

## UNITED NATIONS

## NATIONS UNIES

GENERAL COMMITTEESUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE  
SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE WITH  
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADES UNIONS

Held at Church House at 9 p.m. on 16 January 1946.

1. The President, in welcoming the representatives of the World Federation of Trades Unions, explained that he had received a letter, signed by Sir Walter Citrine and M. Saillant, in which the point of view of the World Federation of Trades Unions was clearly set out. The letter (of which a copy is attached to this report) was subsequently circulated to those present at the meeting (and has since been circulated as document A/BUR/8).

2. The representatives of the World Federation of Trades Unions then presented three explicit requests to the sub-committee. They based these requests on the unique character, importance and size of their organization (with its 65,000,000 members), emphasizing the assistance which it might be able to give to the United Nations in critical times. The three requests were as follows:

- (a) to have permanent representation in an advisory and consultative capacity, but without vote, in the General Assembly;
- (b) to be brought into regular consultation, under the provisions of Article 71 of the Charter, with the Economic and Social Council;
- (c) to be granted full participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council, with the right to vote.

The first two requests were for immediate action. The third was for future consideration.

3. General sympathy with the claims of the World Federation of

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Trades Unions was expressed by members of the sub-committee.

There was, however, unanimous agreement that the request for a vote in the Economic and Social Council, which would involve a revision of the Charter, could not be entertained. This request was therefore withdrawn by the representatives of the World Federation of Trades Unions for the time being.

4. With regard to the second request it was pointed out that the question of establishing arrangements for consultation with non-governmental agencies (which naturally included Trades Union organizations) was covered by item 8 of the provisional agenda for the first session of the Economic and Social Council, which reads as follows:

"8. Constitution of a Committee to report on arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations."

Some fear, however, was expressed by the World Federation of Trades Unions representatives that the issue was likely to be lost in a maze of committees unless there was some directive from the General Assembly. It was explained, therefore, that the most that could be done by the General Assembly would be to make a recommendation to the Economic and Social Council concerning the form of regular consultation with the World Federation of Trades Unions which should be arranged. The representatives of the World Federation of Trades Unions then made it quite clear that they wished the General Committee to recommend to the General Assembly to adopt a resolution recommending to the Economic and Social Council that it make suitable arrangements, within the terms of Article 71 of the Charter, for consultation with the World Federation of Trades Unions on a regular basis. M. Jouhaux and M. Saillant emphasized that by "consultation on a regular basis" they meant permanent consultation involving attendance of a representative of the World Federation of Trades Unions at every session.

5. With regard to the first request made by the World Federation of Trades Unions, to have permanent representation in an advisory and consultative capacity, without vote, in the General Assembly, it was explained by Sir Walter Citrine that this was meant to imply attendance of representatives (not a representative) at every session. In answer to a question by the President, however, Sir Walter Citrine explained that he and his colleagues had reached no conclusion as to whether their representatives should have the right to speak at any time, or merely when called upon by the President; speaking for himself, he thought that it would be undesirable that persons sitting in an advisory and consultative capacity should be regarded as having the same right to speak in the Assembly as an ordinary member. He thought that there would have to be some arrangement whereby they would be called upon to speak or give advice when it was desirable.

6. The President thanked the representatives of the World Federation of Trades Unions for the explanation of their position which they had given and assured them that he would communicate it, on behalf of the sub-committee, to the General Committee of the General Assembly.

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