which have afflicted Europe since the war was the failure to supplement a new political organization with a new economic organization of the Continent. It was apparently thought that, once the political questions were settled, the economic questions would settle themselves. Subsequent events have shown how erroneous was any such supposition. Social and economic dislocations have lent a bitterness to political grievances which they could not otherwise have acquired. It may be doubted, however, whether this mistake will be repeated. It has now been understood that politics cannot be divorced from economics. The problems which now make statesmen uneasy in their beds are not only questions of frontiers and minorities and alliances, but also questions of currency and unemployment, of raw materials, and foreign exchanges, of social security and the maintenance of living standards. These matters now figure prominently in the field of international affairs. They are not susceptible to the old diplomatic technique, but none the less they often contain the germs of stability or upheaval within, and of war or peace without. Their discussion in the non-political atmosphere of this Organization has already done something to promote greater tolerance and understanding not only between employers and workers, but also between nations."

"Every step which promotes the spread of social justice is a contribution, direct or indirect, to the cause of peace. For that reason alone, if for none of the others I have cited, this Organization is an indispensable feature of the kind of civilization at which the world is now more and more consciously aiming. I have no fears for its future, and in passing on the torch to my successor I wish him the utmost success in the great task of carrying it another stage forward along the road which will lead to still greater achievement than it has yet known."

REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE.

This Committee submitted two reports to the Conference. The first stated that the credentials of 156 delegates (eighty-nine Government, thirty-four employers, and fifty-three workers) had been found to be satisfactory. Only 155 were entitled to vote, however, the Uruguayan employers' delegate having no vote since Uruguay had nominated only one non-Government delegate.

In a second report the number of Government delegates was given as ninety, credentials from the Portuguese Government delegate having been received. The Committee had also considered objections from the General-Secretary of the International Federation of Trade-unions to the credentials of the Bulgarian and Greek workers' delegates, on the alleged ground that the organizations they claimed to represent were set up and supervised by the Governments, and from the Estonian Union of Building and Timber Workers and the Estonian Union of Textile Workers to the credentials of the Estonian workers' delegate. This last objection was withdrawn by the workers' member of the Committee in view of explanations furnished by the Estonian Government representative in 1937, but he maintained his personal reservations. The other two objections were held by the Committee to be "devoid of substance."

The Committee reported that the workers' member had drawn attention to the fact that the Government of Uruguay had not nominated a workers' delegate, although he had been informed that the workers' organizations had submitted proposals for this purpose to the Uruguayan Government. In his statement to the Conference the Chairman urged the desirability of sending full delegations to the Conference.

Both reports were adopted by the Conference.