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March 9, 1948

The two day Conference of the representatives of Trade Union organisations in the countries concerned in the European Recovery Programme opened at Transport House this (Tuesday) morning.

Forty-eight delegates were present from 26 Trade Union Centres (list of delegates and organisations attached).

At the opening session, Miss Florence Hancock (Chairman of the British T.U.C. General Council) presided and welcomed the delegates on behalf of the convening bodies - the British T.U.C. jointly with the National Trade Union Centres of Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland.

The Conference had been called together, Miss Hancock said, to serve a simple and straightforward purpose. Confusion and misunderstanding, and perhaps some measure of misrepresentation, have obscured the aim they had in view. The responsibility they had undertaken, as representatives of the Trade Union Movement in the countries concerned with the European Recovery Programme, founded upon America's co-operation and offer of aid, was to explore the position of the European and American Trade Unions in relation to the productive efforts and the administrative problems involved in the Recovery Programme. Their consultations together were therefore restricted in their range, and they would approach them, she was sure, in a co-operative and comradely spirit. They were not concerned with controversies that had arisen in connection with their meeting. These must be dealt with in their proper place and at the proper time. That was not here or now.

They had come together because there was no alternative method available of coming to grips with the situation created by the decision of the Governments of the sixteen European countries participating with the United States Government in the promotion of co-operative efforts in economic recovery, and the decision of other Governments on the European continent to pursue a different line of policy.

Two men could not walk together unless they were agreed, was a scriptural saying. A divided view of the purpose and intention of America's offer of aid to Europe, and divisions within the International Trade Union Movement must obviously not be allowed to prevent those who could agree to walk together on the same path towards the goal that was the same for all. The goal to which their combined efforts were directed was the speediest possible restoration of the economic and political conditions within which the working people could attain a higher standard of living, more security in their employment, and a fuller life than the state of Europe and the world as a whole permits them to obtain today.

Difficult as the situation of the European countries concerned with the Recovery Programme was today, there was, she felt, no ground for pessimism and certainly no reason for a hopeless and despairing state of mind to take possession of the European peoples. Notwithstanding the destruction wrought by the war, there were in these countries still a

highly developed economy, large facilities in industrial and agricultural equipment, and an immense potential in the skill, experience, and energy of their working people. Their tragic plight at the present time was not incurable, if the proper remedies were placed in their hands.

It was the purpose of the European Recovery Programme to give them the additional aid they needed in order to achieve the early restoration of Europe on a self-supporting basis.

The ideals of democracy and free citizenship which found their fullest expression in the European civilisation through centuries of history, had not been discredited, but vindicated in the years of war. In that Conference today, they of the old world who were concerned to defend and fortify those ideals of freedom, civilisation and social progress, had with them representatives of the new world overseas who were ready and eager to lend their aid not to redress the balance between the old world and the new, but to unite them in a common effort to bring normal economic health back to the world without which neither political stability nor assured peace could be achieved.

That was both their opportunity and their task. It was not possible in any other way to get together, and nothing could take away the responsibility they had to the working people whose interests were safeguarded by the organisations they represented. The opportunity came in a challenging and practical form in the European Recovery Programme, backed with the material and financial resources which the United States was undertaking to dedicate to this high purpose. It would enable the countries of Western Europe to achieve a working economy and so to maintain their free institutions and their national independence.

It was unanimously decided that Miss Hancock should preside throughout the Conference.

The Conference having approved the credentials of the delegates, who included a representative of the Spanish General Union of Workers in Exile and the Confederation General of Italian Labour Minority Group, then proceeded to an examination of a number of memoranda dealing with various aspects of the European Recovery Programme.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFERENCE
EUROPEAN RECOVERY PROGRAMME

CONFÉRENCE SYNDICALE INTERNATIONALE
RELEVEMENT et RECONSTRUCTION de L'EUROPE

INTERNATIONALE GEWERKSCHAFTSKONFERENZ
HILFSPLAN FUER EUROPA

Country Pays Land	Organisation	Status Status Funktion	Names Noms Namen
AUSTRIA	General Confederation of Labour	D	Johann Boehm
		D	Walter Wodak
		D	Otto Leichter
BELGIUM	General Federation of Labour	D	Louis Major
		D	Paul Fassin
	Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens	D	Auguste Cool
DENMARK	General Confederation of Labour	D	Eiler Jensen
		D	Haary Agerbak
EIRE	Irish Trades Union Congress	D	John Swift
FRANCE	Confédération Générale du Travail Force Ouvrière	D	Léon Jouhaux
		D	R. Bothéreau
		D	J. Wacker
	Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens	D	Maurice Bouladoux
		D	Georges Levard
GERMANY	British Zone	D	Hans Boeckler
		D	Willi Richter
		D	A. Ludwig
ITALY	C.G.I.L. Minority Group	O	Giulio Pastore
		O	Guglielmo Canini
		O	- . Parri
LUXEMBOURG	General Confederation of Labour	D	Jean Fohrmann
		D	J.B. Rock
NETHERLANDS	Confederation of Free Trade Unions	D	Evert Kupers
		D	A. Vermeulen
		D	A.C. Debruyn
	Katholieke Arbeidersbeweging	D	
	Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond	D	F.P. Fuykschot
NORWAY	Federation of Trade Unions	D	Konrad Nordahl
		D	Gunnar Braathen
SPAIN	General Workers Union in Exile	O	Pascual Tomas