

* Health Insurance for Industrial Workers

Standing Labour Committee Discuss Adarkar Report

Prof. Adarkar's Report on Health Insurance for Industrial Workers in India was discussed at the sixth meeting of the Standing Labour Committee which concluded in New Delhi on March 17. The Hon'ble Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, Government of India, presided. Mr. Stack and Mr. Rao of the I.L.O. also attended the meeting as visitors, and some comments made by them on the scheme were circulated.

The delegates, including those representing employers and workers, warmly appreciated Prof. Adarkar's Report and expressed their respective views on questions relating to medical and cash benefits, the qualifying or waiting periods, the type of treatment, medical organisation and State contribution. A number of delegates emphasised the importance of going ahead with the scheme as early as possible, and there was general agreement that in order to secure the benefits resulting from broadening the basis of the scheme it was advisable to extend its scope to all organised industries and perennial factories.

Maternity Benefits

It was also agreed that the Centre should go ahead with the preparation of a scheme, and, if they found it possible to do so, they should include in this scheme maternity benefits and workmen's compensation. After the scheme was prepared, the Centre should consult provinces and the Employers' and Workers' Organisations and, after consideration of their replies, should introduce a Bill in the Legislative Assembly.

Another item on the agenda for the meeting was a proposal to change the constitution and functions of the Tripartite Labour Conference and

* Indian Information, April 15, 1945, p. 505.

the Standing Labour Committee with a view to classify these functions in two lists, one dealing with general subjects such as terms and conditions of employment, labour legislation, social security, etc., and the other with concrete questions relating to labour welfare and administration of labour laws.

In the *memorandum* placed before the Committee it was suggested that a Labour Welfare Committee should be set up to deal with functions in the second list, the intention being to secure through this Committee a body which would deal with the actual problems arising in the various industries, and to bring into such committee representatives of various important industries. The Labour Conference and its Standing Labour Committee should confine themselves to terms and conditions of employment, labour legislation, social security, etc., looked at on broad lines and from an all-India stand point. It was agreed that a sub-committee should be appointed to examine these proposals.

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