

COMMITTEE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTATION WITH
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Communication from the American Federation of Labor,
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CREATION OF A CENTRAL ORGAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF AND ADVISING
ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

One of the main aims of the activity of the Economic and Social Council, is the promotion of economic and social progress and development. The Economic and Social Council, its Economic and Employment Commission, and the Sub-Commission of Economic Development, all devoted their efforts to the furthering of the cause of economic development. In addition, the delegation of Teams of Experts for Field Missions is being studied.

The American Federation of Labor is greatly interested in the promotion of economic development of the under-developed areas as a condition for the improvement of living and working conditions of the labouring people in these countries. It has therefore co-operated in the Sub-Commission on Economic Development, and wishes to make the following suggestion in the interest of assistance to the under-developed areas.

It seems to be highly desirable that everyone of the countries within this group benefit from the experience and planning of any other country undertaking new projects and preparing for new enterprises. Some sort of pooling might save costly time and financial means. The idea is to bring the fruits of the endeavour of any single nation or group to the knowledge of another who is struggling with a similar or related problem. As an example, the following case may be shown:

/Country "A",

Country "A", in need of irrigation for its agricultural needs, plans the construction of a dam and irrigation system; it also wants to use the project for providing power to serve a developing small industry. It invites the best-known and available experts for the planning and preparation of the project.

Country "B", not knowing anything about the research and planning in process in Country "A", intends the construction of a big power plant, utilizing the hydraulic sources existing in the country. Country "B", too, approaches experts known internationally in the field, and the planning is begun all over again, without utilization of the project in development in Country "A" and the experience gained there.

The examples could be multiplied and extended to many other fields of research and planning. But the one given may suffice to show the desirability of pooling the experience of under-developed countries as well as that of developed countries in related fields.

This could best be done by the editing and publication of a periodical, centralizing the developing knowledge and experience in the various fields of engineering, chemistry, etc. Reports would be received on all under-developed countries, their economic problems, their intended projects and the stage of their preparation, and the new experience gained in the sciences related to industry, agriculture and public utilities, at a central place, which would be the periodical edited by the United Nations. Continuous contact would have to be established with the experts in the same fields, who would put the fruits of their developing experience in the service of the struggling countries through the medium of the United Nations' periodical. There would be a very close co-operation with all pertaining Specialized Agencies, who would report on the projects they, on their part, are assisting, or on the progress of knowledge and methods in their respective fields.

The finances needed for the publication of such a Central Organ would be more than compensated by the excellent furthering the task of development, would receive through its efficient service. It would have the advantage of being a continuous enterprise as against Commission meetings in great intervals once or twice a year, although the latter would not be made superfluous but would benefit on their part, too, from the periodical's work.

To sum up: Such a periodical, edited by the United Nations' Secretariat, could be a two-way proposition - in it, on the one hand, governments of under-developed countries would describe their problems and plans, while on the other hand experts from the various countries would inform interested parties of the progress in applied science and engineering. Such a continued exchange would be of a usefulness the importance of which can hardly be exaggerated.