



CONTENTS

Agenda item 3:	Page
World social situation ( <i>continued</i> ) . . . . .	141

*President* : Mr. M. MIR KHAN (Pakistan).

*Present* :

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Indonesia, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, India, Israel, Japan, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 3

**World social situation (E/3008; E/CN.5/321 and Add.1 and 2, E/CN.5/324/Rev.1; E/CN.5/325 and Corr.1 and Add.1) (*continued*)**

1. Mr. FARUQI (Pakistan) complimented the Secretariat on the *Report on the World Social Situation* (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1), which was remarkable not only for the information it provided, but also for its form. It was one of the most readable documents on the subject issued in recent years.
2. It was heartening to see that the world social situation had continued to improve in certain vital aspects, such as health, the consumption of food, education and national income. Though but a fraction of the progress possible had been achieved, and though even that made had varied considerably by country, by population group and by sector, and though lack of balance in certain matters might have serious long-term implications, the success recorded in coping with current problems none the less augured well for the future.
3. One feature that was causing his Government serious concern was the wide disparity between the more advanced and the less advanced countries. As was stated in the *Report* (page 2), that disparity was particularly marked in the case of national income, where the gap had widened further: a fact which, though primarily of economic significance, had a direct influence on the social

situation. Economic and social development being so intimately related, his Government believed it essential to plan in such a way as to ensure a healthy balance. For under-developed countries, sustained economic development was vital if social advance was to be possible. The lack of funds limited possibilities of undertaking more ambitious social programmes, so that international help through such institutions as the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development (SUNFED) acquired a special importance.

4. He also thanked the Secretariat for the reports on community development and on the maintenance of family levels of living (E/CN.5/325 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and E/CN.5/321), both of which dealt with matters of great import to under-developed countries.

5. There was growing awareness in his country of social welfare problems, and every possible provision had been made, within the limitations of available resources, for social planning, social research and social work in the five-year plan covering the years 1955 to 1960. Without going into detail, he would briefly indicate the fields in which immediate effort was to be concentrated.

6. As it was likely that Pakistan would remain a predominantly agricultural country, the greater part of the available resources would be devoted to village, agricultural and industrial development through community development, with emphasis on better production aimed at improving the economic conditions of rural communities. The essential purpose was to encourage local responsibility and individual and community self-help, as well as to promote a spirit of disinterested public service.

7. The problems of urbanization, so well treated in part II of the *Report on the World Social Situation*, were no less serious than those of the villages, and might well become explosive, since it was in the cities that the forces of tradition were at their weakest, the ties of family responsibility less compelling and the opportunities for inciting discontent at their greatest. If a dignified and peaceful development of industrial life was to be assured, it was essential to give thought to problems of human relations and physical conditions. Town dwellers should be helped to acquire a sense of neighbourliness and to appreciate the value of co-operating with one another and with the government in working for a common cause. The aim was to create under good leadership a society in which each individual could achieve self-fulfilment and learn that by working together with others it would be possible to improve the various social services. Apart from the intrinsic value of such improvements, the experience of co-operating within a community would act as a stabilizing force, and would form an essential element in the whole process of building a democracy by discussion and through the assumption of

wide responsibilities. The keynote was to be self-help in a task which, though no easy one, would greatly enhance social welfare.

8. Other important matters to which attention would be given were housing, refugee problems, protection of children and of women deprived of family support, care of the handicapped, rehabilitation of beggars, medical social work and social insurance.

9. The United Kingdom representative had asked at the 985th meeting how far economic and social development in under-developed countries with an ancient religion and culture could be reconciled with the preservation of traditional values. Experience had shown that there was no insurmountable difficulty about harmonizing the two, and though such a consideration should be borne in mind by the authorities, it ought not to enjoy the same prominence as had been given to it in the policies pursued by foreign rulers in the past. For example, in Pakistan there had been strong opposition to birth control, but a start had now been made on introducing family planning, and the programme might well meet with success. The forces of progress were gathering momentum, and must move forward in company with the old traditions towards the ultimate goal of social progress.

10. Mr. MELLER-CONRAD (Poland), congratulating the authors of the *Report on the World Social Situation*, said that it provided a fuller and more detailed picture than the *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation*<sup>1</sup> submitted to the Council in 1952.

11. While fully appreciating the impossibility of reviewing all the elements of the social situation, he regretted that the authors of the *Report* had not dealt with the question of social security or gone further into such questions as medical services, free education and discrimination in all its forms. Some information on the distribution of the national income in different countries would also have enhanced the report's value.

12. Moreover, very little information was given on the People's Republic of China, and since that nation accounted for roughly one-quarter of the world population, it must be admitted that the *Report's* title of "The World Social Situation" bore little relation to its contents. Furthermore, he noted with regret that the problems created by atomic explosions were inadequately treated.

13. The Polish delegation welcomed the social progress made since 1952, in which it noted in particular the lowering of the death rate, the wiping out of many epidemic diseases, the increased production of foodstuffs and the success of the campaign against illiteracy. Poland occupied an honourable place in the general advance. Moreover, the progress already to be noted in those countries that had recently won their independence, and in India in particular, was a good omen for the future. Poland was following with sympathy the efforts made by those countries to raise the standards of living of the population, the outstanding successes recorded in the Soviet Union, in the People's Republic

of China and in the other Socialist countries, as well as the results obtained in all other countries, especially in France and the northern European countries. At the same time, the Polish delegation agreed with the authors of the *Report* that the progress made in some other areas was still inadequate or too slow to satisfy the requirements of a population which was increasing at a hitherto unprecedented rate.

14. Undoubtedly there was a close relationship between economic expansion and social progress, but that did not mean that one automatically entailed the other. In fact, the contrary might well occur as a result of what he would call an "overflow" of social progress beyond the limits laid down by economic achievement. By way of example he quoted the development of public education in Poland, which had far outstripped the economic expansion of the country. His delegation was, however, unable to share the concern of the United Kingdom representative (985th meeting), who seemed to fear that an undue growth of education — particularly of higher education — in the under-developed regions might upset the vital balance of those countries.

15. He agreed with the statements with regard to the relaxation of international tension which had followed the Meeting of Heads of Government in Geneva in 1955. The easing of the situation had effectively helped the development of international economic collaboration, particularly in trade. The reduction in military expenditure and the direction of the resources thus released to raising the standards of living of the peoples had to a substantial degree promoted not only the progress of the countries concerned but also the improvement of the social situation throughout the world. In that connexion, he pointed out that the military budget of Poland had undergone a very large cut.

16. As things were, it was extremely difficult for a country to solve its economic and social problems single-handed, and international collaboration was imperative. Without wishing to go into the merits of the European Common Market, the Polish delegation would draw the Council's attention to its social repercussions. At a time when many eminent experts were talking of a great industrial revolution, it was more important than ever to strengthen collaboration between all peoples, rather than to restrict it to a limited number of them. He considered that the following *Report* should make a very detailed study of the influence of the latest discoveries — both technical and in connexion with energy — on the social evolution of the various countries with special reference to automation and the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

17. His delegation considered that the conclusions of the group of experts convened under the joint auspices of the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation, which had drawn up a report on a co-ordinated policy for maintaining family levels of living (E/CN.5/321, appendix I), showed that exchanges of information and statistics on specific subjects were an effective form of international co-operation in social matters. There were, however, a number of other forms such as, for example, the organization of vocational training and the help given by certain States to others to enable them

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 1952.IV.11.

to carry out their social programmes. It fully endorsed the views expressed by the Social Commission at its eleventh session on the importance of setting up international committees of experts from countries of different social structure and at different stages of development (E/3008, paragraph 13). Lastly, it must not be forgotten that social progress meant not only advances in health education, nutrition and labour, but — and above all — an improvement in conditions securing the enjoyment of the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The rapid industrialization of certain less highly developed countries might well lead to some disturbance of their social development. Again, the drift of the rural population to the towns was creating at times complex yet unavoidable problems.

18. Poland had had to face those problems, and, despite the difficulties encountered, a marked improvement in the social condition of the workers was already noticeable. The proportion of national income spent on consumer goods had risen from 69 per cent in 1955 to 72 per cent in 1956 and a further rise of 11.2 per cent was expected in 1957. Nominal monthly wages had been raised by 11.8 per cent in comparison with 1955. The material position of persons with a private income had improved considerably, while the income of the rural population had increased by 7,500 million zlotys.

19. Industrialization had also opened up wide new horizons to the rural population. New undertakings had been set up to provide employment for young people who had come into the towns from the countryside. However, since democracy had ousted feudalism in the rural areas and the former landless peasants had become landowners, the flight to the towns was no longer an absolute need. Moreover, the agricultural development plan could, in principle, ensure employment for all those who, in former days, would have abandoned the country to find work in industry. In Poland, one of the results of industrialization had been the creation of an intermediate class of worker — farmer-workers living in the country — who were able to combine factory work with the tilling of their own land. The Polish Government planned an increase in productivity, better utilization of the country's industrial potential and the modernization of industrial equipment, and did not envisage any large-scale transfer of the rural population to industry.

20. Mr. ALMEIDA RODRIGUES (Brazil) said that the task of collecting and analysing material on social developments was a very complicated one, so that the Secretariat was to be particularly commended on the excellence of the *Report on the World Social Situation* (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1).

21. A significant increase in population was reported to have come about since the publication of the *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation* in 1952, thanks to better conditions in such vital fields as health, the production and consumption of food, education and national income. Though such progress was encouraging, it was but poor when viewed against the vast poverty and need with which the world was afflicted. More could have been achieved had it not been for a number

of obstacles described in the present *Report*. One of the most striking facts quoted (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1, page 1) was that “the varying increases in national income in the less developed countries have been accompanied by a growing unevenness in the distribution of this income within the population, and by a growing dissatisfaction on the part of groups that have not benefited as much from the rising incomes as they have suffered from the rising prices”. Furthermore, increases in national income per head of population during the post-war period had been substantially greater in the more advanced countries, so that, despite improvements in some sectors, the existing gap — and very probably the disparity in standards of living — between the two groups of countries had widened. He appreciated the fact that, there being at the moment no satisfactory means of measuring rates of progress and hence of making international comparisons, the under-developed countries might be catching up in some respects while falling farther behind in others. However, it was impossible to avoid the impression that the relative position of the poorer countries was deteriorating, particularly when the data in the *Report* were compared with the statistics contained in the “World Economic Survey, 1956” (E/2982).

22. Although a rapid rate of population growth — such as seemed to be typical of his own country — was a desirable dynamic feature of an expanding economy, it also tended to upset the balance between different groups owing to variations in levels of productivity. Certain groups were better placed to press for a share in the products of an expanding economy, whereas others tended to suffer a decline in their standard of living, and therefore required special government protection. Changes brought about by such dynamic factors, of which his country had had telling experience, called for greater attention, both at national and at international level. Mobility — in all its senses — was a striking feature of Brazil's social structure, and many persons now in prominent positions, both private and official, had come from humble — often immigrant — homes. That was not only true of the white population, but also of the negro, the South American Indian and the mestizo. Though there was some colour prejudice, racial discrimination was forbidden by law. Mestizos were usually classified with the white population: indeed, it would be difficult to find people of pure white origin among Brazilians of several generations' standing. Moreover, women enjoyed full equality of opportunity and remuneration with men.

23. Another important feature of Brazil's social pattern was the geographical mobility of the population; but that should not be regarded as indicating a high standard of living, since it was for the most part prompted by poverty. Though such mobility was a useful element in economic and social development, and was conducive to cultural integration, it created serious social problems as yet unsolved, one of which was the migration from the country to the towns; an ineluctable, and perhaps even necessary, phenomenon in the process of development. But some means had to be found of overcoming the difficulties created by the lack of employment opportunities and urban facilities to meet the needs of the

migrants. Despite the rapid growth of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, only some 20 per cent of the total population lived in towns with more than one hundred thousand inhabitants. New agricultural areas had been developed, particularly in the west of the country, but the exodus from the countryside continued to rise. The problems of urban development were becoming so serious that the Federal Government had prepared a plan to facilitate the acquisition of land and to ease the conditions of its general use and occupation, to carry out some measure of agrarian reform and to develop public transport, and in general to increase the scope of rural development and improve the production of foodstuffs. Several projects forming part of that plan were at present under examination by parliament. In under-developed countries like his own, problems of urban concentration were first and foremost connected with investment. However, the need for investment in the infrastructure of rural areas should in certain cases take precedence, because the extension of social assistance programmes and of investment designed to solve urban problems at the expense of rural needs might, far from providing a solution, aggravate existing difficulties, because country folk, coming to learn of the improvements in urban amenities, would have an even greater incentive to leave their homes.

24. On the other hand, a low level of investment in urban infrastructure tended to keep cities and towns small in extent, so that land values rose steeply. Control of private property exercised by certain juridical institutions in a most self-seeking way had also encouraged the flight from the countryside, and exacerbated the financial difficulties hampering the extension of urban facilities. Those institutions had succeeded in making the cost of expropriation, even of idle land, prohibitive, so that it was impossible to designate the land for rural resettlement or public works. They had also obstructed the acquisition of land in towns, and made it difficult to levy taxes for urban improvement.

25. With its population expanding at a rate of 2.5 per cent per annum, and with its rapid urbanization, Brazil was faced with a serious housing problem. To overcome that problem, at least 275,000 dwelling units would have to be built every year, at an annual cost equivalent to 20 per cent of total public investment in 1956. Inflation added to the difficulties by making the cost of land prohibitive and by discouraging banks from financing house building. Although the authors of the *Report on the World Social Situation* stated that the percentage of Brazil's national income devoted to the provision of housing was relatively high, by far the greater part of that percentage went to the construction of luxury housing.

26. Funds for house-building were put up by savings banks, social security organizations and the Treasury. Outright grants were made only in cases of natural catastrophe. Medium and high quality housing was usually financed privately. Administrative costs were high, local assistance inadequate, and construction methods often inappropriate. Efforts were being made, however, to reduce costs, and to achieve better co-ordination of financial and technical resources.

27. The United Nations had been tackling the problem of housing in a commendable manner. In Latin America, the experience acquired by the research and training centres at Bogotá, sponsored by the Pan-American Union, had been most valuable. However, owing to language and other difficulties, Brazil had benefited little from international action in the field of housing.

28. He fully agreed with the United States representative (985th meeting) that the role of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the social field was to encourage, fortify and supplement national policies and effort. The programme outlined by the Secretariat should be continued, and care should be taken to ensure that the work of the specialized agencies was properly co-ordinated. The dissemination of information on social activities was of the utmost value for the under-developed countries. The technical assistance programmes might be used for that purpose with the help of local bodies and voluntary private organizations. It would help countries where none of the official languages of the United Nations was spoken to receive documents on social matters in their own language.

29. One of the most effective means of encouraging both economic and social development would be the immediate establishment of SUNFED. Finance lay at the root of all the major social problems which had been discussed in the Council, and it was essential to have a financial organization which could supplement the work of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and that of the International Finance Corporation. SUNFED could do much to promote investment in rural projects, health and education.

30. Mr. MAHEU (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) wished to comment on chapter V of the *Report on the World Social Situation*, entitled "Education".

31. Some progress had undoubtedly been made in that sphere. Between 1950 and 1954, school attendance had increased by 18 per cent. But that figure gave no cause for satisfaction, since about 50 per cent of all the world's children still never went to school at all. Neither was progress in education uniform in different countries and different sections of society. There was no doubt that some social classes were at a disadvantage educationally, and their situation could not be said to have improved. In some parts of the world, too, there had been no increase in the pace of educational development. In fact, the only field in which it was possible to talk of more rapid progress was that of women's education.

32. He called attention to the difference between the educational problems of the under-developed countries and those of the economically more advanced countries. Briefly, the main problems confronting the under-developed countries were the development of primary education, the introduction and development of technical education for training the technicians needed for their economic development, and, lastly, the protection of traditional cultural values from the impact of rapid industrialization. The problems of the industrialized countries were quite different. There, the main need was to develop the higher branches of scientific and technical education, to establish a balance between the

humanities and the sciences, and to give special consideration to the use of leisure for cultural as well as recreational purposes.

33. As the Canadian representative had said at the 986th meeting, the persistence of uneven rates of progress in different parts of the world gave the impression that there were two human races; one trying to spread in certain countries the techniques and knowledge already acquired elsewhere, the other wrestling with the problems arising from the increasing complexity of its development. But the increasing pace of progress in the industrialized countries seemed destined to widen and deepen unceasingly the gap between those two sections of mankind, and a solution to the problem must be found forthwith if a fatal rift in the unity of the world was to be averted.

34. In that connexion, he would venture to suggest that there was no need for the less developed countries to follow the same course of development as the more advanced countries had followed in the past. They could make up lost ground by exploiting the most recent scientific and technical discoveries, such as wireless, the cinema and television.

35. Although needs varied from country to country, he would say that the crucial problem of education everywhere was secondary education, including, of course, technical education.

36. Mr. ORBANEJA (Food and Agriculture Organization) said that the ultimate concern of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was the welfare of the world's population in general, and that of its rural population in particular. In its extension work in agriculture and home economics, FAO emphasized the family approach. It sought not only to improve agricultural productivity but also to secure better nutrition and family living. To that end, joint activities in agricultural extension and home economics were being given increasing importance in FAO planning. Governments were also being advised to co-ordinate their extension activities in different fields with general programmes of rural or community development, where such existed. The major emphasis had been placed on training, as the lack of skilled staff was a major obstacle to rural development.

37. FAO had also given assistance to member governments in a variety of ways in the important field of nutrition. One of the most significant was the promotion of education and training in nutrition. FAO's help was being increasingly sought by governments in developing their national food policies. FAO provided assistance in planning appropriate dietary surveys and in training local personnel to carry them out.

38. Agricultural co-operatives, agricultural credit and rural crafts and industries were other subjects of social significance with which FAO was concerned. Information had been disseminated through a series of publications on different aspects of agricultural co-operation, and technical meetings for the discussion of common problems had been held in different regions. Courses for the training of supervisory staff had also been organized.

39. In providing assistance for rural industries, FAO had been mainly concerned with smaller enterprises

engaged in processing agricultural products. A series of brochures gave practical advice on the processing of main crops and raw materials produced under the conditions obtaining in the under-developed countries. Experts were continuing to give direct assistance in that field in an increasing number of countries.

40. FAO had also been concerned with the problems of land reform. In many areas, significant improvements in social and economic conditions were well-nigh impossible until improved systems of land tenure had been inaugurated. A number of seminars had been held on the subject, technical assistance had been supplied to governments through the services of experts, and further work was planned. Another activity intended to assist countries in their rural welfare plans was the appraisal of rural living conditions and the interpretation of the problems and needs of rural populations.

41. Many of the above fields of activity were obviously related to the work of other United Nations bodies. For that reason, FAO acted in close concert with the United Nations and the other specialized agencies, as well as with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in planning and implementing many of its programmes. FAO had also been working in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) for many years in the field of nutrition. One of the most encouraging signs in recent times had been the development of closer inter-agency co-operation in pursuit of the common objective of social welfare. In no other field was such co-operation more noticeable than in the joint programmes of community development, in which FAO had played a significant role.

42. FAO intended to pursue its various activities in the broad field of social welfare with greater vigour, keener awareness and closer co-ordination than ever before. Such efforts would no doubt enable it to link up its activities in the social field more effectively with other United Nations organizations.

43. FAO had provided a substantial part of the material contained in chapter IV (Food and Nutrition) of the *Report on the World Social Situation*. Together with other international organizations, FAO had been concerned about the inadequacy of data on many aspects of the social situation. FAO's activities in the fields of home economics and nutrition involved it directly in the growing problem of urbanization, dealt with in part II of the *Report*, and it was expected that FAO would be called upon to assume increasing responsibilities in that field.

44. Dr. COIGNEY (World Health Organization) thanked the members of the Council who had expressed their appreciation of WHO's contribution to the *Report on the World Social Situation*. The Ninth World Health Assembly had requested the WHO secretariat to draw up a first report on the world health situation for consideration by the Eleventh World Health Assembly, which was to meet in 1958 (E/2980, page 93). WHO would be glad to communicate to the United Nations Secretariat the information supplied by the various governments, which might be helpful when the Council came to consider the next report on the world social situation.



45. As several speakers had rightly said, while it was true that public health activities, which should help to improve the social condition of the peoples, could only bear fruit if accompanied by at least a minimum of economic and social development, it was also true that no economic and social progress was conceivable without an improvement in health conditions. Accordingly, WHO had from the outset devoted its energies to solving basic and urgent technical problems, especially those calling for widespread international co-operation, such as the co-ordination of medical research, biological and pharmacological standardization, health statistics and epidemiology. At the same time, it had been devoting a large proportion of its resources to helping governments to solve their most urgent health problems: control of communicable diseases, training of professional and technical staff, and the development of rural health services.

46. In so doing, WHO was trying to help countries in process of development to produce the trained personnel and basic services without which their governments would be able to stop only the most dangerous gaps, or, in other words, would be obliged to confine themselves to expanding their curative services instead of establishing or expanding preventive services. One of the most important contributions WHO could make to social progress was undoubtedly to help governments to establish or improve their technical services. For that purpose, WHO had to co-operate closely, and had from the outset co-operated closely, not only with the ministries of health of the countries concerned, but also with other ministries, the United Nations and other specialized agencies dealing with social problems, such as the International Labour Organisation, FAO, UNESCO and UNICEF.

47. WHO's methods of work had proved their value and had already produced substantial results. Of recent years, successive World Health Assemblies had paid more attention to the establishment of a general public health policy and long-term programmes. That policy led WHO to co-operate more actively and closely in the preparation of general programmes. Thus, WHO was participating in common community development activities and in the work of the group of experts on family levels of living. Incidentally, the Tenth World Health Assembly had formally approved the WHO's participation in United Nations general programmes (resolution WHA 10.39).

48. Mr. ZOFKA (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the PRESIDENT, said that the *Report on the World Social Situation* was a praiseworthy piece of work. He would, however, draw attention to certain gaps as a contribution to the improvement of subsequent issues.

49. In the first place, the *Report* did not devote sufficient attention to the housing question, a universal problem which might have been studied more deeply. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was deeply concerned at the chronic housing crisis with which a great many countries were afflicted, and was in favour of sweeping measures to solve the problem, which, as was shown by the resolution adopted at the 40th Session of the International Labour Conference,

was also engaging the attention of the International Labour Organisation. Ways must be found of removing obstacles to house building and to the development of the building industry. Apart from the legislative measures required, steps should be taken to promote the formation of workers' housing co-operatives and other non-profit-making institutions for the provision of low-rental housing as well as to foster research into new building methods and architectural ideas susceptible of meeting the needs of modern life. At the same time, thought must be given to providing new housing estates with schools, hospitals and other necessary social institutions, accommodation itself — however important — being only one component of the complex of factors by which alone the workers could be assured of the standard of living to which they were entitled.

50. Chapter III on health conditions ought to have included an account of measures taken to protect workers exposed to ionizing radiation in countries where radioactive products were in everyday use. Deeper study should be made of the question, to which the conclusions of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation were particularly relevant. ICFTU advocated the adoption of special safety measures for workers exposed to such radiation, and the revision of accident or sickness benefits. In addition, it urgently demanded effective protection for the population as a whole from contamination resulting from radioactivity in the air, water and soil in areas where radioactive products were used for industrial or other purposes, and was prepared to co-operate in applying any measures taken in that connexion.

51. Chapter VI, dealing with conditions of work and employment, might be criticized in that insufficient emphasis was placed on the substantial success which had attended the efforts of the free trade unions over the past two years to secure a reduction in the length of the working day in the industrial countries, where a general tendency towards a shorter working day was observable. The importance of such a reduction, which could not fail to have favourable repercussions on the workers' standard of living, ought to be recognized in the next report on the world social situation.

52. Finally, with reference to chapter VIII on urbanization in Africa south of the Sahara, a further cause of instability in the employment of African workers in addition to those mentioned was their sense of insecurity in the industrial community compared with the feeling of security which they enjoyed in their native community, to which they always remained loyal. In view of that fact, ICFTU considered it essential to encourage a sense of personal independence among Africans, and to give them a new sense of security by providing all the requirements for normal life — adequate wages, social security, education, satisfactory working conditions, and other conditions conducive to the development of the individual. As a result of the African regional conference of ICFTU held at Accra in January 1957, where those problems had been examined in addition to many others, a large number of African workers had clearly recognized the need for introducing far-reaching structural changes in their ways of life. ICFTU proposed to help them, and to give every possible support to the young African

trade union organizations in their struggle for better living conditions.

53. Mr. EGGERMANN (International Federation of Christian Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the PRESIDENT, said that both parts of the *Report on the World Social Situation* were of the greatest interest. Not only was the *Report* invaluable to every government and every organization in the world concerned with social well-being; it could, and should, also be used as a means of evaluating the United Nations' and specialized agencies' programme of concerted practical action in the social field, and, in some cases, as a supplement to it. That was why his organization felt it necessary to comment on the *Report*, and in particular to draw attention to some conclusions which appeared inadmissible or which could only be accepted with some important reservations.

54. First, it would appear from the section of chapter II entitled "Some social and economic implications of population growth in under-developed countries", that the authors of the *Report* believed that the solution to the economic and attendant social problems in those countries lay in a lower birth rate. His organization rejected that notion, and took the view that it was only by developing national resources and ensuring that production increased more rapidly than the population that those problems could be solved, as had indeed been recognized in the report, Maintenance of Family Levels of Living (E/CN.5/321).

55. Next, he regretted that the section of chapter III entitled "Environmental sanitation and environmental hazards from industrial development" contained no precise information on the situation in under-developed countries, and particularly on social security and social insurance schemes for workers in new industries. It would have been interesting, for example, to know to what extent the international labour Conventions adopted by the International Labour Conference had been ratified and were respected in such countries. There was no doubt that inadequate information on the social situation in under-developed countries made it difficult to present a clear picture and, for that reason, his organization had read with great interest the Secretary-General's comments on means of improving information about social conditions.

56. Chapter V on education was unsatisfactory in that it took no account of distinctions made between various social groups in respect of access to education. Further, it should be stressed that general educational policy in the under-developed countries should be framed with an eye both to immediate and to long-term economic needs. Lastly, special attention should be paid to the education of women in domestic science in under-developed countries. As the family was the keystone of the community, it was vital that women should be competent to manage their household budget in a society which had undergone far-reaching changes as a result of economic development.

57. Chapter VI on conditions of work and employment, in spite of its considerable interest, gave no clear view of the immense disparity between the wages of workers in industrialized and in under-developed countries. In

that field, a comparative study of family levels of living in each type of country, broken down by their various constituents, would be of great value. Further, the next report on the world social situation should give some information on the shorter working day, a question which was to be examined by the 42nd Session of the International Labour Conference as a result of repeated requests by the Workers' Group on the Governing Body of the International Labour Office. Trade union organizations had done a great deal of work on the subject, and the shorter working day already introduced in some countries had yielded notable results.

58. The main conclusions drawn in that section of chapter VII which dealt with urbanization and economic development were fully endorsed by IFCTU. Incidentally, the policy of integration advocated in the report underlay the action undertaken by the Christian trade unions in the Middle Congo and in the Cameroons under French administration to re-settle urban workers in rural centres, where model villages had been built with the assistance of the local administration.

59. The section of chapter VII on urbanization and labour stressed the difficulties of such development programmes; but those difficulties merely revealed the need for education and vocational training programmes. The trade union organizations, though naturally interested in the task, were frequently compelled to do that work of national importance under very difficult conditions, an aspect of the question which it was to be regretted had not been sufficiently emphasized in the report.

60. With regard to the section on patterns of urban growth and housing, he would invite the Council's attention to the resolution adopted by the International Christian Social Conference on Housing held in April 1957 under the auspices of IFCTU (E/C.2/484). IFCTU hoped that the Council would give special consideration to the idea of creating a special housing fund and to the suggested establishment of a sub-commission on housing.

61. As to the report on the Maintenance of Family Levels of Living (E/CN.5/321), although IFCTU regretted that trade union representatives had not been invited to participate in its preparation, it nevertheless appreciated the great value of the document.

62. IFCTU fully endorsed the statement in the report of the group of experts that "the goal to which a dynamic and evolving society must address itself is not merely the maintenance of existing levels but the progressive improvement of the levels of living for the people as a whole" (E/CN.5/321, appendix I, paragraph 6). It also shared the experts' opinion that "Social programmes cannot... be considered merely as a means of improving the human capital required for production" (paragraph 8). IFCTU had always held that the aim of all social activities must be the development of the human personality.

63. With regard to chapter I of the same report, on the broader framework of policy, IFCTU considered that more attention should have been paid to income distribution in paragraphs 46 and 47. In the under-developed countries, large amounts of foreign capital were invested in sectors which gave an immediate return. On the other hand, the income from capital invested in the under-developed countries' productive sectors was not

ploughed back. Steps ought therefore to be taken to prevent such large losses of capital and interest which could be enormously useful in increasing over-all national output, and thus enhance the prospects of economic and social organization.

64. Chapter III, section B, on the administrative arrangements necessary for implementation of a co-ordinated programme, assigned too large a role to the State and too small a role to non-governmental organizations. While recognizing the important part the State had to play in planning and co-ordinating general social policy, in providing the broader framework and in exercising control, IFCTU considered that effective execution of programmes could and should be left to free bodies. All social systems aimed at free development of the human personality, and it did not seem in the interests of that personality to establish a social security system under which the State looked after the worker financially from the cradle to the grave. Although such a system relieved the worker of certain practical worries, it would ultimately destroy his individuality and make him a slave of the State. Experience had shown that in many countries a free system under the control of the public authorities had all the advantages of a State system without any of its disadvantages. With regard to the financing arrangements considered in sub-section 2 of the same section B, IFCTU believed that the social security contributions added to wages were an integral part of the remuneration of labour, and that they ought therefore to be regarded as “deferred wages” — the property of the workers — and reserved for their exclusive use.

65. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs) wished to thank delegations for expressing their appreciation of the *Report on the World Social Situation*, for drawing attention to omissions and shortcomings and making suggestions about the content of future reports.

66. A number of delegations had noted with regret that the present report did not deal with the question of social security. That omission was due to the fact that the information received on social security had been included in the earlier published report by the Secretary-General entitled *International Survey of Programmes of Social Development*.<sup>2</sup> With regard to income per head of population in different countries, the Secretariat had been unable, in spite of all its efforts, to provide the figures which a number of delegations would like to have seen included; it would try to make good that omission next time.

67. As to the proposal that use should be made of new indicators of social progress — such as the development of public transport and the implementation of human rights — he was obliged to point out that it was almost impossible to evaluate the observance of human rights numerically. As to transport, its development was governed by a number of factors which did not necessarily involve social progress.

68. The welcome accorded to the report on the Maintenance of Family Levels of Living was most gratifying. In his view, that report should be the object of detailed study by the Social Committee, by governments and by governmental and non-governmental organizations during the next five years.

69. He noted that no suggestions had been made about the detailed plan of international activities in community development (E/CN.5/325, part III). He wondered whether that absence of any comment was to be interpreted as an authorization to the Secretariat to proceed with the plan.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 1955.IV.8.