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REPORT II

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

ASIAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

NUWARA ELIYA (CEYLON)

JANUARY 1950

**PROVISION OF FACILITIES
FOR THE PROMOTION OF
WORKERS' WELFARE**

Second Item on the Agenda

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INTRODUCTION

The development of measures for the promotion of workers' welfare which is now taking place in the national field in a large number of countries in Asia, Europe and the Americas, is also being facilitated and encouraged on the international plane, and the subject is taking a prominent place in the deliberations of the International Labour Organisation.

The Declaration of Philadelphia which, in the words of Mr. E. J. Phelan, the then Acting-Director of the International Labour Office, "sets a North Star by which national and international authorities may steer their course with greater certainty than heretofore towards the promotion of the common welfare of mankind", included among the objects to be achieved by programmes which it was the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organisation to further among the nations of the world "provision for child welfare and maternity protection" and "the provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture". The Declaration was unanimously adopted by the 26th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1944.

Much emphasis has been placed by the International Labour Organisation on all these aspects of workers' general well-being. A Recommendation was adopted by the Conference in 1944 setting forth the principles which should be applied in order to improve the health of the people by the development of medical care services. In 1945 a Resolution was adopted by the Conference concerning the protection of children and young workers containing provisions regarding medical care and health services for pregnant and nursing mothers, infants, children of pre-school and school age and young workers. In 1947 a Resolution was adopted by the Conference concerning welfare facilities for workers, and the Governing Body was requested to instruct the Office to expand its studies of the administration and working of such services, facilities and amenities, to consider the desirability of placing the question, or such aspects of it as may be appropriate, on the agenda of an early session of the Conference, and to refer to future regional conferences and to the industrial committees for consideration such aspects of the question as may present special problems in particular regions or industries. In the same year the Asian

Regional Conference held in New Delhi adopted a Resolution concerning conditions of work and labour welfare in which the Governing Body was requested to instruct the Office to study these matters, stressing in particular steps already taken or proposed to be taken in this direction in the Asian countries. The Conference further requested the Governing Body to consider in the light of the progress made in the studies undertaken on the basis of the Resolution what aspects of these questions could usefully be further considered by succeeding Asian Regional Conferences.

At its 105th Session (San Francisco, June 1948) the Governing Body held a preliminary discussion of the questions to be dealt with at the Asian Regional Conference in 1950, and there was complete agreement that the provision of facilities for workers' welfare should be one of the subjects discussed.

In accordance with the proposals submitted by the Office and approved by the Governing Body, officials of the Office who served on the Preparatory Conference on Labour Inspection in Asian countries, held at Kandy, Ceylon, in November 1948, visited a number of Asian countries with a view to establishing necessary contacts in these countries and securing up-to-date information on questions to be dealt with by the Asian Regional Conference. Brief outlines of reports to be submitted by the Office to the Conference, including a report on the promotion of facilities for workers' welfare, were discussed at tripartite meetings of the Government, employers and workers in Burma, Ceylon, India, Pakistan and the Philippines. Having regard to the material in hand as a result of the consultations held by the Office mission in the countries visited, and in view of the national and international interest in workers' welfare, the Office proposed the inclusion of the question of the provision of facilities for the promotion of workers' welfare in the agenda of the Asian Regional Conference. The suggestion was approved by the Governing Body at its 109th Session (Geneva, June-July 1949). The question will be the second item on the agenda.

The present report has accordingly been drafted to serve as a basis for discussion. It comprises four chapters and an appendix. Chapter I contains general observations on the subject, Chapter II gives a summary of present law and practice, Chapter III lays down proposals for action, and Chapter IV gives the conclusion to be drawn from the preceding chapters. The appendix contains the text of a proposed resolution on the question.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

THE SCOPE OF WORKERS' WELFARE

A Resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 30th Session, in June 1947, draws attention to the importance of establishing in undertakings, wherever appropriate, in co-operation with representatives of the workers concerned and under properly qualified management, such services, facilities and amenities as adequate canteens, rest and recreation facilities, sanitary and medical facilities, arrangements for travel to and from work and for the accommodation of workers employed at a distance from their homes, and such other services, amenities and facilities as contribute to improve the conditions under which workers are employed.

It is in this sense, that is, as meaning such services, facilities and amenities as those mentioned in the Resolution which may be established in, or in the vicinity of, undertakings to enable the persons employed in them to perform their work in healthy, congenial surroundings and provided with amenities conducive to good health and high morale, that "workers' welfare" is understood in the following pages.

The term is one which lends itself to various interpretations, and it has not always the same significance in different countries. Sometimes the concept is a very wide one and is more or less synonymous with conditions of work as a whole. It may include not only the minimum standards of hygiene and safety laid down in general labour legislation, but also such aspects of working life as social insurance schemes, measures for the protection of women and young workers, limitation of hours of work, paid vacations, etc. In other cases the definition is much more limited, and "welfare", in addition to general physical working conditions, is mainly concerned with the day-to-day problems of the workers and the social relationships at the place of work. In some countries the use of the welfare facilities provided is confined to the workers

employed in the undertaking concerned, while in others the workers' families are allowed to share in many of the benefits which are made available. The position as a whole has been aptly summed up by the Royal Commission on Labour in India. The term "welfare" as applied to the industrial worker, the Commission states, "is one which must necessarily be elastic, bearing a somewhat different interpretation in one country from another, according to the different social customs, the degree of industrialisation and the educational development of the worker".¹

Modern welfare has been said to be "the outcome of the movement for better and more efficient management in industry", and nowadays the term "management" necessarily includes the human angle, while in all countries there is growing recognition of the need for studying the human factor in welfare work as well as for improved material conditions for the workers, both from the social viewpoint and from the effect on productive efficiency.

Industry cannot be rendered efficient while the basic fact remains unrecognised that it is principally human. It is not a mass of machines and technical processes; it is a body of men. It is not a complex of matter, but a complex of humanity. It fulfils its function not by virtue of some impersonal force, but by human energy. Its body is not an intricate maze of mechanical devices, but a magnified nervous system.²

Industrial psychology is in fact being much used in many countries at the present time to help solve the human problems that arise in undertakings, and bring about improved industrial relations, as well as to make the workers more efficient in their jobs, and personnel managers and welfare officers who take into account the human element inherent in their work are said to have markedly improved the general morale of the undertaking and to have helped to create a good atmosphere.

Whatever the scope of the specific measures which are considered to fall under the heading of welfare, they necessarily form an important part of the general management of the establishment, and the term no longer has the paternalistic, somewhat sentimental meaning at one time attached to it. The following extract from an annual report of the Chief Inspector of Factories in the United Kingdom stresses this point:

¹ U.K.: *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, Cmd. 3883 (London, 1931), p. 261.

² Oliver SHELDON: *The Philosophy of Management*, p. 27, quoted in "The International Development of the Industrial Welfare or Personnel Movement", *International Labour Review*, Vol. X, No. 1, July 1924, p. 57.

The conception of personnel management and particularly of welfare as something extraneous to the normal dealings with employees and as something concerned merely with the more trivial amenities of factory life dies hard. There are still factories in which the responsibility for matters particularly affecting the employees is divided into a number of watertight compartments and in which the Welfare Section functions quite independently of those sections concerned with the engagement, placing and dismissal of labour, with the health and safety of the employees, with the carrying out of the Factories Act and with the running of the canteen.¹

This broader conception of welfare work is one of the ways in which it is developing. It now aims not at the employer doing things for the workers in the paternalistic way, nor at the provision of facilities solely because they are likely to lead to increased output, but at creating harmonious social relations which enable a real partnership in the production of goods to be established between all employed in the undertaking, management as well as workers, and at creating such conditions that every worker can take a pride in his place of work as well as in the work itself.

When defining the scope of workers' welfare it must not be forgotten that the different aspects of welfare to which the Conference Resolution refers and which are discussed in the following pages—nutrition, recreation, health, transport, housing, etc.—are matters touching the well-being not only of workers but of the population as a whole. In so far as the measures devised to meet these problems are of a general nature, they may reasonably be considered to be a public responsibility and part of the general question of raising the living standards of the community, and though, as already stated, this report is in the main restricted to welfare measures at or in the vicinity of the undertaking for the benefit of the workers in that undertaking, nevertheless the wider issues will be briefly mentioned from time to time to keep the picture in proportion.

HISTORICAL SURVEY

The First World War gave considerable impetus to the welfare movement as a whole, but the industrial depression which followed did much to temper the interest which the war had kindled. In a few countries the facilities initiated and developed during the war

¹ U.K. MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for the Year 1943*, Cmd. 6563 (London, H.M.S.O., 1944).

years were maintained and expanded, but in others little was done over and above the minimum requirements laid down in general factory legislation. More extensive welfare services and amenities were in large measure the concern only of enlightened employers who recognised the potential benefit to the undertaking of a healthy and contented labour force. The value of these welfare services was not such as could be computed in terms of money and shown on the annual balance sheet. Nevertheless, the more progressive undertakings would appear to have appreciated the claim advanced later by the Bombay Textile Labour Enquiry Committee that "welfare work intelligently conceived and generously administered must in the long run repay the employer in the higher standards of efficient work which he will be able to secure from his employees".¹

The Second World War revived and strengthened the welfare movement. The benefits resulting from a proper regard for the health and well-being of employees were gradually recognised, and employers co-operated with Governments in the provision of improved amenities. The Bangalore Woollen, Cotton and Silk Mills, in a memorandum to the Labour Investigation Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1944, remarked that "welfare activities carried on in the mills have contributed to making service in the mills attractive to labour and in creating a permanent, settled labour force; attendance and efficiency are better".²

Active interest in welfare facilities has survived the impetus of war. It is indicative of the growing importance now attached officially to this subject that recent amendments to general factory legislation in countries in various stages of industrial development require the establishment of additional amenities or empower the competent authorities to make regulations for the purpose. In India, for example, the new Factories Act of 1948 provides for a definite advance on the old Act in compulsory measures for the health, safety and welfare of employees, and these measures will be applicable to a much larger body of workers than was the case under the previous Act. The fact that one of the forms taken by official interest is the enactment of new legislation, although there is no longer the stimulus of war needs, would seem to show that the

¹ *Report of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee*, Vol. II, *Final Report* (Bombay, 1940), p. 267.

² Cf. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report* (Delhi, 1946), p. 346.

provision of welfare amenities is looked upon as a long-term policy and not merely as a course of action to meet an emergency and to be discontinued when the need has been met.

The distrust and suspicion with which the trade unions at one time viewed the provision of welfare services, seeing in them a threat to union influence and membership, is gradually abating. The unions are beginning to look upon welfare amenities as a right and as an aspect of working life which they should not neglect, and in a number of countries welfare work is now included among normal trade union activities.

As regards the post-war position of employers generally, numerous instances are recorded from many countries of their large-scale support of welfare schemes of all kinds and of their awareness of the importance of welfare facilities from the standpoint of harmonious industrial relations and increased productivity.

The growing interest of the three parties in industry—Governments, employers and workers—in providing for the welfare of workers at or in connection with their place of work, and their co-operation in the establishment and conduct of measures of this kind, are trends which are clearly discernible in the welfare movement in the world as a whole.

Noteworthy progress has been made in Asian countries during recent years in the provision of welfare facilities by both Governments and employers, and they have been actively promoted in many of the larger industrial centres. As pointed out by the Royal Commission on Labour in India, some of the schemes are still only in the early stages of development, others are making rapid progress, and a few may be looked upon as models of their kind. The welfare services and institutions which have been established are not, for the most part, to be regarded as an imitation of western practices. On the contrary, they appear to a large extent to be a peculiarly Asian contribution to the improvement of the worker's lot and to the raising of his standards.

GENERAL BACKGROUND IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

Any consideration of the promotion of welfare facilities must necessarily be viewed against the background of conditions in the countries concerned. In Asian countries there are a number of factors which exert a definite influence on the different types of welfare services which are set up, the priority given to them and the methods of finance and administration which are employed.

The migrant nature of much of the labour force is, for instance, a feature of Asian countries—migrant in the sense that the worker belongs to a district or even to a country other than the one in which he is employed, and not that he moves from place to place seeking work. It was estimated that in 1946, in both Delhi and Karachi, 81 per cent. of the workers were immigrants; in Lahore the percentage was 91 and in Tinsukia (Assam) it was 93.¹ In Burma, the industrial labour force in 1944 was predominantly Indian: in the oil refineries, 87 per cent. of the 8,000 employees were Indian, in the oil fields, 42 per cent. of 12,000; in the mines, 70 per cent. of 8,000; in the transport industries, 45 per cent. of 250,000; in the Port of Rangoon, 60 per cent. of 15,000; and in the teak saw mills, 73 per cent. of 9,000.² In Thailand, large numbers of industrial workers are Chinese. Migrant labour brings with it special welfare problems, such, for example, as living accommodation and recreation, and also to a certain extent feeding, in as much as considerable numbers of migrant workers are single men with no homes near their places of work in which to have their meals prepared for them. It is also usual in Asian countries for agricultural workers to migrate to the towns to take up work in industrial concerns for comparatively short periods and then to return to their village homes. These workers are faced with difficulties of adjustment to new conditions of life in city or urban areas, calling for welfare measures in respect of housing, feeding and recreation which must be sympathetically conceived and administered.

Another factor affecting welfare facilities in Asian countries is the degree of trade union organisation. In a number of these countries effective, organised trade unionism is only of recent birth. In Burma, for example, the trade union movement had little strength before the war; it was stamped out during the Japanese invasion; now it is gradually recovering and beginning to organise on a nation-wide basis.³ Similarly, in the Philippine Islands the trade union movement went out of existence during the Japanese occupation and it is now in process of reorganisation. In the Malayan Federation, trade union members are recruited from persons of different races, religions and culture, and the growth of the unions is thereby hampered, but they would appear to be organising on democratic lines.

¹ *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 21.

² *Blue Print for Burma* (London, 1944), p. 33.

³ *Asian Labour*, Vol. I, No. 1, Oct. 1948, p. 65: "A General Survey of Labour Problems in Burma", by A. C. BAKER.

In addition to inadequate development, trade unions in the majority of Asian countries do not dispose of sufficient funds for extensive welfare activities, though a number of unions, for instance, the Chinese Association of Labour, the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association in India and the Indian Railway Unions have been energetic in this respect. For example, the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association spends 60 to 70 per cent. of its income on welfare activities, which comprise day and night schools, a residential boarding-house for working-class girls, study homes for boys, reading rooms and libraries, physical culture centres, etc. ¹, and much progress has been made in China in the facilities provided by the unions for persons working on their own account. By the end of 1946, welfare committees had been set up in 159 trade unions and provision had been made on a smaller scale for approximately the same type of facilities for independent workers as for factory and mine workers.

The co-operative movement, too, has brought considerable benefit to workers in Asian countries, where the origin of the movement was due to a desire on the part of the workers to improve their lot, and both Governments and employers' and workers' organisations are in favour of the extension of co-operation among wage earners. In all Asian countries there are Government Departments and agencies set up expressly to promote co-operative organisation, and numbers of employers have displayed keen interest in the movement and have given not only moral support but also valuable practical assistance. The value of the co-operative movement for industrial workers has been stressed by a number of Asian authorities, notably by various committees in India, such as the Royal Commission on Labour in India (1931), the Bombay Textile Labour Enquiry Committee (1940), the Co-operative Planning Committee (1946) and the Labour Investigation Committee (1946). The question of co-operation is, however, discussed in another report to the Asian Conference. ²

It should also be borne in mind that in Asian countries there are considerable numbers of plantation workers. This report would be incomplete if no mention were made of the measures taken for the welfare of these workers, though they will be no more than mentioned, as the basic problems common to workers on plantations are to be discussed by the Committee on Work in Plantations

¹ Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report, op. cit.*, p. 351.

² Report III: *Development of the Co-operative Movement.*

set up under the auspices of the International Labour Organisation. Welfare facilities for plantation workers may be generically the same as for industrial workers, but there may be considerable differences in their general organisation and management and in the importance of one kind of facility in relation to another.

Apart from the above factors, the development of workers' welfare in Asian countries is to a certain extent handicapped by social and economic problems which are less acute in other countries and which the various Governments are trying to solve.

Before closing this brief description of the background against which welfare services in Asian countries should be considered, it may be observed that there would appear to be few private organisations or voluntary bodies to develop welfare facilities beyond the minimum legal requirements and to induce the more progressive firms to experiment in new methods and to strike out on new courses. The lack of institutions of this kind was emphasised by the Indian Textile Labour Enquiry Committee in its final report, as is shown in the following extract.

In most of the leading industrial countries of the world, organisations such as industrial fatigue and health research boards, institutes of industrial hygiene, industrial welfare societies, institutes of industrial psychology and institutes of industrial welfare workers are doing extensive pioneering work, both by way of original research and of propaganda, in the field of industrial welfare. . . . As far as we are aware, there are no similar organisations in India, although there are a few institutions which interest themselves in the welfare of the working classes.¹

The recommendations of the Committee included the establishment of a research institute of this kind, part of the cost of foundation and maintenance to be borne by the employers.

¹ *Report of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee, Vol. II, Final Report (Bombay, 1940), p. 264. Cf. International Labour Review, Vol. XLV, No. 3, Mar. 1942, p. 309.*

CHAPTER II

PRESENT LAW AND PRACTICE

In Asian countries, little was done by either central or provincial Governments to promote welfare facilities for workers until the outbreak of the Second World War, when the over-riding need for maximum production called for energetic action, and the responsibility of the State to safeguard the well-being and industrial efficiency of the workers was clearly recognised.

Increased production continues to be one of the major objectives of Asian countries today, and Governments are redoubling their efforts to achieve it, in order, amongst other reasons, to accelerate the rate at which the standard of living of the people may be raised and to offset the steady increase of population. Sir Shri Ram, Managing Director of the Delhi Cloth and General Mills Company, voiced this need at the Asian Regional Conference in November 1947. "Our most urgent need today", he said, "is for more production all round, the fullest development of our productive capacity and the fullest exploitation of our existing capacity", and he went on to say "to the extent that any immediate scheme of labour welfare would help to this end, such a scheme is also urgent".¹ The raising of labour welfare standards was recognised by the Asian Regional Conference, in a resolution concerning conditions of work and labour welfare, to be a condition of increased production, and experience has shown that consideration for the well-being of each individual worker promotes improved industrial relations and encourages general co-operation in the work of the undertaking. Moreover, the expansion of industry in Asia and the recognition of the greater demands it makes on workers in countries where the standard of living is low, has led to increased State promotion of and intervention in welfare arrangements.

A description follows of some of the principal welfare measures in force in Asian countries.

¹ Preparatory Asian Regional Conference of the International Labour Organisation, New Delhi, 1947: *Record of Proceedings*, p. 33.

SANITARY AND MEDICAL FACILITIES

General Problem

The worker has the right to demand measures for the protection of his health at his workplace or in connection with his work, over and above the health protection provided by the State for the community of which he forms a part. The exercise of this right is particularly justified in Asian countries, where public health services are only in process of development.

The Royal Commission on Labour in India, in its report issued in 1931, emphasised the point that the health of the industrial worker was of cardinal importance not only to himself, but also in relation to general industrial development and progress. Indeed, sickness and ill-health are recognised to be among the most widespread causes of absenteeism, lowered morale and bad timekeeping, leading to decreased production, spoiled work and impaired employee-management relations. Care of the worker's health is a matter of major importance everywhere, but it is accentuated in Asian countries owing to the difficult climatic conditions under which work must often be performed, the prevalence of tropical diseases and illnesses due to ignorance and poverty, the unhealthy working conditions obtaining in unregulated factories, and the fact that the industrial worker is often a migrant either from rural areas, where living and working conditions are less congested, or from another province or country with different language, climate and customs. In many undertakings long hours are often worked, the workers' low wages sometimes making this necessary if they are to earn enough to live on, night work is prevalent, partly owing to lack of equipment and the need to make the utmost use of any that exists, and rest days are few. True, there may be legislation on the Statute Book to regulate all these conditions, but it may be "more honoured in the breach than in the observance", and in the smaller handicraft establishments, where the worker sometimes sleeps on the premises, control of working conditions is not an easy matter.

It has been said that industrial medical services are something which no undertaking, however small, can afford to be without. The National Association of Manufacturers in the United States estimates, as the result of a fairly recent survey, that industrial health programmes lead to the following improvements: reduction

in occupational disease, 62 per cent.; in accident frequency, 44.9 per cent.; in absenteeism, 29.7 per cent.; in compensation costs, 28.8 per cent.; in labour turnover, 27.3 per cent.¹ The Automatic Telephone and Electric Co. Ltd., London, contends that an adequately equipped and staffed industrial health service, appropriate to the size of the organisation, is an integral part of the good management of any modern factory, and it goes on to say:

A balance sheet of costs and returns for such services would be extremely difficult to compile in terms of £ s. d. and even if so compiled, would perforce have to omit from its accounts literally invaluable items like health, happiness, contentment and good human relationships. . . . The ultimate justification for departments such as these is the smooth working of the organisation as a whole, to which they contribute an intangible but nevertheless indispensable part.²

Asian countries would seem to be fully aware of the benefits of an industrial medical service. The Indian Factories Act, 1948, for example, has tightened up the existing health and safety regulations and introduced new provisions; the Pakistan Government is considering similar legislation; and the Afghanistan Government has included comprehensive medical provisions in Regulations issued in January 1946. The implementation of a full health service cannot, however, be achieved overnight. Two essential elements of any such service are a trained medical staff and an adequate supply of medical equipment and drugs. At present there is a shortage of both. Industrial medicine is a special branch of ordinary medicine; it takes several years to train a doctor, and still longer if he is to qualify as an industrial medical officer. The same observations apply to industrial nurses. Even when completely trained, both doctors and nurses need to be fully conversant with developments in medical science and may perhaps have to take refresher courses for the purpose. Action in this direction has been taken in Bengal, where a grant of 14,000 rupees has been made to the Coal Fields Subcommittee of the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Advisory Committee for the organisation and conduct of a second refresher course for colliery medical officers.

¹ NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS, U.S.A.: *Health on the Production Front* (Jan. 1944), p. 45.

² AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC CO. LTD., London: *Healthy Industry* (London, 1944).

A successful industrial health service also presupposes the practical co-operation of the workers themselves. Illiteracy is prevalent in Asian countries, and time must elapse before workers in general are sufficiently health conscious to take part in industrial health programmes.

The medical services provided by many employers in Asian countries would seem to be limited to the running of dispensaries. The standards maintained vary from place to place, and frequently the services provided are almost entirely curative and no consideration is given to maintaining the worker in good health and preventing sickness. Some of the dispensaries are merely cupboards containing a few stock mixtures in charge of unqualified persons, and relatively few are well-stocked and run by competent staff. The following examples illustrate the practice in the Bombay city textile mills in 1940. Out of 58 mills, 53 provided dispensaries, of which 40 were open during working hours and the remainder at certain times in the morning or afternoon; seven had full-time doctors and 43 part-time doctors, while three did not employ a doctor, but made arrangements for a medical practitioner to call when necessary; 46 mills had full-time and five part-time compounders; in 36 mills the medical facilities provided were available to workers' families as well as to the workers themselves; 20 mills permitted emergency treatment to be given to the worker in his home.¹

Special categories of workers in any country require special health facilities, either on account of the nature of their employment, as for instance miners and, in Asia, plantation workers, or on account of their physical capacities, as for instance women and young workers. Official action has been taken in one or other of the Asian countries on behalf of all these workers.

As will be seen from the following examples of Government measures and private initiative in the field of medical and health facilities, not only is there considerable official compulsion and encouragement to provide adequate measures of this kind in industrial and other undertakings, but there are noteworthy examples in some of the larger establishments of the efficient maintenance of modern health facilities in charge of fully qualified staff.

¹ *Report of the Textile Labour Office Enquiry Committee, Vol. II, op. cit.*, p. 290.

*Official Action**Legislative Provisions.*

It is customary in most countries for the basic standards of physical working conditions to be embodied in general factory legislation. These statutory provisions normally comprise such matters as minimum standards of cleanliness, sanitation, ventilation, temperature, lighting, and space per worker, the maintenance of first-aid outfits and the provision of drinking water. This is the case, for example, in Afghanistan, under the Conditions of Employment Regulations of 16 January 1946; in China, under the Factory Act, 1932; in India, under the Factories Act, 1948; and in Indo-China, under the Regulations governing working conditions in industrial, agricultural and mining undertakings, of October 1927, as amended.

Special emphasis is sometimes laid on washing and bathing facilities, as for instance in Afghanistan, where factories with living-in accommodation must supply baths in proportion to the number of persons living in and also adequate water for washing, bathing and toilet purposes; legislation in India requires pit-head baths to be established at coal mines and equipped with showers and locker rooms, with separate baths and locker rooms for women workers, and the Factories Act, 1948, lays down that adequate and suitable facilities for washing shall be provided in conveniently accessible places and shall be kept clean, separate and adequately screened facilities being provided for the use of male and female workers.

It is sometimes obligatory to establish infirmaries, clinics and dispensaries, and to employ doctors, dentists and nurses. Afghanistan, China and India all provide examples of this practice. In Afghanistan, the 1946 Regulations stipulate that every industrial establishment employing from 50 to 500 persons, if it is more than 10 km. from the nearest hospital, must establish an infirmary, and those employing less than 50 persons must set up a medical station, consisting of one or two rooms and having the instruments, medicaments and dressings needed in the event of illness or injury, where the workers can receive immediate attention. In China, under regulations for the administration of the Factory Act, 1932, factories employing more than 300 workers must provide sick rooms and employ a medical practitioner to attend the workers in case of sickness and to take care of their health. In India, the Factories

Act, 1948, provides that in every factory where more than 500 workers are employed, there must be an ambulance room of a prescribed size containing specified equipment and in charge of prescribed medical and nursing staff. The Act also empowers provincial Governments to appoint qualified medical practitioners to be certified surgeons for the purposes of the Act.

In the Philippines, under Republic Act No. 239, the owner, lessee, or operator of a shop, factory, estate, or commercial, industrial or agricultural establishment, who employs 50 persons must provide free emergency dental treatment for his workers; when he employs more than 500 persons he is required to engage the services of a dentist. The Emergency Medical Treatment Law has recently been amended, and it now prescribes that free emergency medical treatment shall be provided in the above establishments as follows: (a) if the number of permanent employees is not less than 30, nor more than 200, the owner, lessee, or operator must keep a stock of emergency medicines under the charge of a nurse for the use of the employees; (b) when the number of employees exceeds 200, but is less than 400, in addition to keeping a stock of emergency medicines, he must employ the services of a physician; and (c) when the number of employees exceeds 300 he must also maintain an infirmary or emergency hospital of sufficient capacity to provide one bed for each hundred workers.

In several Asian countries, welfare funds have been constituted under the existing legislation for the purpose, *inter alia*, of financing health measures. In China, Regulations of 26 January 1943, governing the salaried and wage-earning employees' welfare funds, provide that the funds needed by a workers' welfare society to enable it to set up a hospital or clinic may be drawn from the welfare fund. During 1948, 1,150 clinics were provided in industrial undertakings by means of these funds. In India, the health services in coal mines for which payment is authorised from welfare funds are set out in the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1947. They include the improvement of public health and sanitation, the prevention of disease, the provision of medical facilities and the improvement of existing facilities, including the provision and maintenance of dispensaries in collieries the owners of which do not receive grants in aid. Grants in aid up to a specified amount may be made by the Central Government out of the general welfare account of the fund to such colliery owners as maintain—to the satisfaction of the Commissioner—dispensary services of

the prescribed standard for the benefit of workers employed in the collieries. The fund has financed the construction of four regional hospitals with ten to twelve beds in each in two of the coal fields, and in another a well-equipped hospital of 120 beds which will have its own specialists is under construction and is expected to start functioning early in 1950. An X-ray unit is also to be provided for the benefit of colliery workers by means of the fund. A similar welfare fund has been constituted for Indian mica miners.

Statutory measures also provide for the prevention and treatment of tropical and other diseases. In Afghanistan, for instance, the regulations referred to above stipulate that the employer shall have his workers vaccinated once a year against exanthematous typhus, the cost to be paid from the welfare fund, and that the Ministry of Health shall be informed in the event of an outbreak of certain specified diseases among the workers.

In India, a tuberculosis specialist has been appointed for work in the coal mines, and a sum of 10 lakhs of rupees is being spent annually on anti-malarial measures in the coal fields. It is proposed to intensify these measures to bring the total expenditure up to 13 lakhs of rupees. In addition, grants are made from the welfare fund to the Leprosy Association in Bengal and Bihar for the maintenance of a number of beds in their hospital and for the construction of additional blocks.

Medical Facilities for Government Employees.

Many Governments provide medical facilities for workers in their employ or in industries under Government control. In Japan, in addition to the basic health services provided under the contributory mutual aid programme, the Transportation Ministry maintains two hospitals, and the Communications Ministry, the Printing Bureau and the Monopoly Bureau one hospital each. This group of facilities is supported entirely by the Government, with contributions from the users, who must be operating workers in the undertaking concerned.¹

Some examples of provisions in India and Pakistan for Government servants include arrangements by the Indian Ministry of Industry and Supply under which railway colliery workers are

¹ General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Economic and Scientific Section: *Workers' Welfare Facilities in Japan*, Mar. 1949.

granted free medical treatment in well-equipped hospitals manned by competent and qualified staff. Indian State-managed railways have their own self-administered medical departments. Railway servants, other than Class IV, in addition to medical and surgical facilities available in a hospital, are in certain circumstances allowed free consultation with a specialist in the Government service, free supply of the medicines and vaccines ordinarily available in hospitals, and special nursing when this is considered to be necessary. Families of railway servants are entitled to free medical attendance and treatment on the same scale and under the same conditions as those allowed to the employees themselves.

In Pakistan, the health of employees of the Mint is under the care of an Assistant Surgeon with a small staff of compounders, dressers and ward attendants. There is a hospital in the workers' colony consisting of two wards of two beds each. All cases of accident or illness are treated and if the patients require further attention, they are retained in the ward under special care. Serious cases requiring specialised treatment are sent to an outside hospital. The services of a midwife have been arranged for through the local corporation for workers' families. She provides pre-natal and post-natal care and visits the Mint once a week. Medical facilities for employees of the Pakistan railways include 54 hospitals and dispensaries on the North-Western Railway and 48 on the Eastern Bengal Railway, all equipped with special apparatus and some with X-ray plants, and mobile medical vans are being maintained at different centres. On the Eastern Bengal Railway, dispensaries are located in or near each of the railway workshops, and on the North-Western Railway there is a well-equipped dispensary with a doctor in charge in each shop. The employees of the Karachi Port Trust have the benefit of fully equipped dispensaries in charge of an experienced doctor, and free medical facilities are available to both the worker and his family. There is also a maternity home for the wives of the Port Trust workers.

Other Government Measures.

The organisation of welfare centres is also a Government activity, and it is not unusual for medical aid and child welfare services to be made available where centres are provided. For example, in India certain of the welfare centres established by the United Provinces Government provide medical benefits, maternity care and child welfare, and the "A" class centres organised by the Province of Bombay have well-equipped dispensaries.

Action by Employers

A large number of industrial undertakings have their own medical institutions. The Royal Commission on Labour in India reported in 1931 that "many of the medical organisations in industrial compounds are worthy of great praise and are clearly responsible for a considerable increase in the health and happiness of the worker and his family".¹ A few examples of the arrangements made in some of the large undertakings are given below.

In India, the Birla Mills in Gwalior maintain a well-equipped hospital with 40 beds; there is an operating theatre, a lying-in room, an isolation ward and a separate eye section and maternity ward. The staff consists of three doctors, eight compounders, three nurses and fifteen ward boys and others. All medical services are free. Indoor patients are clothed and fed free of charge. The management of the Kolar Gold Fields in Mysore State has established a comprehensive health scheme, including a first-class general hospital containing 250 beds. There are two operating theatres, two X-ray plants, a bacteriological and pathological laboratory and many other facilities. The hospital has a qualified staff and provides free medical and surgical services to more than 25,000 persons annually. Motor ambulances are provided for the conveyance of patients to and from the hospital. Five maternity homes are maintained and staffed by qualified midwives, whose duties include ante-natal and post-natal care. The Tata Iron and Steel Company has made the services of a large and well-equipped hospital and six dispensaries available to the employees free of charge and to the public at a nominal charge.

Examples of the differing standards maintained in different undertakings are provided by China and Pakistan. In China, a recent survey of the operation of the more important provisions of the Factory Act showed that 26 factories in Shanghai gave all the necessary medical attention to their workers, subject to the limitations set by the resources available at the factory, which were often only sufficient for minor treatment, 82 factories provided partial medical care, and in 97 factories the workers provided their own medical requirements. Injections against infectious diseases were given free of charge by the great majority of the factories,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 258.

and the extent to which the workers and their families availed themselves of this service was most satisfactory. The best factories in Chungking had adequate hospitals with medical staffs, the next best group made arrangements with doctors to treat their workers when necessary. Preventive injection against cholera and typhoid was common to all the factories.

In Pakistan, all the important undertakings in West Punjab have been urged to maintain a regular dispensary under the supervision of a qualified doctor. The majority of the large employers have made some arrangement in this respect, but owing to the scarcity of trained doctors most of the dispensaries are at present manned by assistant surgeons or even by only partly trained persons. Midwives are also attached to some of the dispensaries, but no special arrangement has been made for medical facilities for children and young workers. In East Bengal, hospitals are maintained for the employees of the large factories, such as several of the cotton and sugar mills.

In the Philippines, the San Miguel Brewery Company has modern medical, dental and X-ray clinics which provide free medical attention, medicine and drugs. On presentation of a medical certificate, workers who fall ill are allowed 50 per cent. of their wages during the period of sickness.

Medical services are also among the amenities provided by welfare centres set up by employers, as for example, the centre established by the Indian Jute Mills Association.

Action by Workers

Some of the Chinese trade unions and the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association in India have been active in the promotion of workers' health. In China, 156 clinics were established in industrial undertakings by labour unions during 1948. In India, the Ahmedabad union maintains a hospital with 15 beds for its members. Six of these beds are reserved for women, but maternity cases are sent to a special municipal maternity home. The hospital is in charge of a medical officer and there is a resident house physician; treatment is free for in-patients. A dispensary is attached to the hospital which is attended by about 80 persons daily; service is free to members and a small charge is made to non-members. The union also employs a medical practitioner to visit working-class localities to give medical advice and serve as a

liaison officer with hospitals in different parts of Ahmedabad in order to facilitate the admission of workers when necessary.¹

In one or two cases hospitals or clinics have been organised on a co-operative basis and anti-malarial co-operative societies have been set up in some parts of India. It may be of interest to mention as examples of co-operative action in the field of health and medical care the co-operative pharmacies in Belgium, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom, etc., the co-operative health schemes in Poland and Yugoslavia, and the co-operative medical and hospitalisation schemes in Canada and the United States.

Plantation Workers

The standards of medical services for plantation workers vary as much as they do for industrial workers. They are frequently regulated by law and form part of the concessions given to workers on the estates in addition to cash wages.

To quote one or two examples of legislative provisions, in Ceylon, under the Medical Wants Ordinance, the Superintendent of every estate has specified duties in connection with the health of estate labourers. He must take steps for the immediate relief of the sick, send labourers to hospital when directed by a medical officer, call in the medical officer in case of serious illness or accident, inform him within 48 hours of every birth and death on the estate, supply every female labourer giving birth to a child with sufficient food and lodging for one month after the birth and ensure that she does not work for one month after confinement, and see that all children under one year of age receive proper care and nourishment. The Superintendent is empowered to call in a district medical officer to attend any sick person on his estate, to demand hospital treatment for every labourer who needs it, to receive a free supply of certain specified drugs up to a specified value per labourer per annum for the estate hospital or dispensary, and a supply at cost price of other specified drugs. The cost to the Government of these services is met by a duty on all exports of cocoa, rubber and tea, and, where an estate or group of estates has made provision for the health of the workers to the satisfaction of the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, the Medical Wants Committee may grant a rebate.²

¹ *Report of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee*, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

² *Report of the Commission on Social Services, Ceylon, February 1947, Sessional Paper VII* (Colombo, 1947), p. 52.

The Malay Labour Code of 1923 lays down that the employer shall provide medical attendance and treatment for every worker employed by him. The Controller may order the estate manager to construct a hospital on or in the neighbourhood of the estate with sufficient accommodation for a specified number of patients and a trained doctor in charge. The estate is responsible for the staffing of the hospital, its equipment, diet and medicines, and for the observance of any rules for its inspection and management. If any dependant of a worker falls sick and is admitted to the hospital, the employer shall pay the cost of that dependant's treatment and maintenance. The Straits Settlements Labour Ordinance of 1923 contains somewhat similar provisions.

In Ceylon, the employers on some of the estates have made provision for medical attendance on a substantial scale. In 1945 there were 97 estate hospitals and 722 dispensaries serving 1,439 estates; 198 estates had maternity wards or lying-in rooms and 449 were served by 282 registered midwives.¹ In India, free medical aid and maternity benefits are given to the workers and their dependants on many of the plantations; the tea industry in Assam, for example, has been active in providing medical facilities and anti-malarial measures, and most of the gardens have assistant medical officers who visit the tea gardens under their control at specified intervals; there are, however, very few trained nurses and midwives and no women doctors or health visitors. In South India, there are a number of group hospitals in the tea areas staffed with nurses and midwives and with well-equipped dispensaries in charge of experienced compounders.² Generally speaking, however, health conditions prevailing among tea plantation labour are not good, the main causes of bad health being malnutrition, impure water supply, lack of proper conservancy and poor housing. In Burma, many of the estates do not provide either doctors or dispensaries, and if treatment by a doctor is needed the worker is sent to the nearest hospital, transport and medical expenses being borne by the employer. Under this arrangement the patient may be deprived of the early treatment which may be necessary or in any case beneficial.

A Conference on tea plantation labour, comprising six Government, six employers' and six workers' representatives, convened by the Indian Department of Labour, met at New Delhi in January

¹ *Report of the Commission on Social Services, op. cit.*, p. 53.

² GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Labour Investigation Committee: *Report on an Inquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India* (Delhi, 1946), p. 189.

1947. It agreed that employers should submit their proposals concerning the provision of medical services on tea plantations to the Central Government, and that the matter should be discussed again at the next meeting of the Tripartite Committee. Following this decision, the Government of India appointed a Deputy Director General of Health Services to visit tea plantations and consult with provincial Governments and employers' associations on methods of providing care. The resulting *Report on Standards of Medical Care in Tea Plantations* recommended, *inter alia*, a system of well-equipped and well-staffed garden hospitals in the care of a registered medical practitioner, the appointment of not less than one doctor to every 2,500 persons out of the total population, one nursing attendant per 1,000 persons, and one trained midwife for every 2,500 women. It also recommended that any scheme for group hospitals should be elastic and correlated with topographical features and population density. In addition, the report recommended that Government medical inspectors should be appointed to advise on the reorganisation of the medical services and to enforce prescribed standards.¹ The Tripartite Committee endorsed the report at its second meeting in March-April 1948.

Conclusions

As mentioned above, the provision of a healthy and hygienic working environment is one of the purposes of general factory legislation, and the establishment of statutory minimum standards to which every undertaking must conform, framed in accordance with economic and climatic conditions, would seem to be a desirable feature of the labour code of every country. The requirements need to be set out in some detail. It is not sufficient, for instance, to make the provision of drinking water obligatory; it must also be specified that the water shall be pure, cool, adequate in quantity and readily available to the workers. Similarly, most countries prescribe that first-aid appliances shall be provided in the undertaking, but it should also be stipulated that the contents of the first-aid boxes should be maintained in good condition and should be in charge of persons trained in first aid. It would seem desirable that washing and bathing facilities should be accompanied by the

¹ Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. LVIII, No. 2, Aug. 1948, p. 248 *et seq.*

provision of soap and of some means of drying, provided that these materials are kept in a clean and sanitary condition and that a strict supervision of the bathrooms is exercised.

It is important that these minimum standards should as far as possible be applicable to all undertakings, inclusive of factories, mines, transport services, etc., and that their strict observance should be universal and not confined to undertakings of a certain type or size. Otherwise large numbers of workers slip through the mesh. It is in the small unregulated factories that supervision and control are most difficult, and sanitary and medical facilities usually the least satisfactory.

As regards measures for the health of the individual worker, apart from the hygiene and sanitation of his surroundings, the provision of hospitals and/or dispensaries in or near the place of work is a fairly widespread feature of the medical services in Asian countries, both in response to legislation and as a voluntary initiative on the part of the employer. This would also seem to be a desirable statutory requirement at the present time, in view of the insufficient number of public hospitals in proportion to the size of the populations and the low standard of health of workers in general. It is particularly desirable on plantations and in connection with undertakings in isolated areas, in order to ensure early treatment.

The Labour Legislation Committee appointed by the Government of Burma observed in its first report on the revision of the Factories Act that if dispensaries are to perform their functions properly they must be under expert control. This is equally applicable to hospitals. As shown above, there are dispensaries and hospitals which are excellently administered, but there are others where conditions are such as to endanger rather than to promote the health of the workers who make use of them. The extent of the usefulness of institutions of this kind depends on the standards maintained, including the adequacy of equipment and staff. The quality of the staff as well as the quantity should not be overlooked if workers are to have skilled treatment and advice, and members of the medical staff attached to hospitals and dispensaries need to be fully qualified for the duties they are called upon to perform. Statutory minimum requirements in respect of equipment, maintenance and staff of the hospitals and dispensaries provided, conforming to the particular needs of the country or industry concerned, would seem to be a useful provision of general legislation.

The employment of doctors and nurses in industrial undertakings is becoming increasingly prevalent even where no hospitals are attached, though not to the extent desirable. The lack of sufficient facilities for health work among women factory workers, and the inadequacy of the available number of women doctors, nurses and health visitors for work of this nature, were stressed by the Health Survey and Development Committee in India.¹ The duties of doctors and nurses necessarily vary in accordance with the size and nature of the undertaking in which they are employed. It is suggested that the duties which should form the basis of their work should be specified, and should take the form, for instance, of a code drawn up by the competent medical and nursing bodies in the country in question. This would ensure that industrial medical practitioners and nurses were fully cognisant of the duties required of them, and would free them from dependence in this respect on their employers. Where facilities additional to the minimum requirements of general legislation concerning sanitary and medical services have been available, they would appear to have had valuable effects on the efficiency and morale of the workers.

The administration and financing of sanitary and medical facilities in Asian countries, in so far as they may be considered to be a welfare facility organised at or in connection with the place of work, would appear at present to be for the most part the responsibility of the individual employer. The State, in addition to the provision of health services for the community as a whole, has recognised its responsibility in respect of special categories of workers, such as coal miners and plantation workers; it has established hospitals and dispensaries and has exercised direct supervision of malaria control operations in Indian coal mining areas; it also maintains hospitals and dispensaries in charge of qualified medical officers for plantation workers, and, in Ceylon, contributes by means of a rebate on the expenditure incurred by individual or groups of estates on health measures which are considered by the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services to reach a satisfactory standard.

The workers' share in administration and finance is restricted, and is confined to membership of welfare societies, contributions to welfare funds and participation in co-operative enterprises; very occasionally workers have direct control through the establishment

¹ *Report of the Health Survey and Development Committee, Vol. I, Survey* (Delhi, 1946), p. 84.

of medical facilities by trade unions. It may be of interest to mention that when the question of standards of medical care for tea plantation workers in India was discussed at the Tea Plantation Labour Conference in January 1947, the general view was expressed by the employers' representatives that the Government should prescribe the standards and enforce them, the actual provision of medical services being left to the employers.¹

The education of the workers in matters of health and hygiene, which is necessary if their active co-operation in the health programme of the undertaking is to be secured, might take the form of posters, leaflets, films, demonstrations, and of a "health week" when every form of publicity would be used. In Ceylon, for example, the Labour Department organised a section on industrial hygiene and labour welfare at the Central Health Exhibition in Colombo in August 1948, and put on display exhibits relating to industrial health, safety and welfare measures. Health committees might also be set up in the various undertakings, consisting of representatives of workers and employers and of the medical and personnel departments, for the purpose of spreading health propaganda among the workers, organising "keep fit" classes and giving talks on health during working hours. Health education of this kind could be extended to the workers' families and would be of benefit in raising the general level of well-being.

To sum up, the prescription by legislation of minimum standards of hygiene and sanitation, the establishment of hospitals and dispensaries in or in the vicinity of the place of work, the employment of qualified full- or part-time medical practitioners and nurses and the determination of their duties, the most suitable agencies for administering and financing the health services which are considered desirable and the best methods of educating the workers in their use would seem to be problems of particular importance in connection with the provision of sanitary and medical welfare facilities in Asian countries.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

General Problem

The provision of educational facilities for workers and their children is a social service of particular importance in Asian coun-

¹ Quoted in the *Indian Labour Gazette*, May 1949, p. 783.

tries, where not only is the standard of public instruction inadequate, but long hours leave the workers little time or inclination for study and poor physical condition unfits them for the necessary effort. In Bombay, for instance, the Commissioner of Labour reports that though the workers in an engineering firm were paid to attend literacy classes, the results were not encouraging. A large proportion of workers are illiterate and many others have only a rudimentary education. The eradication of illiteracy is being actively pursued. The Government of India, for example, has drawn up a five-year plan of post-war educational development for the whole country, and it is estimated that the expenditure incurred by the central and provincial five-year educational plans alone would amount to approximately 125 crores of rupees in addition to the 33 crores which the Government of India and the provincial Governments are at present spending annually on education.¹

Lack of education is at the root of many of the troubles confronting Asian countries, and the need for it is especially urgent in an era of industrial expansion, when the process of industrialisation may involve the transfer of workers in large numbers from agricultural to industrial occupations and the acquisition of industrial skills and techniques. Without a good foundation of general education, training will be both difficult and expensive.

There is at present a shortage of many of the more skilled types of industrial workers, varying in degree from country to country and from industry to industry, but nevertheless universal, and only by concentrated effort on education and training can the deficiencies be met. The question of technical and vocational training in the Far East is the subject of a report which has recently been published by the Office.²

It is also to be discussed in Singapore in September 1949 at an Asian Conference of experts on vocational and technical training, and the conclusions of that conference will be brought to the attention of the Asian Regional Conference.

The removal of illiteracy and the ability to acquire industrial skills are not the only purposes of workers' education, and apart from the development of their cultural life and the raising of their standard of living, they must know how to form their own organ-

¹ *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 216.

² M. THIBERT: *Training Problems in the Far East* (Studies and Reports, New Series, No. 11) (Geneva, I.L.O., 1948).

isations and consider and take action on their own problems, including the provision of welfare facilities at their place of work. As mentioned above, the workers are now taking a more active part in the promotion and administration of welfare measures, but if they are to make a real contribution to the work of the joint bodies which are being set up in increasing numbers for the purpose, and are to fill positions of responsibility and leadership, education is imperative. Moreover, the efficient administration of many types of welfare activity requires that the persons concerned shall be able to read and fill in forms. The extent of workers' participation in the improvement of their working and living conditions will thus largely depend on the development of their capacities through education.

The imperative necessity of adequate education for workers' children needs no emphasis, more especially in countries where child labour is still prevalent. The Commission on Labour in India recommended as far back as 1931 that "the education of the industrial workers should receive special attention" and that "employers should try to develop the education of their workers' children in their factory schools".¹ General education is one of the measures for improving the protection of children and young workers to which a resolution on the subject, adopted by the Asian Regional Conference at New Delhi in 1947, requests that the attention of Governments shall be drawn. Amongst other measures recommended in the resolution are the expansion of compulsory free education, the planned development of educational facilities, the establishment of a network of free technical and vocational schools and the regulation of apprenticeship. It should be mentioned that one of the most important recommendations of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India is the introduction of free compulsory education throughout the country for children between six and fourteen years of age.

Where universal compulsory education is not yet in operation, it would appear to be important that schools for workers' children should be provided in undertakings, and such a measure would be particularly valuable in countries where existing educational facilities have been disrupted by war and other upheavals. In Hong Kong, for example, it is estimated that 50,000 children are not attending any school, and in the Malayan Federation many young people have lost almost four years of education owing to

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, op. cit.*, p. 494.

the Japanese occupation, while in addition Malay schools are suffering from a severe shortage of equipment.

The education of plantation workers' children offers special problems, as plantation labour is often recruited from a considerable distance and brought into an area where the language and customs are unfamiliar, and in addition many of the estates are far from any Government educational system. The Conference on Plantation Labour in India recommended at its meeting in January 1947 that 10 million rupees should be raised annually for educational facilities, particularly on the estates.

The wider aspects of education raise questions which are outside the scope of industrial welfare. The only features which will be taken into consideration in the following pages are those which concern legislative provisions applicable to workers in their place of work and schemes organised in welfare centres and at or in connection with the undertaking.

Official Action

Official action may be classed under three main headings: legislative enactments requiring the provision of workers' education, statutory requirements that schools or other educational facilities shall be financed from welfare funds, and measures for the education of Government employees. One or two examples of each method follow.

Legislation.

In Ceylon, an amending Ordinance under the Education Ordinance of 1939 governing estate schools was promulgated during 1947 in order to give effect to a resolution of the State Council that all schools on estates should be converted into primary schools and should form a part of the system of national education. The estates are required to provide school buildings (the rent of which will be paid by the Government), teaching staff and educational facilities in general, until such time as the Government can provide its own schools; provision is also made for raising the compulsory school attendance age of young persons to sixteen years, subject to exemptions in suitable cases after the age of fourteen years.¹

¹ Cf. *Industry and Labour*, Vol. I, No. 7, 1 Apr. 1949, p. 287.

In China, the Factories Act of 1932 provides that employers shall take the necessary measures to provide supplementary education during not less than ten hours a week for young persons and apprentices, and to bear all the expenses thereof; employers shall also provide educational facilities for other workers as far as possible, and the time required for this educational work shall be arranged so as to fall outside working hours.

In the Malayan Federation, the Labour Code of 1923 provides that the Government may order an employer on an estate where ten or more children between the ages of seven and fourteen years reside to maintain a school for such children at his own expense.

Welfare Funds.

The Chinese Labour Welfare Funds, to which reference has been made above, may be used for the provision of a supplementary school or supplementary classes, and these services are either supplied free of charge or, if material expenditure is necessary, a fee sufficient to cover the cost may be charged. In 1948, a total of 519 supplementary schools were established in factories and mining undertakings, labour unions, agricultural unions, and Government and social organisations.

In India, the education of coal and mica miners is one of the purposes for which the Indian Coal and Mica Mines Labour Welfare Funds may be used. The budget of the Funds for 1946-1947, as approved by the Advisory Committee, provided for an expenditure of 3 lakhs of rupees on adult education in the coal fields. The Salt Mines Welfare Funds may also be used for educational purposes, including the accommodation and equipment of schools, grants towards their upkeep, scholarships, the creation of school libraries and a vocational training scheme. Schools are provided for the children of employees of the Ministry of Defence in the factories, or grants are made to local institutions; in a few cases literacy classes are organised for adults. All these activities are financed entirely from welfare funds constituted by a Government *per capita* grant.

Educational Facilities for Government Employees and their Children.

Schools have been established at important railway stations on all the Indian Government railways for the children of railway employees; where railway schools have not been constituted, arrangements have been made with other approved educational

institutions for the admission of these children, and grants-in-aid made from railway revenues. Employees who are posted in out-of-the-way places where there are no schools of the requisite standard are assisted to cover the expenses of board and tuition for the education of their children at other schools; the assistance given is related to the employee's pay. In addition, free passes are supplied to the children of all railway employees for the journey by rail between their homes and their school, when the latter is situated at a distance from their homes, either for visits to parents or for examinations.

In Pakistan a scheme organised by the Mint to improve technical, vocational and linguistic education has met with failure. There is, however, a co-educational primary school in the workers' colony attended by about 83 children of workers; and near the workers' quarters there is also a school, managed by the District Board, which the children of workers may attend. The Pakistan railways give financial assistance for the education of workers' children subject to a maximum sum per child and to any one employee. The railways are at present responsible for nine railway schools, and adult education centres have also been organised by the North-Western Railway at an annual cost of 13,200 rupees, which is met from the Staff Benefit Fund. The Karachi Port Trust manages a primary school where free education is given to workers' children, and about 250 children attend daily; two night schools for adult workers are subsidised by the Trust.

Action by Employers

A number of schemes for the education of adult workers have been organised by employers, either as a means of promoting efficiency or from social motives, but generally speaking little has been done. In China, instruction courses are arranged, more particularly in undertakings which provide dormitory accommodation. During the war, 34 factories in Chungking made provision for workers' education in the form of evening classes for instruction in elementary Chinese and technical subjects; the technical classes were chiefly for the benefit of skilled workers. In this way men and women who had had no educational opportunities during their childhood could obtain elementary teaching.

In India, illiterate workers in the Deccan Paper Mills are allowed by the management to attend literacy classes held in the mill premises, during working hours; the management supplies the

premises, shares in the direct expenses of the schools and assumes the indirect cost resulting from reduced working hours.¹ Schemes such as this are, of course, only practical for workers who are not engaged on continuous processes or on piece work. The Delhi Cloth and General Mills have organised a scheme whereby new workers who are illiterate are required under the terms of their contract of employment to join adult education classes, and no worker under forty years of age will be attached to the permanent staff until he has passed the literacy test. Educational arrangements have also been made by the cotton mills in Madras and Bangalore, and in one of the petroleum centres in India night classes are open to all the workers and instruction is given in languages, mathematics and general knowledge.

In Japan, facilities for education after working hours are generally provided free of charge by the employers in establishments where young girls are employed and accommodated in dormitories. The public school curriculum is followed, and in many instances cultural subjects are taught which are of interest to the girls, for instance, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, etc.

Well-organised schools for workers' children have been set up by a number of employers, but only the large institutions can support the expenses. In India, for example, the Tata Iron and Steel Company provides a network of primary and secondary schools and also manages a technical institute for higher technical education for skilled workers; at the Kolar Gold Fields the companies provide 18 day schools, at a cost of 25,000 rupees a year, in which free education is available for workers' children. The Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, the Birla Industries in Gwalior and many other important establishments have made some kind of provision for free schooling for workers' children. The Bombay Textile Labour Enquiry Committee reports that in 1940, out of 58 cotton mills in Bombay, 22 had made provision for either primary or technical education for workers and their children, three had evening and night schools, and four had special classes for adult education; two provided workers' children attending municipal schools with books and stationery, and one conducted sewing and/or day embroidery classes for the benefit of its women workers; one mill reported that the night class which it had provided for some time had had to be closed owing to the feeble

¹ *Report of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee*, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

response from the workers.¹ In 1946, 1,142 children were educated in schools maintained by factories in the Central Provinces—a figure showing a definite improvement over those for previous years. The educational facilities in the Indian coal mines are said to be inadequate, but where they exist, and where the miners have been induced to send their children to school, full advantage has been taken of them, and the miners at some of the coal fields are beginning to appreciate the value of education for their children.²

In China, 28 factories in Shanghai have opened elementary schools, and 22 in Chungking; lessons in the Chungking schools are normally given in the evenings, but in a small number of factories day schools have also been established. The curriculum of these schools corresponds in the main with that of the Ministry of Education; the books and stationery used by the pupils is supplied by the managements free of charge.

Action by Workers

Some of the trade unions have been doing admirable work with the object of raising the educational level. The Chinese Federation of Labour, in particular, is actively concerned in this, and has recently drawn up a programme for the promotion of both adults' and children's education. The object is to stress the importance of workers' education both to industry and production, and to require trade unions to assist in abolishing illiteracy among workers and in improving their skill and productive efficiency. The programme stipulates that every factory or mine employing more than a hundred union members must be provided with an extension school for adult workers, and that factories or mines which normally employ 500 members must be provided with a school for the workers' children. The initial cost of these facilities is to be defrayed by the employer concerned and the cost of maintenance is to be paid by the sponsoring union. In case of financial difficulties, the trade union may apply for a subsidy from the competent authorities and, if necessary, local social and educational bodies may be requested to take over all responsibility for operating the scheme. The programme further requires unions to set up a workers' education committee, and urges all the general labour unions in

¹ *Report of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee, op. cit.*, p. 281.

² S. R. DESHPANDE: *Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in the Coal Mining Industry in India* (Delhi, 1947), p. 98.

the provinces and municipalities and districts to concentrate their efforts on the promotion of workers' education in their respective localities and to report on the way in which the provisions are carried out.

In India, the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association and some other trade unions conduct night classes for adults, and the attendance is said to be satisfactory. It may be of interest to note that the provisional constitution of the Indian National Trade Union Congress of 4 May 1947 provides that one of the objects of the Congress shall be to regulate hours and other conditions of work in keeping with the requirements, amongst other matters, of cultural development.

Libraries and Reading Rooms

The provision of libraries and reading rooms is a statutory requirement in China, under Regulations governing salaried and wage-earning employers' welfare funds, promulgated on 26 January 1943. These facilities are also frequently made available in the welfare centres set up by provincial Governments, employers and trade unions. Sometimes the libraries and reading rooms are well patronised, and the popularity of those run by the United Provinces, for example, may be judged by the fact that during one quarter of 1946, 4,135 persons were members of the welfare libraries throughout the Provinces and 7,696 books were issued to them; 6,927 books were read at labour welfare centres by industrial workers who were not in a position to enrol as members, but deposited a caution fee of one rupee; and 115,858 persons attended the reading rooms. Libraries and reading rooms are also provided by some of the larger undertakings.

Conclusions

If education is understood to imply not only ability to read and write, but also general cultural development and vocational competency, the degree to which workers in an undertaking are educated would seem to be a matter of considerable importance to employers. The Indian Industrial Commission reported more than thirty years ago that—

A factor which has tended in the past to delay the progress of India's industrial development has been the ignorance and conservatism of the uneducated workmen. The evidence tendered by employers was almost universally in favour of labour, both skilled and unskilled, that had at least received a primary education.¹

The Commission took the view that the main responsibility for the promotion of education must ultimately rest with the State, but it could not subscribe to the principle that absolved employers as a class from assuming any responsibility. It considered that the employer should place suitable premises at the disposal of the educational authorities for the opening of schools, should pay the cost of books, pencils, etc., buy literature suitable for children and distribute it free of charge to those of their workers who desired to have it.² Until primary education is compulsory, the value of the participation of the employers in the solution of the problem, on no matter what scale, would seem to be incontestable, provided that the workers co-operate and both attend adult education classes themselves and see that their children attend the schools set up for their use.

Adequate educational facilities presuppose a sufficient number of teachers, trained in modern methods of teaching both children and adults, and without them rapid progress is hardly possible.

Libraries, reading rooms, cinema films of educational interest, radio broadcasts in workshops, canteens, welfare centres and clubs are all valuable means of increasing the educational development of the workers which have been adopted by Governments, employers and workers and which could usefully be extended.

To sum up, the main problems in connection with the question of education, within the limits of welfare, would seem to be the organisation of adult classes to combat illiteracy and to develop the ability to acquire industrial skills and the capacity to hold positions of responsibility and leadership; the establishment in undertakings of schools for workers' children, when public educational services do not exist or are inadequate; the determination of the part to be played in the furtherance of such measures by the State, the employers and the workers themselves; and the promotion of training facilities for teachers.

¹ Quoted in *Report of Bombay Textile Labour Enquiry Committee*, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 279-280.

² *Idem*, p. 408.

WORKERS' HOUSING

General Problem

A Resolution adopted by the Asian Regional Conference held in New Delhi in 1947 calls attention to the low standard of housing of the great mass of the people in many of the Asian countries since the war. The formulation of a policy designed to improve housing conditions is stated to be both important and urgent for the health and efficiency of the workers, and the Governing Body of the International Labour Office is requested to call the attention of the Governments of Asian countries to the necessity of devising immediate and effective ways and means of providing workers with proper housing.¹

The provision of adequate housing for workers is one of the main problems facing the industrial areas in Asian countries. The accommodation of workers in these countries is greatly complicated not only by the results of the war and by political events involving the movement of large sections of the population, but also by the constant drift into cities from the rural areas, the location of undertakings far from centres of population, the rapid growth of the smaller industrial towns and the fact that migrant workers constitute a considerable proportion of the labour force. The situation is also aggravated by the fact that in many cases existing accommodation, in addition to being insufficient, is often insanitary and in need of renovation, and frequently endangers the workers' health owing to overcrowding.

In India, the growth of the population has outstripped the building programme, and the consequent housing shortage has produced acute conditions in some of the larger urban centres. Moreover, the building by-laws laying down standards in regard to open spaces, light, ventilation and sanitary arrangements, are not as a rule enforced by the municipal boards.² The urgent necessity for improving the housing conditions as well as the health of the industrial population, if the existing and future industries of the country were to hold their own against ever-growing compe-

¹ Preparatory Asian Regional Conference: *Record of Proceedings, op. cit.*, p. 290.

² *Report of the Health Survey and Development Committee, Vol. I, Survey* (Delhi, 1946), pp. 139 and 141.

tition, was emphasised more than twenty years ago by the Indian Industrial Commission.¹ More recently, the All-India Trade Union Congress has drawn attention to the serious housing situation of industrial workers in India, and considers that the Government should give the question of housing priority next to food and clothing.²

Workers' accommodation is an equally acute problem in other Asian countries, and Governments are keenly alive to the urgency of the question and to the repercussions of insanitary and inadequate accommodation on the health and efficiency of the workers. The Minister of Labour in Pakistan emphasised the urgency of the housing problem in his address to the first Pakistan Labour Conference in February 1947, as follows:

Pakistan has one of the poorest populations in the world and industrialisation, co-operation and other tried methods of alleviation of its distress are to be fully explored. For those already in employment there should be, at the workplace, safe and healthy conditions of work, while at home there should be good housing with proper arrangements for water supply, light and drainage, with educational, cultural and recreational facilities. The problem of housing is at once urgent and difficult, and the Government should devote special attention to it.

It is reported that large-scale housing schemes are being planned in Asian countries, and put into execution on a national basis. In Mysore State, for example, the five-year development plan provides for the construction of 50,000 houses for workers.

The wider aspects of workers' housing are, however, so closely bound up with the welfare of the population as a whole as to be part of a general problem. Any solution is conditioned by the social and economic difficulties confronting the country in question, and cannot be considered in isolation from them. Workers' housing in general is consequently outside the scope of welfare as understood in the present report, and the only aspect of the subject which will be discussed is provision of accommodation at, or in connection with, the place of work.

The question can then be classified under two main headings—first, provision of accommodation for workers in general at or in connection with industrial and other undertakings, and secondly, the provision of accommodation for special categories of workers, such as miners and plantation workers.

¹ Quoted in the *Report of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee*, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

² *The Trade Union Record*, Vol. X, No. 5, Jan. 1949, p. 44.

The Labour Investigation Committee, appointed in July 1947 by the Government of Burma to consider existing laws and to introduce fresh legislation, took the question of housing for workers in general into consideration when discussing the revision of the Factories Act, and the views of the representatives of the three parties, Government, employers and workers, are set out in its first report. It states that the representatives of the workers on the Committee suggested the inclusion in the new Factories Act of a clause making it compulsory for employers to provide housing for their workers. In support of this proposal they said that large numbers of workers lived far from their places of work and experienced considerable difficulty in reaching the factories where they were employed; that it was difficult for them to secure accommodation themselves, and what they were able to obtain was often insanitary and overcrowded. They considered that if the employers failed to provide housing, the workers should be compensated by the payment of house rent. The employers and Government representatives considered that housing accommodation was the responsibility of the State, and that it was primarily a matter for the Government and local authorities, the Government representatives adding that where a factory was in a particularly remote place, or where the nature of the employment necessitated the workers being available at all hours at short notice, housing accommodation should be the responsibility of the employer. The Chairman of the Committee suggested that the new Factories Act might contain enabling powers under which the Government might later, in consultation with employers' and workers' representatives and local authorities, lay down standards of workers' housing, specifying the proportion of workers for whom accommodation should be provided and fixing the extent to which the expenditure on such housing schemes should be borne by the employers, the Government and the local authorities. The Committee was of the unanimous opinion that the housing question was one which needed the immediate attention of the Government, irrespective of whether the provision of accommodation was regulated by the Factories Act, by a special Housing Act, or by some other means.

The problems of coal miners became prominent during the war, and the improvement of their housing is one of the matters to which special attention is still being directed. A resolution on miners' housing was adopted by the second session of the Coal Mines Committee of the International Labour Organisation. It refers to the insufficient quality and lack of comfort of housing

available in mining areas, and the serious obstacle this presented both to maintaining the labour force and increasing it by large-scale recruitment. It emphasised the point that it was indispensable and urgent that an organised effort on a large scale should be made to overcome the housing crisis, and that it was necessary to lay down the general lines of a housing policy for miners which would increase the standard of comfort of the dwellings of these workers and their families, and would also aim at satisfying their immediate and long-term needs.¹

A suggestion to help solve the housing difficulty for plantation workers was made by the Indian Tripartite Industrial Committee on Plantations at its second meeting, in March 1948, when considering the conditions of work on estates. The Committee agreed that legislation should invest power in the provincial Governments to set up housing boards to acquire and develop suitable areas for the construction of workers' houses, to raise the necessary funds and to prescribe conditions of tenancy.²

The provision of transport for workers to and from the undertaking in which they are employed is linked to the question of housing. It would appear to be less important at the moment in Asian than in some other countries, as accommodation is often arranged for workers actually in the undertaking or nearby. It seems to be the exception rather than the rule for an establishment to make transport arrangements, though it is sometimes done. In Pakistan, for example, railway workers travel to and from work on special workmen's trains, and the staff living at some distance from their workplace are provided with tickets at concession rates; senior staff have free passes and they are also given privilege tickets for themselves and their families. If an undertaking is in an isolated locality and there is not sufficient housing accommodation in the neighbourhood, transport arrangements may be necessary. In India, both the coal and mica miners' welfare funds may be used for the provision of transport to and from work, and in Pakistan, the Salt Mines Welfare Fund may be utilised for the same purpose.

In Japan, on the other hand, facilities for transport to the place of employment is a post-war development which is quite generally provided by employers in order to make regularity of attendance

¹ International Labour Organisation, Coal Mines Committee: *Record of the Second Session, Geneva, April 1947* (Geneva, I.L.O., 1948), p. 131.

² Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. LVIII, No. 2, Aug. 1948, p. 216.

possible and to allow for deficiencies in public transport owing to war disorganisation. In certain instances special tickets are provided on public transport services at the employer's expense, or a nominal charge is made to the worker. A sample study of establishments showed that 50 per cent. provided the full cost of workers' transport and 50 per cent. allowed for this expense in the worker's wages. Many establishments, particularly mining undertakings, provide their own facilities by means of buses or trucks from the worker's home or from a central meeting-place to the place of employment, no charge being made to the worker. It is generally accepted in Japan that the expense involved in getting to and from work is a charge to be met by the employer, and it is accordingly incorporated in the prevailing wage structure.¹

Some examples follow of action taken by the State and by employers and workers to relieve the existing housing conditions of all categories of workers.

Official Action

Legislative Provisions.

The general problem of the housing of the population is frequently the subject of statutory provisions, as in Ceylon, under the Housing and Town-Planning Ordinance, 1946, but the specific problem of the housing of workers at or in connection with their workplace is normally outside the scope of general factory legislation, and the labour inspectorate can neither demand the provision of accommodation for workers, nor, when such provision is made, can it enforce any kind of rule or regulation for better conditions. China is an exception; in that country the Factory Act obliges employers to provide living accommodation for the workers. In Afghanistan, although the regulations governing the employment of persons in industrial establishments do not specifically require the provision of accommodation, they nevertheless lay down certain standards when the dormitory system is organised. They stipulate, for instance, that the dormitories shall be so constructed as to allow 14 cubic metres of air for each worker, that they shall be swept and washed every day, that the walls shall not be

¹ *Workers' Welfare Facilities in Japan, op. cit.*

covered with paper or fabric, that each person shall have his own bed and that the sheets shall be changed once a month, and that when a worker leaves the factory, his bed and sheets shall be washed and cleaned before use by any new worker who takes his place.

The legislation of both China and India provides that workers' accommodation is one of the purposes for which statutory welfare funds may be used. In China, statistics of the Ministry of Social Affairs concerning the working of the welfare fund regulations during 1948 show that 635 dwellings and 1,549 dormitories were provided for workers and their families. Of the dwellings, 594 were provided by factories and mines, 33 by labour unions and 8 by Government and social organisations; for the dormitories the comparable figures are 1,184, 114 and 40, in addition to 211 provided by agricultural unions. The Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1947, provides that the housing account of the Fund may be used to meet the cost of erecting, maintaining and repairing houses for colliery workers, and the cost of preparing schemes and acquiring land. The Act also sets up a Housing Board to prepare and carry out housing schemes, and to lay down minimum standards. Grants-in-aid may be made from the Fund to a local authority or to the owner, agent or manager of a coal mine for schemes approved by the Board. The Government has set a target figure of 50,000 houses for miners to be completed within five years, and has constituted a separate account in the Fund for the purpose.¹

Housing of Government Employees.

In addition to legislation, the Governments of Asian countries help to relieve the serious housing situation by the provision of accommodation or by the grants of rent allowances or house-building allowances to State employees. In Ceylon, a housing estate is being developed by the Colombo Port Commission for harbour workers; there are already 216 houses, 70 new houses will be built during 1949, and when the scheme is completed there will be approximately 750 houses.

Generally speaking, the number of houses which can be made available to Government employees is limited, and they can only be allocated to a selected number of staff. The selection is sometimes based on the worker's need to be near the place of work at any

¹ *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 226.

hour. In Ceylon, for instance, the small number of houses available to employees of the Public Works Department and the Ceylon Government Railways are allocated in accordance with this need, and in India and Pakistan quarters are provided in the first instance for those Government railway servants who are liable to be called on duty in an emergency or who have to attend work at inconvenient hours. In Japan, residential facilities, generally dormitories, are provided by each Ministry as a relief measure to accommodate workers whose homes were destroyed during the war, or to enable those living at a distance to do effective work; low rents are charged. Status is also the basis sometimes for the allocation of accommodation. In India, workers on the established staff of the Meteorological Department Workshops are entitled to Government quarters, but housing facilities are not available to the workers who are paid by the day. In Japan, official residences must be provided rent free to Government employees whose functions require them to occupy such accommodation. Each Ministry controls the housing assigned to its officials, and uniform financial control is exercised by the Allowance Bureau of the Finance Ministry.

Rent allowance instead of housing accommodation is given to railway colliery workers in India, though a scheme for housing the workers is under consideration. The Karachi Port Trust also grants a house rent allowance to employees for whom it is unable to provide quarters.

In India, house-building advances to encourage workers to construct their own homes are made to salt range miners at Khewra, and the Pakistan Government has decided to reopen the grant of house-building advances on more liberal terms to Government servants and has made a provision of 5 million rupees for this purpose in the 1949-1950 budget.¹

Other Government Measures.

In Japan, housing facilities have been provided by the Government for special categories of workers not under direct Government control, such as coal miners and other workers in heavy industries. Owing to the destruction caused by the war, a large-scale housing scheme for miners has been undertaken by the Government since the occupation of the country. Although the

¹ Extract from speech of Mr. G. MAHOMMAD, Defence Minister, Pakistan, when presenting the budget for 1949-1950 in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on 28 Feb. 1949.

destruction of houses was not so serious in the non-urbanised areas, the need to attract a new labour supply, owing to the repatriation of the Chinese, Formosans and Koreans who had previously constituted the greater part of the labour force, made an improved housing programme essential. Up to January 1949, more than 50,000 new dormitories had been constructed, and a considerable amount of repair work had been carried out on buildings. A total of 14,000 million yen was loaned to mining companies for the purpose, and the standard of construction is higher than either the pre-war or post-war Japanese homes. This programme filled the most urgent housing needs for Japanese coal miners. Additional loans are to be based on individual needs, and mine owners have been asked to justify further Government support on the basis of such factors as quantity and quality of coal produced, estimated life of the property, number of workers, number of houses already in existence and financial reasons for requesting the loan.

In addition to miners' housing, special programmes for the heavy industries—particularly the iron, steel and fertiliser industries—were deemed essential in order to attract a stable labour supply during the reconstruction period. During 1947, 70,682 dwellings and 110,664 dormitories and apartments were completed, primarily for industrial workers. The construction programme for 1948, for which statistics of actual construction are not available, provided for accommodation for approximately 120,000 persons.¹

Action by Employers

The methods by which employers have attempted to meet the acute housing situation include the provision in their undertakings of dormitories designed either for families or for single persons, the housing of a portion of their staff in workers' colonies or tenements near the place of work, and, on plantations, the erection of hutments, "lines", and other living accommodation. Sometimes the workers are housed free of charge, sometimes a housing allowance is made by the undertaking, and sometimes interest-free loans are given to enable the workers to construct their own houses.

¹ *Workers' Welfare Facilities in Japan, op. cit.*

As with other welfare facilities, the quantity and quality of the housing provided is very unequal, and ambitious schemes do not necessarily imply high standards. Some examples follow of the housing schemes organised by several of the large industrial undertakings, showing the kind of arrangements which have been made.

In India, 61.8 per cent. of the workers on the Kolar Gold Fields in Mysore State live in houses provided by the management. The workers' colonies are well laid out and have adequate drainage and sanitation. They are practically self-contained, with shops, temples, schools, street electric lighting, maternity homes, recreation clubs and cattle sheds. At the present time, only prefabricated concrete houses are being erected, and the old type of tattie-walled houses are gradually being replaced by the improved kind. The rent charged is nominal, and bears no relation to capital cost. The Birla Cotton Mills in Gwalior also provide a workers' colony, which comprises 2,000 quarters with their own water and electricity supply and big grounds and gardens; nominal rent is charged. The Indian cement industry has given particular attention to the housing of its workers, and it is reported that the employers have shown great imagination in the construction of workers' quarters to ensure the comfort and convenience of their employees. In several factories the unskilled labourer is provided with accommodation comprising two good living rooms, a concrete yard and separate arrangements for water and sanitation.¹

In Pakistan, the Bata Shoe Company, Batapur, houses some 30 per cent. of the workers in a colony. The houses are of different types according to the worker's grade, and rents are scaled accordingly. The colony has its own water supply and electricity and there are spacious lawns, roads and playgrounds.

In Hong Kong, the housing situation has been greatly complicated by the influx of refugees; it is reported that industrial concerns and public utility companies under foreign management have provided a certain number of good standard dwellings for their employees, and that an important scheme has been prepared by a group of Chinese industrialists.²

In contrast to the accommodation described above, the single room tenement, serving as a living room, kitchen and bedroom for one or more families, is still a common feature in many indus-

¹ Quoted in *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 220.

² *The Economist*, 15 Jan. 1949, p. 112.

trial areas. Dormitory accommodation is often very overcrowded, and it may happen that workers on different shifts are obliged to share the same bed. In workers' colonies overcrowding may be such that families of from four to twelve persons are crowded into two rooms, the only access to the different storeys of the houses being by ladder; sanitation is primitive, there is a common water tap, and the whole building is often in urgent need of repair. Another very unsatisfactory custom which is sometimes followed is for the workers to sleep in their workshops.

The following examples of the different practices in respect of workers' housing are taken from China. A recent survey of the working of the Factory Act in a number of cities typical of the various stages of development of Chinese industry showed that in Shanghai, out of the 240 factories surveyed, housing accommodation was entirely supplied by the management in 128; in 32 cases it was partially so supplied, and in 67 factories the workers looked for lodgings themselves. In Chungking, which has shown rapid industrial growth in recent years, 47 factories accommodated all their workers in dormitories and 21 accommodated some of them; 65 factories charged their workers no lodging fees; 3 charged a nominal fee. A distinction was usually drawn between the married and the unmarried; the former lived in small houses near the factory and the latter in dormitories. Fifty-three factories made no distinction between the skilled and unskilled workers and 15 gave special privileges to skilled workmen.¹

Action by Workers

The co-operative movement is the principal means by which the workers play their part in the construction of houses. Co-operative housing ventures have been spreading in Asia during recent years, and they appear to occur most frequently in India, where there are two main types, first, those based on individual house-ownership, where the society helps the member in several ways such as purchase of the land, laying out the colony, and loans to finance building, the house being mortgaged to the society until the loan is cleared by instalments; and secondly, the co-partnership type, where a building is owned in common by the

¹ *International Labour Review*, Vol. LIX, No. 1, Jan. 1949, p. 34: "The Labour Policy of the Chinese Government and its Reactions on Industry and Labour", by Ta CHEN.

members of a society, each member having rights of tenancy subject to certain conditions, and in certain cases having the right to purchase the dwelling from the society by instalments. The former type of society prevails in Madras, where, in 1946, there were 133 with 4,030 members, while the latter is the usual type in Bombay, where in the same year there were 126 societies with 8,600 members.

A significant example of the application of co-operative housing to industrial labour is provided by the Harveypatti House Building Society, through which the Madura Mills Ltd. (Madras Province) have constructed a complete colony of more than 600 houses, with all facilities such as electric light, water, drainage, roads, parks and schools. This colony is managed by the co-operative society, at the head of which is a board of directors consisting of a representative of the mills, a representative of the labour union, a representative of the mill workers, the District Collector or his nominee, and the President or Vice-President of the Madura District Board. Each house in the colony is valued at 600 rupees, and on payment of this sum in small monthly instalments, spread over 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ years, the worker becomes the owner of a house. The successful completion of this scheme has been largely due to the financial assistance of the management of the mills, which not only advanced the share capital of the society and gave a large loan for construction, but also made free grants for several items of capital and current expenditure.

Schemes for the expansion of co-operative housing societies are under consideration by the Madras Government, which has accepted generally the recommendations of the 15th Conference of Registrars of Co-operative Societies that in all schemes of town-planning a definite place should be given to co-operative house building, and that specific areas should be reserved for people with low or middle class incomes who are grouped together in co-operative housing societies.

Plantation Workers

The housing of plantation workers is complicated by the fact that large numbers of these workers are recruited from places far away from the plantation, and have no homes of their own within reach of their place of work. In Ceylon, for instance, on the tea estates about 98 per cent. of the labour force is migrant labour

from India, and on the rubber plantations 60 per cent.¹ If there is no village near where workers can find accommodation, the responsibility for providing it falls upon the employer, and it is customary for free housing to be provided in addition to wages. The employment of considerable numbers of women and children in the tea gardens is another complication, and though the accommodation provided is sometimes adequate, it often leaves much to be desired, more especially as regards sanitation and overcrowding, while it frequently fails to provide the privacy and conveniences which family life requires.

On the Burma rubber plantations free accommodation in the form of temporary bamboo huts is provided for those workers who wish to live on the estates, but most of the workers prefer to live in neighbouring villages, where they build their own houses.

In Ceylon, the Rules issued under the Medical Wants Ordinance provide that every estate superintendent must provide proper dwelling accommodation with adequate drainage. About one third of the Sinhalese, and the majority of the Indian labourers, live on the estates, mainly in what are called "lines", *i.e.*, rows of small rooms, each with a verandah, one room being intended for four persons and to accommodate a family. In a few cases, pairs of semi-detached houses have been built. Houses are regularly inspected by officers of the Medical Department.

In Indonesia, the Native Labour Ordinance of 1925, as amended, requires the employer to provide suitable houses for employees, supplied with a good water supply for baths and for drinking. The houses are sometimes made with split bamboo walls and floors and thatched roofs. More substantial houses of brick and concrete, with corrugated iron and asbestos roofs, provided with electric light, running water, and separate kitchen and toilet facilities, have been built for workers in petroleum-producing camps and refineries.

In India, on the estates in Assam and southern India, free housing is provided for all workers other than casual and local labourers who live in adjacent villages. The French Indo-China Native Labour Ordinance, 1927, lays down that every contract worker is entitled to free housing accommodation for himself and his family. The accommodation must be sound and suitable and must satisfy the rules of hygiene. Families must be accommodated in special huts. Separate houses must be provided for each nationality, and all must be situated as far as possible from the jungle.

¹ *Twenty-five Years of Labour Progress in Ceylon* (Colombo, 1948), p. 35.

The workers' houses on the larger plantations are often grouped in villages, which include a school, a crèche, a hospital, a canteen and a pagoda or a church, etc.

Considerable attention has been paid in the Malayan Federation to workers' housing on the plantations, and the older lines are being gradually replaced by new types of cottages more suitable for families. Under the Federal Malay Labour Code, 1923, it is the duty of every employer to provide housing accommodation for his workers which must conform to reasonable sanitary requirements. The housing lines constructed by the employer must be in accordance with standard designs approved by the Health Officer, and it is the duty of the manager to see that they are kept clean and that all refuse is collected daily and buried. If the Health Officer considers that any lines are likely to endanger the health of the labourers housed in them, for reasons of site, construction, size or any other cause, he may order their demolition, alteration, enlargement, etc. Steady progress has been made in the restoration of the standards prevailing before the Japanese occupation, but new building has been retarded by the need for rehabilitation.

Conclusions

The extent and urgency of the problem of workers' housing, even within the limits of accommodation at or in connection with the place of work, raise first and foremost the question of financial responsibility. At present it is shared by Governments and employers, and by workers through the co-operative system.

Employers frequently provide housing for the workers in their undertakings even when there is no obligation to do so, in order to secure an adequate labour force and to ensure regular attendance at work, the provision of accommodation being looked upon as an indispensable accessory to production. The social motive is shown by the adequacy and comfort of the accommodation provided and the standard of upkeep. The compulsory provision of housing by undertakings might perhaps be envisaged when they are in isolated districts far from centres of population, or where there is an acute shortage of housing in the vicinity of the workplace and the workers are recruited from a distance. In such cases it would seem desirable that the State should lay down minimum standards of construction and equipment and should exercise a certain control.

It would seem inevitable that in urban areas where land sites and other housing costs are high, employers would have difficulty in recouping construction expenses from the rents the workers are able to pay, more especially if the houses conform to statutory minimum standards. At the present time they are also faced with a shortage of building materials, and construction is being held up on that account. If it is considered that employers should be responsible for providing housing for some or all of the workers in their undertakings, the State should prescribe minimum standards. The State might perhaps assist by facilitating the acquisition of land, granting priority of building materials, making water and electricity available, giving some financial help by means of loans, etc.

A method of administration and finance which is sometimes employed—for instance in China and in India for miners—is the use of welfare funds. The extent to which sufficient and suitable accommodation would be provided by this means would obviously depend upon adequate resources being available in the fund.

The accommodation at present provided for workers, whether it be dormitories, "lines", cottages or other dwellings, varies from the most primitive and unhealthy to well-built comfortable houses, and the question of standards, to which reference has been made above, is now under consideration. The Indian Tripartite Industrial Committee on Plantations, for instance, agreed at its second meeting that minimum housing standards should be prescribed for plantation workers, and the Pakistan Tea Association and the Labour Department of the Pakistan Government are considering a scheme laying down minimum standards for tea garden labour. Also, a recent Indian Labour Ministers' conference decided—during the discussion of a project to construct one million houses for industrial workers in the course of the next ten years—to constitute a Central Housing Board, with branches in the provinces to prescribe minimum standards in their respective regions. No matter by whom housing is provided, whether by an industrial employer, a plantation owner, a housing board or a local authority, it would seem desirable that there should be a minimum standard, conforming to climatic, local or other special requirements, below which no building should be permitted to fall. Such standards should take into account the needs of both single workers and families.

A point which deserves consideration, especially in Asian countries which are in process of industrial expansion, is the subordination of the opening of new factories to the provision of

houses for the workers to be employed in those factories. It is suggested that if all or any of the workers are to be accommodated in the undertaking itself, the competent body should ensure that suitable provision is made in the architect's plans before construction is begun, and that if, on the other hand, the workers are to be lodged in the vicinity of the undertaking, steps should be taken to find out if sufficient accommodation already exists, and if not what measures are contemplated to construct it. Such an important aspect of the worker's life as the home which he will share with his family should not be left to chance at a time when the housing shortage is as acute as it is at present. *Ad hoc* arrangements when the undertaking is already a going concern are likely to be unsatisfactory, and may result in workers being forced to leave their families behind when they go away to work in an industrial undertaking.

It has been argued that the provision of housing for workers by the employer, whether the employer be the State, a local authority or the management of a private concern, may carry with it certain disadvantages from the workers' point of view, in that in such cases there is usually more or less close supervision, involving considerable restriction of the workers' liberty. Any encroachment on individual liberty of action within the bounds of the law cannot but be deprecated, more especially if one of the forms it takes is to prohibit the entry of outsiders into the workers' quarters. This prohibition is usually enforced in plantations, and effectively prevents trade union organisation, and in industries where unions already exist it checks their growth, for it is only during his leisure time that the worker has an opportunity to talk over his grievances with trade union leaders. On the other hand, there are obvious advantages in the employer providing the accommodation if the dwellings provided are clean, sanitary, sufficiently commodious and in the vicinity of the workplace, especially if otherwise accommodation of any kind whatever is only to be found with great difficulty and, if found, is probably unsatisfactory. As long ago as 1931 the Commission on Labour in India reported that—

The keen competition which takes place for any vacancy in the houses provided by employers indicates that his (the worker's) desire for a sanitary and decent house and an improved standard of living is greater than is generally realised. There is also evidence that he is willing to pay something for decent quarters.¹

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India op. cit.*, p. 293.

A measure which might help to some extent to relieve the worker's difficulty in finding a house to live in would be to include in the duties of welfare officers attached to undertakings that of assisting the workers in obtaining accommodation within a reasonable distance of the establishment.

To sum up, the principal problems in regard to workers' housing at or in connection with the place of work include the allocation of responsibility for its provision and for the necessary finance, the prescription of minimum standards of construction and equipment, and the subordination of the opening of new undertakings to the existence of adequate accommodation for the labour to be employed in them.

CANTEENS AND OTHER FEEDING ARRANGEMENTS

General Problem

The importance of adequate nutrition for workers was brought into prominence by the war, and the provision of canteens and other feeding arrangements at or near the place of work is a noteworthy development of recent years, both in Asian and in other countries. Some of the objects of industrial canteens are aptly described in the report of the Indian Government Labour Investigation Committee, issued in 1946. The report states that—

The works canteen is increasingly recognised all over the world as an essential part of the industrial establishment, providing undeniable benefits from the point of view of health, efficiency and well-being. To introduce an element of nutritional balance into the otherwise deficient and unbalanced dietary of the workers, to provide cheap and clean food and an opportunity to relax in comfort near the place of work, to save time and trouble to workers on account of exhausting journeys to and from work after long hours in the factory, and (during wartime at any rate) to enable them to surmount the difficulties experienced in obtaining meals and foodstuffs, these are some of the objects of an industrial canteen.¹

Canteens are not, however, always appreciated in Asian countries by the workers for whom they are provided, since many of these workers are in the habit of hurrying to and from their homes for their meals during the work interval and prefer to do so. If their homes are distant from their place of employment, which

¹ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report* (1946), p. 252.

may easily be the case when housing has to be accepted where it can be found, they have to rush through their dinner to get back to work on time. This constitutes a drain on their normal rest periods and may cause nervous exhaustion and ill health. The canteens are not always well managed and may be deservedly unpopular, but if they are properly run, and the meals are cheap, appetising and nourishing and served in clean and attractive surroundings, due attention being paid to local customs and religious observances, the workers would be encouraged to make use of them. This has in fact been borne out by a number of large firms in India. The canteen run by the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur, for instance, is housed in two large buildings and fitted with electric light, tables and fans; it is being visited three times a day for refreshments and meals by about 13,000 workers.¹

As the Labour Investigation Committee infers, wise catering rather than mere feeding should be the aim of every industrial canteen, and it is essential if they are to play their part in building up and maintaining the health and happiness of the workers. Research has shown that a deficient diet may contribute to chronic fatigue and to the development of neurosis and other forms of ill health, with harmful effects on the worker's general morale. The resulting economic waste is undoubtedly substantial. The mental and physical capacity needed to enable workers to be good citizens and efficient workers can often be improved simply by eating the right kinds of food properly prepared.

The rank and file of workers are for the most part ignorant of the effect of a suitable and nutritious diet on their general well-being, and in any case they cannot afford to buy the particular foods they need to build up and maintain their health. Frequently they arrange for their meal to be sent from their home to them at their workplace, and this is undoubtedly an economy when a good deal of cooking has to be done in the home for non-earning members of the family; or they carry their food themselves, wrapped in a handkerchief, on which the dust is bound to collect during working hours; or they find they can eat more cheaply by cooking their own food in a corner of their dormitory. In none of these cases do they get a well-balanced and nutritious meal. A compromise which is sometimes practised is for workers to supplement the meals they bring with them from home by purchases from the canteen.

¹ *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 239.

Newly established industries or small undertakings with little capital may find it difficult to establish up-to-date canteens, for lack of the necessary resources, and, instead of canteens serving cooked meals, it is sometimes customary to provide shelters where the workers can rest and eat their own food. This practice is useful for those workers who prefer to bring their food with them or to have it sent from their homes, and it is said to be much appreciated, and to have had an encouraging effect on production.¹ It does not, however, meet the problem of adequate and balanced diets.

A service provided by both Government and employers which, without going so far as to ensure the proper nutrition of workers, aims at facilitating the purchase of foodstuffs at low prices, is the institution of stores, where grain and frequently other consumer goods are sold at cost price or at concession rates. This service may be especially useful for workers in isolated districts. Unlike industrial canteens, which are often confined to the use of the workers of the undertaking concerned, this is a method of helping not only the workers themselves but also their families to obtain more adequate food.

The distribution by employers of basic foodstuffs at prices below market rates, as well as the organisation of canteens in or in the vicinity of their undertakings where meals are served at low cost, while being of great potential benefit to the workers, are also ways of assisting them to meet the higher cost of living as opposed to the more direct method of a proportionate increase in rates of pay.

The supply of goods at correct weights and reasonable prices has been the classical objective of consumer co-operative societies throughout the world, and this motive has led to the formation, especially during the last few years, of many consumer co-operatives in Asian countries. Though the goods sold are not limited to foodstuffs, it may not be out of place to mention the co-operative stores formed for the workers of industrial concerns. In Madras Province, for instance, the number rose from 9 in 1939 to 69 in 1945, their membership from 3,500 to 69,000, and their turnover from 3.51 to 133.24 lakhs of rupees.

Efforts have also been made in China to develop consumer co-operative services as a means of increasing workers' welfare. Thus, the Shanghai Bureau of Social Affairs indicated in 1947 that the distribution of commodities to factories would be made only

¹ Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report, op. cit.*, p. 354.

through the consumer co-operatives of workers in these factories. By September 1948 some 114 such societies, with over 130,000 members, had been set up, and had grouped themselves into the Shanghai Federation of Factory Employees' and Workers' Consumer Co-operative Societies. Among the labour welfare facilities quoted by the Chinese Ministry of Social Affairs in June 1948 were 227 consumer co-operatives established by factories and mines, 35 by labour unions and 22 by Government and social organisations.

Owing to the isolation of many of the estates, the feeding of plantation workers presents special problems. In many cases the worker is employed at a considerable distance from his home, and the employer either has to board him or to see that foodstuffs are available. The supply of food is frequently one of the concessions made to plantation workers in addition to their wages. Nutritional research conducted amongst plantation workers in India has shown that the diet of the workers is of a low standard, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Health Survey and Development Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1943 mentions that diet surveys carried out on plantations in different parts of the country have usually shown that the food consumed is insufficient to provide the necessary requirements in the case of some 30 per cent. of the families, and that the diet is almost invariably inadequate and ill-balanced.¹

Plantation owners—for example, in Ceylon—have shown marked interest in the co-operative method of distribution of foodstuffs and other stores, and have helped their workers to form consumer societies with over 12,500 members; by 1945 their number had risen to 172 and their membership to nearly 73,000.

Official Action

Legislative Provisions.

The legislation of several Asian countries requires the provision of canteens in specified undertakings, and sometimes imposes certain conditions in regard to their construction and management. In Afghanistan, the Conditions of Employment Regulations, 1946, lay down that an employer shall be permitted to open a canteen in his undertaking subject to the following conditions: (a) he shall not employ his workers in the canteen without remuneration;

¹ Quoted in *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 203.

(b) he shall not make any pecuniary profit from the provision of meals in the canteen; and (c) the canteen shall be placed under the control of a committee, of which not less than one third of the members shall be chosen by the workers of the undertaking.

In India, the Factories Act, 1948, empowers provincial Governments to issue rules for the provision of canteens in factories employing 250 or more workers. The rules may lay down the date by which the canteen shall be provided, the standards to be observed in respect of construction, accommodation, furniture and other equipment, the food to be served and the prices charged, the constitution of the managing committee and the representation of the workers on this committee. Many of the provincial Governments have exercised this faculty, and the provision of canteens has thereby been made compulsory. In Assam, the rules require separate canteen accommodation to be provided for men and women workers, the prices charged to be fixed on a non-profit basis and one workers' representative to be on the managing committee for every 15 workers employed in the undertaking. The Madras Government, by Order of 14 September 1948, has directed the managements of 166 factories, in each of which more than 250 workers are ordinarily employed, to provide an adequate and suitable canteen for the use of the workers. The factories affected include paint works, motor workshops, match factories, cotton and jute mills, sugar mills, cement undertakings, railway workshops, tile works and coffee processing factories.

In addition to canteens, the Indian Factories Act requires shelters to be provided in every factory where more than 150 workers are normally employed. The shelters must be adequately lighted and ventilated, and provided with drinking water.

Where the establishment of a welfare fund is a statutory obligation, one of the purposes for which the fund may be used is the provision of feeding arrangements. In China, for instance, a dining-hall must be maintained by every welfare society set up in a factory, mine or other undertaking in accordance with the needs of the case, and in conformity with specified financial conditions, the money to be drawn from the welfare fund. In India, the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act lays down that the Welfare Fund may be used, amongst other purposes, to improve the nutrition of colliery workers.

As regards the sale of foodstuffs and other commodities, in Japan, under the Labour Standards Law, sales facilities, either co-operative or directly managed by the establishment, are legiti-

mate activities which are found throughout the whole of Japanese industry. Workers frequently exercise considerable control over these company stores through their welfare association or co-operative organisation. Many are company-owned, while others function as co-operatives with the unions generally directing their activities. The administrative costs, including the salaries of the stores assistants, are generally borne by the employer. The items for sale are sometimes purchased on a recurring basis, but frequently they are in odd lots according to the availability of supplies and the attractiveness of the price. In other instances, employers display samples of goods offered to them at wholesale or manufacturer's prices, and accept orders from the workers, with the result that the purchases made by the employers are specifically fitted to the individual wants of those workers who wish to buy particular articles. In many cases, because of the limited supplies of articles which are much sought after, an allocation may be made according to the order of applications or possibly by means of a lottery, or sometimes taking into account the extent to which prospective purchasers have previously been allotted limited supplies of a similar nature. No one is obliged to purchase from the stores, although credit is generally given to those workers who wish to secure goods in advance of pay day.¹

Feeding Arrangements for Government Employees.

Among the measures taken by Governments to feed their own employees may be mentioned a scheme proposed by the Indian Ministry of Labour to open a canteen in New Delhi for the supply of cheap, wholesome and nutritious food to employees of the Central Government. The canteen will be managed and run by the Ministry on a non-profit basis under the executive control of the Government Superintendent of Industrial Canteens. The prices charged are expected to be at least 40 to 50 per cent. less than market rates. The Government intends to introduce the cafeteria system so as to reduce the number of staff required and the time spent by each customer on his meal; purchases will be made by means of coupons, in order to reduce the possibility of fraud.²

Canteens are also provided by the Indian Railway Administration for its workers; these mostly serve tea and light refreshments

¹ *Workers' Welfare Facilities in Japan, op. cit.*

² Communication from the Indian Branch Office.

and in only a few cases cooked meals. The number of employees served by these canteens in December 1948 was 33,106. The Railway Administration provides the necessary accommodation and also the sanitary and electric installations, furniture and cooking utensils, and pays the charges for supply of electricity and water; the canteen account is debited with the cost of working and running the canteens, including a nominal rent for accommodation and for the cost of crockery, cutlery, service, etc. The prices of articles sold in the canteens are adjusted from time to time so as to maintain a "no profit, no loss" basis. There are two canteens at the railway collieries, run by private contractors, which provide light refreshments and meals at rates approved by the workers' welfare committee.

In Pakistan, the Karachi Port Trust runs four canteens for its employees, where tea and cooked food are served at cheap rates. The Pakistan Mint has a canteen for tea and refreshments; meals are not provided as there is no demand for them, owing to the fact that most of the workers live in quarters provided by, and in or near, the mint. Pakistan railway personnel are provided with seven cooked food canteens and seven tea canteens; in the cooked food canteens tables and benches are provided, and commodities are sold at prices cheaper than market rates. Canteens are also provided for miners and surface workers at the Salt Range Mines, and, in order to improve the conditions of coal miners, the Indian Government proposes to launch a scheme of mobile canteens in the coal fields to supply tea and refreshments of real nutritional value. The canteens may also be used for propaganda, to explain the principles of a balanced and nutritious diet.

The Vizagapatam port authorities run a fair-priced food shop for employees, and the Bombay Port Trust Fund runs fourteen grain shops which supply certain essential commodities at concession prices ranging from 25 to 50 per cent. below market prices. The Calcutta Port Commissioners and the Karachi Port Trust also operate shops for the sale of certain articles of food to their respective employees at concession rates.¹

In Burma, numerous consumers' co-operatives have been formed by staffs of Government Departments, with official encouragement and support. These "service co-operatives" have in fact constituted pilot projects for the further expansion of consumers' co-operation among the general public. The development

¹ Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. LIII, Nos. 1-2, Jan.-Feb. 1946, p. 105.

of a consumers' co-operative network throughout Burma is an integral part of Government plans to ensure fair distribution of supplies, including foodstuffs, and to reduce the cost of living.

Other Government Action.

In Japan, a nation-wide system has been in operation since 1941 for the allocation to workers in general of essential commodities of which there is a widespread shortage. Staple foods are among the important commodities distributed by means of this national programme. These commodities are provided at official or specially low rates which are only a fraction of the prices which prevail in the free market when the articles in question happen to be available. A supplementary allotment of staple foods is made to all establishments engaged in mining, manufacturing, gas and electricity supply, land and maritime transport and the construction industry, and this covers approximately seven million workers. These supplements are intended to stimulate output and worker efficiency by providing additional foodstuffs to workers whose physical effort is directly related to the quantity of production of the industries which are basic to national welfare. No attempt is made to restrict the practice sometimes followed by workers of sharing the food with their families, and in the coal mining industry an additional supplementary food allotment is made to the miners' families. This programme helps to reduce absenteeism, as the amount of food distributed is based on the number of days actually worked. Owing to flexible administration, except for Government administrative employees and those engaged in commerce, almost all the production workers and many non-productive workers secure supplementary food allotments, differing in quantity according to the importance of the industry in the national programme.

The Japanese Government is responsible for the general planning and supervision of the supplementary food programme, and the receiving unit is generally the employee, but recently joint committees of management and trade unions have been assuming this responsibility; in the case of independent workers, such as carpenters, the responsible union functions as the receiving unit. Where eating facilities are available in the place of employment, the supplementary foodstuffs are served to the workers as lunch or some other meal; the prices charged are generally lower than the actual costs and in some cases the meals are free.

The supplementary ration programme was revised in October 1948 and the ration level was established on a scientific basis in accordance with the requirements of each occupation. The programme is of considerable significance for the economic recovery of Japan; by making available energy-providing foods it will increase productivity, especially as many industries which are important to Japan's export programme have now been included, and by making possible economies in each family's food budget, it will decrease the worker's cost of living.¹

In Singapore, the Department of Social Welfare supplies food to the population in four ways: by people's restaurants; by the "sponsored restaurant", which factories and other units are encouraged and assisted to establish and run for their workpeople, usually on a co-operative basis; by the people's kitchen, where any unit, by making its own transport arrangements, can obtain at 24 hours' notice any number of cooked meals from one of the Department's central kitchens; and by the family restaurant, which provides meals for 10 cents for people who cannot afford to buy a meal elsewhere. Contractors are not employed. The advantages of the system include nutritionally balanced meals as advised by the Government Nutrition Adviser; the possibility of conducting feeding experiments on behalf of medical experts; and the help given in control of prices and the first-hand information the Government obtains about food conditions.²

Action by Employers

There are considerable variations in the type and quality of the canteens provided by employers for workers in their undertakings. They may be up-to-date restaurants with a big seating capacity, as, for instance, at the J. C. Mills Ltd., in Gwalior, India, where the firm has installed a canteen with electrical machinery for steam cooking and a hall to seat 500 workers at a time; or they may be little better than tea-stalls where the refreshments supplied are neither cheap nor good. In China, for example, the majority of employers in Foochow supply free board for the workers, but often there is little nutritional value in the meals provided, and in the worst cases they are barely enough to abate the workers'

¹ *Workers' Welfare Facilities in Japan, op. cit.*

² Office of Special Commissioner in South-East Asia: *Social Welfare Conference*, Singapore, 1947, p. 14.

hunger.¹ Facilities for steaming rice are usually made available in Chinese undertakings.

In Japan, almost all the large industrial establishments provide facilities for hot meals for workers at nominal charges. The food is obtained through the supplementary ration programme and is generally augmented by dishes of local vegetables provided by the establishment at a low price. In all undertakings where dormitory accommodation is provided, eating facilities are included. Although the supplementary food ration is only intended for manual workers, employers find it impossible to differentiate between them and administrative or clerical workers. In such cases the management will purchase rice through unofficial channels and make it available at the official prices or at an extremely low price to those not entitled to the supplementary food. Workers thus have hot and better balanced meals than they would enjoy in their own homes, and at lower cost. In many cases workers bring their lunch boxes with them and supplement their meals from food provided by the employer. This method of eating away from home is not limited to industrial establishments, but applies to all Government, commerce and trade activities. Hot tea is the universal beverage at almost all hours in all places of employment, from the largest to the smallest.²

In the Philippines, the San Miguel Brewery Company and several other establishments provide dining-rooms for the workers. In the West Punjab, Pakistan, the factory owners have experienced difficulty in persuading the workers to use canteens, as they prefer to bring their own food with them, and while some of the large undertakings arrange for meals for both supervisory staff and manual workers, others, including most of the registered factories, provide shelters; similarly, in East Bengal canteens are not in great demand; in certain centres, such as the light installation centre, the cement factory and a cotton mill, canteens have been provided; the cement factory subsidises 50 per cent. of the cost of the meal.

Where a canteen is established, its organisation varies in different undertakings; sometimes separate dining accommodation is provided for men and women and for skilled and unskilled workers. In China, the survey referred to earlier in this report states that in 18 of the reporting factories in Shanghai, skilled and

¹ Information from the China Branch Office.

² *Idem.*

unskilled workers ate their meals in different rooms, and 24 factories made no distinction between them; in Chungking, 68 factories provided dining-rooms and the larger factories grouped the workers at mealtimes according both to sex and skill; in Sian and Paochi, skilled and unskilled workers usually took their meals separately, the latter eating coarser and cheaper foods.¹

In some undertakings workers are provided with meals free of charge, while in others they have to pay for them. The canteens provided by the Bata Shoe Company, Batapur, India, are run by contractors and the prices charged are controlled by the Government. In China, the above-mentioned survey showed that in Shanghai, 135 of the factories studied provided full or partial board free of charge and 22 provided it at the workers' expense; in one of the Shanghai mills the factory provides meals for senior workers at cost price and only facilities for rice-steaming and hot water for the other workers; in Chungking, seven of the factories charge the workers for their food, but they sell them rice at reduced prices and give a food subsidy. In India, the canteen run by the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur serves tea, refreshments and meals at prices about 50 per cent. below market prices.² The Birla Cotton Mills in Gwalior have a modern canteen where meals are served to workers at 5 annas per meal.

An example of the provision of food grains at concession rates is provided by the Bata Shoe Company at Batapur, India; the company has its own grain shop and rations are sold to all employees, whether resident in the workers' colony or not. The Fact Finding Committee appointed by the Government of India in May 1947 to report on the grant of monetary benefits and concessions to colliery workers in Assam recommended that the food grain concession which was being granted by the colliery owners should continue, and in the case of collieries where no arrangements for the issue of grains had been made, the Committee recommended that immediate steps should be taken to open grain shops. In the Philippines, the San Miguel Brewery Company gives each worker one sack of rice (100 lb.) a month free of charge. On the basis of a monthly consumption of 20 lb. per person, this free rice ration is sufficient for an average family of five persons. The National Development Company gives the workers reconstituted milk with added vitamins, either free or at cost price. In Thailand,

¹ *International Labour Review*, Vol. LIX, No. 1, Jan. 1949, p. 44.

² *Indian Labour Gazette*, Vol. VI, No. 1, July 1948, p. 12.

a feature of the rice mills is free rice allowance, and some establishments have set up stores for the benefit of the workers.¹

Many of the Indian employers, concerned at the scarcity of essential commodities and the difficulties experienced by the workers in their undertakings in obtaining adequate supplies of foodstuffs during the war, decided to try the co-operative system in order to ensure an equitable distribution at reasonable prices. "Many of the stores", remarks an official survey, "have already established themselves with the generous help of the employers, and it is not too much to hope they will become permanent adjuncts to all industrial concerns and form an integral part of schemes of social security for the industrial labourers."

Conclusions

The question of the nutritional value of the food consumed by workers is a most urgent one. The fact that undernourishment and malnutrition are widespread in Asian countries has been brought out by research surveys, and though industrial canteens can be only a partial solution of the general problem of workers' nutrition, they are generally recognised as making a useful contribution to that solution. The statutory requirement that canteens shall be established in undertakings of a certain size, conforming to specified minimum standards of construction and equipment, would therefore appear to be a desirable measure.

The actual day-to-day running of a canteen is specialised work, and difficulties often arise from the appointment of insufficiently qualified persons for this purpose. Canteen managers should understand the choice and preparation of foodstuffs, the dietetic values of various nutriments, the least wasteful and destructive methods of cooking and serving, and the effects of monotonous diets, badly prepared meals, hastily consumed lunches and dinners and insufficient quantities of calories, proteins and essential vitamins. Training courses for canteen management might with advantage include instruction in food hygiene and nutrition and also in staff organisation and training, record keeping, stores organisation and the control of accounts.

Another measure which has been adopted in some countries in an effort to maintain and raise canteen standards is the appointment by the Government of canteen advisers or dieticians to give

¹ CONSUMERS' CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN MADRAS: *The Madras Journal of Co-operation*, May 1944, Supplement, p. 22.

detailed advice to employers and canteen managers. This is the case in India, for example, where a Central Inspector of Industrial Canteens was appointed in 1947 to assist employers in the establishment of canteens and in improving the standards of canteens already established. This would also seem to be a practice which might usefully be extended.

The administration and financing of canteens and other feeding arrangements in industrial and other undertakings in Asian countries are for the most part the responsibility of the individual employer. He may place the management and running of the canteen in the hands of a contractor, but unless prices are controlled, officially or otherwise, they are likely to be high, as not only will the canteen be run for profit, but the contractor may have to pay high prices to the employer for the use of the premises. As a result, the workers are unable or unwilling to use the canteen. If the employer runs the canteen himself, he may economise unduly in the quality and quantity of the food provided and on the upkeep of furniture and equipment. He may also be unwilling to incur possible additional expense by making special arrangements for women and young workers, as, for instance, separate dining accommodation for women, a practice observed in an appreciable number of undertakings, or meals at reduced prices for young workers, a desirable method of inducing them to have a proper balanced meal and a useful measure for building up their health.

The workers are beginning to take a more active part in the administration of canteens, as for example in India, where provincial Governments have taken advantage of the power given them by the Factories Act to make rules requiring representation of the workers on the managing board of the canteen.

Workers' association in management, whether through co-operative societies or otherwise, would help to keep the prices charged at a reasonable level, so that the workers would be in a position to purchase the meals provided and to make the canteen a welfare facility which they would patronise and enjoy.

The financing of industrial canteens is sometimes one of the purposes for which welfare funds may be used, as is the case, for example, under the Indian Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1947. If a welfare fund is used to defray the cost of the establishment, equipment and maintenance of canteen services and the workers assist in deciding what amounts shall be allocated for the purpose, it would be of no special interest to the employer to

economise on a particular service, and any economy dictated by general financial stringency would have the workers' consent.

Foods habits are ingrained and not easy to change, especially when it is poverty that dictates what shall be eaten. In some countries, particularly in underdeveloped regions, the people have become accustomed to a narrow range of foodstuffs, such as rice or fish, and the possession of a higher wage would not necessarily break their normal consumption habits. As mentioned above, in addition to inability to buy the right kind of foods in sufficient quantities, malnutrition is due in some measure to ignorance of nutrition values and to the fact that the housewife does not know how to make the best use of her money. Malnutrition could be countered to some extent by the education of both the worker and his family in what constitutes an adequate and nutritious meal and how best to prepare it. Even if there is a canteen, run at prices which the worker is able to pay, he needs guidance in his choice of what to eat, and, as he also eats at home, his wife should know what food to give him and how it should be cooked.

Education on nutrition and food values might take various forms: for instance, books, pamphlets and guides might be published; the results of scientific research might be popularised, radio talks being broadcast at suitable hours in the cities and villages and at the place of work, talks given in the workshops and in community halls and posters displayed in appropriate places; advice might also be given to the workers by welfare officers and industrial nurses. In the Malayan Federation, for example, two books on nutrition have been produced in four languages with the co-operation of the Public Relations Department; one is a popular guide to the value of different foodstuffs, and the other recipes for meals providing local substitutes for the usual rice meal. Both have had a wide circulation. Articles have also been published in the press and talks given by mobile public address units of the Public Relations Department.¹

Research on workers' nutrition has already been undertaken in Asian countries; to give one example, the Public Health Department of the United Provinces Government in India is conducting a research survey on dietetics to find out the nutrition value of the various kinds of edibles, including roots, fruits and cereals, in common use in the provinces. Research work on, for instance, the relation between food requirements and specific occupations,

¹ *Annual Report of the Malayan Union, 1947*, p. 74.

the influence of climate, the requirements of environmental conditions, workers' consumption habits and the possible ways in which those habits might be changed in accordance with scientific standards, the use and preparation of foods and their effect upon nutritional value and tastiness, would seem to be an effective method of combating malnutrition.

A resolution unanimously adopted by the Social Welfare Conference held in Singapore in 1947 is of interest. It stresses the value of communal feeding including, where necessary, the provision of free meals, both in rural and urban areas, by the establishment of canteens controlled and operated by the Government, since, among other reasons, such action ensured the supply of cheap meals to clerks and manual labourers, brought relief to all those who could not always eat at home—including working housewives—and enabled Government nutritionists to correct prevalent dietary deficiencies. The Conference was also of the opinion that such feeding schemes should have as their objective the general nutritional education of the public.¹

To sum up, the prescription by law of minimum standards to be observed in the construction and equipment of canteens, the employment by the undertaking of trained canteen managers, the appointment by the Government of canteen advisers or dieticians, the administration and financing of canteens by some means involving workers' participation, educational propaganda to encourage healthy consumption habits, and research work into all aspects of food and nutrition, would seem to be some of the principal problems raised by the provision of canteens and other feeding arrangements at or in connection with the place of work.

CRÈCHES AND DAY NURSERIES

General Problem

Maternity protection is a fundamental problem everywhere, and action is being taken on both the international and the national plane to find a solution to it. In recent years public authorities have shown increased activity in regard to the question, and in Asia legislation has been enacted in a number of countries, for instance, in China, India, French Indo-China, the Malayan Federation, the Straits Settlements and Indonesia, in order to ensure that

¹ Social Welfare Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

maternity protection is made available to working mothers. The most satisfactory methods of developing effective protection, which safeguards both the health and the economic interests of women workers, lie within the framework of social security schemes, and consequently the question falls outside the scope of welfare as understood in the present report, which will in the main be confined to discussing the provision of crèches and day nurseries for the children of working women. This aspect of the question has also been the subject of international consideration. A Resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1945 recommends, *inter alia*, the provision where necessary, for children requiring such services, of home helps and day nursery care, and the resolution concerning the employment of women and the protection of maternity, adopted by the Asian Regional Conference which was held at New Delhi in 1947, contains recommendations concerning crèches and day nurseries, to which further reference is made later.

The provision of crèches acquired added importance in many countries during the war owing to the increase in the number of mothers of young children who were working away from home, and it was found necessary to institute crèches and day nurseries and to extend previously existing arrangements, in order to ensure that the children were properly cared for during working hours. The question has lost none of its importance since, and in Asian countries the problem of looking after the children of working mothers is further accentuated by the high birth rate. The importance placed upon it officially may be judged—in addition to legislative enactments—by the inclusion in the new Constitution of Burma of the following principle:

The State shall specifically direct its policy to protect the interest of mothers and infants by establishing maternity and infant welfare centres, children's homes and day nurseries, and to secure to mothers the right to leave with pay before and after childbirth.

A feature of the working mother child care problem in Japan is the development of mother and child co-operative dormitories in which a number of mothers—usually war widows with dependent children—live together, a few mothers taking care of all the children while the remaining mothers go out to work. The task of looking after the children is taken in rotation. Material facilities are generally provided by the employer, but the mothers usually bear the full responsibility for their operation and management. This co-operative dormitory programme is being urged by the

women's section of the General Federation of Japanese Trade Unions for adoption throughout Japan, and it has been successful to the extent of persuading the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to establish such a facility, unassociated with any particular enterprise.¹

Official Action

Legislative Provisions.

Crèches and day nurseries in undertakings employing a specified number of women are sometimes a statutory requirement. In Burma, the Bill amending the Factory Act contains a clause requiring the provision of crèches or rooms for children to be made compulsory in factories employing more than 50 women workers. In China, Regulations of 30 December 1932 for the administration of the Factory Act lay down that establishments employing women shall provide a room for nursing and, where possible, a crèche with nurses to look after the babies; the Regulations also prohibit the admission of children into the factory. Regulations issued in 1936 require all factories employing 100 or more married women workers to set apart a room where nursing mothers can feed their babies. In addition, workers' welfare societies, set up by Regulations of 23 October 1943 in undertakings employing more than 200 workers, must maintain a nursery in accordance with needs and in conformity with financial conditions.

In India, the Factories Act of 1948 stipulates that in every factory employing more than 50 women a suitable room shall be set apart for the use of children under six years of age. The rooms must be sufficiently large to ensure adequate accommodation, properly lighted and ventilated, and maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, and they must be placed in charge of a woman trained in the care of children and infants. The Act also empowers provincial Governments to make rules prescribing the location and the standards in respect of construction, accommodation, furniture and other equipment, and requires the provision of additional facilities for the care of workers' children, such as arrangements for washing and changing of clothing and for the supply of free milk and refreshments. In addition, provision must be made for nursing mothers to feed their babies at regular intervals. In the United Provinces, the Regulations provide that crèches must be

¹ *Workers' Welfare Facilities in Japan, op. cit.*, p. 17.

set up, and a female attendant and a trained health visitor employed, in factories employing 50 or more women workers or in which 25 per cent. of the workers are women (provided there is a minimum of 10 women). Two breaks a day must be allowed for women with children under one year of age, either of half an hour each or, in factories where crèches are maintained, of a quarter of an hour each. The Indian Mines Act, under the Mines Crèche Rules, 1946, makes the provision of crèches compulsory in mining undertakings in accordance with standards prescribed in the Rules, and the children attending the crèches must be medically examined at regular intervals.

Other Government Measures.

A number of welfare centres established by Government or municipal action make provision for looking after the children of working women. This is the case, for example, in the municipal labour welfare centres opened in Hyderabad and in the welfare centres established by the Bengal Government. In the United Provinces, nurses are attached to the Government-aided welfare centres and look after the proper bathing of workers' children and visit the workers' homes in the evening to examine pre-natal and post-natal cases. Provision is also made for the distribution of milk to weak and undernourished children.¹

In Cawnpore, during the year 1946, the midwives attached to labour welfare centres attended 455 ante-natal cases, 413 deliveries and 640 post-natal cases, advised 12,210 nursing and expectant mothers in their homes and paid 4,553 visits for purposes of health education. In addition, 23,823 women attended different centres to consult the midwives.²

Action by Employers

As with other welfare facilities, the practice of different employers in respect of the provision of crèches varies considerably and, where crèches are established, there is no special standard to which they must conform. Excellent arrangements are to be found in some undertakings, and unsatisfactory conditions in others. A number of textile mills in India, for example, pay considerable attention to this facility. The J. C. Mills, Ltd., Gwalior, run a

¹ *The Indian Labour Year Book, 1946* (Delhi, 1948), p. 236.

² *Labour Bulletin*, Vol. VI, No. 1, Mar.-Apr. 1947, p. 23.

crèche at an annual cost of 8,000 rupees; there is a trained nurse and an assistant in attendance, and milk and other nourishing articles of diet are supplied to the children free of charge. In another group of mills, crèches are provided with hanging cradles, cots, mattresses, sheets, blankets and all other nursery equipment; nutritious food and diets are supplied by the management, and the crèches are under the supervision of a trained staff.¹ In the Province of Bombay there were 127 factory crèches in operation in 1943, and many of the undertakings also provided milk, clothes, soap and medical aid for the children as well as educational facilities. On the Kolar Gold Field, five maternity homes are maintained by the mines, and they provide a service which is fully utilised by the wives and children of employees. The homes are well equipped and provided with a staff which includes qualified midwives, whose duties comprise ante-natal and post-natal care. Free meals, bread and coffee are supplied to patients in the homes. In 1947, 79 per cent. of all the births in the mining area took place in the mines' maternity homes. The midwives and health visitors attached to each mine maternity home give useful service to workers' families.² In Japan, of the few nursery facilities provided by establishments, most are to be found in the textile industry, where many married women are employed.

Plantation Workers

The care of infants and young children is a difficult problem not only in the mines and factories but also on the plantations, where a considerable number of women are employed. If there are no crèches they either have to leave their babies lying on the ground, or must carry them strapped to their persons with no protection from the sun and rain. Provision for looking after children is, however, frequently made even when there is no legal compulsion to do so, more especially in the tea gardens, but the quality of the facilities provided varies.

A recent survey made by the Indian Labour Investigation Committee showed that often the sanitary and other conditions of the crèches were unsatisfactory, and the Committee recommended that employers should be required by law to maintain well-defined

¹ Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report, op. cit.*, p. 356.

² CENTRAL WELFARE COMMITTEE, K.G.F. MINING BOARD: *Welfare Work on the Kolar Gold Field*, p. 9.

standards. As mentioned above, a number of regulations have in effect been issued relating to the establishment of crèches and day nurseries, for instance, in French Indo-China, the Malayan Federation and the former Straits Settlements. The provisions are somewhat similar. To quote as an example the terms of the Straits Settlements Labour Ordinance, 1923, any employer may be ordered by the controller of an estate on which more than 50 women are employed to construct within a reasonable time, and to maintain at his own expense, a properly equipped nursery on or near the estate with accommodation for such number of infants under three years of age as may be stated in the Ordinance. The controller may also require that a specified number of nurses shall be put in charge of the nurseries, which must be open during the hours of work of the mothers or guardians. The employer must supply milk and rice free of charge to each infant accommodated, both the quantity and the quality of which may be prescribed.

The importance of adequate supervision of the crèches provided was recognised by the Conference on Plantation Labour in India at its meeting in January 1947 when it suggested, among the proposals made for the improvement of conditions, that estates should provide competent directors for their crèches.

Conclusions

Large numbers of working women have no means at all by which to ensure proper care for their young children during working hours, and yet crèches and day nurseries are not a costly welfare facility and would seem to be highly desirable in the vicinity of undertakings where women are employed in any numbers, from the standpoint both of the health and safety of the workers of the future and of the peace of mind and working efficiency of the mothers. The widespread introduction of this amenity would also be a valuable contribution to the improvement of the general position of women, as the existence of a crèche would enable many girls of school age to attend school who now have to look after the youngest members of the family while the mother is at work. There is no doubt that the lack of crèches in sufficient numbers is one of the reasons for poor school attendance among girls.

One method sometimes employed to increase the number of institutions of this kind consists in the circulation by the competent authority of illustrated pamphlets and leaflets to undertakings in which a large proportion of the workers are women, containing

plans for building new crèches or day nurseries together with a statement of the approximate cost both of new buildings and of possible adaptations to existing buildings so as to include crèches or day nurseries. Employers then have the necessary information at their disposal and it may be a stimulus to them to take action.

If, however, the institution of crèches and day nurseries is to be adopted on a scale sufficiently wide to relieve the majority of working mothers of the difficulty of ensuring the care of their young children while they are at work, official encouragement of the establishment of such amenities near the undertakings in which women are employed to any appreciable extent would seem desirable. It might take the form, for instance, of subsidies to municipalities or the making of suitable premises available.

To set aside a room or a tent in charge of a woman who has had no training or experience in child welfare work and who is perhaps asked to take charge because she is old or for some other reason is unable to work in a factory on an estate, does not solve the problem. It is important that the construction and equipment of crèches and day nurseries should be adequate, that standards of cleanliness and sanitation should be high, and that they should be staffed by persons qualified by training and experience to look after children. It has been stated that even where crèches are provided they are not always used, but it is understandable that mothers will feel reluctant to leave their children in strange hands unless they know that they will be properly cared for in healthy surroundings. If the nurseries are badly kept and allowed to fall into disrepair and the equipment is not kept clean and in working order, the health of the children will inevitably suffer. The organisation of training courses in child welfare, including instruction classes in hygiene and nutrition, should be beneficial in raising standards of management. It would also seem desirable that standards of accommodation and equipment should be drawn up and, when crèches are a statutory requirement, that these standards should be incorporated in the legislation, together with a clause making the employment of trained personnel obligatory.

The supervision and inspection of crèches and day nurseries, without which their satisfactory upkeep cannot be assured, should preferably be entrusted to a woman. This course was recommended by the Indian Commission on Labour, and the provincial Governments of both Bombay and Madras have appointed women factory inspectors to visit crèches in order to ensure a minimum standard of cleanliness and comfort.

A further point to be noted is that day nurseries can be effectively used not only for looking after the children and keeping them safe while their mothers are at work, but also as a means of educating the mothers in child care and inculcating good habits in the children, in addition to promoting the general health of the children by the provision of suitable and nutritious meals.

The provision of crèches and day nurseries must be organised with care. When they are set up in the undertaking itself, the responsibility for the cost both of providing and of maintaining them is usually borne by the employer. Although these costs should not be heavy, they may nevertheless seriously affect the employment possibilities of women. Employers are sometimes reluctant to engage persons who are subject to special provisions involving a certain amount of additional responsibility, and they may try to reduce the number of women workers and to employ men and children instead, or they may discharge pregnant women as soon as their condition is known. They have also been known to engage single women or widows in preference to married women and to pay their women workers wages so low that the cost of maternity protection is in effect passed on to the employee.

Not infrequently crèches and day nurseries are provided at the welfare centres set up by provincial Governments or other bodies, or they may be provided by a municipality as a collective social service for the entire working population. Both these methods may be a considerable convenience to mothers living at a distance from their place of work, and may also save long and tiring journeys for the child to and from the undertaking where the mother is employed, but it would of course be impracticable for nursing mothers with young babies to feed to make use of such crèches.

It may be of interest, in connection with the financing of crèches and day nurseries, to refer to the systems of public financial aid instituted during the war by Canada and the United States in order to encourage the development of such amenities and to raise the standards to a satisfactory level. In Canada, the Dominion Government concluded agreements with those provinces in which the need for crèches was most felt according to which it subsidised on a 50 per cent. basis the setting up of institutions satisfying the qualifications specified in the agreement; in the United States limited Federal grants were made for similar purposes. Another method of financing which is employed by China, and by India in the coal mining industry, is by means of welfare funds. These funds are usually derived from a number of different sources, and

since by this method of financing the costs do not fall directly on the individual employer, the reasons for practices prejudicial to the employment of women no longer exist.

It is suggested that the employment of welfare funds or some other means of financing the provision and maintenance of crèches and day nurseries might with advantage be adopted which would neither redound to the economic disadvantage of women nor result in unsatisfactory standards of equipment and upkeep.

Recommendations concerning the establishment of crèches and day nurseries are contained in a paragraph of the resolution on the employment of women and the protection of maternity adopted by the Asian Regional Conference at New Delhi in 1947. The paragraph reads as follows:

Children's crèches and day nurseries should be established in expanding numbers, so that the infants and children under school age of working women may be looked after in healthy and safe conditions. The crèches or day nurseries should be located with due regard to the convenience of mother and child, and should be under the direction and supervision of the competent public authority, which should wherever possible utilise the experience and facilities of existing institutions providing such services. Such services should be staffed by trained and qualified persons whose remuneration and conditions of employment should be such as to secure adequate and suitable personnel.

RECREATION

The question of suitable facilities for the use of workers' spare time is beginning to take a prominent place among the social requirements which are now under consideration in both official and unofficial circles. A Recommendation concerning the development of facilities for the utilisation of workers' spare time was adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1924. The Preamble states, amongst other things, that—

During (their) spare time workers have the opportunity of developing freely, according to their individual tastes, their physical, intellectual and moral powers, and such development is of great value from the point of view of the progress of civilisation . . . a well-directed use of this spare time, by affording to the worker the means of pursuing more varied interests, and by securing relaxation from the strain placed upon him by his ordinary work, may even increase the productive capacity of the worker and increase his output, and may thus help to obtain the maximum of efficiency from the eight-hour day.

Recommendations are then made to further the steady general improvement of working and living conditions and to develop and extend the use of institutions for the utilisation of spare time.

The problem of recreation is of particular urgency for young workers, who are unused to the strain of continuous work and whose healthy physical and mental development needs the stimulus of sports and games. The Resolution concerning the protection of children and young workers adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1945 recommends that the following social services, amongst others, should be provided as a minimum:

The encouragement of the organisation of facilities for leisure-time activities adapted to different age groups and the encouragement of youth organisations, for the purpose of promoting the physical, intellectual and moral development and public spirit of children and young persons.

Other workers for whom recreation is important are coal miners, on account of the arduous and unhealthy nature of their work, and plantation workers, owing to their frequent isolation from other communities. Some of the recreational facilities available to miners in India were suspended during the war and have not yet been reorganised; football grounds exist at some of the bigger coal fields, one colliery arranges dramatic and musical performances and another cinema shows, but generally speaking very little has been done. The homes of many plantation workers are distant from their place of work and they are separated for long periods from their relations and friends. Also they are frequently housed on the estates, where it may be the rule that no outsiders shall be permitted to enter the housing "lines". Consequently plantation workers are often deprived of a normal social life. The question of recreation was discussed by the Tripartite Conference on Plantation Labour in India, and it was proposed that 2.5 million rupees should be raised for recreational and entertainment facilities.

The recreational facilities provided by Governments and employers vary considerably from area to area and from undertaking to undertaking. They include welfare centres, providing for a number of different types of recreation and entertainment, such as reading rooms, radio sets, games, sewing classes, sports clubs, moving picture shows, swimming baths, gymnasiums and physical culture classes. In China, 557 playgrounds were established in 1948, 459 by mines and factories, 74 by labour unions, 11 by agricultural unions and 13 by Government and social organisations; 767 recreation centres and 1,021 reading rooms were also organised.

In India, the Government of Bombay has set up three types of welfare centres, the largest of which provides outdoor games, a

gymnasium and shower baths, in addition to educational services. It has also instituted a Recreation Board for the effective co-ordination of the recreational activities at present conducted by the Departments of Labour, Education, etc. The functions of the Board are to provide facilities for such activities as dramatic performances, cinema shows and visual instruction; to make provision for swimming pools, milk bars, gymnasiums and choirs for industrial workers; to co-ordinate the administration of these facilities and to advise the Government on measures to promote recreation. It is reported that workers have taken full advantage of the outdoor games and physical exercises arranged by some of the Government welfare centres, and in the United Provinces, during 1946, the numbers taking part in foreign and Indian games and attending gymnasiums organised by the welfare centres were 57,479, 28,026 and 16,059 respectively.

In Japan, recreation facilities are found in the majority of the larger establishments, more particularly in mining, manufacturing, and transport. Where dormitory accommodation is provided, recreation facilities are also available, including sports and indoor amusements and sometimes libraries and reading rooms. These facilities are all organised on company property, and may be engaged in at will and free of charge.

The recreation facilities provided for workers are not always used by them to the best advantage, though, as mentioned above, the entertainments organised in some of the welfare centres have become popular and the response of the workers encouraging. Increased leisure and the raising of the level of health and education will doubtless lead to greater use and enjoyment of recreational opportunities, and this in turn will improve labour turnover, for one of the inducements for workers to leave an undertaking which is distant from their homes and return to their villages is the renewal of social contacts. As stated by the Indian Labour Investigation Committee—

It is for the employers to realise that ordinary entertainments, such as sports, exercises, etc., cost really little, while the psychological and moral gain both to themselves and to the workers is immense and the effect of this on efficiency must be far greater than the small cost involved.¹

It is important that the workers should not be obliged to use the facilities provided, but be left entirely free to avail themselves

¹ Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report, op. cit.*, p. 357.

of them or not as they see fit. It is this principle which has guided the International Labour Organisation in its consideration of leisure and it is incorporated in the Recommendation concerning the development of facilities for the utilisation of workers' spare time, mentioned above.¹ Workers' co-operation in the management of recreation facilities would remove any threat to their liberty in this respect. Action already taken by trade unions includes the establishment by the Chinese Association of Labour in 1943 of two welfare centres in industrial cities containing, amongst other amenities, a hostel, a cafeteria, a library and a recreation room, and one of the functions ascribed to trade unions by the Chinese Trade Unions Act of 13 June 1947 is the organisation of social gatherings, clubs and other recreational activities.

Reference should also be made to co-operative action in the organisation of leisure. In most countries, besides publishing magazines for home reading, co-operative organisations organise lectures, concerts and film shows, and have promoted many other recreational activities and facilities, their nature varying from country to country. To take examples from Western countries, in Belgium and Finland there are "people's houses" which are centres of community life (restaurants, meeting halls, etc.); in France, there is the National Committee on Leisure, with its libraries, music schools, sports societies, fêtes, excursions, etc.; in Czechoslovakia and Denmark there are co-operative theatre organisations; and in Great Britain and the United States there are co-operative cinema enterprises organised by or with the assistance of consumers' co-operative societies.

International interest in the question of workers' recreation is shown by the recent action of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office in reconstituting the Advisory Correspondence Committee on Workers' Recreation, which was set up before the war and which is to hold a meeting before the end of 1950 to discuss the subject.

¹ The relevant paragraph of the Recommendation points out that the most practical and successful institutions are those which have been started and developed by the beneficiaries themselves, and adds that, while recognising that in many cases public authorities or employers assist such institutions financially or otherwise, and consequently have a legitimate claim to take part in their management, the Conference recommends that "every care should be taken to avoid any encroachment on the liberty of those for whose use such institutions are intended".

CHAPTER III

PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

The following proposals for action are put forward for consideration in the light of the foregoing description of national experience and practice in the provision of welfare facilities.

1. LEGISLATIVE PROVISION FOR WELFARE FACILITIES

The general position in respect of welfare measures in Asian countries would seem to be that there is growing awareness of their beneficial effect on the well-being of workers as a whole, leading to improved industrial relations and greater productivity, but that they are not uniformly provided, and, where they are, there are considerable variations from country to country, from industry to industry and between different units of the same industry even within the same country. Their provision would seem to be dictated by necessity or by the possession of adequate funds rather than by deliberate planning. It should not be thought that the social motive has no place in their institution, as this is by no means the case, but it would sometimes seem that where it is in the national interest that no effort should be spared to increase production, welfare measures have been undertaken on a large scale and where an undertaking has sufficient resources and is obliged by force of circumstances, or considers it desirable for business reasons, to provide certain amenities, excellent and comprehensive arrangements have been made.

The question arises whether the provision of welfare facilities should be made a statutory obligation. Real concern for the welfare of human beings cannot find expression merely in the inclusion of certain facilities in the requirements of something as impersonal as a national law. Nevertheless, if the provision of welfare facilities is to be regarded as a social obligation, there must be some compulsion, and the most effective method of compulsion is by legislation. This was stressed by the Indian Labour Investiga-

tion Committee in respect of welfare facilities provided by undertakings. "Unless the precise responsibilities of employers in regard to welfare work are defined *by law*", it said, "such employers are not likely to fall in line with their more enlightened and far-sighted confrères."¹

It may also be necessary to define by statute the responsibilities of local authorities in respect of welfare facilities. Asian countries present special problems in connection with welfare facilities for reasons which have already been indicated, for example, the isolation of many of the undertakings in which considerable numbers of workers are employed, the fact that many workers come from long distances to take up industrial employment and are separated from their families for considerable intervals, the period of development through which many of the trade unions are now passing, and the difficulties confronting Asian workers for such reasons as climate, poverty and lack of education. The statutory provision of the basic requirements in respect of welfare facilities would focus attention on the importance of careful consideration being given to the workers' welfare generally, both on the job and when work is over.

In view of the need for welfare facilities of all kinds in the various Asian countries, a need which is enhanced by the countries' rapid industrial expansion, another question to be decided is which of the different welfare services, amenities and facilities are most urgently necessary, and indeed a basic requirement, in any given country.

There can be no question that the health of the worker is of primary importance, not only as regards his efficiency vis-à-vis his employment, but also as regards his happiness and effectiveness as a citizen, and the provision of facilities which are directly aimed at helping the worker to attain a high standard of health and well-being would therefore seem a necessity. Measures to counter illiteracy and ignorance are also fundamental to a rapid improvement in the standard of living and to sustained economic progress, for, as already pointed out, successful industrialisation calls for the acquisition of industrial skills and modern techniques. Healthy minds and bodies and developed intelligence are, moreover, essential if the full benefit of welfare measures generally is to be gained, for, if the workers are to gain this benefit, they must co-operate and make full and intelligent use of the facilities

¹ Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report, op. cit.*, p. 350.

provided. Schools, canteens, crèches, medical services and recreational facilities may be well equipped and administered and made available to the workers on a wide scale, but they may fall into disuse through lack of patronage, owing to the worker's ignorance of their potential benefits, preference for established custom, suspicion of innovation, or mere indifference. Though both medical services and education in the wider sense are outside the scope of welfare, there is much that can be done by employer and worker collaboration.

Another welfare facility which would seem to be of great importance at the present time is the provision of accommodation for workers and their families. Clean, suitable and adequate housing has a direct bearing on health and efficiency. The housing situation in Asian countries is critical, owing to war damage and large movements of population resulting from political upheavals, apart from the effects of a growing population and an awakening consciousness of what constitutes good housing. Here again, though the wider implications of housing cannot be considered to be a welfare measure, an appreciable contribution can be made by employer-worker co-operation in helping to ease the extremely difficult situation. In any case, if for reasons of convenience the employer should house some or all of his workers and their families, legislation should ensure that the accommodation provided is healthy and sufficiently commodious.

The need to ensure that workers have food which is not only sufficient in quantity to allay their hunger, but which contains adequate nutritive properties to build up and maintain their health and working efficiency, has been referred to in a foregoing chapter. In view of the very close link between health and nutrition, the provision at or in the vicinity of undertakings of suitable feeding arrangements is a facility of much consequence.

The great importance of measures to safeguard the health and safety of the future generation, combined with the influence of suitable provision for the care of children on the recruitment and efficiency of women workers and on their general well-being, would seem to make the provision of crèches and day nurseries an undoubted need. The institution of these facilities should be a public service, but if they are installed by the employer they should be subject to the safeguards mentioned below. Furthermore, the value of recreational activities suitable to a particular country and to its climate and customs in building up bodily and mental health is considerable, more especially as, owing to the extension of

holidays with pay and the trend towards a shorter working week—social reforms which are steadily gaining ground in all countries—workers are becoming accustomed to a considerable amount of leisure. Some policy for the provision of recreational and other facilities to enable the workers to utilise their holidays and other spare time for the purpose of recuperation and cultural development would also seem to be a great need, not only from the point of view of the well-being of the individual workers, but from the wider standpoint of public health and the general welfare of the community.

A recurring theme in the conclusions reached in respect of the welfare facilities described in the preceding pages is the desirability of minimum standards being observed. This is particularly necessary in respect of such important aspects of welfare facilities as construction, equipment and personnel. To ensure that a certain level is maintained, it is suggested that the law should lay down the minimum standards of welfare facilities considered desirable. These minimum standards would form the basis on which an expanded welfare programme could be built up. The need for minimum standards to be set out in some detail has already been mentioned in the section of Chapter II which deals with sanitary and medical facilities¹, and it would seem to be equally desirable for the other welfare facilities which have been discussed in the foregoing pages. In countries of the vast area of some of the Asian countries it might, however, be preferable for national laws to enumerate general principles only and for detailed requirements to be the subject of regulations by provincial Governments. In this way account could be taken of differing needs due to climate, custom, social and economic conditions and other reasons.

Small undertakings with limited resources may have difficulty in providing a full range of welfare facilities conforming to statutory minima, and it would be necessary to make special arrangements for the workers employed in them. This question is discussed below in connection with the scope of statutory welfare provisions.

To conclude, the basic requirements in respect of workers' welfare facilities would seem to include sanitary and medical facilities, educational facilities, workers' housing and other accommodation, canteens and other feeding arrangements, child care services and recreational facilities. To ensure that these basic requirements are provided, legislative compulsion would seem to

¹ See above, p. 23.

be indicated. In view of the wide diversity in the quantity and quality of the welfare facilities at present available, it would seem desirable that the law should prescribe the minimum standards to be observed, more particularly as regards construction, equipment and personnel.

The Conference may wish to consider the prescription by law of the basic requirements in respect of workers' welfare facilities and of the minimum standards to be observed.

2. SCOPE OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

If the Conference should decide that the basic requirements in respect of welfare facilities should be incorporated in statutory enactments, together with minimum standards, it would seem important that the field of application should be prescribed by law and that the scope of the relevant legislation should be wide and should not be limited to circumscribed types of undertakings or to certain categories of workers. At present, the welfare provisions included in the labour legislation of a number of countries apply only to workers in specified undertakings, for instance, factories, or exclude establishments below a certain size or seasonal occupations. This means that a considerable number of workers are outside the scope of statutory welfare provisions. In Asian countries small establishments predominate, big concerns being relatively rare. This is a characteristic of the Philippine Islands, for example, and also of India, where about 85 per cent. of the workers engaged in industrial occupations are employed in small-scale industry. Moreover, in Asian countries seasonal occupations are widespread. It is the workers in small and unregulated industries and occupations who are the least protected in respect of their working and living conditions and who frequently have the greatest need of welfare measures. An effort has been made in India to redress the situation, and recent amendments to the Factories Act extend its provisions to smaller establishments than heretofore and also the seasonal occupations.

One way in which the difficulty in respect of small establishments might perhaps be met is by arranging for welfare facilities to be made available in the vicinity of the undertakings on a collective basis. To be successful, the undertakings would need to be near together, for if the workers were obliged to leave their workplace and go any distance, for instance, for a canteen meal or

some health service, they might go back home and partake of the family meal instead of using the canteen or, in the case of medical care, they might decide to do without. Joint schemes of this kind would, however, reduce the cost to each individual undertaking and would provide an opportunity for an exchange of experience and ideas between those running the services in question.

Another solution, and one which might with advantage be adopted, is contained in the following suggestion made by the All-India Trade Union Congress in a memorandum to the Indian Labour Investigation Committee:

As there will be difficulties in enforcing some of the welfare activities, such as canteens, crèches, washing and bathing facilities, in the case of small factories, we suggest that some of these welfare activities should be made available in industrial areas for the general body of workers for whom no separate provision could be made by the employers, and these facilities should be under municipal or Government control, but may be financed by the employers.¹

The provision of amenities for workers in industrial areas for whom there are no facilities at their place of employment is, in fact, a function of welfare centres, though as a rule they are not financed by the employers.

The extension of the scope of labour legislation to small undertakings with resources so limited as to make it difficult for them to conform to satisfactory welfare standards may, however, more especially in circumstances of underemployment, reduce employment possibilities. The attention of the Preparatory Conference on Labour Inspection in Asian Countries, held in November 1948 in Ceylon, was drawn to problems of this nature. Mention was made of the possibility of initiating measures to provide for alternative accommodation in the form of modern premises which could be let to a number of occupiers, and in which the application of accepted standards of working conditions and the furnishing of common welfare facilities would be more readily secured. It was recognised that in view of the wider social and economic implications of this problem, it should be referred to policy-making authorities to be taken into account in the elaboration of national development plans.²

As regards the scope of welfare facilities in respect of persons, the compulsory provision by employers of welfare facilities which

¹ Labour Investigation Committee: *Main Report, op. cit.*, p. 347.

² *Report of the Preparatory Conference on Labour Inspection in Asian Countries*, Ceylon, Nov. 1948.

benefit only certain categories of workers in their undertakings may have harmful effects on the economic position of workers belonging to these categories, for instance, by reducing either their employment possibilities or their wages. To give examples, the compulsory provision of crèches and day nurseries may have undesirable consequences on the recruitment and employment of women, and the compulsory organisation of schools on that of fathers of large families. These difficulties can, however, be overcome if the financial charge does not fall directly on the employer, a matter which is referred to on a later page in connection with methods of financing welfare facilities.¹ The fact that welfare facilities cannot be fully effective if large numbers of workers fail to derive any benefit from them cannot be stressed too strongly.

To conclude, the influence of the welfare facilities outlined in the preceding pages on the well-being of workers as a whole depends in large measure on their application to the largest possible number of undertakings and of workers, and the most effective method of ensuring that this is done would seem to be by making it a statutory requirement.

The Conference may wish to consider the prescription by legislation of the scope of statutory welfare requirements and its progressive expansion to cover all categories of workers and all classes of undertakings.

3. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Before discussing the finance and administration of workers' welfare facilities separately, it might perhaps be called to mind that conditions in Asian countries are changing very rapidly, and it may well be that the responsibility for welfare measures as at present borne will be shifted. The welfare of plantation workers is a case in point. Up to the present, the responsibility frequently rests with the employer; many estates are self-contained and self-supporting, and they maintain their own houses, schools, hospitals, etc. Will the advent of motor traffic and the construction of modern road systems affect the position? The Commission on Social Services, Ceylon, remarks that "the generally good standard to be found on the larger plantations reflects credit upon the employers, but does not weaken the argument that the Government

¹ See below, p. 89.

has, in the past, largely escaped a burden, part of which at least it should have borne". The Commission argues that a measure of centralisation is now possible in many districts, and in certain areas the existing system will, no doubt, survive for a considerable time; eventually there must be a change-over to State management of education, public health and welfare measures, instead of a system which leaves these mainly to private control.¹

Adequate provision of such facilities as well-equipped hospitals and dispensaries, the employment of qualified medical personnel in sufficient numbers, the organisation of schools for workers' children and adult education classes in charge of trained teachers, the installation of suitably equipped and properly managed canteens and the construction of adequate accommodation for workers and of crèches and day nurseries for their children involve appreciable initial expenditure, however much may be recovered later by improved health and industrial relations and increased productivity.

It may be argued that different welfare facilities call for different methods of finance; that the State or local authorities should bear the bulk of the responsibility for some particular facilities, such for instance as housing, child care and medical services, but that others may appropriately be regarded as the employers' obligation, for instance, canteens and recreational activities; or that the burden should be shared jointly by Governments and employers. This last proposal is endorsed in respect of medical services by the Labour Investigation Committee appointed by the Government of Burma: "The cost of medical treatment is beyond the means of the average worker in Burma", it states, and adds "while not intending to absolve the State of its duties in the matter, we feel that both in the national as well as in its own interests, industry should help to bear the cost of the medical needs of the workers."² It may also be considered that the workers' organisations should share in the expense of the facilities intended for their benefit, and indeed they may prefer to do so and by so doing strengthen their position and at the same time achieve a sense of ownership.

In practice, as may have been noted in the foregoing descriptions of the operation of various welfare facilities, expenditure is sometimes a Government charge, or the Government makes a grant-in-aid, sometimes it falls exclusively on the employer, and

¹ *Report of the Commission on Social Services, Ceylon: Sessional Paper VII, —1947, p. 54.*

² GOVERNMENT OF BURMA, INDUSTRY AND LABOUR DEPARTMENT: *First Report of the Labour Investigation Committee.*

sometimes it is drawn from trade union funds or is provided by co-operative measures. Up to the present, the financing of welfare facilities set up in undertakings has not been undertaken by workers' organisations to any great extent, as existing wage levels do not justify any substantial contribution from the workers. Another method of finance is by means of welfare funds, and some examples of this method are given below.

The Chinese Labour Welfare Fund Regulations, 1943, as amended in 1948, require the establishment of a workers' welfare fund in public and private factories, mines and other industrial establishments. The resources of the funds are to be derived from an appropriation of 1 to 5 per cent. of the total capital investment of the concern when it is set up, 0.05 to 0.15 per cent. of the total amount of monthly proceeds, 5 per cent. of the salary or wages and allowances of each worker, and from 20 to 40 per cent. of the proceeds from the sale of waste materials or scrap. In the case of workers who do not work for a specified employer, the trade union concerned must earmark 30 per cent. of its membership fees for the fund, and if necessary an application may be made to the Government for a subsidy. Provision is made in the Regulations for the annual publication of the accounts of the fund and for their inspection by the competent authorities. It is prohibited to use the funds for other than labour welfare purposes, and penalties are provided for infringement of the Regulations.

The Indian Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1947, which is applicable to all the provinces, provides for the establishment of a Coal Mines Labour Housing and General Welfare Fund, made up by the levy of an excise duty on all coal and coke despatched from India at a rate of not less than 4 nor more than 8 annas per ton. Besides the cost of administration and annual grants-in-aid to such colliery owners as maintain satisfactory dispensary services, the general welfare account of the fund is to be used for measures to promote the welfare of workers employed in the coal mining industry. Such measures may include the improvement of public health and sanitation, the provision of medical facilities and transport, and the improvement of standards of living. Grants may be made to a provincial Government, a local authority, or the owner, agent or manager of a coal mine in aid of an approved scheme. The Housing Account of the fund is to be used to meet the cost of building and repairing houses for colliery workers, and the cost of preparing schemes and acquiring the land. The Indian Mica Mines Labour Welfare Fund is similarly composed of the

proceeds of a tax on all exports of mica. The Salt Mines Welfare Fund is financed by means of an annual budget grant from the Government, and the expenditure on welfare measures is recovered from the proceeds of the sale of salt and gypsum produced in the mines.

The Indian Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1947, was adopted by Pakistan after partition.

Welfare funds are also a statutory requirement in Afghanistan in every industrial establishment, and are constituted from an employers' contribution of a specified sum for each person employed, plus a workers' contribution composed of a percentage of wages, 1 per cent. for a manual worker and 2 per cent. for a salaried employee, and in addition, from the proceeds of fines paid by workers for breaches of their terms of contract. The main purpose of the fund is to pay compensation for industrial accidents, but part of the proceeds from fines may also be used to establish dispensaries, infirmaries and other health facilities.

If welfare funds are set up, the question arises of the sources from which they should be derived. Should they, for instance, be composed of employers' contributions, consisting of a percentage of capital investments or a percentage deduction from the total payroll of the undertaking or some other such percentage; should they consist of an excise duty on goods produced, or of employers' and workers' contributions, perhaps aided by a State subsidy? From whatever sources they are derived, they should not be such that the provision of special facilities would be affected by, for instance, the civil status of the worker, nor should they be liable to fluctuate, as would be the case if they depended solely on the profits of an undertaking. It should always be possible to know approximately how much money would be available each year, and to be able to plan the promotion of adequate facilities for all categories of workers, if necessary to extend them, and in any case to ensure that premises and equipment are kept in good condition and that suitably qualified staff can be appointed to manage them.

As regards the administration of welfare facilities, the part played by Governments includes the administration of the services and amenities provided for State employees, of special measures made necessary by prevailing conditions, such as the supply of commodities at special rates, and of Government promoted welfare centres. In addition, Government Departments or Sections have been set up to give advice and assistance on the administration of welfare facilities to other Government Departments and to private

undertakings, as well as on their promotion generally. In Ceylon, for instance, a Labour Welfare Section has been established in the Ministry of Labour with an Assistant Commissioner in charge, to give assistance to private industrial establishments. In India, an organisation under the Chief Adviser of Factories advises central and provincial Governments on labour welfare matters, and the Government of Mysore has set up a Labour Welfare Board, including representatives of employers and workers, to facilitate informal discussion on welfare facilities for industrial workers.

The Government also administers welfare facilities financed by welfare funds. For instance, in India it administers the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund with the advice of a tripartite committee constituted under the Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act. Amongst other provisions, the Act sets up a Coal Mines Housing Board to prepare and carry out housing schemes, consisting of a Coal Mines Welfare Commissioner, the Chief Inspector of Mines and three representatives each of colliery owners and workers. The Indian Mica Mines Labour Welfare Fund is also administered by the Central Government, with the help of an advisory committee consisting of an equal number of employers and workers. The Salt Mines Welfare Fund is administered by the Collector of Central Excise, who is advised by a committee of twelve members, six representing the mines administration and six workers.

As a general rule employers administer the welfare facilities which they themselves promote in their undertakings, and there is a growing practice for them to appoint welfare officers for the purpose. In India, for example, the Factories Act, 1948, makes the appointment of welfare officers obligatory in factories where more than 500 workers are ordinarily employed. The employment of welfare officers should ensure that proper consideration is given to the problems confronting workers as human beings, and by their personal knowledge of workers and frequent contacts with them these officers should be fit to make the right kind of approach and to investigate causes of discontent and friction and handle grievances in an understanding manner. Care is needed in the selection of welfare officers, and they should be persons qualified for the work by training and experience. The Indian Factories Act provides for this, and authorises the provincial Governments to prescribe their duties, qualifications and conditions of service, so as to ensure that the right type of person is appointed, and the Indian Government has taken practical measures to provide for adequate training by a substantial grant for the purpose to the

All-India Institute of Social Welfare set up in Calcutta University. If welfare officers are to make a success of their job, they must work in close collaboration with the workers' representatives. The welfare officer of the Karachi Port Trust, to whom all welfare matters are referred, is a full-time officer directly responsible to the Chairman and the Board of Trustees; he acts as a liaison officer between employers and workers, and maintains close contact with union officials. In undertakings where a large number of women are employed, the welfare officer should be a woman.

In addition, employers participate in the administration of welfare facilities in their undertakings by representation on joint bodies appointed in connection with welfare funds, as for example, in China, and in India in the mining industry.

The workers themselves have not yet taken a large share in the administration of welfare facilities, as for the most part the trade unions are not fully organised and trade union activities of this kind are new to the members. The tendency for their association is, however, becoming more pronounced, and is sometimes a statutory requirement. In India, the Factories Act contains a clause enabling provincial Governments to prescribe that workers shall be associated in the management of welfare arrangements. In China, the welfare funds are to be administered by welfare committees composed of representatives of employers and workers, not less than one third of the members being representatives of the workers. These committees are responsible for the planning of welfare facilities, their actual execution being in the hands of welfare societies constituted on the same basis as the committees. To facilitate administration, two or more undertakings may organise joint welfare committees, consisting of the heads of the general administrative section of the participating units and one representative each elected by the salaried and wage earning employees.

In addition to the representation of workers on joint bodies set up to administer welfare funds, the practice is growing of establishing joint works committees, one of the functions of which may appropriately be, and sometimes is, the administration of welfare facilities. The progress of the movement for the establishment of works committees is sometimes hindered by hostility on the part of the employers and apathy on the part of the workers, or by the workers' fear that the object of welfare measures is to undermine trade union influence. Works committees have, however, recently

been required by law by several of the Indian provincial Governments, and in Pakistan the Industrial Disputes Act has vested power in the Government to require their appointment in the larger industrial establishments.

The co-operative movement engages the responsibility of the workers in connection with such facilities as co-operative housing, co-operative stores, and co-operative health and recreation schemes.

To sum up, as regards the welfare facilities provided by undertakings, the most desirable method of financing them would seem to be by means of welfare funds. This method would mean that the cost of the welfare facilities did not fall directly on the employer. Consequently, the quality and quantity of the facilities provided would not depend on his good will and there would not be the same incentive for him to economise in the services made available and perhaps to obey only the letter and not the spirit of the statutory obligations. Furthermore, if expenditure on welfare facilities were drawn from a fund, there would no longer be any reason for the anti-social practices in connection with the recruitment and employment of special categories of workers to which reference has been made on a preceding page.¹ The essential features of welfare funds would seem to be, first, that they are proportionate to the total number of workers employed, and secondly, that they are derived from sources of such a nature that the funds are always in a position to promote facilities on a wide scale and to maintain them at a high level of efficiency.

The difficulty which small undertakings might experience in financing adequate welfare facilities might be met by the establishment of welfare funds on a collective basis, either in the same region or in the same industry.

There would seem to be no question but that the workers themselves should participate in the administration of welfare facilities provided by employers. The object of these facilities is to promote the general well-being of the workers, and their share in the management would ensure that the facilities matched the workers' needs and were such that the workers would benefit from and make proper use of them. It would also remove any atmosphere of paternalism that might otherwise exist, and would encourage the workers to co-operate in the solution of their own problems. Workers' participation might be effected by their representation on welfare committees or other joint bodies.

¹ See above, p. 83.

Until such time as public services are fully developed for the community as a whole, it would seem desirable that welfare facilities for workers and their families should be provided by the State and local authorities in an increasing measure and should be situated in the vicinity of undertakings and of the workers' living quarters. As mentioned above, the responsibility for providing them might be laid upon local authorities by law. The facilities should be administered by public authorities, national, regional or local, but as the health and general well-being of workers is of considerable importance to employers, the undertakings concerned might make a financial contribution.

The Conference may wish to consider the most suitable ways in which to finance workers' welfare facilities and the methods for their administration.

4. ENFORCEMENT AND SUPERVISION

Should the Conference decide that the establishment of welfare facilities in undertakings should be a statutory requirement, the appearance of laws on the statute book will not necessarily ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made. It is essential that there should be strict control of the application of legislative provisions, but proper enforcement is not easy. It presupposes a large, well-organised inspection service, and this may be, and sometimes is, hampered by financial stringency. Nor is the trade union movement in many cases strong enough to watch the interests of members sufficiently closely and to bring to light infringements of the law.¹ There is, however, a progressive development in both these directions. To be fully effective, it would seem desirable that the officials responsible for the enforcement of welfare measures should be suitably qualified and have a knowledge of welfare work.

It may be of interest to mention in this connection that, in India, among the powers given by the Factories Act to provincial Governments is that of making Rules prescribing the standards to be observed in respect, *inter alia*, of certain welfare facilities provided by the Act. A recent amendment authorises the Central Government to give direction to a provincial Government as to the execution of the Act. Consequently, if provincial Governments

¹ Cf. *Asian Labour*, Vol. I, No. 1, Oct. 1948, p. 66: "General Survey of Labour Problems in Burma".

are not carrying out the provisions of the Act in an adequate manner, the Central Government may issue orders requiring them to do so.

Unceasing effort is required to ensure that the welfare provisions of labour legislation are properly applied in the existing conditions in Asian countries, in many of which labour legislation and its enforcement are in process of development, and the difficulties to be surmounted in such enforcement are widely appreciated. The enforcement of labour legislation is, however, dealt with in another report which has been prepared for discussion by the Conference.¹

Enforcement alone is not enough, for even when the necessary provision has been made in an adequate manner, there must be careful supervision of the upkeep of premises and equipment if the facilities provided are to serve their purpose and improve the workers' general well-being. Enforcement by the official labour inspectorate necessarily involves a certain supervision, but in addition regular day-to-day control is needed. The appointment of welfare officers for the administration of the welfare facilities set up in undertakings has been discussed in the foregoing pages, and it should be one of their duties to see that the services provided for the physical comfort and general well-being of the workers are being maintained in a clean and serviceable condition and are used in a proper and orderly manner.

The Conference may wish to discuss the necessity for strict enforcement of workers' welfare facilities and the desirability of State control of their uniform application.

¹ Report I: *Labour Inspection*.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made in the foregoing pages to describe some of the principal welfare services, facilities and amenities which are now being provided for workers in Asian countries. It is realised that the information given is fragmentary and that it in no way provides a complete and balanced picture of what is happening in the welfare field, but it is hoped that the concrete examples of the various welfare facilities at present available will furnish a fruitful basis of discussion by the Conference. They may also be useful in helping to stimulate further measures to promote the health, efficiency and well-being of the working population, for a wider knowledge of developments along these lines, and an exchange of views with those working in the same field, may disclose ways in which welfare arrangements may be extended and completed and may also shed light on stubborn problems.

There is no doubt that there is a real interest in workers' welfare in both official and unofficial circles in Asian countries, together with a desire for knowledge of the principles underlying a sound welfare programme. Now that many of these countries are embarking upon an era of industrial expansion, the moment would seem ripe to lay the foundations of a far-sighted and constructive welfare policy suited to their needs, and to build up and perfect those programmes upon which a start has already been made. It is with this object that the proposed resolution concerning the promotion of facilities for workers' welfare in Asian countries—the text of which is contained in the appendix which follows—is submitted for consideration by the Conference.

APPENDIX

PROPOSED RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PROMOTION OF FACILITIES FOR WORKERS' WELFARE IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

Whereas the Declaration of Philadelphia reaffirms the fundamental principle that labour is not a commodity and recognises the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organisation to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations and the provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture;

Whereas the Preparatory Asian Regional Conference at its meeting in New Delhi in October-November 1947 adopted a resolution concerning conditions of work and labour welfare in which it declared that the human element in industry is of primary importance and the increase in production is conditioned, amongst other means, by the raising of labour welfare standards;

Whereas in Asian countries public welfare services are not yet fully developed and there is wide diversity in the amplitude and quality of the welfare services and amenities provided for the benefit of workers in the various undertakings;

Whereas the effective contribution of welfare facilities to the well-being of workers as a whole depends on the scope of their application and this is at present limited;

Whereas a review of existing methods of financing welfare facilities shows that they are such that employment possibilities are sometimes reduced and sufficient resources are not always available for the promotion of facilities on a wide scale and their maintenance on a high level of efficiency;

Whereas experience has shown that if welfare facilities are to achieve their object and improve the workers' general well-being there must be adequate control and careful and regular supervision to ensure that premises and equipment are kept in a clean and serviceable condition and used in a proper and orderly manner;

Recalling the Resolution concerning welfare facilities for workers adopted by the General Conference at its 30th Session (Geneva, June-July 1947), but considering that the special conditions in Asian countries must be taken into account;

The Asian Regional Conference calls the attention of the Asian countries to the following principles which seem to provide a suitable basis for the promotion of facilities for workers' welfare in Asian countries:

1. The basic requirements in respect of workers' welfare facilities, such as sanitary and medical facilities, educational

facilities, workers' housing and other accommodation, canteens and other feeding arrangements, child care services and recreational facilities, should be prescribed by legislation defining—

- (a) the minimum standards to be observed, in particular as regards construction, equipment and personnel; and
- (b) the scope of application, which should include the largest possible number of undertakings and workers and should be widened progressively.

2. It is desirable to provide in the vicinity of undertakings workers' welfare facilities administered by public authorities, national, regional or local, the financing of which might include, if necessary, a contribution from the undertakings concerned.

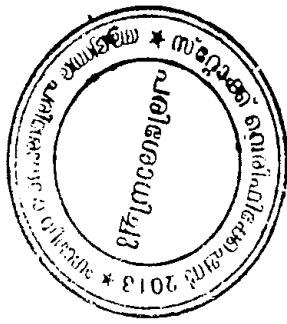
3. Welfare facilities provided by undertakings should be financed by welfare funds—

- (a) if possible, on a collective basis in the same region or in the same industry, so that workers in small undertakings are able to benefit from the facilities provided;
- (b) proportionate to the total number of workers employed.

4. Welfare officers employed by undertakings to administer welfare facilities should be suitably qualified and appointed on the basis of their personal competence.

5. The enforcement of statutory welfare provisions should be subject to State control, consideration being given to the appointment for the purpose of persons whose qualifications include a knowledge of welfare work.

6. The workers should co-operate in the administration of the welfare facilities provided in or in connection with the undertakings by such means as representation on welfare committees or other bodies whose functions include this responsibility.



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