

An association of nations, financed by their Governments and controlled by representatives of those Governments and of their organized employers and workers, the Organization comprises: (1) the General Conference of representatives of the Member States; (2) the International Labour Office; and (3) the Governing Body of the Office.

The Conference in normal times meets at least once a year, and is composed of four delegates from each Member State, two representing the Government and two representing employers and workers, respectively. Decisions of the Conference are in the form of Conventions or Recommendations. The former, when given legislative effect and ratified by Member States, are legally binding on them and their enforcement within such countries is a matter for annual consideration by the Conference. The ILO Constitution requires, however, that every Convention must be brought before the competent authority or authorities for legislative or other action. In Canada, the competent authorities in respect to the subject matter of most of the Conventions and Recommendations are the Provincial Legislatures. Amendments to the Constitution adopted by the Conference in 1946 included new provisions concerning the obligations imposed on federal countries with respect to the manner of dealing with Conventions and Recommendations when ratified by two-thirds of the Member States. These changes in procedure are expected to facilitate the adoption of Conventions and Recommendations by the constituent States or Provinces of federal countries.

The International Labour Office acts as the permanent secretariat of the Organization and as an information centre and publishing house.

The Governing Body consists of 32 persons, 16 Government representatives, eight employers' and eight workers' representatives, of whom all but the representatives of the eight States of chief industrial importance, which hold permanent seats, are elected triennially by the Conference. The Governing Body, which usually meets quarterly, has general supervision of the International Labour Office, frames its budget and fixes the agenda of the Conference when the Conference itself does not do so. Three sessions were held during 1947—in March, June and December, all at Geneva, Switzerland.

There have been 31 sessions of the Conference at which 90 draft Conventions and 83 Recommendations have been adopted covering a wide range of subjects: freedom of association; hours of work; weekly rest; holidays; minimum age for employment; night-work of women and young persons; minimum wages; health and safety; workmen's compensation; seamen's conditions; insurance against unemployment, sickness, old age and death; colonial labour problems; protection of migrant workers; and many other aspects of the protection of workers' rights and interests. There have been 971 ratifications of these Conventions from 55 countries.

Eight International Labour Conventions have been given legislative effect by the Federal Parliament and have been ratified by the Government, six relating to seamen, one to dockers and one to statistics.

During 1947 the International Labour Conference held its 30th Session, at Geneva; four of the eight Industrial Committees of the ILO held their second session (Coal-mining, Inland Transport, Iron and Steel Production and the Metal Trades); and the ILO's Sixth International Conference of Labour Statisticians took place. Canada was represented at all of these meetings, full accounts of which may be found in the *Labour Gazette*. The 31st Session of the Conference was held at San Francisco from June 17 to July 10, 1948.