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# TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONISM

By J. SASSENBACH

Secretary of the International Federation of Trade Unions

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DERATION OF TRADE UNIONS  
ADESTRAAT, AMSTERDAM

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the International Federation of Trade Unions, Amsterdam

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The organisation of the workers internationally presupposes a certain degree of development of their national organisations, at least to the extent that practical objects are concerned. The desire to join hands with working class comrades across national boundaries was in evidence before this stage of development had been reached, but because the essential condition was absent the desire never led to tangible results.

So long as the trade unions of the various countries were not united in one central federation, international association could only take the form of organisations linking up unions of workers in the same trade, and in fact these were the first international trade union bodies to come into existence. This aspect is specially treated in the chapter on International Trade Secretariats.

The great obstacle in the way of an international gathering was the language difficulty. It not only prohibited direct communication, but it also made it difficult for the workers to reach mutual understanding or to become well-informed on the situation in other countries. Naturally enough, trade union machinery and trade union methods vary from one land to another, and only the person who is well acquainted with a country and its people can hope to appreciate the appropriateness of one set of methods to the existing local conditions.

The absence of information left a kind of mental barrier between the nations, and the differences of language retarded the growth of the necessary enlightenment.

The first loose association sprang up therefore between those countries speaking the same language, or in which for some special reason, large numbers of persons understood the language of their neighbours as well as their own.

Where these favourable conditions existed, books and papers could be exchanged, enabling the peoples to learn to understand each other. Much good also came from the practice of sending fraternal delegates to trade union meetings and congresses across the frontier, and it was this exchange of publications and these visits to foreign trade union meetings which constituted the principal part of early international activity. In addition, appeals were made from time to time for support in the more extensive industrial disputes, and for help to prevent the recruitment of strike-breakers abroad.

Often however it was difficult even to find out whether in another country there existed unions for particular trades, and still more difficult to secure reliable addresses. The need continually grew therefore for some international centre ; especially on the part of those countries the workers of which were in the habit of taking employment abroad.

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## II. First Attempts

We cannot here go into the proceedings of the International Working-men's Congresses, International Socialist Labour and Trade Union Congresses, International Socialist Congresses and other similar gatherings under a variety of names, because they were all primarily political in spite of the attendance of many trade union delegates and the occasional treatment of trade union questions. At these congresses and in various publications, principles were laid down for the guidance of the national trade unions in their work at home, but no effort was made to link them together internationally. We may perhaps regard as the first practical attempt to secure international trade union co-operation the conference called by the Parliamentary Committee of the British Trades Union Congress in London in 1888. It was attended by 123 delegates, 79 of them British, and represented in all 850,000 British and 250,000 continental workers. The German, Austrian, and Russian unions were not included in the invitation issued by the Parliamentary Committee, an omission which called forth sharp protests from the continental and from some of the British delegates. In consequence of the antagonism between the majority of the British delegates and the remaining delegates, the conference took a most unsatisfactory course. The following problems were dealt with :— (1) Hindrances to trade union federation abroad. (2) The best methods of organisation in the various countries. (3) Does decrease of production result from decreasing the hours of work ? (4) Regulation of hours of work.

A further attempt to build an international organisation was initiated by the French trade unions at an international

conference which met in the Paris Labour Exchange on December 17th and 18th, 1900, when it was sought to create an International Labour Secretariat as a step to the formation of a Workers' International. Some Italian and British delegates took part in addition to the French, but in view of the lack of support given to the conference the Secretariat was not formed. Instead, the French trade union centre was commissioned to get in touch with the trade unions of other countries and obtain their opinion on the calling of a new international conference.

As neither the British nor the French attempts were successful, the 1901 Copenhagen Conference must be taken as the starting-point of the International Trade Union movement, the 25th anniversary of which is accordingly being celebrated this year.

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### III. From 1900 to 1914

#### The Inaugural Conference in Copenhagen.

The President of the Danish trade unions, J. Jensen, came to Glasgow in 1900 to take part in the Congress of the General Federation of Trade Unions, and took the opportunity to discuss with the latter's General Secretary, Isaac Mitchell, the need for the formation of an association of the national trade union centres of the different countries. As a Scandinavian Labour Conference had been arranged to take place in 1901 in Copenhagen, Jensen proposed that the European national trade union centres be invited to send representatives to Copenhagen in order to lay there the foundations of an international association.

The Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, had already been co-operating internationally since 1886, and had from time to time held Scandinavian labour conferences which were attended by the political and trade union organisations of all three countries.

Jensen placed himself in touch with the President of the General Committee of the German Trade Unions, Karl Legien, and obtained his approval for the plan. The outcome was the first international conference, held at Copenhagen on August 21st 1901.

Legien in his opening address remarked that a demand had sprung up repeatedly in different countries for the calling of an international trade union congress, such congresses having already taken place in England in 1888, and in France in 1900. The German unions had not declined to participate out of any want of international solidarity, but because these

attempts gave no promise of success. Success could only have been achieved if at these congresses it had been possible to enter into binding agreements for the provision of mutual assistance in labour disputes, but the trade unions of the respective countries were then not strong enough for that purpose.

So far as the discussion of general questions was concerned this could quite well be done at the regular congresses of the Labour and Socialist International. In order to reach agreement on international trade union questions, what was required was to call conferences of representatives from the national trade union centres. These international conferences could be arranged to coincide with the holding of the trade union congresses of the different countries.

This point of view met with the approval of the other delegates and it was decided to call the next conference simultaneously with the Congress of the German Trade Unions at Stuttgart in 1902.

### The Second Conference – Stuttgart 1902.

The second international conference was accordingly held in Stuttgart in the following year. The attitude of this and subsequent conferences towards particular questions will be dealt with separately for each question; here we need only consider the development of international trade union organisation. In this respect Stuttgart already represented a definite step forward. The position taken up by the Copenhagen conference towards the holding of specifically trade union conferences was endorsed, and it was decided to hold international conferences of the secretaries of the national trade union centres, a decision which, apart from extraordinary conferences, remained in force until 1919.

No special international bureau was set up. Instead, it was agreed that the national centre of one of the countries should be authorised to act as International Centre, and Germany was chosen. Legien's proposal that Germany should bear the cost

until the next conference was readily accepted by the delegates. It was decided that the next conference should meet in Great Britain in the following year.

On the duties of the International Centre there was general agreement. Different points of view existed only on questions of detail. In the first place the bureau was to form a permanent connection between the trade unions of the different countries, to undertake the exchange of important information, books, periodicals, documents etc., to make accessible in good translations Acts of Parliament, Regulations and Court decisions likely to be of interest to the workers of other countries, to begin the preparation of uniform trade union statistics, and to arrange the provision of mutual assistance in industrial disputes.

A perusal of the debates of the delegates at this conference shows only too clearly how far they still were from a common conception of international organisation. The British representative, O'Grady, laid emphasis on what appeared to him to be self-evident, that all that need be done was to show the road to internationalism, and leave it to the national centres to decide whether they wished to follow that road or not. With regard to the proposal to hold the next conference in England, he stated that the British representatives had not been authorised to arrange this, but that they would endeavour to get such an invitation issued. Van Erkel, the Dutch representative, opposed the Copenhagen decision to leave general questions to the International Labour and Socialist Congresses, and urged the holding of international trade union congresses instead of conferences of secretaries. In this he received the support of the French delegate Griffuelhes. There was also difference of opinion on the question as to whether requests for international assistance should be addressed to the national centres direct or whether they should go through the international Bureau.

A significant picture of conditions in Germany at that time is given by a postscript to the letter which was addressed to the national trade union centres of the other countries inviting them to attend the German Trade Union Congress and the International Conference.

"Will you please refrain from discussing this matter in public, and from publishing any announcement in the press prior to the holding of the Conference in Stuttgart. We do not want the police authorities in Germany to have information of the Conference in advance, because they will in that event pay undue attention to our visitors from abroad. Although there is in Wurtemberg no occasion whatever for apprehension, we do not want our foreign guests to feel themselves in any way pestered by unwelcome attentions from the police. Afterwards of course public reports can be made. We therefore ask that, prior to the Conference, the matter be discussed confidentially only."

We may add that the Wurtemberg police authorities took no action against the foreign visitors.

### Third Conference – Dublin 1903.

In order to show what difficulties there were in these early days in the way of international trade union co-operation, a letter of protest is reproduced below. It was presented at the conclusion of the Dublin Conference to the General Secretary of the General Federation and was signed by all the non-British delegates.

*Complaint drawn up by the Continental Delegates and Mitchell,  
Dublin, Grosvenor Hotel, 9 July 1903.*

(1) We are in the habit of taking care that our guests are well accommodated.

Here we were brought to dirty lodgings and have had to sleep four in a room in which every stick of furniture was broken.

(2) We place at the disposal of the delegates from each country a translator for the congress proceedings, and a guide knowing the locality so far as this is desired.

Here right from the first we have been left to ourselves and it was only due to the kindness of Comrade Van der Veer, translator for the Dutch delegates (to whom we are very grateful) that we have received any assistance.

(3) The International Conference has given us the impression that the representatives of the British organisation were not in earnest about the matter. We have seen 25 to 30

British delegates, and heard 10 or 12 of them speak, but we still do not know which of these are the proper representatives of the General Federation.

Had the matter been arranged systematically, the first step should have been to decide who were conference delegates, then take the reports as set out on the agenda, and then and not till then, deal with and settle the proposals made.

Since we were not even given time to hear translations of the speeches, we had no opportunity to lodge a protest against this kind of proceeding. We eventually decided to refrain from making a protest because we knew from experience that where good will is lacking protests are useless, and we also did not want to raise a discussion in the presence of press representatives. For these reasons I agreed to the request to thank the Bureau for the arrangements, but there was little enough justification for expressing thanks.

(4) We have always made it a rule not to impose any restriction on the delegates invited to our congresses, in respect of addresses of welcome. If the time for discussion is short, a request has been sent privately to the delegates asking them to make their remarks brief.

At Stuttgart the delegates themselves decided, without being asked, to be very brief. Only the two British delegates spoke for nearly an hour each, without the Congress making any complaint.

(5) Here the committee simply made a public statement that it had been decided that only three delegates should speak. This they did without having arrived at any understanding previously with the foreign delegates, and without knowing whether the delegates wanted to speak. Since, as far as we are concerned, the delegates of every country are equal, we declined to speak at all.

(6) All these things have created in our minds the impression that the British organisation's delegates were not particularly pleased at having foreign trade union representatives present among them, and on account of this we discussed whether it would not be better to leave at once on July 8th. Out of politeness and in order not to give the opponents of the workers' movement a spectacle of disunity between the workers of different countries, we refrained from doing this, but will not again trouble our British fellow-workers more than is absolutely necessary.

The delegates of the continental organisations take very seriously the question of the International Organisation and will, if necessary, bring it into being among themselves, and

wait until the British organisations, through capitalist pressure, are forced to feel their community of interests with the workers of all countries.

N.B. I only make this declaration at the wish of Comrade Van der Veer, who has taken pains to change my opinion.

(In part worded more sharply, softened at the request of certain delegates.) (This note made by Legien.)

The letter explains itself. The talk with Mitchell relieved the tension somewhat, but the whole matter left behind an unpleasant impression. If co-operation between the organisations of different countries had been going on longer than it had, and if the different ways of conducting meetings on the Continent and in Great Britain had been known, many of the grounds for complaint quoted by Legien would not have been raised.

A short printed report drawn up by Legien, secretary of the International, was submitted to the Dublin Conference. It dealt with the supply to the national centres of reports of previous conferences, with the affiliation of certain countries, with statistics and with the aid given in strikes, but contained nothing of special importance. The Report was called the "Report of the International Centre of the National Trade Union Centres". The Stuttgart Conference had, as mentioned before, made the German national centre the trade union international centre, and this caused some technical difficulties. It was therefore suggested in the Report, that the international functions be placed in the hands not of a national centre, but in those of an international secretary, it being an essential condition that the secretary should be a member of his national centre. This was agreed to by the Conference and the following formal resolution was carried :—

"The International Conference of the National Secretaries of Trade Unions designates an International Secretary of the National Centres of Trade Unions, who is bound to keep up a correspondence with the national centres, to compile the yearly reports of the National Secretaries and to send them to the different national centres in the official languages. (English, French, and German.)"

After some discussion as to whether the seat of the International should be changed from year to year to the various countries affiliated with the International Federation, it was decided that the Secretariat should remain in Germany until the next conference. It was at the same time agreed that Legien should act as International Secretary, although a formal vote was not taken.

Germany had declared at Stuttgart her willingness to bear the expense incurred until the next conference, while Great Britain was willing to pay half. To meet future expenditure every affiliated national centre was to pay 6d. per 1,000 members per year.

Some discussion took place on the question of the right to be present at international conferences, a resolution being moved by the French delegate Griffuelhes "that all countries be invited to the International Conference, and that every country be allowed to participate in it". As against this somewhat ambiguous resolution it was laid down that only trade union national centres of the different countries should be allowed representation, and not individual trade unions, and that the delegate must reside in the country he represents. This ruling has been permanently retained, and it is expressly stated in the present rules of the International Federation of Trade Unions that the I.F.T.U. shall be composed of the national trade union centres of the various countries, and that all delegates must be residents of the countries they represent and members of trade unions in those countries.

It was also decided that in future the International Conferences should be held every other year.

#### Fourth Conference — Amsterdam 1905.

This conference was preceded by a long correspondence concerning the agenda between the international secretary and the French national centre. The French demanded that the questions of anti-militarism, the general strike, and the eight-hour day should be placed on the agenda, and declared that

if their request were refused they would remain away from the conference. Legien replied that discussion of Anti-Militarism and the General Strike did not come within the duties of the conference, and that he was therefore not in a position to place these matters on the agenda. He suggested that the conference itself should decide the issue, but expressed himself willing nevertheless to inquire of the national centres as to their views, pointing out to them that it was done only at the express wish of the French National Centre.

A sharp reply to this suggestion was received from the French, who denied that the international secretary had the right to reject a proposal submitted by one of the centres. Every national centre must have the right to submit its ideas to the other countries. They wished however to be accommodating and would consent to the national centres being asked for their views, insisting at the same time that Legien ought not to express his personal opinion when conducting the enquiry.

Legien forwarded a summary of the correspondence to the national centres and asked whether these items should appear on the agenda. As only Holland, Norway and Switzerland were in favour, the French request was declined, with the result that they remained away from the Conference. The conference endorsed the attitude of the international secretary. Only Holland voted against the endorsement, Switzerland not being represented.

The American Federation of Labour was invited to attend, but declined firstly because the Conference consisted of secretaries and not of elected delegates of the national centres, and secondly, because of the expense involved. Gompers, who signed the letter, suggested that future international conferences should be so arranged that the American delegates who were sent every year to the British Trades Union Congress might attend without too great loss of time.

Letters had been exchanged with the Australian trade unions, resulting in the affiliation of Victoria.

A reference was also made to Russia :—

"We feel able today to express the hope that Russia, whose workers are at present valiantly fighting to obtain the necessary freedom of action, will, after the storms of the revolution, take up her position in the ranks of the states with modern trade union movements, and join in the International organisation of trade unionists. The Labour movement of the whole world extends its heartiest sympathy to the Russians as to every people struggling for freedom, and hopes that Russia will soon succeed in shaking off the yoke of absolutism, and instead of being, as it is today, an obstacle to the cultural development of Europe, will reorganise itself as a free country."

In a letter from the Dutch National Centre the complaint was made, not without foundation, that no real agenda had been prepared, and that only France and Holland had submitted proposals. This they considered did not give evidence of a very great degree of interest and they asked whether it would not be desirable to postpone the conference for a year or two. The international secretary did not however give the suggestion further consideration.

This conference was the first to receive from the international secretary a detailed printed report dealing with the trade union movement in 1903. From this conference until the outbreak of the war such reports were regularly presented, growing in size year by year. After the outbreak of the war they appeared only at irregular intervals. The reports were not confined to information on the extent of the trade union movement in the various countries, but dealt also with special questions which had occupied the workers during the year covered by the report. There were, it is true, complaints that the duty of submitting detailed reports each year was so imperfectly performed by the national centres that in 1902, for instance, no report was published. Practice is required before the idea of co-operation becomes well accepted, but the work was lightened by the circulation to the national centres of uniform statistical questionnaires sent out from the international secretariat. The report also contained membership tables, rates of contribution, figures of income and expenditure of the organisations affiliated with the national centres of

Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Norway, Sweden, and Serbia and the addresses of the trade unions in Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Austria, Norway, Sweden, and Hungary, these addresses being of particular value to organisations catering for workers in the same trades in different countries when these desired to link up internationally. As the report appeared in German, English and French, it was widely welcomed as an aid to the formation of connections between the workers of all countries and as a means of disseminating information.

It was stated in the report that the following countries had officially notified their adhesion to the International Secretariat :—Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, France, Holland, Italy, Austria, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Hungary, and Victoria (Australia).

The fourth conference had one very difficult question to settle ; the relations between the Austrian trade unions. Some of the Czech trade unions in Bohemia had separated themselves from the Austrian national centre with headquarters in Vienna, and had set up a special Czech national centre in Prague. Their representative was Nemeč, who died just recently. He asked for recognition and a vote at the conference as representative of the Czech national centre. This was firmly opposed by Hueber, who was present on behalf of the Austrian Centre. The matter was thoroughly discussed ; all the delegates sided with Hueber and Nemeč's request was refused, but he was allowed to remain as a fraternal delegate.

The International Secretary's first Report was praised on all sides, but certain delegates suggested that for reasons of economy, it should be published every two years instead of each year. This was, however, rejected by 6 votes to 4. It was therefore decided to raise the annual contribution from 6d. to 1/- per 1,000 members.

The Amsterdam Conference had to deal with the following proposal submitted by Germany :—

- (1) "The Secretaries of the national centres affiliated with the International Secretariat, or delegates appointed by

the national centres, or elected by the affiliated trade unions, shall meet in conference every two years. To these conferences each national centre may send not more than two delegates.

- (2) The tasks of the Conference are to deliberate concerning the promotion of closer association between the trade unions of all countries, the collection of uniform trade union statistics, the provision of mutual support in industrial conflicts, and all other questions directly relating to the trade union organisation of the working class.
- (3) All theoretical questions and questions affecting the tendencies and tactics of the trade union movement in the various countries shall be excluded from treatment by the Conference."

This proposal arose, as Legien explained, from the French demand that the general strike, and anti-militarism be included in the agenda, while the suggested alteration in the appointment of delegates was intended to permit of the participation of the American trade unions. The first paragraph was adopted without opposition, but the remainder caused considerable controversy. Hueber was afraid that they were aimed at creating a division between the trade unions and the political party, and considered that the exclusion of theoretical trade union questions was impracticable, it being essential that there should be discussion on aims and tactics. Octors was also of the opinion that the political and trade union movements could not be rigidly separated from each other. Paragraphs 2 and 3 were put to the vote separately, 2 being carried unanimously and 3 against the votes of Belgium, Holland, and Austria.

In deciding on the place of the next conference, Hueber urged that it should be chosen with a view to allowing the Balkan states to participate. Nevertheless, on the request of the Norwegians, Christiania (Oslo) was selected because in 1907 Christiania was to be the seat not only of the Norwegian Trade Union Congress but also of that of the Scandinavian Trade Union Congress, which met only once in five years. For the sake of the Americans the Conference was arranged for the end of August or the middle of September, instead of in June, as formerly.

## Fifth Conference – Christiania (Oslo) 1907

This Conference had before it two reports from the international secretary. One dealing with 1904 had been published in 1906, and the second, dealing with 1905, in 1907. The international secretary regretted the late appearance of the reports, but explained that it was due to the national centres being late in supplying the required information. It was a matter for congratulation that co-operation between the countries was constantly improving, and that the statistical material regularly collected by the international secretary, had been the means of inducing those countries which had previously not troubled about statistics to interest themselves in this important branch of trade union activity. International statistics were therefore becoming more and more comprehensive.

In the third Report for 1905 Bulgaria and Serbia were recorded as additional affiliations, while Victoria no longer appeared in the list, having paid affiliation fees for 1903/1904 only. In order to encourage their affiliation, however, all circulars and printed matter of the International were sent to Victoria, the U. S. A., Japan, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. No replies had been received from the U. S. A. or Japan, and often reports were not sent in by the Australian States because it was intended to form a general trade union centre for the whole of Australia and in the meantime they refrained from affiliating. Negotiations with Finland and with individual unions in Russia were reported. There had for instance been an exchange of letters with the trade union centres of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and Odessa, but no permanent results had been obtained owing to the disturbed conditions prevailing in Russia. The international secretary had therefore to be satisfied with supplying the leaders of the struggling Russian trade union movement with material and information on the most effective methods of organising the working class.

Certain information was given in the report on the Russian trade union movement during these early years, and it is of

sufficient interest to be reproduced here. First, there is a letter from the President of the 1st conference of the Warsaw trade unions, held on August 12th, 1906.

"Comrades ! the conditions under which the workers here have to carry on their struggles do not permit public and legal activities, an alliance of all the trade unions which have recently been formed in such large numbers, or the maintenance of permanent connections with you. In face of this situation we would like to convey to you our fraternal greetings with the assurance that we shall, in due course, take our place in the ranks of the great International Trade Union Organisation."

The international secretary added the following remarks to the letter :—

"As in Warsaw, so also in other large towns in Russia, trade union centres have been formed. The trade union centres in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and Kharkoff also publish trade union journals. But these organisations and their journals have a most uncertain existence under the frightful reaction which is raging in Russia. The trade union journal published by the trade union committee in Moscow has twice been compelled to suspend publication, but has again appeared for the third time, under another title. The tenacity shown by the Russian workers in their organising work cannot be destroyed by the reaction, and all the acts of violence of those who wield power will not stay the formation and growth of the trade unions.

Attempts have already been made to unite the organisations which are affiliated with the trades councils on the different districts. The first suggestion of a move in this direction came from Kharkoff and the St. Petersburg centre undertook to carry out the plan. Already two trade union conferences have been held to complete the preliminary preparations for unification. At the second trade union conference there were representatives from the united trade unions of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Kiev, Kharkoff, Odessa, Vilna, Lodz, Nijni-Novgorod, and Nikolaieff. They defined their position under the trade union law, and discussed the methods which they would have to adopt in order to create a united trade union movement in Russia. It was also proposed to call an All-Russian trade union conference.

It is still impossible to give a comprehensive picture of this powerful movement just coming into existence. But the first vigorous efforts justify the hope that in a short time

unity and an assured existence will be achieved for the trade union organisation of our Russian fellow-workers. The workers of every country not only follow attentively the events in the Russian Empire, but they are also prepared at all times to give practical assistance in order to promote the more rapid development of the trade union movement in Russia."

The report also contained some information on the affiliation fees paid by the affiliated national centres. The expenditure for the years 1901/1903, was, as already indicated, borne jointly by Germany and Great Britain. In the next three years amounts were received as follows :—1903/1904, 1046 marks ; 1904/1905, 1087 marks ; and in 1905/1906, 2145 marks. These amounts were quite inadequate and the German national centre was obliged to make a further payment of 3000 marks to enable the international secretary to carry out his duties. The chief expense was caused by the annual International Reports, and the Christiania Conference therefore discussed a Swedish proposal that the reports should be published every two years only. The proposal was, however, rejected after full consideration.

The Christiania Conference had to deal with another exchange of letters with the French national centre, in which the latter again made attendance at the conference dependent on acceptance on the agenda of the two items—the general strike, and anti-militarism—which had been turned down the previous year. Since the international secretary, in accordance with the previous resolutions, could not agree to the French request, they once more stayed away from the Conference. Similarly the Dutch Centre, which had so far been affiliated, made a formal declaration of withdrawal at the close of the conference, and it was reported in the press that France, which was two years, and Holland which was one year in arrears with affiliation fees, intended to disaffiliate from the International Secretariat and form a new Trade Union International in conjunction with the insignificant groups of trade unions which existed in Germany and Italy outside the trade union national centres. Nothing came of this. Griffuelhes,

who was then leader of the French trade unions, had to give up his position and as early as the Christiania Conference Holland was represented by a newly formed national centre which had an outlook in agreement with that of the other national centres. It had perhaps 30,000 members and it gradually ousted the original and more anarchistic national centre, which dropped more and more into the background. A Finnish representative took part in the proceedings on this occasion, as fraternal delegate.

The communication from the French national centre induced the Conference to define once more in a resolution its attitude on the question of the duties of the Trade Union International in order, as the Dutch delegate Oudegeest said, to "show the French trade unions that it was not only certain individuals who maintained a standpoint in opposition to that of the French Confédération but that this standpoint was also the general attitude of all the other national trade union centres".

The resolution, which was drafted by Legien, Huysmans, and Olsen, and adopted unanimously by the Conference, was worded as follows :—

"The International Conference of representatives of the trade unions of Great Britain, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy, held on September 15th, and 16th, 1907, in Christiania, has considered the proposal again presented by the Confédération Générale du Travail, to include in the agenda the questions of anti-militarism and the general strike.

The Conference reiterates the decision reached at the Amsterdam Conference, which defined the tasks of the International Conference to be the promotion of close association between the trade unions of all countries, the collection of uniform trade union statistics, the provision of mutual support in industrial conflicts, and the consideration of all questions directly relating to the trade union organisation of the workers.

All theoretical questions and questions affecting the tendencies and tactics of the trade union movement in the various countries shall be excluded from treatment by the Conference.

The Conference regards the questions of anti-militarism and the general strike as questions which can be settled not by a Conference of trade union officials, but only by the representatives of the whole international working class, at the regular International Socialist Congresses, all the more since both questions were settled at Amsterdam and Stuttgart in accordance with the existing situation.

The Conference regrets that the Confédération Générale du Travail has not recognised that the attitude in this matter of the International Conference of representatives of the national centres is a thoroughly correct one, and that it uses this attitude as an excuse for remaining outside the international trade union movement.

The Conference urgently appeals to the French workers to take up the questions mentioned with the political labour organisation of their own country and to assist in settling them by participating in the International Socialist Congresses, and further, to join the International Trade Union Movement with the object of carrying out trade union aims."

The Americans were again not present, although the Conference had been fixed for the middle of September on their account, and it would have been possible for the American delegates at the meeting of the British Trades Union Congress in the first week of September also to have attended the Christiania Conference.

The Americans had not even considered it necessary to reply to the invitation, and Legien therefore expressed his opinion that the American Federation of Labour and its President, Gompers, wished to avoid associating themselves with the trade unions of other countries, so that it was useless making further efforts in this direction. This point of view was opposed by Olsen. He proposed that the international secretary advise the American unions that it was only out of consideration for them that the Conference this year had been held so late, and that they therefore could not but regret that America was not represented, and that no reply had been received to the letter of invitation.

This proposal was agreed to unanimously. The resolution was to be forwarded to the American Federation of Labour in writing, and the individual unions were later to be supplied with copies of the Conference Report in English.

The Christiania Conference raised the annual affiliation fee from 1 mark to 1½ marks (1/- to 1/6) per 1,000 members, decided to cover the existing deficit by a levy on affiliated organisations and left the question of a future possible deficit to future conferences. It was further agreed to gather together the resolutions already passed relating to the International Secretariat and have them printed. It was also planned to publish the rules governing the individual national centres.

The Conference was also occupied with the rules governing the transfer of members from unions of one country to those of another, and other matters of which the national centres had been notified beforehand in the agenda.

A report is given elsewhere of the treatment of these questions and the resolutions passed.

At the conclusion of the Conference it was again decided, not without reason, that at future conferences only those resolutions could be discussed which had been submitted in advance to the international secretary and translated for the use of the conference delegates. The next conference was proposed for 1910 in Vienna, but it actually took place in Paris in 1909.

### Sixth Conference – Paris 1909.

In the Report of the International Secretary for 1907, (published in 1909 and therefore containing information later than 1907) attention was drawn to a resolution passed in 1908 by the Marseilles Congress of the French Trade Unions. This resolution stated that France had never broken off relations with the international secretariat and that the congress was keenly desirous of making international relations closer and more effective. The Congress authorised the executive committee of the national centre to propose to the international secretariat "that the agenda of the next conference shall contain an item dealing with the organisation of international workers' congresses at which efforts should be continued to bring to examination and discussion the questions which had hitherto been systematically rejected."

The international secretary declared himself in agreement with this, so that peace was restored with France.

Relations with the U. S. A. also appeared to have improved. The American Federation of Labour had received the Christiania resolution, and its affiliated organisations had been supplied with copies of the Conference report. The American Federation of Labour explained that the Christiania Conference had acted on incorrect assumptions. It was only due to misunderstandings that no representative of the American trade unions had attended the International Conference at Christiania, and there would certainly be a delegate present at the next conference.

In the 1908 Report it was further stated with reference to the U. S. A. that the Annual Congress of the American Federation of Labour, held in November, 1908, had decided to send a delegate to the following International Conference. It was assumed in error that the conference was to take place in 1909, it being overlooked that the Christiania Conference had decided on Vienna, 1910.

Gompers the President, who was elected delegate, informed the international secretary of this mistake in December 1908, and asked if it would be possible for the next conference to take place in 1909. The Christiania Conference had decided that, should it be necessary to call an earlier conference, the International Secretary had the right to submit a proposal to this effect to the affiliated national centres. The international secretary considered himself justified in approaching the national centres on account of the statement received from Gompers, and accordingly asked their opinion. The majority of the national centres declared themselves in favour of holding the conference in 1909 in Paris. Gompers, who had been travelling in Europe in order to study conditions there, accordingly took part in the Paris Conference. After remaining away from two conferences, the French were of course on this occasion again represented. It appeared however that the French delegates had some fears that they might upset the conference, and accordingly proposed that the public be ex-

cluded. This was rejected by all the other delegates on grounds of principle.

The differences of opinion which during the preceding years had divided the French national centre from the others were easily disposed of after a short discussion, but the question of relations with the American Federation of Labour occupied much more time.

It had been generally assumed that Gompers was coming to take part in the Conference as the delegate of the American Federation and to announce its affiliation to the International. This impression was strengthened by the fact that the Americans had submitted certain proposals for discussion. But Gompers stated that he was present only as a fraternal delegate and had no instructions to make binding declarations in the name of his organisation. If an undertaking could be given that the Americans would be allowed to settle their own affairs themselves, he was convinced that affiliation would follow. The proposals he had submitted to Legien must be regarded in the light of suggestions only. Naturally Gompers' statement did not receive a very warm welcome.

A resolution of the Dutch national centre was before the conference, providing for the appointment of a paid official whose duty it would be to carry out the work of the international secretariat under the direction of Legien. It was thought that this would make it possible to extend the field of activity of the secretariat. While the usefulness of such an appointment was fully realised, the conference decided, in view of the financial situation, not to take definite action, and left the question of the eventual appointment of an assistant to the international secretary. At the same time the Secretary was instructed to submit to the next conference a scheme for the development of the Secretariat.

A resolution (or, as Gompers would have called it, a suggestion) was submitted by the American Federation of Labour, which was significant because a similar decision was arrived at in 1919 when the International Secretariat was being reorganised. It ran as follows :—

"The International Conference recommends the National Trade Union Centres of every country to study the question of the formation of an "International Federation of Labour", the autonomy of the trade union movement in each country being ordained and guaranteed. The purpose of the Federation is for the protection and the advancement of the rights and interests of the wage-earners of every land and the establishment of international fraternity and solidarity."

Gompers argued that the name "International Secretariat" meant nothing to Americans and it was necessary to have a different name and also a different form of organisation. As the proposal did not come from an affiliated organisation, it was agreed, with Gompers' consent, not to discuss the matter or take a decision on it.

In accordance with the resolution of the French national centre, the question of holding International Labour Congresses was now dealt with. Jouhaux, who on this occasion made his first appearance at an international gathering as representative of the French trade unions, recalled the earlier attempts made by the French trade unions to have the international conferences replaced by congresses. Conferences of the usual type were, he said, quite inadequate for the discussion of the fundamental interests of the workers. Only congresses could provide what was necessary. The French did not want to see questions affecting the workers left in the hands of organisations outside the working-class movement. Conferences failed to interpret correctly the real opinions of the organisations represented. Even if many trade unions did attend the Socialist Congresses, these remained nevertheless primarily political, and it was essential that we should keep strictly to the trade union movement.

Hueber then made the following statement :—

"On behalf of the national centres of Great Britain, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Spain, Italy, Hungary, Austria and Croatia I submit the following declaration :— We appreciate the reasons for the French suggestion. We recognise that in France there are causes for making such proposals. We are however of the opinion that the international conferences already present sufficient difficulties. We consider the

calling together of international congresses to be an impossibility. It has already been shown here that decisions cannot be carried against the will of individual national centres. We must refrain from calling congresses at the present time in order that the workers may be spared bitter disappointments. But there is still another reason for our attitude ; we stand by the policy of the joint political and trade union struggle. These are the two arms of the body, which are controlled by the head of the organised working-class. We must carry on the fight with the left arm as well as with the right. So long as the capitalist class oppresses the workers politically and industrially, it would be a crime against the workers to march separately."

Legien remarked that the German representatives had not signed the declaration, not because they dissented from the views expressed, but because they considered that it was necessary to hear the opinions of other countries. The question could very well be discussed, and he was also of the opinion that the development of the trade union organisations would make it necessary to call international congresses, but only for the representation of one united organisation. It would be desirable to have the matter thrashed out at future conferences.

After a somewhat heated debate between Jouhaux and Yvelot on the one side, and the delegates of Belgium, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, and Austria on the other, the French withdrew their resolution, at the same time requesting the delegates to consider the question again in their national centres before the next conference.

### **Seventh Conference — Budapest 1911.**

The international secretary in his Report for 1909 was able to make the encouraging statement that, with only a few exceptions, the workers in every country had been able to achieve considerable successes on the social-political field, and that there was everywhere a marked tendency towards increasing the power of the trade unions through the concentration of small organisations.

One particularly gratifying event to be recorded was the affiliation of the American Federation of Labour—the first non-European national centre. Altogether there were now 20 countries belonging to the International Secretariat : Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Finland, France, Holland, Italy, Croatia, Austria, Norway, Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, Serbia, Spain, Hungary and the United States.

The international secretary had also during the year excercised the power conferred on him by the Paris Conference and had engaged Comrade A. Baumeister for the work of the secretariat.

All the reports had been published very late, and each time the secretary had had to complain of the difficulty of getting the national centres to supply the required statistical material. 1910 was the first year the report for which was published in the following year, although this meant that certain countries had had to be left out of the report. Bulgaria was left out because, in spite of all efforts, it had proved impossible to unite the two existing national centres.

The Budapest Conference had a larger attendance than any of its predecessors. The American Federation of Labour was represented by Duncan, while a rival organisation, the Industrial Workers of the World, had also send a delegate, Foster. The second national centre in Bulgaria, which was not affiliated with the International, had sent two comrades who were admitted as fraternal delegates.

The appearance of Foster, who came into conflict with Duncan at the very opening of the Conference, gave rise to a long discussion which occupied a whole sitting. The Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.) had applied for affiliation, and at the same time protested against the acceptance of the American Federation of Labour (A. F. of L.)

The chief ground of the protest was that leaders of the A. F. of L. belonged to the Civic Federation, an organisation consisting of members of all classes of society whose aim was to act as conciliators in industrial disputes. Opinions differed

widely as to the real nature of the Civic Federation. Jouhaux denounced it as an organisation aimed at obscuring the class struggle, whose activities were directed against the workers. He asked Duncan if he belonged to the Civic Federation, and declared that, if so, he would be compelled to vote against Duncan's admittance. Legien on the other hand held the view that the question of Duncan's membership of this body was not the concern of the Conference. Duncan was the representative of the A. F. of L. and must in that capacity be admitted to the Conference without question; he personally would refuse to reply to such a question. The only issue to be decided by the Conference was as to whether they would accept the application for affiliation made by the I. W. W., and this they could not do in face of previous decisions which declared that only *one* Trade Union National Centre from each country could be admitted to membership of the International. After much talk for and against, the question was raised as to whether a delegate was obliged to give information about the tactics of his national centre and his own political opinions. It was decided that he need not do so, and the application of the I. W. W. was rejected.

Another long debate concerned the situation in Bulgaria. Both national centres had sent delegates to the conference and on the preceding day Legien had made a vain attempt to bring about a reconciliation. The Conference requested both national centres to open up unity negotiations again in their own country and to report to the next Conference. Until then both centres must remain outside the International Secretariat.

On the Secretary's report Oudegeest expressed the wish that the activities of the International Secretariat should be still further developed, and that all international matters should go through the hands of the International Secretary, and not, as was so often the case, from one national centre to another direct. At the same time he submitted a joint proposal of the Belgian and Dutch national centres to the effect that in future, in order to economise, conferences should be held only once in three years and at the time when the congresses of the Labour and Socialist International were sitting. Legien opposed

on practical grounds. The saving, he said, was open to question, and the work of the conference would be made very difficult if it had to be carried on simultaneously with the holding of a big international congress. Duncan supported Legien, and invited the International in the name of the A.F. of L. to hold its next Conference in San Francisco on the occasion of the opening of the Panama Canal.

This invitation placed the delegates in some difficulty because they had not had an opportunity of obtaining the decision of their national centres, and they could not dispense with this formality on account of the high cost likely to be incurred by the American visit. Legien pointed out that while there were practical difficulties in the way of holding the Conference in America, it must not be overlooked that it might be worth while to consider the matter further because of the desirability of maintaining good relations with the American trade unions. By sharing the expenses it would be possible for the smaller countries to be represented also. At the moment however it was not possible to accept the American invitation. They could return to the question at the next conference and consider then whether it would be practicable to hold the conference after that in America. This was finally agreed upon, the Belgian-Dutch resolution being withdrawn.

The suggestions put forward by Gompers at the Paris Conference were now officially before the meeting, since the A.F. of L. had in the meantime been accepted as a member. With regard to the proposed formation of an International Federation of Labour, Duncan explained that this was not intended as an immediate step, but merely as a problem for study. Legien said that he was quite willing to give his support to the motion because he regarded it as a necessary and logical outcome of the development of the trade union movement. The American proposal could however not be given practical application until international relations had become much firmer and until there was a greater degree of agreement among the organisations in the different countries. With the consent of the American delegate the matter was referred to the national centres for further study.

The same fate befell the French resolution on the calling of international workers' congresses, which had been supported by Jouhaux and opposed by Legien, Bergmans and Hueber. Jouhaux also agreed that this question, which had already been discussed at the Paris Conference, should be referred to the national centres.

### Eighth Conference — Zurich 1913.

In the Report for 1910 and again in that for 1911, the Secretary had had to state that it had proved impossible to heal the breach between the two Bulgarian National Centres. As subscriptions for international relief actions had now to be sent to the International Secretary, the 1911 Report contained accounts of two such actions and their results. For Norway 36,887 marks (£ 1,844), and for the locked-out London dockers 100,072 marks (about £ 5,000) had been collected, no less than 74,545 marks (£ 3,727) and 49,545 marks (£ 2,477) coming from Germany and Austria respectively. For the first time the Report also contained statistics and information about the *International Trade Secretariats*.

In the 1912 Report four international relief actions were recorded, the amounts subscribed being as follows:— for Serbia and Bulgaria 29,732 marks (£ 1,486), for Belgium 10,470 marks (£ 523), for Italy 8,549 marks (£ 427) and for the Dutch tobacco-workers 49,336 marks (£ 246).

This was the first conference attended by representatives of the International Secretariats as fraternal delegates, and on the same occasion the first Conference of the Secretariats was called. Attendance both at the International Conference of secretaries of the national centres, and at the conferences of one or the other International Trade Secretariat should, as Legien pointed out, help materially to strengthen and extend international relations.

On this occasion Great Britain was not represented only by the General Federation of Trade Unions, as the Parliamen-

tary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, a looser but more comprehensive organisation of the British trade unions, had sent its secretary, Bowerman, as a fraternal delegate. Roumania and Serbia had ceased to be affiliated on financial grounds. At the opening of the Conference news was received of the adhesion of the Transvaal Federation of Trade Unions to the International.

The Conference dealt first with the position in the Balkans. On account of the unsettlement caused by war the money collected for Serbia and Bulgaria had not yet been handed over. An appeal for assistance had been received from Salonica and Roumania was in need of support also. It was therefore proposed to hold a Balkan trade union conference in October of that year simultaneously with the meeting of the Austrian trade union congress in Vienna. It was decided also that Legien should go to the Balkans in order to study conditions there and see that the money collected was properly spent.

That part of the Secretary's Report dealing with relief actions gave rise to a long discussion, in the course of which several countries were reproached with having made little or no contribution. No country could be ordered to give financial aid to another country, but there was certainly a moral obligation to do so. Mention was also made of the fact that certain countries were in arrears with their affiliation fees.

Oudegeest again suggested an extension of the activities of the Secretariat. It should, he said, collect material on important questions affecting trade unions, and advise the national centres as to their attitude in such questions. In all matters of this kind the international secretariat could secure united action by the national centres and thus give us much greater influence in the arrangements made.

An important new activity of the international secretariat was the publication from the beginning of 1913 onwards of the "International Newsletter", printed in German, French and English. This new step had been suggested at earlier con-

ferences. The Newsletter was very well received and helped to introduce some uniformity into the make-up and news organisation of the trade union press of the various countries. It had been the means, as was recognised at the Conference, of improving enormously the relations between the individual countries. But a journal printed in three languages costs a great deal and the international secretary had accordingly submitted a proposal for increasing the annual affiliation fee from 1½ to 4 marks per 1,000 members. The proposal was adopted with unanimity, except that the American representative refrained from voting.

Appleton raised the question of representation at the congresses of the national centres and submitted the following resolution on behalf on the General Federation of Trade Unions of Great Britain :—

"The international secretariat shall be officially represented at all ordinary congresses of the affiliated national trade union centres, and shall choose its representatives from the various national centres affiliated with the international secretariat. The cost of sending these representatives shall be borne by the international secretariat."

With reference to the last sentence Appleton proposed that a special levy should be voted at the next conference of an amount which would cover the cost incurred. He added that it was impossible on financial grounds for the national centres to accept all the invitations extended to them to attend the congresses of the other national centres, and joint representation through the international secretariat would be sufficient and less expensive. Legien agreed with Appleton in principle but did not want the conference to make a hasty decision. At his suggestion Appleton's proposal was accepted to the extent that the national centres were first to be asked by the International secretary to examine the feasibility of the plan.

This Conference was asked to deal again with the American proposal for the formation of an International Federation of Labour, and with the French proposal for the holding of international congresses. Both were subjected to detailed

discussion without, however, any new arguments being introduced either for or against. As at the previous conference, they were disposed of by being referred to the national centres for further study, but another proposal of the American delegate Perkins, to change the name of the International into the "*International Federation of Trade Unions*" was unanimously accepted.

Perkins pointed out that it was not a question of altering the form of the organisation, but only its name, and Legien agreed that the change of name was justified by the developments which had taken place in the Trade Union International.

In consequence of the change of name it was now necessary to appoint a President of the International Federation of Trade Unions, instead of an International Secretary of the national trade union centres, and Legien was of course chosen.

The Conference busied itself with the question of founding information bureaus in the various countries and linking them up internationally. It was intended that these should not confine themselves to specifically trade union events, but should study the economic situation, employers' organisations etc. It was felt, however, that the whole matter was too complex to be dealt with off-hand, and the President was therefore instructed to collect information from the national centres about existing bureaus of this or a similar kind, summarise the results of the enquiry and submit a report if possible to the next conference.

A long discussion arose on the question of the place of meeting for the next conference. The American Federation of Labour repeated and with much cordiality pressed its invitation to hold the conference in San Francisco in 1915. Perkins, who had given a full description of the American Trade Union Movement, believed that a visit of European trade union leaders to America would remove many misunderstandings and would lead to the establishment of closer relations between the European and American labour movements. This was appreciated by many other speakers, but the dominating

factor was still the question of the expense. Legien rightly insisted that no useful purpose would be served by holding a conference with many countries unrepresented, and the smaller countries must therefore be given the opportunity of attending. The only method was to distribute the total outlay over the whole of the affiliated national centres so that the bulk would fall on the larger countries. Legien nevertheless considered that the invitation should be accepted, and the Conference decided to do so by 10 votes to 7, it being understood that the expense should be shared in the manner mentioned.

Unfortunately the conference proposed for 1915 did not take place, either in San Francisco or anywhere else. By that date a large part of the workers organised in the I.F.T.U. were facing each other in the trenches.

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## IV. During the War

### The Maintenance of Class Solidarity.

The world war suddenly broke into the preparations for further developing the international relations of the trade unions. The International Conference at Zurich had not only changed the name of the International, but had also given it new duties to perform : the publication of the "International Newsletter" which had been started without a formal resolution, and the setting up of a translation bureau to carry on the translation work of the affiliated national centres and of the international trade secretariats.

By the beginning of 1914 the President of the International Federation of Trade Unions had already formed a large bureau, and at the outbreak of the war there were twelve persons of various nationalities employed, and a further extension was intended for the autumn of that year. The cost of the bureau was fully covered by translation work. Immediately after the outbreak of the war the publication of the "International Newsletter" had to be suspended and, as orders for translation ceased, part of the staff had to be dismissed. Others resigned in order to return to their homes.

The nations, whose trade unions had for 14 years worked amicably together, stood facing each other arms in hand or as helpless spectators, and the labour movement against its will was drawn into the fatal whirlpool. We can however claim that the international working class, with the exception of certain individuals, was never at any time enthusiastic for the war. They had to pay the penalty for misdeeds begun by other hands than theirs.

It may be of interest here to publish some letters which passed between the President of the International Federation of Trade Unions and various national centres at the outbreak and during the progress of the war.

The French national centre sent the following letter to Legien on July 31st 1914 :—

"Dear Comrade Legien!

You will have received my telegram. I would like further to insist on the great rôle to be played by the French and German workers in the present situation. Absolute unity must exist between our two organisations. It is essential that we act together to ward off this danger. For this reason and because we shall probably be taking part officially in the socialist and trade union demonstrations which are to be held in Paris on August 9th preliminary to the International Congress, we propose that a special meeting of the trade union delegates to the congress take place on this occasion. This meeting would give our proposals definite form, and increase our moral strength. It would add to the authority of the Workers' International, which is more alive than ever.

We submit this proposal to you believing that it will be acceptable.

Trusting that this will be the case, I send fraternal and international greetings.

L. Jouhaux."

This letter fell at once into the hands of the German military censor and was not released until September 28th. The fate of this letter was also the fate of nearly all. Often letters had to pass not merely one but several censors, were retained for weeks, and if they failed to pass the military office were simply destroyed. Many misunderstandings arose in consequence of this, because it was supposed that comrades across the frontiers were refusing to respond.

On August 25th the President of the International Federation of Trade Unions sent a circular letter to the national centres of the neutral countries, expressing the desire that relations with these countries be maintained, asking for occasional reports on the situation in the Entente countries, and promising to give similar news from Germany. He also in-

cluded a brief description of affairs in Germany in order to correct some inaccurate press statements.

On the same day the Danish national centre conveyed a message from Appleton, General Secretary of the British General Federation of Trade Unions, to the effect that he had in accordance with Legien's request paid the arrears of salary due to a former English employee of the International Secretariat. The message continued "He sends his cordial greetings, and is forwarding for you extracts from English newspapers".

Legien answered on August 31st :—

"Many thanks for the conveyance of greetings from Comrade Appleton. That he was prepared to pay to Mr. A. the amount outstanding, proves to me that Appleton regards the situation in the same light as I do, i. e. that relations between the organised workers cannot be more than temporarily impaired by the unfortunate state of war. I hope soon to hear further from Appleton on this matter. It is impossible to get direct information from England, so that I do not know to what extent the trade unions have been influenced by the war."

On September 1st Gompers wrote :—

"I scarcely know how to express my sentiments in regard to this terrible, monstrous war that is devastating the whole continent of Europe. I realize of course that the reports published by the newspapers in the United States are only fragmentary and highly censored and that we have no way of getting accurate information as to what is really transpiring. I can only express the fervent hope, which I am convinced is the earnest hope of the whole American people, that this terrible and bloody war may be speedily ended and peace established. Please let me hear from you often."

On September 25th Legien wrote to the Belgian national trade union centre :—

"Dear Comrade Mertens,

Since the sudden outbreak of this wretched war we have often tried to get into touch with you but without success. I hope nevertheless that you will receive this letter at least—or that one of your comrades will do so—and that you will as soon as possible let us have a sign of life from you.

It goes without saying that in this tragic moment we must do all that we possibly can to maintain international relations,

to disperse or destroy the hatreds which may be created between the workers of the different countries, and to save our International for which we have made such great efforts and so many sacrifices. It is, I think, not necessary to discuss at this moment what is passing before our eyes ; let us hope that we shall soon be able to do that in circumstances of tranquillity. What seems to me to be useful at the present time is for us to give encouragement to each other, to help each other as far as possible, and to prepare for the future of international trade unionism. The international bureau continues to function as in the past, but we have had to suspend publication of the International Newsletter and in consequence eight of the twelve members of the staff have had to be dismissed, but I hope that we shall be able to re-engage most of them before long. Those who remain receive half their usual salaries as our financial resources are nearly exhausted. But as we are in touch with all the countries except France and Great Britain, (with which we have however indirect connections) we are in a position to gather together and prepare all information relating to the present situation and particularly to the activities of the trade unions in the various countries. I believe that these records will have a certain value after the war and I am therefore approaching you to ask for your assistance in this task. Of course we have not received any Belgian newspaper since July 31st. Can you possibly let us have a file of these papers which you consider will be useful for the end in view. We will of course pay the cost. I shall be most grateful if you will do this. You must also write about the situation in your unhappy country, either for publication or for the information of persons who are specially interested. This appears to me to be all the more necessary because we read in the press, which is dependent on the London and Paris agencies, really droll accounts of events in Germany, on the attitude of our socialists etc. Certainly many lies are manufactured in time of war, but some of the things I have read in the Italian papers, for instance, must have been invented in the Middle Ages. To help us in destroying misunderstandings and in reuniting as far as possible the workers of our countries, I ask you urgently to let us have information, newspapers, cuttings and anything else you may consider to be useful for us or for the party. I shall of course be only too pleased to serve you in the same way. You have only to say what you want me to do for you or your comrades.

Hoping that I may soon see you again in good health, and also your comrades, I send fraternal greetings and best wishes for peace."

This letter did not reach Brussels until October 27th and was answered on November 7th as follows :—

"Dear Comrade,

The Bureau of the Trade Union Committee of the Labour Party and of the independent trade unions has noted your letter of the 25th September 1914, which reached us on October 27th ; it is of the opinion that the present moment is not opportune for carrying out the request contained in your letter.

Please accept, comrade, our best wishes.

For the Bureau of the Trade Union Committee.

Corn. Mertens, Secretary."

On September 30th Gompers wrote a long letter about the situation in America and the anxiety which the war caused him. He further expressed his regret that the proposed International Trade Union Conference in San Francisco could not take place.

"You know that for several years I have been most anxious that the meeting of the international secretariat should be held in the United States, and finally succeeded in having the invitation accepted and the decision reached to hold the next meeting in San Francisco in 1915. We were anxious that the representatives of the labor movements of the various countries might come to America and see a convention of the American Federation of Labor in operation, and to judge of the work from their own immediate observation. I was anxious that they should see and study on the ground the American labor movement in the various localities that they would visit : that they would see us as we are, and study our industry and our workers and our movement, and all that we have done and are trying to do, also that they would have the opportunity of witnessing the Panama Exposition at San Francisco. And all these hopes which would have done so much for the better understanding of our movement and for the solidification of the knowledge, feeling and sentiment are gone by the board.

Yes, I can understand that even should the war be at an end before 1915, the active men in the labor movement will be required in their own home countries to help build up what has been so ruthlessly set back or set aside in the labor movement. But I do entertain the hope that the war may end at an early date, and that some compensation may come to the great masses of the people for the burdens that have been borne, and the sacrifices that have been made.

May I express the hope that thorough recuperation may soon come after the close of the war, helpful, beneficial recuperation, and with it the reviving growth and extension of the people, and that with it we may soon have determined that the International Congress shall be held, and held in the United States of America at a point which the American Federation of Labor may suggest. In sadness, and yet in hope for the best, I send fraternal greetings to you and your fellow friends and trade unionists of Germany."

Comrade A. Gruber, who had been employed in the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions and had returned to his native Switzerland shortly after the outbreak of war, wrote (by agreement with Legien) to the French national centre, on September 10th. Unfortunately no copy of the letter is to be found in our records, but the contents can be judged roughly from the reply addressed to Gruber on October 3rd by the interim secretary of the French national centre, A. Merrheim. After describing the course of events in France Merrheim continued thus :—

"This résumé must suffice for the present. But in your letter you considered it necessary to inform us of the attitude of the German workers who, you say, "*go to war against France with the utmost regret*". You add that "*they feel themselves threatened by Czarism and are afraid that a victory for that régime would have ominous results for Europe and particularly for the workers' movement*". Allow us to state that the moment is not one for regrets, which cannot lessen the horrors of which we are the witnesses. Neither is it a time for extenuations or for efforts to establish the responsibility of one side or the other. For us the brutal fact is that every day thousands of Belgian, German, British, Austrian and French workers are mown down by bullets, wounded or killed, on the European battle fields. In their suffering they mingle their sobs of anguish and grief, their screams and agonised cries of death. And after the war there will be hundreds of thousands of maimed and disabled soldiers.

Their agonies are ours too. The inconsolable griefs, the afflictions of parents, wives and lovers are ours because they are the sorrows of our class, the workers, because it is our ideal to see them all united under a single symbol, the symbol of emancipation ; emancipation not by war, but through knowledge and the international organisation of the workers of all

the world. None of them can be or appear to be in our eyes our enemy.

It is for this reason that we would point out to you that, for all our sympathy, we cannot see any distinction between the Imperialism of the Kaiser, crushing the liberties of the workers under the burden of militarism in Germany, and the Imperialism of the Russian Tzar strangling those liberties in St. Petersburg.

The liberties of the workers are the same in both countries. They are in both countries unknown or almost unknown.

We cannot see what the German workers will gain, whether as victors or vanquished, by strengthening with rivers of blood and mountains of corpses the imperialism of the Kaiser and of the German militarist Junkers, of whom they are and will be the permanent dupes or victims. Moreover we cannot see what they, and with them European liberty, stands to lose.

In conclusion, all that we can or wish to say for the moment is that the French national trade union centre and the French Socialist Party on this occasion, as in previous crises when our activities have been thrown with immense weight on the side of peace, have performed their duty to the full in the endeavour to avoid war and the present nightmare of horrors which are its consequences.

With fraternal and international greetings,

*For and on behalf of the Central Committee, Interim Secretary,  
A. Merrheim."*

A further letter was addressed by the French national centre to A. Baumeister, Copenhagen, but here again there is no copy of Baumeister's letter. The letter of the 31st October signed by Jouhaux runs as follows:—

"In reply to your letter of September 23rd, I am able to reply in the name of the French Confédération Générale du Travail, that we remain today, as in the past, firmly attached to the cause of internationalism, and resolved to achieve the economic emancipation of the working class.

The tragic circumstances surrounding us today, have in no way dimmed our ideals and we shall continue, in spite the sorrows of the moment, as pioneers in the struggle for human liberty.

We have fulfilled to the letter our duty as peaceful workers fighting against the coming catastrophe whose terrible consequences we realised. Unfortunately it did not rest with us alone to prevent the dawn of this fatal day.

With the violation of Luxemburg, of gallant Belgium, and the invasion of our country, we could not stand aside as uninterested spectators of a war in which were at stake the rights of small nations, the existence of our country, and the future of democracy.

We who have always fought against militarism understand more clearly than ever at this terrible moment that German militarism is a menace which compels us to fight, and that Prussian imperialism, like Russian imperialism, is a vicious principle whose destruction is essential for the peace of the world.

In no way animated by the desire for conquests, our men have gone forth hoping in their hearts that their sacrifices will not have been in vain and that this war may be the last, as it will if at the conclusion every people performs its democratic duty at home and the United States of Europe come into being.

We do not wish to discuss at this moment the question of responsibility, as our whole energies are devoted to the task of relieving the suffering of our people.

Nevertheless we venture to state that the manifesto of the German intellectuals, which declares that "German culture rests on the force of militarism, and justifies the destruction of Louvain" is unworthy of civilisation.

Certainly we do not hold the German people responsible for these bombastic utterances. We hold precious the memory of the enthusiasm of the German workers on the day of the international meeting in the "Neue Welt" Hall, and we only desire, if circumstances permit, to help them to gain the liberties for which they were then fighting. In conclusion, we realise that the rapid termination of the conflict will not come by way of regrets for the irreparable past, but in the actions of the enslaved masses towards governments which oppose those democratic principles which must be our guide in our future progress.

We were desirous of informing you of these sentiments in order to nullify the assertions of those who talk of dismembering Germany and of exterminating the German nation.

With fraternal greetings,

For the Confédération Générale du Travail.

Secretary : *L. Jouhaux.*"

A postscript was added to the letter asking that the contents should either be published in full or not at all, as otherwise occasion might be given to new friction.

On November 6th Appleton wrote on behalf of the General Federation of Trade Unions :—

My dear Legien,

I do not know whether my recent letters have reached you. All letters are censored even on this side and there are some very unintelligent people employed by the censor.

Today harrowing stories of the treatment of German civilian prisoners were placed before me. I was assured that every one of these stories had been verified and I was asked to make representations to the Home Secretary. I was impressed by the stories and determined to make an instant personal investigation, putting aside all other work for the purpose."

Appleton then described a number of incidents related to him and continued :—

"These wickedly stupid stories tend to embitter feeling on both sides, and I propose obtaining permission to visit some of the camps for the purpose of seeing for myself the exact situation. If you could do this on your side we might be able, not only to elicit the truth, but to ameliorate the lot of those whose only fault is their nationality."

On September 13th, V. Bukšeg, secretary of the Croat National Centre, wrote a long letter to Legien containing the following :—

"One of the most distressing results of the war is its effect on the Socialist International : it is a question whether it still exists. Still worse for the workers' movement is the nationalist, chauvinist spirit which is now fiercely blazing, and the guilt lies with the Germans for having intervened in the Serbo-Austrian affair. I believe that unpleasant dissensions will not only arise between the socialist parties of the different countries but that these will also follow within the parties themselves. Unfavourable omens for the future ! It is to be hoped that the trade union movement will not directly take part in this quarrel."

Legien replied to this letter on November 28th.

"You will have seen from the circular sent to all national centres by me last week, that the friendly relations with the trade union centres of the countries at war with Germany have not entirely disappeared. I hope that even in the difficult time which certainly lies before us, there will be no change in these relations, and that we shall be able, soon after the end

of this frightful war, to resume our work in common in the interests of the working class."

On November 30th Legien wrote to Jouhaux :—  
"Dear Jouhaux,

I have received the letter you addressed to Comrade Baumeister as well as Merrheim's letter to Comrade Graber. Both Baumeister and Graber wrote to you by agreement with me. It was only because the postal services between our countries were not functioning at the time the letters were sent that I chose this method of communicating with you.

You may rest assured that the opinions expressed by you in your letter of October 31st are precisely those held by the organised German workers.

We understand to the full that the workers in France in this critical hour, like those in Germany, are striving to obtain the best for their own country. We do not reproach our French comrades for acting thus, any more than you, as shown by your letter, reproach us for acting in the same manner. We have done everything in our power, right up to the declaration of war, to save the nations of Europe from this frightful catastrophe. It is a matter for regret that we were not strong enough to avert this misfortune, which is certainly not our fault.

It will not be possible for me, great as is my desire to make your opinions known to the workers, to publish your letter in full. As you request that in the event of publication, we shall publish the letter in full, I must for the time being refrain from publishing it.

If you agree that your letter, whose importance I fully recognise, be reproduced in our labour press, with the exclusion of those passages which would not be passed by the censorship (which is about the same as in your country), I would very much like to be able to show by means of your letter that in your country as much as in ours the need for international trade union relations is recognised.

As regards the steps taken to prevent the disappearance of the international labour movement during this terrible period, you will have been informed of these in my last circular.

I hope to have early news of you and I am convinced that though the two nations are at present hostile, that will not mean the final ending of relations between them, nor the ending of personal friendships. I am certain that after this horrible war, we shall again be able to work together to better the conditions of the working class.

Fraternal greetings."

In similar friendly tone Legien wrote on December 5th to Appleton.

The above selections give the main lines of the correspondence of the first war year between the President of the International Federation of Trade Unions, (who was also President of the German trade unions), and the trade union centres of the countries at war with Germany. Everyone must recognise that the feelings herein expressed are far removed from war fever and petty hatreds, and that the trade unions are entitled to be gratified at the attitude maintained by their appointed leaders. If in the further course of the war, words of another kind were used mostly by less responsible persons, this must be taken in conjunction with the facts that the air was thick in every land with war hatreds stimulated by the press and with the fact that the belligerent powers made it impossible not only to keep up personal contacts but also to carry on regular written correspondence.

### **Removal of the Headquarters of the International Federation of Trade Unions.**

From its foundation in 1901 right up to the International Conference in 1913 there had never been any suggestion of moving the Headquarters of the I. F. T. U. away from Germany. That after the outbreak of war some such suggestion would be made by one or other of the national centres, was to be expected, but it is a matter for astonishment that the proposal should have been made for the removal not to a neutral country, but from Berlin to London. Oudegeest, at that time President of the Dutch trade union centre, wrote on September 30th 1914 to Legien :—

"Unfortunately international relations are now upset and we are afraid that the war is going to kindle mutual hatreds even between the workers of the different countries.

We have already received letters from the National Transportworkers' Federation in Great Britain proposing the removal of the I. F. T. U. Headquarters from Berlin to London. We do not need to tell you that the Dutch organisations are

most certainly not in agreement with that proposal. We are however of the opinion that it will be necessary to have the International Secretariat located temporarily in a neutral country. We consider that this is the only way to save our International."

In his reply on October 7th Legien stated his attitude to Oudegeest :—

"I have gone carefully into your proposal to remove the headquarters of the International to a neutral country, with my colleagues on the general committee. We are unanimously of the opinion that such a removal would be without practical importance.

No kind of practical work can be carried on by the International Secretariat at the present time. It can at most only endeavour to prevent international relations from being completely and try to maintain the friendly exchange of reports. This, in our view, can be done from Germany just as it has in the past (including the period of the war) by International Secretariats which have their Headquarters here.

Everything reported from Germany in this way, and the contents of our labour papers which now regularly reach the neutral countries, should go to prove unmistakably that our organised labour movement in Germany is very far from being chauvinistic. We accept the war as something which we could not prevent and we must of course, as things are, do everything to secure that the war has a favourable conclusion for Germany. We are quite free from hatred or contempt for our fellow workers in other countries which find themselves at war with Germany. In these circumstances we believe that it is possible for us to keep the International fully in being, so that the removal of the Secretariat does not appear to be called for. In any event we must wait for some time in order to obtain the views of the affiliated organisations. So far as the International Federation of Trade Unions is concerned, although I am in touch in the manner stated with nearly all the national centres, I have received no suggestion of removal from any quarter."

On November 23rd Legien sent the following circular dealing with this question to the affiliated national centres :—

To the T.U. National Centres,  
Dear Comrades,

The Dutch National Centre suggested the establishment, for the duration of the war, of a Correspondence Bureau of the

I. F. T. U. in a neutral country in order that the relations between the trade unions of the belligerent countries should not be altogether broken.

International correspondence during that period can only deal with general news, since there is hardly any possibility of settling business questions now. In recent months I have received letters from Comrades Jouhaux and Appleton. The connection with the centres of the countries at war with Germany is therefore not entirely broken. The attitude of the trade union leaders in France and Great Britain is the same as in Germany. It is that the war must be fought to the bitter end. The premises on which that opinion is based are however widely different, but it is not the proper time now to enquire into the correctness of those premises.

If the presidents of the national centres have the same opportunity as I have of reading regularly the labour press of all countries, they will admit that the German labour papers, apart from occasional lapses which we cannot prevent, have tried their utmost to present matters dispassionately. Whether my opinion is right or is brased by the fact that I am living in Germany, may be tested by a comparison of the press of the belligerent countries. An examination would show that there is little, if any reason for distrusting the management of the I. F. T. U. in Germany.

None the less it appears to me to be advisable to act upon the suggestion of the Dutch National Centre. Owing to the deficient postal communication between the belligerent countries, valuable materials may be lost which may be of the greatest importance for the critical study of the trade union movement in the present time and for the reconstruction of our international organisation.

Comrade Oudegeest, who has been in Berlin for the purpose of negotiations with the Transportworkers' Organisation, has declared himself willing to act as intermediary for the correspondence of the I. F. T. U.

I beg to ask the trade union national centres of the countries which are at war with Germany to send correspondence and materials henceforth to

*C. Legien, clo Oudegeest, Amsterdam, Reguliersgracht, 80.*  
The national centres of the neutral countries are asked to send correspondence and materials to the address of the I. F. T. U.

*C. Legien, Berlin SO. 16, Engelauer 15.*

The international translation bureau, contrary to expectation, has received translating orders from Germany sufficient to employ a staff of a few members, and to cover expenses.

On account of the high cost of printing which, owing to the non-payment of contributions by the national centres, cannot be defrayed, no international report can be issued this year. Besides, even if published, it would hardly receive attention in these times of turmoil. I hope to publish it in the middle of next year together with the report for 1914, and I beg you to send therefore, as far as possible, the materials for 1913.

It is surely not our fault that the work of organisation has been interrupted. Other factors than the working class have decided the course of events. We have to take things as they are. But I trust that it will not be difficult to reunite, after the termination of the war, the working classes of all countries under the banner of the economic struggle for a higher level of civilisation.

With fraternal greetings,  
*C. Legien.*"

This arrangement continued until the International Congress held in 1919; the headquarters of the I. F. T. U. continued to be Berlin as in the past, while correspondence with the trade unions of the Entente countries was carried on via Amsterdam.

### Relief Action for Belgium.

On December 9th, 1914, Oudegeest, in the name of the Dutch National Centre, wrote to Legien suggesting that relief action be taken for the Belgian workers. After describing the conditions existing in Belgium under the German occupation, and the intolerable position of the Belgian workers, Oudegeest continued :—

"Under normal circumstances we should not have hesitated for a moment to ask you to publish this appeal since, in your capacity as President of the International Federation of Trade Unions, you have the final decision. But in existing conditions there is, among the Belgians, (as has been made known to us from reliable sources) an attitude of mind which makes it out of the question for them to ask for the much-needed assistance through the Secretariat of the International Federation of Trade Unions. For our part we do not wish to criticise either this attitude or its cause ; we simply confine ourselves to stating that we can understand it.

In the interests of the Belgian trade union movement and above all in the interests of the future of our International, we ask you to take this mood into account on your side. We have enough confidence in your knowledge of men and things to expect that after this explanation, you will understand and will place no obstacles in the way of the steps we have taken to procure help for the Belgians and at the same time to preserve our international from disruption. We felt impelled to take the initiative after we had received detailed information of the wretched conditions in which our Belgian fellow workers are living and of the state of mind among them with regard to the International."

Legien declared at once his agreement with the Dutch proposal, and was himself of the opinion that the appeal must come from a neutral quarter. The following appeal was then addressed to the National Centres.

*Nederlandsch Verbond van Vakvereenigingen.*

*Amsterdam, December 1914.*

"To the Affiliated National Centres.

Dear Comrades,

It is now more than four months since the Belgian people were forced against their will into the war which has now spread over the greater part of Europe. It is more than four months since the war with all its horrors has been paralysing the economic life of the country. Everywhere the people, and particularly the workers, have been plunged into the deepest misery.

We believe that it is not necessary to describe the general situation in this war-stricken country. You will have learned enough from your own daily press.

But it seems to us to be all the more necessary to direct your attention to the results the war has had for the Belgian working class.

From the first day of the outbreak of hostilities work has been stopped in all factories and workshops, so that the workers not called to the colours to defend their country have with their families had to suffer from total unemployment.

One part of the country after another has been conquered and occupied by German troops. Wherever battles or skirmishes take place the workers have to leave their homes and flee to some other town or district and wait in fear for the moment when they must again flee to seek some new refuge.

It is obvious that unemployment in such circumstances must reach such dimensions that the trade unions are helpless in face of it and are not in a position to bring appreciable succour to the victims.

All public bodies on which the workers have representatives have, it is true, taken the necessary steps and everything is being done to feed the unfortunate, half-starved population as far as this is possible. The bare necessities of life are distributed, and here and there some slight assistance is also given in the shape of money.

But all this is quite insufficient to feed the workers and their wives and children. Everywhere there is the direst misery, which threatens to become even more acute with the approach of winter.

The Belgian trade unions, which have taken all possible steps to save their organisations from total destruction, have also done their utmost to aid their members in this terrible and tragic situation. But there is a limit to what is possible and the resources of the Belgian trade unions are now completely exhausted.

The Dutch National Trade Union Centre (Nederlandsche Verbond van Vakvereenigingen) has, after careful examination of the situation, decided to make an appeal to the class solidarity of the international working class on behalf of our Belgian comrades. With this object in view we have got into touch with the headquarters of the International Federation of Trade Unions (President, Karl Legien in Berlin). We have told him of our intentions and received information from him that the step we are taking has been noted.

We therefore take it upon ourselves, Comrades, to address an appeal to your organisation for assistance for the Belgian trade unions which are passing through such terrible and difficult times.

We ask you to bear in mind that our Belgian friends are in this painful situation today through no fault of their own. We hope that you will do everything in your power to aid the Belgian working class which had no other desire than to continue working peacefully for the betterment of their economic position and for their emancipation.

We ask you to forward your contributions to us as soon as possible. They will then be forwarded to the Belgian Trade Union Centre.

Thanking you in anticipation, and awaiting your early reply.

With fraternal greetings.

For the Dutch National Centre,  
*J. Oudegeest.*

There was a certain degree of doubt as to whether the Belgian trade unions would be prepared to accept money coming from Germany and Austria. A discussion took place between Legien and Oudegeest on this point, at which Oudegeest took up the attitude that negotiations with Belgium were not at the moment advisable, but that later on it would certainly be possible to make an arrangement. The General Commission of the German trade unions thereupon decided to start collections. A circular to the Executives of the various unions pointed out the difficulties of the situation and went on :—

"In spite of this, the General Commission decided to urge the unions to provide as much assistance as possible, because this would be of very great significance later on. There can be no better proof of the absurdity of the contention that the organised workers of Germany approve of everything that the German Government has on military grounds done to Belgium, than that the German trade unions should try to alleviate the misery caused to Belgium by the war. The workers of all countries will after the war be dependent on each other in their trade union activities just as they were before. None of the actions of the German workers in the war require an apology to the workers of other countries. On the other hand, however, they must do everything calculated to re-establish at an early date the good relations formerly existing between the workers. For this purpose the importance of giving assistance to the Belgian workers must not be underestimated."

### Further Developments. Conferences in Leeds and Stockholm.

In 1915 and the following years another interesting exchange of letters took place between the International Secretary and the Dutch branch office on the one hand and the national centres on the other, but it would take too long to reproduce even extracts of this correspondence. In general, the position was that the state of mind became worse and worse and the antagonisms greater and greater, although

at first the friendly tone of the letters left nothing to be desired. It will be sufficient to give a résumé here of events up to the meeting of the Berne Trade Union Conference in 1917, as outlined in the published report of the President of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The representatives of the national centres in France and Great Britain did not consider the establishment of the branch office in Holland to be sufficient. They proposed at the beginning of 1915 to remove the headquarters to a neutral country (Berne, Switzerland) and submitted this proposal to the president of the American Federation of Labor, who forwarded it to the president of the I. F. T. U. on March 4th, 1915. The reply would have been as friendly as the letter, but before it could be written, the organ of the British General Federation of Trade Unions published the correspondence on the matter. The question then took on an official character, and the president of the I. F. T. U. thought it advisable to ask the Dutch national centre to call together an international conference of the representatives of the trade union centres for the purpose of deciding upon the further composition of the I. F. T. U.

The Dutch national centre, with which personal negotiations were going on at Amsterdam concerning the calling of a conference, was not in favour of such a step and tried in the first place to arrive at an understanding with the national centres of Great Britain and France.

On May 14th 1915 the British General Federation of Trade Unions forwarded to the national centres a circular signed by Comrades Jouhaux and Appleton, asking them to send in their opinion to the General Federation of Trade Unions concerning the removal of the headquarters of the I. F. T. U. Considering that the result of the inquiry would have meant a referendum vote on the question of the removal of the I. F. T. U., and further considering that such a vote may only be taken at an international conference, the Dutch national centre decided to call for an international conference. The majority of the national centres affiliated to the I. F. T. U. declared thereupon

that such a conference was not necessary, since they did not desire to have changes during the war. Thus the matter was settled.

On July 5, 1916, a Trade Union Conference took place at Leeds (Great Britain) at which representatives of the national centres of Great Britain and France, and delegates from Belgium and Italy attended. Resolutions were carried concerning Labour demands in connection with a future Peace Treaty. The Confédération du Travail (C. G. T.) communicated them to the national centres asking them to send amendments or supplementary demands in this matter to the C. G. T.

The Conference at Leeds resolved likewise to establish at Paris an International Correspondence Bureau, a procedure which induced the president of the I. F. T. U. to send out circulars on October 4, 1916, calling an international conference for December 11, 1916, at Berne (Switzerland). This invitation was cancelled by circular of November 12, 1916, after the Scandinavian Trade Union Conference, held at Copenhagen, had passed the following resolution :—

"Whereas under the present circumstances it must be regarded as difficult to bring together an international conference with such a representation as appears desirable, and whereas various questions to be discussed at such a conference have not been sufficiently prepared, the representatives of the Scandinavian national centres, assembled at Copenhagen on November 10 and 11, 1916, after having carefully considered the matter with the representative of the International Secretariat, resolved to ask the latter to postpone the conference which had been called at Berne for December 11.

At a later date when the conditions shall have so far changed as to improve the prospect for a general attendance, a conference should be called together, at which the Labour demands in connection with the coming Peace Treaty could be discussed."

The Leeds Program was recast and supplemented by the Secretariat of the I. F. T. U. The materials, put together on February 1917, could not be forwarded, owing to the aggravation of the war.

At the last Christmas Conference of the French trade unions in Paris, their representatives had declared that they would send delegates to an international Conference called together by the Swiss Trade Union Federation to Switzerland. The national centres which paid their contributions to the I. F. T. U. during the war declared themselves in agreement with the Swiss invitation to such a conference. Thereupon the Swiss Federation applied on March 28, 1917, to the national centres of the U. S. A., Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Spain, asking them to decide in favour of participating in an international trade union conference convened by it.

While these proceedings were going on, it transpired that the Socialists were trying to convene an international Socialist conference at Stockholm for June 10, 1917, for the purpose of peace propaganda. It was necessary to submit to this conference the trade union peace demands, but they had first to be discussed by a trade union conference. Therefore the I. F. T. U. branch office at Amsterdam issued invitations for a conference to be held at Stockholm on June 8, 1917, after the Swiss Federation had declared that it could not take the initiative to convene the conference.

The conference was attended by the national centres of Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Holland, Norway, Austria, Sweden, and Hungary. The trade unions of the Allied countries which had taken part in the Leeds conference were not represented. It was suggested that the letters of invitation might have fallen into the hands of the censor and so not have reached the national centres in question.

Lindquist, the President, proposed at the beginning of the Conference (in agreement with Legien) that the social-political demands, drawn up partly by the Leeds Conference and partly by the Trade Union International, should not be dealt with, and that business should be confined to preparing for a new conference to which it would be possible for all countries to send representatives. The conference accepted this proposal and decided after exhaustive discussion on the following "In-

vitation to a general trade union conference", signed by all delegates :—

"This International Trade Union Conference of June 8th, 1917, attended by representatives of the trade unions of Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria, has taken note of the programme drawn up by the Trade Union Conference held in Leeds in July, 1916, and of the draft peace demands of the I. F. T. U.

The Conference regards the safeguarding of workers' rights, labour protection, and workers' insurance as the most important provisions to be inserted in the peace treaty which will finally be drawn up.

Since these questions are of vital concern to the working class of the whole world, the Conference does not consider it opportune to enter into the final discussion of them now. The Conference therefore decides in favour of the calling of a fresh Conference for September 17th, 1917, in Switzerland, so that the trade unions of all countries will be able to participate. The workers organised in trade unions in every land are hereby invited to send representatives to this Conference. The Stockholm Conference does not consider it advisable that the fresh Conference be called in accordance with the rule of the I. F. T. U. that each country have only three delegates, but that each country be permitted to send up to 10 delegates. It is however to be based on the rule that in a division each country shall have only one vote.

The Conference is convinced that such a gathering of representatives of the organised workers of the whole world will have great importance for the safeguarding of the position of the international working class and will further the cause of human progress.

Too long already the workers have been divided by the war. To unite them again on the ground of the struggle for workers' rights and workers' protection is a noble duty which calls us all to work together.

Stockholm, 8th July, 1917.

With fraternal greetings."

The Stockholm Conference had no reason for and no intention of adopting a hostile attitude towards the Conference in Leeds. In order that this might be made plain it was decided to send the following telegram to Jouhaux :—

"This Conference, consisting of representatives of the national organisations in Austria, Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and the branch office of the International Federation of Trade Unions in Holland welcomes the resolutions of the Leeds Conference of July 1916 as an important move in the interests of the organised workers of all countries, and as a pleasing sign of the intention to remove the divisions wrought among the workers by the war. The Conference regards it as its duty to declare its appreciation and it requests that you forward this message to the organisations represented at Leeds."

Legien stated further that in accordance with an earlier instruction he had prepared a draft scheme of reorganisation for the I.F.T.U. but that he considered it better to postpone discussion of this scheme until after the war. This was agreed to. A number of proposals were taken from Legien's draft at the discussion on new rules at the International Congress in 1919.

### International Conference at Berne, 1917.

Invitations to this Conference were issued by the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions on June 30th 1917, but by agreement with Legien the conference was called for October 1st instead of for September 17th, as had been decided at Stockholm. The agenda contained the following :—(1) Constitution, and place of headquarters of the I.F.T.U. (2) Proposals of the International trade unions for the peace conference. It had been decided that the discussion of political questions should be ruled out. Every country had the right to send up to 10 delegates.

The countries represented can be seen from the accompanying table. The French national centre wanted to take part in the conference, but could not send anyone, because the French government refused passports. The Italians were prepared to come if all countries were agreed on calling the conference. The Belgian and British trade unions bluntly declined to take part and the latter based their refusal on the

decisions of a conference of representatives of the trade unions of the Entente countries, held in London on September 10th and 11th. The attitude of the Belgians and the British gave rise to a long discussion, particularly hostile towards the communication from the latter, the absence of the Belgians being excused by some delegates.

The original sharp resolution moved by Hungary was considerably softened in the course of the discussion and was finally accepted in the following form :—

"This international conference greatly regrets that the French trade unions have been prevented by their government from sending representatives to Berne.

It takes note of the communication from the British national centre, explaining its absence from the Conference.

\* This refusal to take part in the conference appears incomprehensible, since it is in opposition to the aims and efforts of the international labour and trade union movement. This conference does not consider itself to be competent to decide the question of the complicity of the peoples and their governments in the war or its attendant events, and it therefore passes over the letter from the British trade union centre to the next item on the agenda. At the same time it expresses the ardent wish that leaders and rank and file in the organised working class movement in every country will use all the resources at their command to secure the early conclusion of peace."

The question of the removal of the headquarters to a neutral country led likewise to a lengthy discussion. Jouhaux in the telegram announcing the refusal of passports had expressed the wish "that the question of the removal of the office of the I. F. T. U. be examined and determined, in order to ensure the success of the next conference", and the Swiss comrades who had had an opportunity of discussing the matter with both sides vigorously supported the proposal to move the office to a neutral country. They drew attention to the danger that instead of gaining unity, two internationals might come into being, one for the Central and the other for the Entente powers.

A special commission had been appointed to deal with the question, and had submitted the following resolution :—

"The Conference does not reject in principle the question of removal of headquarters. However, the circumstances under which the removal of the I.F.T.U. headquarters is demanded, as well as the absence of the original movers themselves, induce the conference to adjourn the resolution concerning such an important question and to submit it to the next conference.

In order however to keep up the international relations between the affiliated national centres, the conference confirms the branch office at Amsterdam and instructs it to continue its intermediary work and develop it. The conference expects further that the national centres will do their level best to remove the still existing differences created by the war, and to restore unity."

After further discussion in full conference, this resolution was adopted against the opposition of the Swiss delegates.

Legien then made a declaration on behalf of the German delegation, as follows :—

"The representatives of the German unions declare that their refusal to agree at once to the removal must not be interpreted that they under all circumstances desire to keep the I.F.T.U. headquarters in Germany. They have taken up their attitude on account particularly of the opinions of British trade unions that the removal of the headquarters was tantamount to a vote of censure on Germany. The I.F.T.U. can only be maintained when there is full confidence in one another. As soon as all national centres are prepared to come together to a conference, the trade unions of Germany will be ready to discuss in a proper manner the question of the removal of the I.F.T.U."

It was further agreed on the motion of Fimmen to send the following telegram to the French and Italian national centres :—

"The delegates at the International Trade Union Conference at Berne send their fraternal greetings to their Comrades of the French and Italian national centres. They wish particularly to express their appreciation of the willingness of the French trade unions to send delegates to the international conference and hope that the French and Italian national centres will participate in the next conference, so

that the question of the proposed re-organisation of the International Federation of Trade Unions may be dealt with and settled, and the International Federation, made more powerful than ever, may be able to carry on its work in the interests of the workers of all countries."

On the 4th day the conference came to the discussion of proposals which had been drafted by a committee for submission to the peace conference on behalf of the international trade unions. The draft programme included freedom of movement, the right of combination, social insurance, hours of labour, hygiene and the prevention of accidents, home work, the protection of children, the protection of women workers, laws affecting seamen and the protection of seamen, and the introduction of legislation for the protection of labour. It is impossible to reproduce here the extensive demands which were after a short discussion accepted in the form presented by the committee. The conference also accepted a resolution moved by Leipart urging the trade unions to strive with all their power for the recognition and application of these demands of the workers, and to press them on their governments. The governments were requested to admit representatives of the trade unions to the settlement of the social-political part of the peace treaties.

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## V. Reconstruction after the War

### International Conference at Berne, 1919.

On October 26th, 1918, just before the close of the world War, Oudegeest, as acting president of the I.F.T.U., sent a circular letter to the national trade union centres, reading as follows :—

"Dear Comrades,

Yesterday I sent you the following wire :—

Please appoint delegates to International T. U. Conference at place and time of the official peace negotiations.

Agenda :—New Statutes. Removal of the international secretariat.

Peace Demands (Leeds and Berne programmes).

Election of Committee of Trade Union representatives for peace negotiations.

Letter follows.

Oudegeest.

Allow me to add to that telegram the following remarks :—

While nothing is as yet definitely fixed as to the date and place of the peace negotiations between the belligerent States, there is reason to believe and hope that these negotiations will before long commence.

In view of that possibility I think it of the greatest importance that the internationally organised workers should, at an early date, take measures calculated not only to reunite and strengthen the international bonds of the workers of the various nations, but also to secure as firmly as possible the vital interests of the working classes.

During the war it was emphatically pointed out on various occasions that the representatives of the national centres of all countries should come together to a conference as soon as

peace negotiations begin. I remind you only of the opinions expressed at Leeds in July, 1916, by the representatives of the trade union movements of the Entente countries, further of the resolutions of the Berne International T. U. Conference, and of the views developed by Mr. Sam Gompers, president of the A. F. of L., on that matter.

Based on those opinions and resolutions, I thought it right, at a moment when it is possible that the representatives of the belligerent nations may soon come together, to send off my wire, the contents of which are given above.

The questions which I, as the acting president of the I. F. T. U., have put on the agenda—which of course may be augmented by the national centres—hardly need any special explanations.

As the first item of the agenda I have put the discussion and fixing the new statutes of the I. F. T. U., the draft of which was sent to you at the end of 1915.

As the second item I have put the possible removal of the headquarters of the I. F. T. U., which are still in Berlin. At Leeds as well as at Berne the matter was dealt with and the discussions there have shown that such removal is desired by some national centres. I have therefore given that question a prominent place.

As to the third item—the peace demands—I likewise may refer to the discussions at Leeds and Berne. At both these conferences the representatives of the national centres were unanimously of opinion that the coming peace negotiations should be made use of with a view to fixing a minimum programme of the workmen's peace demands and to insure their execution. Both conferences carried essentially identical resolutions. The question now is to bring about unanimity among the workers of all countries. This, in my judgment, will be brought about at the first international conference of the trade union national centres, which will be convened as soon as possible.

The last item on the agenda is the election of a committee which should sit at the locality where the peace negotiations take place, in order to act in harmony and in cooperation with the workers' representatives in the official peace delegations for securing the adoption of the peace demands formulated by the international conference, and generally to take care of the interests of Labour. The appointing of such a committee is in harmony with the desire expressed by our friend Gompers.

I trust that you are also convinced of the importance of taking without delay all the steps necessary to strengthen as far as possible the influence of the working class at the peace negotiations and generally in the world after peace has been restored and that you are for the same reason in accord with the agenda put up by me.

I, therefore, beg to ask you to get the delegates appointed to the coming international trade union conference, and I suggest that the number of delegates should not exceed ten.

I am looking forward to your sending in the names of the delegates as well as new items which you would like to see on the agenda. As soon as the date and place of the peace negotiations are definitely known, an invitation will be wired to you.

Considering that the representatives of the capitalist governments of the belligerent countries will soon sit down together at the same table, I may express the hope that the representatives of International Labour will also come together for the purpose of laying the foundations of a new community of nations, in which liberty, equality, fraternity, and humanity will not be vain and empty words.

Awaiting your earliest reply, I send you my fraternal and international greetings.

*Oudegeest.*

As however the peace negotiations were unexpectedly delayed, and there was no certainty that the trade union conference could meet at the place at which the peace conference would be held, it seemed better to hold the trade union conference independently of the peace conference, and in a neutral country. Oudegeest had meanwhile had opportunities of discussion with the Executive of the British national centre and other comrades of the Entente countries, and had found that it was considered desirable to convene an international conference promptly, so that the trade union international might take up its former work again as soon as possible. The idea of holding this conference at Versailles was for various reasons given up and it was agreed that it should take place in neutral Holland. Austria, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Norway, Sweden, and

Switzerland had already signified their consent, and negotiations with the United States, Belgium and France were still going on. Italy and Spain had not replied, and no relations could be re-established with the Balkan countries. There was therefore reason to hope that nearly all the countries affiliated with the I. F. T. U. would be represented. Oudegeest therefore convened the Conference on February 3rd for March 8th at Amsterdam. Draft agenda and new rules had already been sent round.

During the interval an international trade union conference was held at Berne on the occasion of the International Socialist Congress held there from the 5th to the 9th February. This was preceded by a series of interviews between the various individual groups. Oudegeest, who had had nothing to do with the convening, was invited to attend by wire, but could only be present during the last day of the conference. The question of the removal of the headquarters was again a chief point of interest, and both the German and neutral representatives emphasised the incompetence of this conference. At last it was agreed to appoint a commission to draw up a resolution dealing with the reconstruction of the trade union international. This commission submitted the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted :—

"Though already before the war a strong and well-established international trade union movement had been one of the chief conditions for the rise of the working classes of all countries, this will be the more called for in the future. Recuperation of the ruined forces of all nations and the furtherance of the material and spiritual interests of the working classes will need strong trade unions in every individual country, which will be the more powerful according as they meet strength and mutual willingness to help, in the trade unions of all other countries.

Starting from these considerations the International Trade Union Conference held at Berne on the 6th and 7th February, 1919, by the trade unions of fifteen different countries, pronounces in favour of the earliest possible definite reconstruction of the trade union International. In consequence thereof, it commissions the branch office of the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam to convene a new International

Trade Union Conference as soon as circumstances allow, but not later than May of this year, in concert with the national centres affiliated to the Federation and the correspondence office of the trade unions of the Western States at Paris. The task of that conference will be to restore the integrity and solidarity of the trade union movement."

The date fixed by Oudegeest for the conference was considered too soon, and even that suggested by the Commission was found to give too short a time. The question which organisations were to be invited to the Conference was decided by asking, in addition to those affiliated with the I.F.T.U., those which applied for admission, the question of final admission being left to the Conference itself.

The Conference then dealt with the proposals of the international trade union organisations at the peace conference : in this matter they acted on the principle that the resolutions passed in this field at Leeds (1916) and Berne (1917) were already out of date, and must be extended.

The French delegation had proposed that the question of the League of Nations should be dealt with : but objections were raised on several sides, on the ground that this would be to forsake the trade union sphere, and would come into contradiction with the principles laid down at previous conferences. Bourderon, the French representative, opposed this view, however, declaring "that a time had set in that compelled them also to deal with political questions, which were, after all, human questions." The following words of Merrehelm, the French representative, are also worthy of mention : "Further, you say the League of Nations is a political question. So I ask :—Has not the war dragged away *all* the workers of *all* the nations from their families, and hurled them on the battle-fields without regard to their political convictions ? Is not the question of the League of Nations the very question of the working classes, of the International ? At the moment when the representatives of the German Republic are appealing to all nations, to all workers, for their assistance to ensure a just and permanent peace on the lines of the Fourteen Points of

President Wilson, are we to say no word here about this appeal? We in France also desire for Germany a just peace, in opposition to the views of our Government. If you want from us, in any form whatever, a denial of the League of Nations, you weaken our position as against our government, and you make it impossible for us to stand out for a just peace in the interest of the German workers."

The following resolution was accepted unanimously:

"This extraordinary International Trade Union Conference declares, without entering into particulars of the organisation of the League of Nations, that in accordance with the wishes of the great masses of the peoples the League of Nations shall not be a mere alliance of the ruling classes, whose tasks will only consist in the institution of compulsory arbitration and the limitation of armaments, but that it shall be founded on the will and the co-operation of all peoples.

The nations must no longer decide their own cases by force.

In order that the international sense of justice may be strengthened among the peoples, the League of Nations must be a community possessing an independent legal existence, freed from the oppression of individual governments.

The transition from war to peace shall be effected along the lines of general disarmament, and the freedom of the nations shall be defended solely by means of an international court of justice.

The League of Nations shall have legislative as well as judicial powers, which will have to be kept apart.

The proceedings of the League of Nations shall not be confined to the political sphere, but shall also further economic relations among the nations.

The economic tasks of the League of Nations shall be : to strengthen working capacity, to improve the education of the workers and to promote protective legislation, the rational and scientific organisation of labour, the international distribution of the necessary raw materials and the international regulation of financial traffic and of traffic in general.

The International Trade Union Conference declares however that if the working classes desire to prevent the League of Nations from becoming the centre of reaction and oppression, they will have to organise internationally and attain in this way sufficient power to enable them to become an effective controlling organ of the League of Nations."

There is a good deal of literature in book form dealing with the conferences, congresses and activities of the I. F. T. U. since 1919. We give the following titles :—

(1) Report of the Proceedings of the International Trade Union Congress, held at Amsterdam, July 28th to August 2nd, 1919, 56 pages. Price 2/6.

(2) Report of the International Trade Union Congress, held at Rome from the 20th to the 26th April, 1922. 110 pages. Price 2/6.

(3) Report of the special International Trade Union Congress, held at London from the 22nd to the 27th November, 1920. 119 pages. Price 2/6.

(4) Report of the International Peace Congress, held at The Hague under the auspices of the International Federation of Trade Unions from the 10th to the 15th December, 1922. 210 pages. Price 2/6.

(5) International Conference of Women Trade Unionists, held at Vienna on May 31st, 1924.

(6) Report of the Joint Conference of the Management Committee of the International Federation of Trade Unions with the International Trade Secretariats, held at Vienna from May 31st to June 2nd.

(7) Report of the Third Ordinary Trade Union Congress, held at Vienna from the 2nd to the 6th June, 1924.

(Nos. 5, 6 and 7 are combined with the Second Report on Activities 1922—1923 to form a single volume entitled "The Activities of the International Federation of Trade Unions, 1922—1924." 373 Pages. Price 4/-.)

(8) First Report of the Activities of the International Federation of Trade Unions from July, 1919, to December, 1921. 126 pages. Submitted to the ordinary Congress, Rome, April 1922. Price 2/-.

(9) Second Report on Activities of the International Federation of Trade Unions, during the Years 1922 and 1923. (See Remark on No. 7.) Price 2/6.

(10) The Decisions of the International Labour Conferences of Washington (1919) and Genoa (1920). 30 pages. Price 3/-.

In view of these books with their many thousand pages, it will be sufficient to deal briefly here with the events of the period 1919—1926.

### First International Trade Union Congress, held at Amsterdam in 1919.

The conference was not, as had been decided at Berne, held in May at the latest, but from the 28th July to 2nd August. It was preceded by a preliminary conference which met on the 25th and 26th July, and again on the 29th July. This conference was convened by the substitute president, Oudegeest, and was composed similarly to the conferences which had been held before the War, that is, each country sent 2 representatives. The function of the conference was to bring to a conclusion all business connected with the old International, and to prepare the standing orders for the Congress. The proposal to regard the proceedings as confidential was objected to by the Belgian delegation, which had to express its protests against the conduct of the Germans during the War: it was therefore decided to hold the proceedings publicly. On the question introduced by Mertens there were long discussions between Mertens, who was the spokesman for the Belgian protests, and Leglen, who defended the conduct of the German trade unions, and at the same time called attention to the intervention of the latter on behalf of the deported Belgians. Many other delegates spoke on the subject, and at times there was strong feeling. Eventually, Sassenbach, with the approval of Leglen, made the following declaration :—

"The German trade unions have always admitted that great injustice was done to Belgium: they have also always condemned the cruel acts committed during the occupation of Belgium. Nor have the German workers ever approved of the

deportations of Belgian workers : instead, they opposed them, so far as this was possible under war conditions.

The attitude of the German trade unions at the time of the outbreak of the War and during its progress was determined by the conditions in Germany. The German organised workers were firmly convinced that the war was one of defence for Germany. The German workers have always been opposed to war and armaments, and have never supported efforts for annexation. Had the German trade unions been of the opinion that Germany was the aggressor, their attitude and that of their representatives would have been different. We know that the workers of the Entente countries regarded as wrong many of our actions during the war, actions which in the midst of the bitter fight which the German people had to wage appeared to us natural. And we, too, do not understand many of the actions of the working-classes of the Entente countries. Everything which was done during war-time by the German trade unions was done in the belief that it was necessary in the vital interests of the German people, without doing wrong to the workers of other countries, or conflicting with our international undertakings."

The representatives of the trade unions of the Entente countries were satisfied with this declaration, and the past could be regarded as dead and buried.

There was some difficulty in determining the method of voting to be proposed to the Congress : eventually a proposal put forward by Dürr was adopted, to the effect that each affiliated national centre should have at least one vote, and a second vote for each additional million.

The Congress itself adopted the rules drawn up by a Commission with but little alteration. One of these amendments was that the affiliation fee proposed by the Commission—4 pfennigs, or 5 centimes ( $\frac{1}{2}d.$ ) per member—was reduced by about half, that is, to 1.2 Dutch cents. The election of a president was found to be a very thorny matter : and in the end Legien refused the post offered him as second vice-president, and did not therefore sit on the Executive. Appleton of Britain was elected president, Jouhaux of France first vice-president, and Mertens of Belgium second vice-president. The two Dutchmen, Oudegeest and Fimmen, were appointed secretaries.

Sanction was given to the Berne Programme of the Proposals of the international trade unions for the peace congress, and each national movement was charged to secure the immediate and complete realisation of these. The American and British representatives voted against this. When the question came up of attending the International Labour Conference to be convened at Washington, the commission which had been appointed proposed that delegates should only be sent if the representatives of the trade union movement of all countries were without any exception invited and admitted as delegates on an equal footing with the rest. This proposal was warmly supported by Jouhaux, and opposed with equal warmth by Gompers : it was then adopted against the votes of the United States and Britain, as was also the proposal that this resolution should be binding on all the national centres represented in the I. F. T. U. Gompers declared however at the end of the congress that he would do his best to help to reconstruct the International.

### **First Report on the Activities of the I. F. T. U.**

This report, which covers the period between the Amsterdam Congress and the end of the year 1921, begins with a few remarks concerning the course of the Amsterdam Congress and the difficulties which were still obstructing loyal cooperation.

These remarks were :

- "In August of 1919 fears might still have been entertained in certain quarters that the press commentary on the Amsterdam Congress—that the pot had fallen to pieces, and although plastered together, it was not at all certain that it would hold for long—might come true. These fears were however in course of time proved to be groundless."

It was then stated that Appleton, who had been elected president at the Congress, had resigned this post, and that he had been succeeded by J. H. Thomas. It was also stated

that it would be necessary for Germany to be represented in the Bureau, which at that time consisted of the president, the two vice-presidents, and the two secretaries : and that there must be more secretaries. The admission of the German and Austrian representatives to the Washington Labour Conference gave rise to a long correspondence, the upshot of which was that they were admitted, and nothing therefore stood in the way of the participation of the organisations affiliated with the I. F. T. U. in the

### **International Labour Conference at Washington.**

Of the members of the I. F. T. U. Bureau, Appleton, Jouhaux, Mertens and Oudegeest took part in the Conference. The Workers' Group, under the leadership of the I. F. T. U., worked both on commissions and in the plenary assemblies in complete unity : war was waged along the whole line against the governments and the employers and their antiquated ideas and principles. During its session from the 29th October to the 29th November, the Conference adopted draft conventions or recommendations on the following subjects : the limiting of the hours of work in industrial undertakings to eight in the day and forty-eight in the week : unemployment : reciprocity of treatment of foreign workers : the employment of women before and after childbirth : the employment of women during the night : the prevention of anthrax : the protection of women and children against lead poisoning : the establishment of government health services : the fixing of the minimum age for the admission of children to industrial employment : the night work of young persons employed in industry : and the application of the Berne Convention of 1906, on the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches.

### **The Second International Labour Conference at Genoa**

took place from the 15th June to the 10th July, 1920, and found the workers' group again under the leadership of the I. F. T. U. : it dealt solely with seafarers etc., and adopted

conventions or recommendations concerning : the limitation of hours of work in the fishing industry : the limitation of hours of work in inland navigation : the establishment of national seamen's codes : the fixing of the minimum age for admission of children to employment at sea : unemployment insurance for seamen : unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of the ship : the establishing of facilities for finding employment for seamen.

The unity of the workers' group has been steadily maintained at all succeeding international labour conferences, (which have been held once a year ever since) : even those workers' representatives whose organisations are not affiliated with the I.F.T.U. have recognised its leadership. Nothing need be said in this connection concerning the Fascist representatives.

The constitution of

### **The International Labour Office**

provides for the cooperation of the workers' representatives, who are, it is true, nominated by the governments, but only in agreement with the predominant labour organisation of the country. The workers' representatives also have six seats on the Governing Body, which has a membership of twenty-four. The unity of the workers' group has enabled it to obtain a great deal of influence both in the Governing Body and the Plenary Assembly, even although it has not managed to achieve all its desires. In general, there has been but little criticism of this cooperation in the International Labour Office.

The most important actions of the I.F.T.U. during the period covered by the First Report were :—

### **The Boycott against Hungary.**

The reaction in Hungary and the high-handed action of the courts of justice had become so intolerable that the Hungarian trade unions and Socialists appealed for help to the

workers' organisations of the other countries. They asked not merely for relief for the victims of the White Terror, but also for pressure by the Labour Parties on their respective governments, urging them to intervene with the Hungarian Government. As nothing worthy of mention was done, and the reaction was steadily strengthening, it was decided at the I.F.T.U. Bureau Meeting of the 10th and 11th May, 1920, to proclaim a boycott of Hungary on June 20th. The interval was employed in written negotiations : as however these were without effect, the boycott came into force on the appointed day. It could not be carried through with the requisite completeness, and was formally withdrawn on the 8th August. A full account of the negotiations may be found on pp. 37 to 48 of the Report on Activities, while on pp. 48—51 there is an account of the

### Action against the Transport of Munitions

a measure which was also decided upon in 1920. In the struggle between Poland and Russia in 1919—1920, European Labour took the side of Russia, regarding the Polish government as an agent of the Western European reaction. On August 19th, the I.F.T.U. Bureau resolved to co-ordinate this spontaneous movement of working-class solidarity and to render the campaign against military intervention in Russia and against the new "Holy Alliance"—an affair of the whole working class : "Not a train carrying munitions must be worked : not a ship laden with war materials must be allowed to leave harbour : not a single soldier must be transported." The Trade Union International also demanded that action should be taken in all countries to put an end to the manufacture of arms, in order to effect eventually general disarmament, which will assist in the liberation of the peoples from militarism and proportionately expand industrial production. The difficulties were of course very great : much was done to put into effect the boycott resolution, but complete success could not be attained. The action lapsed when peace negotiations were started between Russia and Poland.

In November, 1919, a beginning was made with the  
**Relief Movement on behalf of the Workers of Vienna.**

This movement was a brilliant success, over a million guilders having been raised at a moment of the utmost economic depression, caused by the War and the succeeding collapse. Coming at a time when the workers of Austria were in terrible straits, this assistance was a splendid proof of the international solidarity of the workers.

Of still wider scope was

**The Russian Relief Action**

which lasted from August, 1921, till 1923. Over two million Dutch guilders were collected. Full details will be found in the First Report on Activities, pp. 55—58, and in the Second Report on Activities, pp. 77—80.

**Special Trade Union Congress at London.**

Apart from Fimmen's speech on the international situation and the international trade union movement, the congress held in London from the 22nd to the 27th November, 1920, discussed only the economic questions which the War had forced into the foreground. Jouhaux spoke on "The Rate of Exchange Problem", Mertens on "The Distribution of Raw Materials for Industrial Purposes", and Oudegeest on "The Socialisation of the Means of Production". The speeches and discussions and the resolutions adopted have been published as a separate volume.

**The Second Ordinary International Trade Union  
Congress, held at Rome**

from the 20th to the 26th April, 1922, had first of all to devote its attention to questions of organisation, but it also discussed matters of a general nature. Jouhaux spoke on "The Economic Restoration of Europe", Fimmen on "Disarmament and the Action against War", and Mertens on "International Reaction, with special reference to the Eight Hour Day". Here, too, we may refer the reader to the full report, while pointing out briefly that it was decided in this year that a third vice-

presidency should be created, in order to enable a German representative to obtain a seat on the Executive. Leipart was elected as the new vice-president. The Bureau remained otherwise unaltered, although the question of increasing the number of the secretaries was under consideration.

### **The International Peace Conference at the Hague.**

This congress was held from the 10th to the 15th December, 1922. Invitations were sent out not merely to the trade union centres affiliated with the I. F. T. U., but also to trade union centres holding other views, cooperative bodies, political organisations, youth organisations, Pacifist organisations, and others, so that it attracted a good deal of attention, and doubtless did much to promote peace principles. Among the speeches were the following : "The Necessity of Concentrating all Pacifist Endeavours towards the Attainment of One Common Aim", by Jouhaux ; "The Mission of Organised Labour in the Movement for World Peace", by Fimmen ; "What the Governments and the Various Political Parties Have Done and Can Do in the Future, for the Promoting of Peace", by Arthur Henderson; "The Propagation of Peace Ideals among the Rising Generation", by Buisson; and "The Pacifist Organisations and Their Part in the World Movement against War", by von Gerlach.

### **The Second Report on Activities of the International Federation of Trade Unions.**

This Report covers the years 1922 and 1923. With regard to the Executive, the Report stated that, in accordance with the Rome resolution, one full secretary (Sassenbach) and one assistant secretary (Brown) had been added to the two secretaries already in the employ of the I. F. T. U. Fimmen resigned in 1923, and Brown was promoted to be full secretary. On account of currency depreciation in various countries (especially Germany), which hit the finances of the I. F. T. U. very hard, the staff employed by the I. F. T. U. had to be reduced by one-half. It was however possible to keep going fairly well. The press service was completely reorganised. Workers'

education was taken up for the first time. The fight against war, militarism and reaction was effectively continued, joint work being done with the Labour and Socialist International and the Youth International. An attempt was made, also in conjunction with the Labour and Socialist International, to take steps to prevent the impending occupation of the Ruhr, but unfortunately the International Labour Movement was not strong enough to help the French working class to keep under French militarism. An international relief action was organised in aid of the German trade unions, which were almost on the point of collapse through the inflation, a total amount being raised of 494,490 Dutch guilders.

The relations between the International Federation of Trade Unions in Amsterdam and the Red International of Labour Unions in Moscow occupied the attention of almost every meeting of the Executive and General Council in the years 1922 and 1923, and gave rise to long controversy in the press. Attention continued to be given to the economic reconstruction of Europe, which had been the subject of the International Trade Union Congress of London, and it may be said that the resolutions of the labour organisations have not been without their influence on the governments. Cooperation with the International Labour Office of Geneva was continued as before throughout these years. For a short time the I.F.T.U. also cooperated with the International Cooperative Alliance.

### **The Third Ordinary Trade Union Congress of Vienna.**

This congress was preceded by an International Conference of Trade Union Women and a Conference of the Management Committee of the I.F.T.U. with the International Trade Secretariats. The Congress itself was held at Vienna from the 2nd to the 6th June. Besides the usual organisational questions the Congress also discussed "The Organisational Relations between the I.F.T.U. and the International Trade Secretariats" (speaker Oudegeest), "The Position of the I.F.T.U. in the International Labour Movement" (speaker Leipart), "The International Fight against War and Militarism"

(speaker Jouhaux), "The International Fight for the Eight Hour Day" (Mertens) and "International Social Legislation" (Oudegeest). At the proposal of the British delegates, A. A. Purcell was elected president of the I. F. T. U. instead of J. H. Thomas, who had resigned his post on account of becoming a member of the British Government.

The resolutions of the International Conference of Trade Union Women and of the Conference of International Trade Secretaries were approved. The Rules were revised: one of the amendments being that ordinary international trade union congresses will in future be held only once in three years. Paris was designated as the place of the next congress. The Congress also considered the relations of the I. F. T. U. with the Red International of Labour Unions.

Those who took part in the congress will never forget the mass demonstration arranged by the workers of Vienna: the congress showed its appreciation by the presentation of a banner to the workers of Vienna.

### After the Vienna Congress.

A comprehensive report dealing with the events of the years 1924, 1925 and 1926 will be submitted to the congress to be held at Paris in August, 1927: here therefore it will suffice to give a brief outline of the facts.

In 1924 a relief action on behalf of Georgia was organised, and the funds raised were used to send out a large consignment of medicaments. Another relief action, started to help the German trade unions which were suffering from the currency depreciation, yielded 494,490 Dutch guilders; a third in 1925 for the great Danish conflict resulted in the collection of 4,423,201 Danish kronen; and a fourth, on behalf of the Indian textile-workers, brought in 34,000 guilders. It has not yet been possible to make up the final balance-sheet for the relief action started during the present year in aid of Great Britain.

The action against war and militarism has gone steadily on. The culminating point was the Anti-War Day, held in 1924, which was prepared by the issue of a series of articles

by well-known leaders of the International Labour Movement, and was celebrated by a large number of effective demonstrations throughout the world. Unremitting war has also been waged against reaction and fascism : the fight against the latter carried on in the session of the International Labour Conferences has been conducted in a manner found very unpleasant by the Fascists.

The fight for the Eight Hour Day and the Ratification of the Washington Agreement has always been in the forefront, and has already had a certain measure of success, in that Belgium has ratified the Convention : a step which, it is to be hoped, will soon be imitated by other nations.

The Russian question has also had much attention since the Vienna Congress. The resolution of that Congress recommended the Executive to continue consultations, so far as that is compatible with the dignity of the I.F.T.U., with the object of securing the inclusion of Russia in the international trade union movement through the necessary acceptance of the Federation Rules and conditions. This led to renewed negotiations, which have not yet proved successful.

To the Danish, Dutch, English, French and German press reports there has been added an edition in Spanish, especially intended for South America. It has thus become possible to enlighten the South American trade unions as to the aims and activities of the I.F.T.U. The affiliation of the newly-created Argentinian trade union centre is the firstfruits of this extension of activity.

In spite of very friendly relations with Mr. Green, the successor of Gompers, it has not been possible to effect the re-affiliation of the American Federation of Labour : Norway, Finland and Portugal also hold aloof from the I.F.T.U. In Lithuania and Estonia trade unionism is at a very low ebb. Greece will not affiliate formally till next year : in the meantime, however, the Balkan Conference held at Sofia has established very close relations with all the countries of South Eastern Europe. Successful amalgamation negotiations have been conducted in Czechoslovakia between the separate trade union organisations of the German and Czech workers.

International educational conferences have been held at Brussels and Oxford; international summer schools at Schönbrunn and Oxford in 1924, at Brunnsvik and Prague in 1925 and at Brussels in 1926. A preparatory migration conference held at Prague in 1924 was followed by the world migration conference of London in 1926.

Full information as to the development of the trade union movement in the individual countries is to be found in the Year Book of the I. F. T. U., which has been published every year since 1922. According to the Year Books, the affiliated membership of the I. F. T. U. during the period 1904—1924 was:

1904	2,477,077	1915	5,168,429
1905	2,949,453	1916	5,234,343
1906	3,664,707	1917	6,996,572
1907	4,097,002	1918	10,359,805
1908	4,237,547	1919	23,170,006
1909	5,807,799	1920	22,701,103
1910	6,118,748	1921	21,991,615
1911	6,900,319	1922	18,185,531
1912	7,383,420	1923	15,316,127
1913	7,702,368	1924	13,133,004
1914	6,843,909		

From the above table it will be seen that the membership of the Trade Union Movement moved steadily upward until the outbreak of the War. The rise then came to a standstill, but at the close of the War set in again to an overwhelming extent : it was very evident that reaction was bound to follow. The 1920 figure however really shows an increase also, since the figures given for this year do not include the 3,360,068 members which were given in the previous year's figures as belonging to the American Federation of Labour. It is almost certain that the end of the year 1925 will show a slight increase in membership.

The following tables show which countries were represented at the various conferences and congresses, and the persons acting as delegates :

Country	I Copenhagen 1901	II Stuttgart 1902	III Dublin 1903	IV Amsterdam 1903
Belgium	A. Octors	—	—	A. Octors
Denmark	J. Jensen	J. Jensen	Martin Olsen	Martin Olsen
Germany	Carl Legien	Carl Legien	Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach	Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach
Finland	H. Drokila	—	—	—
Great Britain	Isaac Mitchell	Pete Curran James O'Grady	Pete Curran Isaac Mitchell und 14 Mitglieder d. Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions	T. Malallieu Isaac Mitchell
Norway	A. Pedersen	A. Pedersen	A. Pedersen	Joh. Johnsen
Sweden	Herm. Lindquist	Herm. Lindquist	—	Ernst Söderberg
France	Vic. Griffuelhes	Victor Griffuelhes	Victor Griffuelhes George Yvetot	—
Holland	—	G. van Erkel	A. W. Ammerlaan G. van Erkel	J. W. Bonnet G. van Erkel A. Spierdijk
Italy	—	A. Cabrini	A. Cabrini	—
Austria	—	Anton Hueber J. Rousar	Anton Hueber	Anton Hueber
Switzerland	—	A. Calame	—	—
Spain	—	A. G. Quejido	—	Vincente Barrio
Hungary	—	—	—	Samuel Jászai
Croatia	—	—	—	—
Bosnia and Herzegov.	—	—	—	—
Bulgaria	—	—	—	—
Roumania	—	—	—	—
Serbia	—	—	—	—
United States	—	—	—	—

V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
Christiania 1907	Paris 1909	Budapest 1911	Zurich 1913	Amsterdam 1919
C. Huysmans	J. Bergmans C. Huysmans	J. Bergmans	C. Mertens	C. Mertens G. Solau
Carl F. Madsen Martin Olsen	Carl Gran Carl F. Madsen	Carl Gran Carl F. Madsen	Carl F. Madsen	Carl F. Madsen
Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach	Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach	Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach	Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach	Carl Legien Joh. Sassenbach
K. Wartainen	—	—	O. Tokoi	—
Pete Curran Allen Gee	W. A. Appleton Allen Gee	W. A. Appleton James O'Grady	W. A. Appleton James O'Grady	W. A. Appleton Ben Tillett
Rich. Hansen Ole O. Lian	Ole O. Lian	—	Ole O. Lian	Ole O. Lian Jens Teigen
Herm. Lindquist Ernst Söderberg	—	Arvid Thorberg	Ernst Söderberg	Arvid Thorberg
—	L. Jouhaux George Yvetot	L. Jouhaux George Yvetot	G. Dumoulin L. Jouhaux	G. Dumoulin L. Jouhaux
J. Oudegeest	J. Oudegeest	J. Oudegeest	J. Oudegeest	Ebo Fimmen J. Oudegeest
A. Cabrini	R. Rigola F. Quaglino	L. D'Aragona	L. D'Aragona F. Quaglino	—
Anton Hueber S. Zulawski	Anton Hueber F. A. Jura	Anton Hueber F. Rautenkranz	Anton Hueber Franz Nader	Franz Domes Anton Hueber
—	Aug. Huggler	Aug. Huggler	Aug. Huggler Rob. Kolb	Karl Dür Ch. Schürch
—	Vincente Barrio	Vincente Barrio	Vincente Barrio	Julian Besteiro F. L. Caballero
Samuel Jászai	Samuel Jászai	Samuel Jászai K. Teszárssz	Samuel Jászai	—
—	Wilh. Bukscheg	Wilh. Bukscheg	Wilh. Bukscheg	—
—	—	Franz Rauscher	Franz Rauscher	—
—	—	G. Karpousoff J. Sakasoff	—	—
—	—	G. Christescu	—	—
—	—	D. Laptchewitsch D. Tucovic	—	—
—	—	James Duncan	George W. Perkins	Samuel Gompers John J. Hynes Daniel J. Tobin

Country	Trade Union Conference 1917 Berne	Trade Union Conference 1919 Berne
Belgium . . . . .	— — — — — — — —	— — — — — — — —
Bulgaria . . . . .	Dr. N. Sakasoff Janko Sakasoff	Dimitroff Janko Sakasoff
Canada . . . . .	—	Gus. Franco
Denmark . . . . .	J. A. Hansen P. Hedeboe Carl F. Madsen — — — —	Karl Kiefer J. P. Nielsen — — — —
Germany . . . . .	G. Bauer A. Brey B. Döblin K. Hübsch W. Jansson C. Legien Th. Leipart F. Paeplow H. Sadse J. Sassenbach — — —	K. Hübsch W. Jansson H. Jäckel H. Kube — — — — — — — —
France . . . . .	— — — — — — — —	M. Bidegaray A. Bourderon P. Chanvin Doumenq Dumas G. Dumoulin Imbs L. Jouhaux Lefevre Luquet A. Merrehelm A. Rivelli A. Savoie Petridis
Greece . . . . .	—	

1st Ordinary Congress 1919 Amsterdam	Extraordinary Congress 1920 London	2nd Ordinary Congress 1922 Rome	3rd Ordinary Congress 1924 Vienna
B. Martel C. Mertens G. Solau L. Uytroever — — — — —	J. Baect L. Gris E. Gryson Ch. Hannick A. Hellinckx E. Mallien C. Mertens J. Solau P. Somers	J. Bondas G. Laroche A. Lombard C. Mahlmann C. Mertens Petit L. Uytroever J. van Staeyen J. Verdonk	J. Baect J. Bondas P. Debruyne A. Detattice J. Lauwers E. Martel C. Mertens G. Rongy G. Solau
— — — — —	— — —	G. Danoff —	G. Danoff —
—	H. J. Halford	—	Tom. Moore
V. P. Arup J. A. Hansen K. Kiefer C. F. Madsen J. P. Nielsen R. Poulsen — —	J. A. Hansen H. Jacobsen C. M. Lyngsie C. F. Madsen Mart. Petersen — —	J. A. Hansen P. Hedeboel M. Kristensen C. F. Madsen A. Nielsen R. Poulsen Frau S. Rasmussen Th. Stauning	Frau A. Andersen V. P. Arup V. Christensen H. Jacobsen Chr. Jensen Vilh. Nygaard M. Petersen Chr. Sorensen
A. Brey K. Höbsch C. Legien H. Leipart P. Paeplow H. Sachse J. Sassenbach O. Schumann J. Seitz — — —	S. Aufhäuser L. Brunner R. Difmann P. Graßmann Otto Hue C. Legien Fr. Paeplow Fr. Scheffel G. Schmidt J. Seitz J. Simon O. Sireine O. Urban	S. Aufhäuser A. Brey A. Cohen R. Difmann E. Haucisen Fr. G. Hanna Th. Leipart F. R. Müntner F. Paeplow M. Spreeberg P. Tarnow O. Urban —	S. Aufhäuser P. Blum A. Brey J. Diermeyer P. Graßmann Fr. G. Hanna Fr. Husemann G. Reichel Fr. Scheffel A. Schönfelder O. Urban —
C. Bartuel M. Bidegaray A. Bourderon P. Chanvin G. Dumoulin L. Jouhaux A. Luquet F. Mammale A. Merrheim Million A. Rivelli A. Savoie —	M. Bidegaray A. Bourderon Mlle. J. Bouvier P. Chanvin G. Dumoulin E. Imbs L. Jouhaux A. Merrheim P. Perrot M. Roux V. Vandepitte E. Vignaud	A. Bourderon Mlle. J. Chevenard Mlle. J. Chevenard H. Cordier G. Dumoulin L. Jouhaux A. Merrheim E. J. M. Rollan — — — —	Biot Chéreau G. Guiraud Harmel L. Jouhaux H. Labe R. Lenoir — — — —
—	—	—	—





<b>C o u n t r y</b>	<b>Trade Union Conference 1917 Berne</b>	<b>Trade Union Conference 1919 Berne</b>
<b>Norway . . . . .</b>	R. Hansen O. Ruud — —	P. Aarø Olav Kringsen D. Ole Lian —
<b>Austria . . . . .</b>	P. Domes J. Grönwald P. Hanusch A. Hueber R. Möller — — — —	P. Domes J. Gion J. Grönwald — — — —
<b>Palestine . . . . .</b>	— —	— —
<b>Poland . . . . .</b>	— — — — —	— — — — —
<b>Roumania . . . . .</b>	—	—
<b>Sweden . . . . .</b>	J. Jönsson Herm. Lindquist B. Söderberg Claes E. Tholin Arvid Thorberg — — — — —	K. Holmström E. Söderberg A. Thorberg — — — — —
<b>Switzerland . . . . .</b>	K. Dürr H. Eugster A. Grosspierre A. Huggler B. Nicolet F. Reichmann Emile Ryser J. Schlumpf O. Schneeberger Alb. Senn A. Vuattolo	E. Duby } K. Dürr } A. Grosppierre } A. Huggler } K. Ig } E. Marti } B. Ryser } O. Schneeberger } Ch. Schürch }





1st Ordinary Congress 1919 A m s t e r d a m	Extraordinary Congress 1920 L o n d o n	2nd Ordinary Congress 1922 R o m e	3rd Ordinary Congress 1924 V i e n n a
J. Besteiro F. L. Caballero	J. Besteiro F. L. Caballero	J. Besteiro F. L. Caballero	F. L. Caballero A. F. Ribas A. Saborit
—	—	—	A. Crawford
V. Skursky R. Tayerle	J. O. Hals Fr. Kadlec F. Nemecák R. Tayerle	R. Beran V. Brodecky R. Klein P. Kusnier F. Stank J. Straus R. Tayerle Q. Winter	J. Bečko V. Brodecky L. Brožík A. Hampl B. Jakubka Fr. Kadlec R. Klein V. Nemecek V. Slach J. Staněk R. Tayerle
—	—	—	Frau A. Trojánská A. Turner
—	—	—	E. Deutsch S. Jászai N. Kertész
—	S. Jászai G. Malasitz	S. Jászai M. Rothenstein	Frau A. Keithly J. Peidl
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—
S. Gompers J. J. Hynes Daniel J. Tobin	—	—	—
	—	—	—

## VI. International Trade Secretariats.

No presentation of the growth of the international trade union movement would be complete without mention of the international trade secretariats. They have helped, each in their different degrees, to bring together the workers of the various countries : in fact, international organisation in individual trades often preceded the organisation of unions into national centres. This two-sided centralisation of the trade unions has proved its value ; there have never been difficulties in the cooperation of the various bodies catering internationally for the various trades, since each has its own special tasks to do. The international secretariat of the national trade union centres and the international trade union conferences convened by it have always promoted the international centralisation of the trades, and these in their turn have always urged affiliation with the national centre.

The Conference at Christiania (1907) was the first to take up this question : it passed unanimously the following resolution on the subject :—

“The fifth international conference is of opinion that for general reasons of solidarity as well as for reasons of prudence in view of the rapid growth of the employers' combinations, the separate trade unions should affiliate to their respective federations in their own country and that, for the same reasons, those federations should affiliate with their respective national trade union centre.

When this duty is accomplished and only then, this Conference advises the separate federations of every country to federate with their separate federations of all other countries, thereby securing much greater support of important struggles than could be given by their national centre alone. At the same

time this will also help to further international brotherhood and solidarity among the workers."

When an item on the agenda entitled "The Organisation of Seafarers", was proposed by Norway, the Christiania Conference decided not to handle it, but to leave it to the Seafarers' International.

The International Conference of Budapest (1911) amplified the Christiania resolution in the following way:

"The International Conference at Budapest, renewing the decision of the Christiania conference in 1907, that all trade unions should join their respective national centre, invites the international trade federations and secretariats to admit only those unions who are members of their own national centre of trades unions, and further to bring pressure to bear upon the non-affiliated unions in order to induce them to join the national centre of their country."

Statistics of the international trade secretariats were first given in the Report of the International Secretary for 1911, and accounts of the various secretariats also appeared then for the first time. In that year there were 28 secretariats, 24 of which had their headquarters in Germany. These were the bakers, the bookbinders, the brewery workers, the building workers, the china workers, the factory workers, the furriers, the glass-workers, the hairdressers, the hatters, the hotel, restaurant and bar employees, the leather-workers, the lithographers, the metal-workers, the painters, the potters, the workers in public services, the saddlers, the stone-setters, the shoe and leather-workers, the tobacco-workers, the transport-workers, the typographers, and the wood-workers. The miners' and textile-workers' secretariats were in Britain, the commercial employees in Holland, and the stone-workers in Switzerland. Twenty-two of these secretariats gave information concerning the affiliated countries, organisations and memberships.

The Zurich Conference of 1913, at which there were for the first time representatives of the International Trade Secretariats, discussed thoroughly the relations between the national centres and the international trade secretariats.

Roumania, although unrepresented, had made the proposal that only those unions should belong to the international trade secretariats which were affiliated with the competent national centres. Legien objected, pointing out that the resolutions of Christiania and Budapest had put in the form of a *desire* what the Roumanian national centre now wished to make obligatory. He thought the time was not ripe for this, and it would be better to confirm the wish expressed in previous conferences.

Most of the delegates of national centres and international trade secretariats were of this opinion, but Jouhaux, Mertens and D'Aragona supported the Roumanian proposal, whereupon Fimmen remarked that it was interesting to note that the Roumanian proposal would only be likely to be carried into effect in a few Germanic countries, yet it was advocated by the Romance countries in which it was absolutely unworkable. Perkins agreed in principle with the Roumanians, but was willing to drop their proposal on account of Legien's objections. A resolution proposed by Hueber was eventually carried. It runs as follows :—

"The Conference declares that it maintains the previous resolutions concerning the mutual duties to each other of the national centres and the international trade secretariats, to induce unaffiliated organisations to affiliate; and it refers back the proposal of the Roumanian national centre."

The same question was placed on the agenda of the First Conference of the International Trade Secretariats, which was held in connection with that of the international trade union centres. Little was said that was new and finally a rather mild resolution proposed by Tom Shaw, of the international textile-workers, was unanimously adopted: viz.:

"This Conference of the national and international trade secretaries is of opinion that international organisation will be greatly promoted by closer relations between the international trade secretariats and the international bureau, and by the maintenance of a permanent translation department in the international bureau."

Negotiations followed concerning the standardisation of reports and statistics and it was decided to instruct a Com-

mission of Three to prepare general rules for the compilation of statistics.

The desire was also expressed that the international trade secretaries might in future be invited to attend the conferences of the national centres.

The World War stopped the work of the international trade secretariats, especially as, with two exceptions, they all had their seats in belligerent countries. None of the trade secretaries took part either in the Berne Conferences or in the International Trade Union Congress at Amsterdam: but eighteen of them were represented at the Special Trade Union Congress of London. They shared in the revival of trade unionism which marked the immediate post-war period: at the end of 1921 21 million workers were organised in international trade secretariats. At the Rome Congress there were many representatives of international trade secretariats, and they took a lively part in the debates. Here, too, a resolution was passed declaring that the trade or industrial unions of the various countries ought to affiliate both with their national centres and with their international trade secretariates. It was also under contemplation that the Executive of the I. F. T. U. should, when necessary, convene special conferences with the trade secretaries.

During the congress there was also a special conference of the Executive of the I. T. F. U. with the representatives of the trade secretariats, in which were discussed the tasks of the trade secretariats, their participation in trade union congresses, and the duty of their members to join the national trade union centres. The Russian question was already a factor at this time, as also at the negotiations which followed the congress. On November 9th, 1923, a conference was held of the executive of the I. F. T. U. and the trade secretaries, at which resolutions were passed, some unanimously, others with a large majority, concerning the relations between the I. F. T. U. and the international trade secretariats. The text of this agreement is to be found in the Report of the International Trade Union Congress of Vienna,

together with a full account of the relations between the international trade secretariats and Moscow.

A conference between the international trade secretariats and the I. F. T. U. also preceded the Vienna Congress, and a full report of it was recorded. The short resolution passed at this conference was later confirmed by the Congress, and is to-day in operation : it reads as follows :—

"This Conference of international trade secretariats of May 31st and June 1st, 1924, declares that the International Federation of Trade Unions is to be recognised as the only international organisation of trade unions.

The resolutions of the Conference of the International Federation of Trade Unions and the International Trade Secretariats of 9 and 10 November, 1923, will be recognised as guiding principles.

The Conference further decides that, should the International Trade Secretariats find themselves compelled to deviate from this rule, they are requested to refer beforehand to the Management Committee of the International Federation of Trade Unions or at least to a meeting of the Bureau, with the addition of the three representatives of the international trade secretariats."

#### *Declaration :*

The representatives of the International Trade Secretariats declare that they consider collaboration with the International Federation of Trade Unions as necessary and that it is in the spirit of para. 4 of the guiding principles for the Trade Secretariats that they agree with the clause : Should the international trade secretariats find themselves compelled to deviate from the rule, they are requested to refer beforehand to the Management Committee of the International Federation of Trade Unions or at least to a meeting of the Bureau with the addition of the three representatives of the International Trade Secretariats.

(Para. 4 reads as follows : The International Trade Secretariats pledge themselves not to take final decisions in regard to general questions which lie outside the domain of their respective trades, or in regard to special questions affecting the interest of other trade union organisations, without first consulting with the Management Committee of the International Federation of Trade Unions, or at least with the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions.)

The Vienna Congress approved of the appointment of three of the trade secretaries to represent the international trade secretariats on the General Council of the I. F. T. U., and thus secure cooperation without friction.

The general bases in all negotiations between the I. F. T. U. and the international trade secretariats are that the I. F. T. U. is an organisation representing the national trade union centres, and that the international trade secretariats are not directly affiliated, but that there is friendly cooperation. But in order to make this cooperation as effective as possible, representatives of the trade secretariats were appointed at a later meeting, for the purpose of drawing up, together with the I. F. T. U., principles guiding the relations between the I. F. T. U. and the I. T. S. These deliberations are not yet at an end.

The following information has been received directly from the international trade secretariats in reply to the questions given below :

## Questions

- (1) In what year was your Secretariat founded ?
  - (2) What international connections led the way to its establishment ?
  - (3) Where was the Secretariat originally established ? Have the headquarters ever been transferred ? If so, please give particulars.
  - (4) A list of the Secretaries, with particulars as to the dates during which they held office.
  - (5) What international congresses or conferences have taken place ?
  - (6) Is your Secretariat the result of the amalgamation of several previously independent, international Secretariats ? If so, when were these founded, and when did the amalgamation take place ?
  - (7) Can you let us have more recent figures with regard to the number of affiliated countries, organisations and members, than we have already received for the 1926 Year Book of the I. F. T. U. ?
-

## **Book-Binders.**

### **The International Federation of Bookbinders and Kindred Trades.**

- (1) 1907.
  - (2) In 1902 the Austrian union proposed an international conference, then the German Congress of 1904 advocated closer international relations, and the German union issued a questionnaire on the subject to the unions, but without result. The Austrian union renewed its efforts, and a fresh invitation of the German Union led to the international conference of the year 1907.
  - (3) 1907—1919 Berlin, 1920 to the present Berne.
  - (4) 1907—1919 Emil Kloth, 1920 to the present H. Hochstrasser.
  - (5) 1907 Nuremberg, 1910 Erfurt, 1913 Brussels, 1920 Berne, 1923 Leipzig.
  - (6) —
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 17 organisations with 79,800 members.
- 

## **Building Workers.**

### **The Building Workers' International.**

- (1) 1903.
- (2) Before the founding of the Building Workers' International, the German Masons' Union had relations with the building workers' unions in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Austria and Ger-

many : the relations of the German Masons' Union with the masons' unions of the Scandinavian countries were however chiefly confined to friendly intercourse, without any special economic background. The relations with the building workers' organisations of Italy, Austria, Hungary and Holland were somewhat different, although of course also friendly. In these countries the German Masons' Union tried to strengthen organisation by providing funds and sending propagandists, and to prevent the recruiting of strike-breakers for Germany.

- (3) 1903 to the present Hamburg.
  - (4) 1903—1913 Theodor Bömelburg, 1913—1919 Fritz Paeplow, 1919 to the present Georg Käppler.
  - (5) 1903 Berlin, 1907 Stuttgart, 1910 Copenhagen, 1919 Amsterdam, 1921 Innsbruck, 1922 Vienna, 1924 Stockholm.
  - (6) On the 1st January, 1925, the Carpenters' International was amalgamated with the Building Workers' International. The Carpenters' International was also founded in 1903, at a Conference in Berlin. Its seat was always Hamburg. Later conferences were held at Cologne in 1907, and at Hamburg in 1913. The amalgamation was necessary because in course of time the carpenters' organisations in all countries except Denmark and Germany had joined the general building workers' unions.
  - (7) Affiliations on the 31st December, 1925, numbered 26 organisations with 756,059 members.
- 

## Clothing Workers.

### The International Clothing-workers' Federation.

- (1) 1893.
- (2) Nothing is known of earlier international relations.

- (3) 1894—1920 Berlin, 1920 to the present Amsterdam.
  - (4) 1894—1900 Mrs. Klara Zetkin, 1900—1920 Heinrich Stühmer, 1920 to the present T. van der Heeg.
  - (5) 1893 Zurich, 1896 London, 1900 Paris, 1904 Dresden, 1908 Frankfort o. M., 1913 Vienna, 1919 Amsterdam, 1920 Copenhagen, 1924 Vienna.
  - (6) On January 1st, 1925, the International Furriers' Secretariat was amalgamated with the International Clothing Workers' Federation. The former was founded in 1894, and until 1901 had had its seat in Vienna ; it was then transferred to Berlin in 1910. The secretaries were : 1894—1901 Jos. Waslawik, 1901—1908 Kobis, 1908—1909 Schubert and lastly A. Regge. Congresses were held 1894 Brussels, 1902 Hamburg, 1906 Leipzig, 1909 Brussels, 1912 Vienna, 1921 Leipzig and 1924 Berlin.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 29 organisations with 315,447 members.
- 

## Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees.

The International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees.

- (1) 1920.
- (2) Before the War there had been an international secretariat, founded in 1910 at Copenhagen, but later closed down.
- (3) 1920 to the present Amsterdam.
- (4) 1920 to the present G. J. A. Smit Jr.
- (5) 1920 Amsterdam, 1921 Vienna, 1925 Copenhagen. Section-conferences : *bank-clerks* 1922 Berlin, 1925 Copenhagen ; *technical employees* : 1922 Berlin, 1925 Copenhagen.

(6) —

- (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 41 organisations with 725,103 members.
- 

## Diamond Workers.

### The Universal Alliance of Diamond-workers.

(1) 1905.

(2) As far back as 1889 there was cooperation on the occasion of a conflict in France, and at a congress held at Paris in the same year, French and Swiss delegates were present. At a second international congress held at Charlesville in 1890, Belgians and Dutch were represented, and at the third congress, in 1894, again it was only these two countries which sent delegates. At Amsterdam, in 1895, however, Belgium, Germany, France, Holland and Switzerland were represented. There was another congress at Antwerp on 1897, and again in 1905 at Paris: the last-named decided upon the establishment of the Universal Alliance.

(3) 1905 to the present Antwerp.

(4) 1905—1911 Groesser, 1911—1913 Bartels, 1913 to the present time Van Berckelaer.

(5) 1905 Paris, 1907 St. Claude, 1910 Amsterdam, 1913 Antwerp, 1920 London, 1925 Paris. Besides these, conferences were held to deal with special questions, viz.: in Frankfurt 1911 for the settlement of the apprenticeship question, in Idar 1921 to deal with general propaganda and in Antwerp 1924 in connection with the rate of exchange.

(6) —

- (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 9 organisations with 21,241 members.
-

French postal employees at Marseilles in June, 1910. At this congress the subject was introduced by a Russian delegate. Brown, the English delegate of the Postmen's Federation, gave the suggestion strong support: at the congress of Paris he said he had been sent to Marseilles with special instructions to foment an international movement among postal employees.

- (3) 1911—1919 Berne, 1919 to the present Vienna.
  - (4) 1911—1917 Felix Koch, 1919 to the present Dr. Ludwig Maier.
  - (5) 1911 Paris, 1914 London, 1920 Vienna, Berne and Milan, 1921 Prague, 1922 Coblenz and Berlin, 1923 Basle and Salzburg, 1924 Bregenz and Vienna, 1925 Luxemburg and Strassburg.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on May 31st, 1926, numbered 30 organisations with 466,246 members.
- 

## Pottery Workers.

The International Federation of Pottery Workers.

- (1) 1905.
- (2) Many years before the founding of the Secretariat the German union had concluded mutual agreements first with the Austrian and then with the Danish organisation. These agreements regulated the mutual aid to be given to travelling members in the countries entering into the agreement, and, when employment was obtained in one of the countries entering into the agreement, provided for unconditional admission of the foreigner into the organisation of the country: in such cases the period of membership in the original union was reckoned in, and the rights obtained were maintained.

- (6) Before 1920 three international secretariats were in existence, which amalgamated in that year on October 1st, viz.: the international secretariat of Bakers and Confectioners established in 1907, the international secretariat of Brewers and Millworkers established in 1908, and the international Butchers' Centre established in 1913.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 29 organisations with 623,000 members.
- 

## Glass Workers.

### The International Federation of Glass-workers.

- (1) 1908.
  - (2) As early as 1892 there was an international secretariat with seat at Castlefort (England), but it fell to pieces in 1900. The Secretary was Greenwood. Two congresses were held, one at Fourmiers in 1892 and the other at London in 1894.
  - (3) 1908—1920 Berlin, 1920 to the present Paris.
  - (4) 1908—1920 Emil Girbig, 1920 to the present Charles Delzant.
  - (5) 1908 Paris, 1911 Berlin, 1921 Amsterdam, 1924 Prague.
  - (6) —
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 11 organisations with 93,000 members.
-

## Hairdressers.

### The International Union of Hairdressers

- (1) 1907.
  - (2) International relations, chiefly between Austria and Switzerland, arose naturally out of the employment of German hairdressers in Switzerland, Britain, France, Denmark and Sweden. Since 1905 there has been mutual representation at congresses. For a time the "Hairdressers' Gazette" of the German union was also the journal for Austria and Switzerland. Eventually mutual agreements were made concerning transfer of members and travelling aid.
  - (3) 1907—1908 Hamburg, 1908 to the present Berlin.
  - (4) 1907 to the present Friedrich Etzkorn.
  - (5) 1907 Stuttgart, 1911 Zurich, 1921 Reichenberg, 1924 Vienna.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 9 organisations with 8,860 members.
- 

## Hatters.

### The International Federation of Hatters.

- (1) 1900.
- (2) Before the founding of the International three congresses were held, one at Paris in 1889, another at Zurich in 1893, and a third at London in 1896. The idea of founding an international federation arose in 1878 during a world

exhibition in Paris, at a meeting of representatives of the hatters' unions of Germany, Denmark and Italy. International relations had however existed much earlier between the unions of hatters of the various countries for aid to comrades seeking employment abroad.

- (3) 1900—1906 Paris, 1906—1921 Altenburg (Germany), 1921 to the present Monza (Italy).
  - (4) 1900—1906 Joseph Espanet, 1906—1921 A. Metschke, 1921 to the present Ettore Reina.
  - (5) 1900 Paris, 1903 Brussels, 1906 Frankfort o. M., 1909 Vienna, 1912 Monza, 1921 Zurich, 1925 Paris.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 13 organisations with 57,077 members.
- 

## Hotel, Restaurant and Bar Workers.

The International Union of Hotel, Restaurant and Bar Workers.

- (1) 1908.
- (2) The German union was in close relation with the Austrian organisation even before the establishment of the Secretariat. In other countries there were no "free" trade union organisations of importance. This fact led the German union to extend its sphere of organisation into foreign countries, and to carry on propaganda work, especially in countries in which large numbers of Germans and Austrians were working. In this way branches of the German union were formed in Paris, London, Brussels, Zurich and other non-German towns, which were connected with the national union in Germany in the same way as the German local branches.

- (3) 1908—1920 Berlin, 1920—1924 Amsterdam, 1924 to the present Berlin.
  - (4) 1908—1912 Albert Baumeister, 1912—1920 Hugo Poetsch, 1920—1924 van Heusden, 1924 to the present Rudolf Ströhlinger.
  - (5) 1908 Berlin, 1911 Amsterdam, 1920 Amsterdam, 1924 Berlin.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 14 organisations with some 68,000 members.
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## Land Workers.

### The International Land Workers' Federation.

- (1) 1920.
  - (2) Before 1920 there was only an interchange of union journals and other printed matter.
  - (3) 1920—1924 Utrecht (Holland), 1924 to the present Berlin.
  - (4) 1920—1924 Hiemstra, 1924 to the present Georg Schmidt.
  - (5) 1920 Amsterdam, 1921 Geneva, 1922 Vienna, 1924 Berlin.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 15 organisations with 377,800 members.
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## Leather Workers.

### The International Federation of Boot and Shoe Operatives and Leather Workers.

(1) 1907.

(2) The first International Federation of Boot and Shoe Operatives was founded in 1889, on the occasion of a conference at Paris, held simultaneously with the International Socialist Congress, Zurich being designated as the seat of the federation. The Secretariat could not do much on account of the lack of interest of the various national unions. The last financial report of the former secretary, Martens, was issued at Zurich in May, 1897. Up to the founding of the present International, international relations were only very loose. They chiefly consisted in an agreement made between the Shoemakers' Unions of Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Austria, Hungary and Switzerland for the mutual payment of travelling aid to the members of these unions : a balance sheet being drawn up at the end of each year, to settle for these payments. Mutual aid was occasionally given in strikes or lock-outs of considerable importance.

(3) 1907 to the present Nuremberg.

(4) 1907 to the present Josef Simon.

(5) 1907 Stuttgart, 1910 Copenhagen, 1919 Zurich, 1921 Vienna, 1923 Dresden, 1925 Paris.

(6) The International Federation was founded in 1921 by the amalgamation of the International Trade Secretariats of the Boot and Shoe Operatives (to which the above information refers) with the International Trade Secretariats of the Saddlers (founded in 1903, Secretary Joh. Sassenbach), and of the Leather-workers (Tanners). This latter had sprung out of the International Secretariat of Glove-makers, founded in 1896, which in 1914 decided to

admit the leather-workers unions, and changed its name accordingly. The Secretary was Heinrich Mahler.

- (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 26 organisations with 357,504 members.
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## Lithographers.

The International Federation of Lithographers and Kindred Trades.

- (1) 1896.
- (2) There were no organisational relations before this date : there was merely an interchange of information.
- (3) 1896—1907 London, 1907—1920 Berlin, 1920 to the present Brussels.
- (4) 1896—1900 C. Harrap, 1900—1907 G. D. Kelley, 1907—1920 Otto Sillier, 1920 to the present Fr. Poels.
- (5) 1896 London, 1898 Berne, 1900 Paris, 1902 Berlin, 1904 Milan, 1907 Copenhagen, 1910 Amsterdam, 1913 Vienna, 1920 Berne, 1923 Lucerne, 1925 Cologne.
- (6) —.
- (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 22 organisations with 45,562 members.
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## Metal Workers.

The International Metal Workers' Federation.

- (1) 1893.
- (2) In 1891 there was a meeting at Brussels which discussed a proposal to establish international relations.

- (3) 1893—1896 Winterthur (Switzerland), 1896—1904 London, 1904—1920 Stuttgart, 1920 to the present Berne.
  - (4) 1893—1896 an Executive consisting of five members, 1896—1904 Charles Hobson, 1904—1920 Alexander Schlicke, 1920 Konrad Ilg.
  - (5) 1893 Zurich, 1896 London, 1900 Paris, 1904 Amsterdam, 1907 Brussels, 1910 Birmingham, 1913 Berlin, 1920 Copenhagen, 1921 Lucerne, 1924 Vienna.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 28 organisations with 1,857,984 members.
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## Miners.

### The Miners' International Federation.

- (1) 1890.
  - (2) Nothing is known of earlier relations.
  - (3) 1890—1918 Manchester, 1919 to the present London.
  - (4) 1890—1918 Thomas Ashton, 1918 to the present time Frank Hodges, with temporary occupation of the office by A. J. Cook.
  - (5) 1890 Jolimont, 1891 Paris, 1892 London, 1893 Brussels, 1894 Berlin, 1895 Paris, 1896 Aix-la-Chapelle, 1897 London, 1898 Vienna, 1899 Brussels, 1900 Paris, 1901 London, 1902 Dusseldorf, 1903 Brussels, 1904 Paris, 1905 Liège, 1906 London, 1907 Salzburg, 1908 Paris, 1909 Berlin, 1910 Brussels, 1911 London, 1912 Amsterdam, 1913 Karlsbad, 1920 Geneva, 1922 Frankfort, 1924 Prague.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations of the 1st May, 1926, numbered 15 organisations with 1,750,550 members.
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## Painters.

### The International Secretariat of Painters and Kindred Trades.

- (1) 1911.
  - (2) International relations date back to 1903. In that year the president of the Danish painters' union (Rudolph Poulsen, now 73 years of age, and still occupying the same position) attended the general meeting of the German union at Berlin. As a result of this general meeting, a conference was held at Leipzig in 1907, at which delegates were present from the unions of Austria, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland and Serbia. In 1911 there was another conference at Munich, attended by delegates from the same countries. This Conference resolved to hold an international congress, which took place at Zurich in 1911.
  - (3) 1911 to the present Hamburg.
  - (4) 1911—1914 Albert Tobler, 1914 to the present Otto Streine.
  - (5) 1911 Zurich, 1920 Stuttgart, 1923 Berlin, 1925 Dresden.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations were on December 31st, 1925, 11 organisations with 181,536 members.
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## Postal Employees.

### The Postal International.

- (1) 1911.
- (2) The first suggestion and the first resolution to found an international alliance came from the congress of the

French postal employees at Marseilles in June, 1910. At this congress the subject was introduced by a Russian delegate. Brown, the English delegate of the Postmen's Federation, gave the suggestion strong support: at the congress of Paris he said he had been sent to Marseilles with special instructions to foment an international movement among postal employees.

- (3) 1911—1919 Berne, 1919 to the present Vienna.
  - (4) 1911—1917 Felix Koch, 1919 to the present Dr. Ludwig Maier.
  - (5) 1911 Paris, 1914 London, 1920 Vienna, Berne and Milan, 1921 Prague, 1922 Coblenz and Berlin, 1923 Basle and Salzburg, 1924 Bregenz and Vienna, 1925 Luxemburg and Strassburg.
  - (6) —
  - (7) Affiliations on May 31st, 1926, numbered 30 organisations with 466,246 members.
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## Pottery Workers.

### The International Federation of Pottery Workers.

- (1) 1905.
- (2) Many years before the founding of the Secretariat the German union had concluded mutual agreements first with the Austrian and then with the Danish organisation. These agreements regulated the mutual aid to be given to travelling members in the countries entering into the agreement, and, when employment was obtained in one of the countries entering into the agreement, provided for unconditional admission of the foreigner into the organisation of the country: in such cases the period of membership in the original union was reckoned in, and the rights obtained were maintained.

- (3) 1905 to the present Berlin.
  - (4) 1905—1913 Fritz Zietsch, 1913 to the present Georg Wollmann.
  - (5) 1906 Limoges, 1909 Florence, 1912 Hanley, 1923 Berlin.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 6 organisations with 84,869 members.
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## Public Services.

The International Federation of Employees in Public Services.

- (1) 1907.
  - (2) On the occasion of the congress of the German Municipal Workers' Union, which took place at Mainz in 1906, negotiations were carried on with the representatives of foreign organisations concerning the founding of an International.
  - (3), 1907—1919 Berlin, 1919 to the present Amsterdam.
  - (4) 1907—1919 Albin Mohs, 1919 to the present N. van Hinte.
  - (5) 1907 Stuttgart, 1910 Copenhagen, 1913 Zurich, 1919 Amsterdam, 1920 London, 1923 Brussels, 1923 Berlin.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 15 organisations with 445,145 members.
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## Stone Workers.

### The International Secretariat of Stone Workers.

- (1) 1903.
  - (2) The organisations of Germany, Austria, Norway and Sweden have had mutual relations since 1898.
  - (3) 1903 to the present Zurich.
  - (4) 1903 to the present Robert Kolb.
  - (5) 1903 Zurich, 1908 Cassel, 1913 Brussels, 1921 Innsbruck, 1924 Lugano.
  - (6) The international stone-setters' secretariat founded in 1904 amalgamated with the stone-workers' international in 1923.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 14 organisations with 108,455 members.
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## Textile Workers.

### The International Association of Textile Workers.

- (1) 1894.
- (2) Discussions in Zurich between the German and English organisations led to its foundation.
- (3) The Secretariat was always been situated in England, at Manchester, Accrington, Colne, and London in turn.
- (4) 1894—1905 W. H. Wilkinson, 1905—1911 W. Marsland, 1911—1924 Tom Shaw, 1924—1925 J. Bell, 1925 to the present Tom Shaw.
- (5) 1894 Manchester, 1895 Ghent, 1897 Roubaix, 1900 Berlin, 1902 Zurich, 1905 Milan, 1908 Vienna, 1911 Amsterdam, 1914 Blackpool, 1921 Paris, 1924 Vienna.

(6) —.

(7) Affiliations on the 19th May, 1926, numbered 14 organisations with 942,000 members.

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## Tobacco Workers.

The International Secretariat of Tobacco Workers.

(1) 1899.

(2) The Belgian and Dutch organisations endeavoured to found an international organisation before 1889. There was an exchange of correspondence between them and the German unions on the question.

(3) 1889—1910 Antwerp, 1910—1919 Bremen, 1919 to the present Amsterdam.

(4) 1890—1892 J. Vendelmans, 1892—1910 H. Jugters, 1910—1919 Karl Deichmann, 1919 to the present J. J. Eichelsheim.

(5) 1889 Antwerp, 1890 Antwerp, 1892 Amsterdam, 1895 Basle, 1896 London, 1900 Paris, 1904 Amsterdam, 1907 Stuttgart, 1910 Copenhagen, 1919 Amsterdam, 1925 Brussels.

(6) —.

(7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 11 organisations with 118,376 members.

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## Transport Workers.

The International Transport-workers' Federation.

(1) 1897.

(2) At a conference held in London in July, 1896, of the British dockers and seamen's organisations the establishment

of an International of Ship, Dock and River Workers was contemplated, and it was resolved to hold a congress for the purpose in February, 1897. This congress decided to found the International : in June, 1898, it was resolved to admit all sections of transport-workers, dockers, and seamen. Before this there had been international congresses of railwaymen (Zurich 1893, Paris 1894 and Milan 1895). At this last congress it was decided to set up an International Study Commission to Safeguard the Interests of Railwaymen.

- (3) 1897—1904 London, 1904—1919 Berlin, 1919 to the present Amsterdam.
- (4) 1897—1904 Tom Chambers and afterwards for a short time Ben Tillett, 1904—1919 Hermann Jochade, 1919 to the present time Edo Fimmen.
- (5) 1897 London, 1900 Paris, 1902 Stockholm, 1904 Amsterdam, 1906 Milan, 1908 Vienna, 1910 Copenhagen, 1913 London, 1919 Amsterdam, 1920 Christiania, 1921 Geneva, 1922 Vienna, 1924 Hamburg, 1925 Bellinzona.

*Dockers and Transportworkers* 1910 Copenhagen, 1921 Geneva, 1922 Vienna, 1924 Hamburg, 1924 Hamburg (Chauffeurs) 1924, Hamburg (inland navigation), 1924 Antwerp (North Sea ports), 1925 Berlin (North Sea ports).

*Seamen* 1908 London and Vienna, 1910 Copenhagen and Antwerp, 1911 Antwerp and London, 1912 two in Antwerp, 1913 Brussels, 1921 Geneva, 1922 Vienna and Hamburg, 1923 London and Amsterdam, 1924 Hamburg.

- (6) See No. 2.
- (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 83 organisations with 2,140,123 members in 35 countries.

## Typographers.

### The International Typographical Secretariat.

- (1) 1893.
  - (2) Relations had existed for a long time between certain unions, especially the German-speaking ones, which turned chiefly on travelling aid. As early as the eighties of last century mutual agreements were made laying down freedom of movement from one union to another in respect of travelling aid, a practice which is as old as the printing trade itself.
  - (3) 1893—1909 Berne, 1909—1919 Stuttgart, 1919 to the present Berne.
  - (4) 1893—1896 G. Reimann, 1896—1901 Friedrich Siebenmann, 1902—1920 Pierre Stautner, 1921—1925 Fritz Verdan, from January 1st, 1926, Hans Grundbacher.
  - (5) 1889 Paris, 1892 Berne, 1896 Geneva, 1901 Lucerne, 1907 Paris, 1912 Stuttgart, 1919 Lucerne, 1921 Vienna, 1924 Hamburg.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on May 1st, 1926, numbered 23 organisations with 175,104 members.
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## Wood Workers.

### The International Union of Wood Workers.

- (1) 1904.
- (2) In August, 1891, the First International Wood Workers' Congress was held at Brussels at the invitation of the

Belgian wood workers' union, and decided to establish an International Information Service. In 1893, the Second International Congress was held at Zurich. On the occasion of the International Labour Congress of London, 1896, a conference of wood workers was held, at which delegates from Britain, France, Germany and Holland were present. Up to 1899, however, international relations were very loose. After 1899 new international intercourse developed between various Central European countries on the one hand, and France and Great Britain on the other. Contact between the two groups led to the convening of the Amsterdam Congress in 1904.

- (3) 1891—1893 Brussels, 1893—1896 Stuttgart, 1904—1908 Stuttgart, 1909—1919 Berlin, 1920 to the present Amsterdam.
  - (4) 1891—1893 François Sas, 1893—1896 Karl Kloss, 1904—1919 Theodor Leipart, 1920 to the present Cornelis Woudenberg.
  - (5) 1891 Brussels, 1893 Zurich, 1896 London, 1904 Amsterdam, 1907 Stuttgart, 1910 Copenhagen, 1919 Amsterdam, 1922 Vienna, 1925 Brussels.
  - (6) —.
  - (7) Affiliations on December 31st, 1925, numbered 41 organisations in 22 countries with 1,000,876 members.
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## VII. International Trade Union Questions

### Statistical Enquiries and International Distribution of Information.

The Stuttgart Conference of 1902 had already placed on its agenda the item : "What joint statistical tasks of the trade unions can be carried into effect on uniform lines in all the national trade union organisations ?" It was universally admitted that it was desirable for statistics to be kept uniformly and on the same principles, but attention was also drawn to the difficulties of any such uniformity : it was decided that efforts should at any rate be made in this direction.

The following conference, held at Dublin, made it obligatory upon the national centres to send in once a year a report to the International Secretary concerning the movement in their countries, and two copies of same were also to be sent to each national centre. The International Secretary carried out this resolution in a somewhat different form : from 1903 onwards he issued in book form, and in the German, English and French languages, "International Reports on the Trade Union Movement". These publications contained not merely the desired reports, but also a comprehensive report of the International Secretary, minutes of the international conferences, and the addresses of the national trade union centres, and of their affiliated unions, together with statistics of memberships, affiliation fees, income and expenditure ; and they thus formed a new bond of union between the centres, and contributed greatly to strengthen international relations.

Most of the following conferences discussed the best methods of collecting trade union statistics, and the international secretaries always complained that too little was done by the national centres to help them. International statistics were however regularly kept up to the outbreak of war, although of course during the war they became impossible. When the I. F. T. U. resumed its activities at Amsterdam in 1921, it resumed its statistical research work and issued its "First Year Book of the I. F. T. U." The International Federation of Trade Unions has now (in 1926) published its Fourth Year Book, which has 686 pages, and contains, in addition to full information as to the situation and activities of the national centres affiliated with the I. F. T. U. and the organisations affiliated with these, a good deal of information concerning the international trade secretariats. The Year Book also gives some account of other trade unions adopting a different platform, and concerning the Labour and Socialist International, the International Cooperative Alliance, the International of Socialist Youth and the Workers' Educational Institutions.

### International Trade Union Relief Actions.

Even at the Copenhagen Conference it was considered necessary to make definite agreements concerning mutual aid in economic conflicts, and the conclusion of such agreements was specified as being one of the tasks of international meetings. The Stuttgart Conference went into the matter more fully. It was decided that the question of the need for international aid should be determined not by the international centre, but by the national centre concerned; also, that only a national centre may send in a request for an international relief action. Most of the delegates thought the request for aid should be addressed to the international centre, and sent on by the latter to the affiliated countries, but this was not formally laid down.

In the first Report submitted by the International Centre to the national trade union centres, which was at the Dublin

Conference, reports were included concerning the international relief actions on behalf of the French miners and the Dutch general strike.

The Dublin Conference drew up the following regulations for relief actions :—

"At the request of a national centre, the International Secretary must submit an application for relief in an important conflict to all the national centres.

The national centre which presents such an application for relief must enclose a report, stating :—

(a) the number on strike and the number of persons employed in the industry affected ;

(b) the number of workers in the country and the number organised ;

(c) what means of relief will be afforded in their own country.

The different national centres decide on the granting of help.

The contributions for relief are to be sent directly to the national centre that has applied for them, but same is obliged to send to the International Secretary a report about the total expenses of the strike and about the contributions of the different countries. These statements are also to be embodied into the report that is submitted to the international conference of the national secretaries.

It was also further resolved "that in case of important movements and strikes weekly reports on the situation must be sent in to the national centres, so that the reports appearing in the non-Labour Press, which are frequently false, may be counteracted."

In each Report of the International Secretary, since the Dublin Conference, there has been information concerning the international relief actions proposed and carried through : but as the amounts raised were sent direct to the national centre or, very often, to the union in question, without any information being conveyed to the International Secretary, it is impossible to make a list of the amounts raised in the course of years for international aid.

The Budapest Conference (1911) considered for various reasons that it was necessary to discuss thoroughly the

question of international relief actions, and adopted a proposal of the Swiss national centre, supplemented by one from Holland :—

- (a) The international secretariat shall only then take part in any appeal for monetary help, if at the same time, several trade or industrial federations of a country are engaged in industrial disputes, and if the necessary funds can neither be raised in this country alone nor by the international trade federations to which the unions engaged in the struggle are affiliated. Under exceptional circumstances the international secretariat shall be authorised to issue an appeal for help, if the number of workers of a certain trade engaged in industrial disputes is so great that the financial means at their disposal, derived from their own country or from the International Secretariat, are not adequate.
- (b) An international appeal shall only be issued by the secretariat, if the following conditions have been complied with:
  - (1) The national centre to which the federation in want of help is affiliated should forward a formal demand with full explanations to the international secretariat. This demand must contain: a brief report on the cause and development of the dispute and a review of the numerical and financial strength of the unions in want of assistance.
  - (2) These organisations must be affiliated to some national centre represented at the International secretariat, if this should not be impossible on account of the political situation in that particular country.
  - (3) International assistance shall only be continued in the case of those organisations, which regularly provide the International Secretariat with information as to the development of the movement, and if they, at the same time, undertake to publish a financial report on the movement, after the dispute has been settled.
- (c) The international secretariat shall issue an appeal for help if the conditions sub (b) have been complied with. The letter of appeal addressed to the national centres, should contain: a brief statement as to the reasons for the appeal, the advice of the international secretariat and further, as far as this may be possible, suggestions as to the manner in which best to conform with the desire of the applicants.
- (d) It shall be incumbent upon the international secretariat to keep those centres, who give a favourable reply to the

appeal, constantly or from time to time informed as to the actual situation of the movement, and to see that in every case a financial report on the cost of the movement be submitted, as soon as possible, to these national centres.

- (e) All funds to be forwarded to the International Secretariat, which at the end of the movement shall issue a financial statement showing the income and expenditure for this dispute.

A suggestion made by the Croatian national centre, to create by means of regular contributions of the affiliated organisations or their members a fund "for the aid of important foreign economic conflicts which are in need of such aid" was declared to be premature, and withdrawn by the proposer.

A further discussion of this subject took place at the international trade union conference of Zurich in 1913. It was then pointed out that certain of the affiliated countries scarcely take any part in relief actions. At the close of the discussion the International Secretary issued the following declaration, which was passed unanimously :

"If it is a case of an action which will require the aid of all the organised workers of a country, the national centre alone can issue an appeal. If it is a case of an important action in one trade, the organisation affected may appeal for relief to its international trade secretariat, which may then transmit the appeal to all its affiliated unions. Should that be insufficient, or should the conflict be extended so as to cover other groups, or unusually large numbers, the national centre concerned may send in to our International Secretariat a proposal for a relief action including all the national centres."

No further decisions have been made by conferences or congresses.

International solidarity in the case of labour conflicts may be shown not merely by collecting money, but also by preventing strike-breaking, refusing to manufacture goods intended for the country affected, and preventing the transport of such goods. Certain unpleasant incidents which had recently occurred, especially the recruiting of foreign strike-breakers, caused the Christiania Conference to discuss this

matter and pronounce in strong terms against international strike-breaking. The national centres were asked to give this question their closest attention.

The Paris Conference passed a formal proposal of the British trades union congress, condemning international strike-breaking in very strong terms. It will be generally recognised that this is one of the most fundamental principles of international trade unionism, but at different times there have been many technical difficulties and also difficulties due to wage agreements. It will therefore be necessary for the next international trade union congress to deal comprehensively with the question of international solidarity and mutual aid in wage conflicts.

### Recognition of Membership in foreign Unions.

This question first came up for discussion at the Amsterdam Conference at which the Dutch national centre brought in a motion demanding the introduction of international identity cards. The idea was not approved, as the cards might easily become "international begging letters". But, with the approval of the other delegates, Sassenbach asked the British delegates to use their influence in Britain to get foreign trade unionists emigrating to Britain recognised as members of trade unions, and admitted into British organisations without artificial difficulties. It was, he declared, an untenable position that immigrant trade unionists desiring to join British unions should be refused admission and treated as unorganised. The British delegates promised to do what was asked.

It is doubtful whether they did very much, for there was certainly no change in the conduct of the British unions and for this reason the following proposal was submitted by the German national centre to the Christiania Conference :

"Members of trade unions affiliated to their respective national centre *must* be admitted to the trade unions of their calling in other countries if they produce their member's book and notice of departure from their old organisation.

If no other agreements between the respective federations are in existence, then the following conditions will be in force in such cases :

(a) The entrance fee paid into the first organisation will be taken into account. In case the entrance fee should be higher in the new organisation that difference can be charged.

(b) The transferred member will obtain the same rights and privileges as the old members of that particular union enjoy, according to the amount of subscriptions he has paid until then in his old union : the time of membership booked in the new organisation, however, must not exceed the time he has been organised, even if the subscriptions paid hitherto were higher.

The delegates present at the conference promise to submit these conditions of transfer to the next meeting of their respective organisations and there support same."

This proposal was opposed by the British representatives. Curran said he was in agreement with the principle, but that there were rules in British unions which would make it impossible to act in the way proposed at once : and the British could only support the proposal if the word "must" were replaced by "may". Legien objected that that would mean nothing : but in order to meet the objections of the British representatives, it was proposed to amend that particular sentence in the resolution to "The Conference is of opinion that . . ." In this form the resolution was passed unanimously.

But the Paris Congress had to deal with this question further, since it appeared that nothing had been changed in Britain. Germany proposed the following : "The Conference should determine what steps are to be taken by the national centres in order to carry out the unanimous resolution of the last international congress at Christiania." Sassenbach explained that the proposal had been brought forward with special regard to the conditions prevailing in Britain. In Britain good comrades who had belonged to their unions in their own country were regarded as unorganised, when they tried to join the British unions. Britain was shutting out the trade unionists of other countries. Therefore the British delegates had been asked at Christiania to see that immigrant trade unionists

from other countries were recognised in their unions. It had been conceded that, if their rates of entry were higher, they might claim the difference. The British delegates had declared that they must oppose a direct resolution of the conference, but that if the conference would express its opinion, they would see that this question was brought before the organisations. Two years had passed since then, and nothing had been heard of anything being done in the matter in Britain. They understood very well the existing difficulties, and knew that old-established arrangements could not be abolished in a day. But they would like to know what the British delegates had done to carry out the resolutions of Christiania.

Appleton replied that the British Trades Union Congress could not move the individual unions in this matter, as these were autonomous, and would strongly repel any attempt to coerce them. Many organisations had already made special agreements with their foreign sister organisations. A long discussion followed, in which delegates of every country took part : all the speakers declared that every affiliated organisation was unquestionably under the obligation to admit any immigrant trade unionist at once. No formal resolution was however passed.

The matter was again briefly referred to at the Budapest Conference of 1911, when it was shown that progress had been made in the desired direction. The Zurich Conference of 1913 adopted a proposal that foreign workers must pay their contributions to the organisations of the countries in which they were living.

No difficulties have ever arisen with any other of the countries affiliated with the I. F. T. U. : these have always taken it for granted that foreign trade unionists should be admitted. There might possibly have been difficulties with the American trade unions if these had belonged longer to the I. F. T. U. The question has now been settled fairly satisfactorily through the international trade secretariats.

## Fight concerning Working Hours and the Eight Hour Day.

The fight for the shortening of working hours has always been in the foreground with the trade unions of all countries. Naturally, therefore, the trade union international has had to deal with it. This it did first at the Amsterdam Conference (1905), where the Danish centre introduced the following proposal :—

"The Conference resolves that the international secretariat of the national trade union centres shall in 1905 undertake an enquiry into the length of working hours in the various countries. The material obtained through the enquiry shall be presented to the national centres in the 3 chief languages in the usual way at the beginning of 1906."

This proposal gave rise to much discussion and was regarded as the most important business before the Conference. Attention was called to the difficulties of the enquiry and warning given against exaggerated expectations. The international secretary called for a year's delay, in order to give time for careful preparation and the compilation of uniform questionnaires. The Danish proposal was adopted with this condition.

The Christiania Conference (1907) considered Legien's draft questionnaire, which was appreciated, but thought to be too complex. It would be an enormous piece of work, and nothing complete would result: the work had been estimated too lightly at Amsterdam. The Swedish delegate thought it was really a business for governments to make such enquiries. In principle, the Amsterdam resolution was confirmed, but it was amended, the national centres being invited to give the "best possible" information as to the working hours in their countries.

The Paris Conference (1909) had before it a Danish proposal relating to the intention of the Danish trade unions to make demands for a reduction of working hours, although they were not unaware that this might involve the risk of a big conflict, which would throw the trade unions upon the economic support of other countries. A confidential circular was

to be sent out in order to ascertain if such support would be forthcoming.

Another matter closely connected with the legal regulation of working hours is the legal regulation of homework. Hence the adoption of a proposal from Belgium, demanding the prompt regulation by law of homework : in which however it was added that the real object was the abolition of homework altogether. The Budapest Conference (1911) instructed the international secretary to collect information about homework and to present a report to the national centres. The Budapest Conference also adopted a resolution against nightwork, and invited labour members of parliament to demand the prohibition by law of all night work which is not absolutely necessary.

The last international conference before the outbreak of war, held at Zurich in 1913, passed after a brief discussion the following resolution proposed by the Swedish national centre :

"The Conference urgently requests the Labour members of parliament of the various countries to introduce or reintroduce, as the case may be, motions for the prohibition of nightwork (wherever it is not already prohibited) for those categories of workers and branches of industry, in which pressing circumstances do not render such work necessary, and also to bring forward proposals for the introduction of a statutory eight hours day.

In order to provide a survey of the treatment of these questions in the legislative bodies of the various countries, the Executive of the affiliated national centres of the various countries were asked to include in their annual reports information concerning the treatment of these proposals and the course of negotiations in the various countries."

The outbreak of the World War prevented the International from receiving the information requested : further action in respect of this question, which is so important for the international working classes, was brought to a standstill.

## **International Legislation for the Protection of Labour.**

After the War, and the founding of the International Labour Office, the question of the fixing of working hours became

part of the general fight for international protective legislation, not merely for women and children and in trades injurious to health, but for the workers in general. We may refer here to the so-called Washington Convention and the fight for its recognition in the various countries, and also to the Conferences of Genoa and Geneva. The International Trade Union Congresses and many other national and international congresses have dealt with this subject. The expectations prevalent immediately after the Washington Conference have only partly been fulfilled, for the opposition to any adequate measure of statutory protection has strengthened with the strengthening of the reaction. The working class will have many a battle to fight before it succeeds in creating order in this field. As the question is a pronouncedly international one, the I. F. T. U. has in it a wide sphere of activity, a sphere in which it has already long worked, and in which it has registered successes which might have been more conspicuous than they are if the influence of the working class upon the legislative bodies of their countries had been as great as it was immediately after the War.

### Migration Questions.

The Conference in Christiania (1907) discussed a proposal of the Italian trade union centre concerning the regulation of emigration by using the trade unions as employment agencies. It soon became clear, however, that the lack of information made it impossible to take a decision. A commission was appointed, but did not work out a unanimous proposal. At last, through the withholding of some votes, an emergency resolution was adopted, calling upon the trade unions to send the trade unions of other countries or their emigration offices all serviceable information concerning the labour market.

The Paris Conference (1909) took up the question of the compulsory identity cards of foreign workers, as introduced by the Prussian Government. Legien explained the institution by means of which foreign workers were recruited as strike-

breakers. The foreign workers who did not duly fulfil the conditions of their working agreements were deported, unless they returned to their former employment. Protests against this had already been received from certain foreign governments and also from the German national government. He proposed that the delegates should urge their comrades in parliament to induce their governments to intervene. Bergmans, the Belgian delegate, had been instructed by his national centre to propose that, in order to abolish identity cards for foreign workers, the trade union International should get into touch with the political International, a suggestion which are strongly opposed by the French delegates. A British resolution, providing for "the use of all possible means" for the abolition of identity cards was at last adopted by 9 to 6 votes.

The American national centre had sent in a proposal declaring it to be one of the objects of the Labour Movement to do all possible to prevent the emigration of the workers of one country into other countries in times of industrial depression, also during wage conflicts, or on the eve of wage conflicts. It was recognised that special American interests had inspired this proposal, and in view of the fact that the American trade unions were not affiliated, it was not discussed, but referred to next conference. At the Budapest Conference of 1911 the United States was represented as an affiliated country, and the motion was adopted, but supplemented by a clause demanding that, in normal times, immigrant workers from abroad should be admitted without difficulty into the organisations.

O'Grady took the opportunity to call attention to the efforts of certain governments to promote emigration: this would lead to wage cuts in the countries of immigration, and such attempts of the governments must be watched.

At the Zurich Conference of 1913, Jouhaux spoke on the threatened increase in the number of foreign immigrant workers into France. The French trade unions did not object to immigration, but they would like the immigrants to be told beforehand that in the eyes of French law they were entirely

without rights or protection in France. The agreements they had made abroad were not valid in France, and it was almost impossible to organise these workers. It had even happened that French strikers had been replaced by unorganised foreigners, and that the employers had granted to these foreigners the conditions refused to those whose places they had taken : this, of course, in order to turn them off later on. By means of two years of strong counter-agitation, they had hitherto succeeded in preventing legislation, desired in certain quarters, for the taxation of foreign workers : but the workers might quite easily change their minds about this if the dangers of this kind of immigration continued.

After the War, when the migration question had become especially acute in all the European countries on account of territorial changes and economic difficulties, the I. F. T. U. again took up the question of migration ; and it has recently done so very thoroughly at the World Migration Congress held in London, in 1926, which was organised jointly by the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour and Socialist International.

### Political Views.

As early as the First Conference at Copenhagen Legien had suggested the participation of the trade unions in the international Labour and Socialist Congresses, and had proposed that they should leave to these the discussion of general questions. But this view was opposed at the Second Conference, held at Stuttgart, by Van Erkel (Holland). The Dutch national centre of that date was syndicalist in its opinions : it opposed all political activity, and all parliamentarism : when the agenda was being drawn up, Van Erkel had moved that no resolutions should be passed which would make it necessary for the national centres to attend as guests the International Labour and Socialist Congresses : he considered the convening of special international trade union congresses would be better. This view was however shared only by the representative of

the French trade unions : all the other delegates were against special international trade union congresses.

The Amsterdam Conference (1905) came up against the question of relations with the political labour movement when it was discussing the German proposal concerning the composition and tasks of international conferences ; on this occasion the fear was expressed that if the German proposal were adopted, the division between trade unions and political parties would be deepened. The Paris Conference (1909) discussed the same subject when it was considering the French proposal for the conversion of international conferences into international trade union congresses. The French then expressed several times and very forcibly their objection to joint action with political parties.

There was but little change in this point of view until the end of the War. Care was taken to avoid expressing an opinion on purely political questions and dealing with them at international conferences.

This line of conduct was fostered by the close association to be found in most countries between the political and trade union branches of the Labour Movement : and also by the statutory restrictions on the trade unions, prohibiting them political activity : if these legal restrictions were violated, the opportunity was gladly taken of dissolving the organisation.

After the War matters were very different. The tremendous changes which had taken place, especially in the most reactionary forms of state government, had led to entirely new conditions, which made it possible for the trade unions to do political work : added to which was the fact that the political International was placed in much more difficult circumstances than the trade union, and could not resume its real activities until much later than they did. The Rules adopted at Amsterdam still limited activities to the trade union sphere, but resolutions were adopted which cut deep into the political field.

From that time onwards the I. F. T. U. has dealt with many political questions, but always in complete harmony with the Labour and Socialist International.

### The Combating of War and Militarism.

In February, 1904, the French national centre approached the international secretary with the suggestion that an international conference should be convened in connection with the Russo-Japanese War, to which the trade unions of all countries might send representatives. At the recommendation of Legien the affiliated national centres declined to do this: which caused some friction between the French and the other trade unions. The French unions submitted a demand that anti-militarism and the general strike should be placed on the agenda for the Amsterdam and Christiania conferences: and when this too was refused, they remained away from these conferences. Later on, they made repeated attempts to get this subject discussed, but always in vain, for all the other countries held the view that the trade unions, and, above all, the trade union international must deal only with trade union questions, and must leave to social democracy the question of combating war and militarism, these being matters of high politics.

This standpoint could not be maintained after the War. I have already pointed out under the heading of "Political Views" that the I. F. T. U. was obliged to take up political matters, for what could be more important and more worthy of a place in the forefront than the combating of war and militarism? The very first Report on Activities after the war gave information concerning the steps that had been taken.

It was a time in which all sections of the peoples were full of hatred of war and of hope for a permanent peace. The I. F. T. U. with its membership (at that time) of 23,000,000 ranked as a power which might well be able to call a halt to the war-like plans of individual states. The refusal to transport munitions to Poland was the first demonstration of this power.

Even ruling circles no longer passed indifferently over the representatives of Labour. When in 1921 the League of Nations decided to appoint a Disarmament Commission, this originally consisted only of military experts, financiers and economists : but it was soon found necessary to add to these some representatives of the workers : Jouhaux, Oudegeest and Thorberg were given seats on the Commission. At the Special International Trade Union Congress held in London in 1920. Fimmen made a speech on the world situation which introduced a resolution on pacifism : the same speaker also addressed the Second Ordinary Trade Union Congress, held at Rome in 1922, on the subject of Disarmament and "War against War". A resolution was passed on war and militarism and a manifesto on the same subject was issued to the workers of the world. (See pp. 115—117 of the Report on this Congress.) In December of the same year the International Peace Congress was held at The Hague, and a report 200 pages long was issued on it. The congress attracted much attention throughout the world.

In accordance with the resolutions passed at that congress, the I. F. T. U. has continued its work against war and militarism and for the promotion of brotherhood among the peoples, the means for the purpose being supplied by an Anti-War Fund amounting to nearly 200,000 Dutch guilders especially established to that end. It has carried on an unremitting press campaign, which has found warm support from the Labour Press of the whole world : and it has distributed anti-war placards and postcards with designs provided by artists of the first rank. Fimmen's speech at the Hague Peace Congress was published as a pamphlet under the title of "War against War". The Committee of Action against War and Militarism appointed by the Rome Congress, which consists of the I. F. T. U. Executive, the Secretaries of the Miners', Metal-workers', and Transport-workers' Internationals (later also the Secretary of the Factory-workers' International), has held several meetings, one of which defined its attitude on the eve of the occupation of the Ruhr. Unhappily, however, the power of the in-

ternational trade union movement was at that time no longer so uncontested as immediately after the War.

In 1924, the International Trade Union Congress of Vienna passed, after a speech from Jouhaux, the following resolution, which may be regarded as representing the present policy of the I.F.T.U. It reads as follows :—

*The Campaign against War and Militarism.*

"The Third Ordinary Congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions, held at Vienna from the 2nd—6th June 1924, confirming the previous resolutions against militarism and war, reaffirms that it is the duty of the working class, organised nationally and internationally, to resist war in the most energetic way by stopping the manufacture of arms and munitions, by effecting an economic blockade, and by declaring the international general strike.

The Congress declares that the trade union organisations of all countries must not cease to devote their attention to propaganda to put an end to animosities between the nations, so that it may be possible to reorganise the relations between the peoples, basing them upon mutual international aid, the application of international law, and compulsory arbitration.

In view of the fact that the general well-being of the peoples can only be safeguarded by general disarmament, the Congress proclaims the urgent necessity for :—

- (1) Controlling the manufacture of and traffic in arms and munitions for war purposes.
- (2) Convening an international Conference for the purpose of suppressing the private manufacture of armaments and effecting general prohibition of the manufacture and sale of all war material.

The Congress instructs the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions to continue its activities for the education of the masses, and especially of the rising generation and the women, for the strengthening of the activities of all forces working for peace in the whole world.

In carrying out this resolution, the International Congress while solemnly confirming the resolution adopted by the Executive at its meeting of November 8th, 1923, concerning the organisation of an international anti-war demonstration on September 21st, 1924, calls upon the workers of all countries to make the greatest possible efforts in order that this demonstration may have the importance and magnitude which the actual state of the world demands."

It is well-known that the International Anti-War Day (September 21st, 1924) referred to in the closing sentence of the above resolution, proved to be a brilliant success.

When the peace work accomplished by the International Federation of Trade Unions during the period under review is fairly and impartially considered, it must be admitted that everything possible has been done, especially when the position of the trade unions in the various countries is taken into consideration. The International Federation of Trade Unions has refrained from adopting resolutions which it was unable to put into effect. It has to a greater extent than any other world organisation created a spirit of international brotherhood which is bound to make itself felt as time goes on.

### The International Committee of Trade Union Women.

Trade unions have always recognised the equality of male and female workers and, with but few exceptions, have formed joint organisations for both sexes. That this is the only right way was universally recognised by the International Conference of Trade Union Women, which preceded the Vienna Trade Union Congress. But there are questions which have special interest for women workers, so that, in accordance with wishes expressed in certain quarters, an International Committee of Trade Union Women was appointed: it is further intended to hold an International Conference of Trade Union Women in connection with every international trade union congress. The Committee, which may be regarded as an I. F. T. U. institution, defined its duties at its meeting of November, 1925, as the following:—

“The International Committee of Trade Union Women decides to deal only with such matters:—

(1) As concern the woman as a worker.

(2) As are of particular interest to the woman worker, or as are deserving of special consideration in view of the mental and physical constitution of woman.”

There is already good ground to hope that this Committee will do valuable work in assisting to recruit working women for the trade unions.

## International Auxiliary Language.

The Dutch Centre submitted the following proposal to the Amsterdam Conference of 1903 :—

"The international conference should consider whether it is not possible to introduce an international language for correspondence. The International Secretariat shall be instructed to submit to the next international conference a proposal or motion, so that the question may be finally decided at the fifth international conference."

In supporting the proposal Van Erkel emphasised the fact that they had carefully avoided proposing any specific living or dead language.

Sassenbach commended the soundness of the principle underlying the proposal, but thought the practical application would be very difficult: only a living tongue could be considered and English would be the best. If they could agree upon some specific language, many a trade union leader and many an earnest trade unionist would be prepared to learn it. It would facilitate not only intercourse between the national centres, but also that between the trade organisations. He introduced the following proposal :—

"The idea of striving for an international correspondence language is a good one. Only a living language can be considered, and English would be the best. The Conference considers that it is to the interests of the internationally associated trade unions to master this language."

The Dutch delegate withdrew his proposal in favour of Sassenbach's, but it was rejected after a short discussion, in the course of which Hueber remarked that they had enough to do in Austria to master the seven languages of the country, without learning English. Germany, Britain and Holland were in favour.

At the Paris Conference (1909) the French trade union centre proposed propaganda in favour of Esperanto, but it was decided not to refer the question to future conferences. At

the Budapest Conference (1911) the proposal was renewed : Jouhaux threatened that they would proceed to take direct action in France by writing their foreign letters in Esperanto only. As all but the French delegates were opposed to the official introduction of an artificial language, the idea was dropped after a formal vote.

No further international discussion of the subject has taken place.

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## Conclusion.

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It is as difficult to imagine that there could be an end to the international body representing trade unionism as to the national centres grouping together the trade unions of the various countries.

The international body which represents trade unionism is not yet complete. The trade unions of various countries are still outside it, sometimes because they are not in sympathy with the principles and methods of the International Federation of Trade Unions, sometimes because they are far distant from Europe, and therefore do not feel that they would derive any direct profit from joining. But we can afford to wait calmly upon events, for in the end unity must come, and it will be a unity which is based on the long-established well-proven principles of the I.F.T.U. Even the non-European countries will eventually be forced by economic necessity to abandon their attitude of aloofness.

As for the work of the I.F.T.U., an unbiased critic cannot fail to recognise that valuable work has been done, even if it has not been possible to attempt or carry into effect everything that some of our critics desire us to take on. If there is a movement anywhere which is compelled to take concrete facts into account, and to keep its feet firmly fixed on the solid earth, that movement is trade unionism, especially international trade unionism, which must never lose sight of the political, economic and organisational conditions in the various countries.

There can be no doubt that international trade unionism has succeeded in strengthening the international spirit, and in giving it concrete form. With united ranks trade unionism is fighting for the rights of the working class and for their social advancement; and the sooner those workers who are now outside trade union ranks recognise their value and enrol themselves within them, the sooner shall we be able to achieve practical successes.

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