



ISSUED BY THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

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BELGIUM
CANADA
CHINA
DENMARK
DUTCH GUIANA
ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GREAT BRITAIN
HOLLAND
HUNGARY
ICELAND
INDIA
INDO-CHINA
IRELAND
LUXEMBURG
MADAGASCAR
MOROCCO
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
PALESTINE
RHODESIA
RUMANIA
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TRINIDAD
TUNISIA
YUGOSLAVIA

Relations with unions in :

AUSTRALIA
CHILE
CUBA
DUTCH EAST INDIES
ECUADOR
EGYPT
MEXICO
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
UNITED STATES

Other relations in :

AUSTRIA
BRAZIL
BULGARIA
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
GERMANY
GREECE
ITALY
JAPAN
LATVIA
POLAND
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
and other countries

PROCLAMATION OF THE I.T.F., MAY DAY, 1941

The following May Day Message was issued during the month of April, both as a circular and a leaflet. We reproduce the text here for two reasons. First, the views expressed bear beyond May Day, 1941. Secondly, as in time to come this journal will be one of the sources of information on the attitude and activity of the international trade union movement during the second world war, it is well that it should record the I.T.F.'s May Day Message for 1941.

ON the occasion of this second wartime May Day, the International Transport Workers' Federation sends its greetings to the Transport Workers all over the world. This will be a day of meditation, because we shall ponder the past, mourn over the present and try to visualize what the future will bring us. Although scattered all over the earth, with communications broken off, owing to the war, we know that we shall be united in thought, united in our aspirations, and united in preparing for the day of common action, which shall dawn as irresistibly as the advent of the 1st of May.

On May Day, 1941, millions upon millions of workers will recall how—thanks to their own sacrifices and activities—important victories in the political and trade union fields have been fought and won. Their thoughts will be mostly occupied, however, with the wars raging in Asia, Europe and Africa, the massacre of human life and the devastation of cultural and material values on an unprecedented scale. And then to think that the worst has yet to come.

Totalitarian warfare, as conceived, fostered, preached and practised by the so-called Axis powers, sways the destiny of Mankind, and all peoples and continents are being scourged by this plague let loose over the world by the most wretched of criminals.

What of the future of which we all think with anxiety? Do not all our hard won gains seem lost, and does not the realization of the great ideal for which the International Labour Movement has been striving: the Emancipation and the Triumph of Labour, does it not seem farther off than ever?

If we should give way, regard our Cause as lost, accept the defeat of freedom, the victory of force over right, then indeed we should live without hope.

But we are not afraid of the future and shall not give way. We know how Nazism and Fascism have by brute force, by exploiting the lowest traits and vices of human nature, succeeded in occupying vast territories and subjugating free peoples who have nothing to learn nor anything to expect from their oppressors but cruel persecution and ruthless exploitation. We know how they are challenging the freedom and very lives of all workers and all peoples. We are aware of what would happen, if the aggressors and war-mongers should be victorious. And therefore, although we love peace and abhor war, we realize that there is no alternative but to carry on the struggle against Fascism and Nazism until the bitter end.

The International Labour Movement, and the I.T.F. in particular, have given repeated and timely warnings to the world against the threatening dangers, pointing out that to appease the dictators would not augment their lust for power, would only add to their strength, and would inevitably lead to another world war.

The only possibility of restoring peace, of regaining freedom, of reconstituting the International Labour Movement, of saving the lives and guaranteeing the happiness of future generations, lies in the complete overthrow of the totalitarian regimes. There is, for the present, no other means of accomplishing that task than to meet force with equal—nay, with even greater force. Later, that greater force will be backed by the uprising of the subjected and betrayed masses of the peoples and the dictators will be dethroned; the regimes reigning over the peoples, without the peoples and against the peoples, will then collapse.

Our thoughts and sympathies go out to the workers and populations of China, Abyssinia and Poland, the Baltic countries, Czechoslovakia, Austria and the Balkan States, Norway, Denmark, the Low Countries, Luxemburg and France, suffering under the yoke of the oppressors who are looting and enslaving their victims, and compelling them to assist them and work for their war machine. We congratulate them upon the resistance they are offering to a merciless enemy; we appeal to them to keep the international spirit alive, to continue to oppose the invaders with all available means and to prepare for the day of reckoning, when the usurpers and their treacherous helpers will be swept away.

Our thoughts are also with our comrades in Germany, Italy, Japan and Spain, who for the time being have been silenced: they have shown such bravery in their opposition against the powers that be, that we are confident that they will rise against their oppressors at the first possible opportunity. The sooner they will, the greater will be their service to Humanity and to their own peoples.

The workers of such countries as are still neutral must realize that it is incumbent upon them to make a front against aggression; they will be dragged into the war, if the dictators choose to overrun and loot their countries for which a pretext is easily found by the notorious violators of international law.

We hail the airmen, the sailors and the soldiers of the allied countries who are shedding their blood and sacrificing their lives for the cause of freedom against tyranny. We salute the soldiers of China, and we hope that they will remain united in their fight against Japanese aggression and foreign intervention. We are convinced and we warrant that all their sacrifices will not be in vain, but that the indomitable spirit of freedom and humanity will conquer in the end.

We thank our own members, the merchant seamen of the allied fleets, of the British Commonwealth, of Denmark and Norway, of Belgium and Holland, of France, Greece and Yugoslavia, and the seamen of other nationalities serving in allied ships, all of whom are keeping the sea routes open notwithstanding the

inhuman methods of warfare practised by the enemies. Their contribution towards victory will go down in history.

We thank also the dockers, the railwaymen and the road transport workers of Great Britain, who are continuing their work unabated. The bravery and the endurance shown by the whole population of Great Britain are proof for us that the British people are unconquerable.

We call upon the transport workers of all countries to realize that they hold key positions in the present emergency, and we appeal to them to join in the common struggle by using every means to thwart the Axis' and to support the Allied war machine. They will thereby help to destroy the aggressors, bar the road to a new and ferocious imperialism and open the way to progress and welfare.

The 1st of May is International Labour Day which heralds the triumph of Labour. For more than fifty years it has been celebrated by the working classes of very many countries. At first, when the overwhelming majority of the workers were still unconscious of their strength and when trade unions and labour organizations were still in their infancy, May Day celebrations only served the propagation of the eight hour day. Later the 1st of May provided the platform for disseminating the most urgent demands and the highest ideals of the International Labour Movement. One of the greatest aims has always been: the preservation of Peace and the cultivation of International Brotherhood.

For the realization of these aims we stand to-day as we have stood before. We offer no apologies for having cherished and for cherishing a World Order from which war will be banned, and in which all peoples will co-operate as free nations to further their mutual happiness and prosperity. Had these aims been realized on an international scale, Fascism and Nazism (which are only refuges of big capital) would never have had the opportunity of demoralizing and poisoning the minds of large sections of the population. They would not have been able to overthrow constitutional governments and substitute totalitarian regimes which alone can resort to war regardless of the people's earnest desire for peace.

When the existing system of production and distribution presents an obstacle for providing work and livelihood and a steady progress in the standard of living of the masses of the people, when it is unable to prevent industrial crises, misery and bankruptcy, then the time has come for transforming society, for the collective ownership of the means of production, for the abolition of a system based upon profit-making and the exploitation of man by man.

If National Socialism and Fascism are allowed to survive, there can be no progress and no happiness within the nations, nor peace and collaboration between the peoples. If they are defeated, a new era will begin in which Labour will mark the step of progress, provided it stands united in its national

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TWO AFFILIATIONS TO THE I.T.F.

The South African Council of Transport Workers on 25th March announced by wire its decision to affiliate to the I.T.F. The Council is a federation of local and regional organizations covering the principal towns of the country—Bloemfontein, Cape, Durban, East London, Johannesburg, Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria and Witwatersrand. Every organization of tramway and omnibus employees, with the exception of the railway-owned road motor services, is affiliated to the Council. A number of goods transport workers' unions is also affiliated. Total membership is 3,000.

For the present the Council is a co-ordinating body, but it is hoped that the development of its activities will culminate in the formation of a National Union of Transport Workers. In addition to the groups already mentioned, a Taxi-Drivers' Union has already joined; and a Seamen's and Fishermen's Union of fairly recent formation, has announced its intention to join the Council.

On 3rd April we were informed of the affiliation of a second African organization, the Kenya and Uganda Railway Asian Union, which comprises some 600 Indian railwaymen working in British East Africa.

The Management Committee and Secretariat of the I.T.F. extend a cordial welcome to the two organizations.

The trade union movement is still in a fairly undeveloped stage in the Black Continent, and is largely confined to scattered groups of pioneers. Trade union problems are complicated by the fact that, over vast

tracts, the political structure is colonial in nature, and the fact that several races live side by side on the same territory. Recently, the trade union movement of French North Africa has been deeply affected by the defeat sustained by Metropolitan France. The pioneers of trade unionism in Africa are confronted with the task, both magnificent and immense, of working to unite the workers of their Continent.

It is our ambition to make the banner of the I.T.F. the first emblem for the international rallying of the forces engaged in the struggle for the emancipation of the workers of all the exploited races of Africa. The railwaymen of Rhodesia, the Indian railwaymen of Kenya, and the transport workers of South Africa, provide a valuable starting-point for an African section of the I.T.F. A few more reinforcements, and a first African conference will become within the bounds of possibility.

The two affiliations which have been registered cause us deep satisfaction because they mark a, perhaps decisive, progress in the extension of the influence of the I.T.F. in Africa, but also because they are an expression of solidarity with the workers of the countries at war with the totalitarian powers. The Indian railwaymen of Kenya, equally with the transport workers of South Africa, are making their contribution to the war effort. By their affiliation they have both shown their will to join also in the working-class struggle against Fascism and for a peace opening the way to social progress.

Proclamation of the I.T.F., May Day, 1941—(continued from page 22)

and international organizations at the end of the present calamity.

You Transport Workers!

Show everywhere that you despise slavery and oppression and show by your deeds that you understand what we are fighting for:

For the downfall of Fascism and Nazism.

For personal freedom and democracy.

For national autonomy.

For co-operation between all peoples on the basis of equal rights.

For Social Progress and Social Security.

On behalf of The Executive Committee of the I.T.F.:

Ch. Lindley, President.

Edo Fimmen, General Secretary.

The Management Committee of the I.T.F.:

J. Marchbank, Chairman.

A. Deakin.

W. R. Spence.

London, 8th April, 1941.

Swedish Workers Prepared to Defend their Freedom

May Day was enthusiastically celebrated in Sweden this year, and in many places the demonstrations assumed impressive dimensions.

The dominant note of the celebrations was a determination to defend the independence of the country. This was expressed in eloquent language by the vice-president of the Swedish Federation of Trade Unions, Gunnar Anderson, who said that the Swedish trade union movement has always aspired after an international system of justice in which differences between countries would be settled by arbitration. "The present world situation proves the necessity of such a system better than any treatise. We remain faithful to the ideal of peace, but that does not mean that we accept the principle of 'peace at any price.' There are prices which cannot be paid. Other peoples wanted, like ours, to preserve peace and neutrality, but were dragged into war by force.

"If Sweden is a free country, it is not due to the benevolence of the great powers. What guarantees our freedom is our determination to make every sacrifice necessary for its defence. Sweden does not want to join in the war, but it will go to war rather than submit to enslavement. If need be, the country and its liberty will be defended with all the means at our disposal."

War and Peace Aims of the Trade Union Movement—II

An Organized Economy

On what will be the economic structure of the world after the war there can be but conjecture. A hypothesis which, towards the middle of the second year of war, seems to have some chance of materializing and at the same time to correspond to many widely and profoundly held aspirations, is the following :

The political frontiers of states will not always coincide with the limits of what have come to be termed economic units. Regions constituting an economic unit sometimes will extend over more than one state. Some economic units will be regional, rather than national, in extent.

The state is destined to assume economic functions in a greater measure than in the past. Internally it must exercise wider sovereign powers. Externally, on the other hand, it must curtail them. Each of the states comprised in an economic region will have to abrogate its sovereignty in economic affairs and abide by the decisions of the regional community of which it will be a constituent, but never a dominant, part. By the decisions dictated by the general interests of the economic region it must abide even if that involves the temporary or permanent renunciation of advantages or privileges possessed by its territory. Where the frontiers of a state coincide with those of an economic region, there too the state must give up the right to decide alone the practice that shall govern its relations with other economic regions, and accept the principles laid down by the international communities of which it is a part. In particular it will have to place at the disposal of world distributive authorities the raw materials it has in abundance and which are needed by other peoples.

It seems reasonable to expect that these changes in relations between states will remove many difficulties which have hampered economic advance in the past. The world thus envisaged, however, bears still too much resemblance to the world of before 1st September 1939 to permit of the hope that lasting peace and enduring prosperity will be automatically assured. Peace will not be assured if economic nationalism remains the chief counsellor. Prosperity will not be assured if, internally, the state fails to exercise its rights or exercises them badly, or seeks objects other than the common weal.

If substantial economic progress, calculated to bring lasting prosperity to mankind, is to be witnessed still during the present century, reforms will have to be made both in international relationships and within the economic units. The world must decide to govern its economic life.

The Task of Economic Government

The task of an economic government is not hard to envisage. It would have to regulate production, by methods both sufficiently flexible and sufficiently rigid. To this end, it would have to be invested with powers to control the investment of capital, to distribute

credits and raw materials and to direct international trade. The power to control capital investment is necessary to ensure that each section of the productive and distributive apparatus shall be sufficiently developed and no more, and that there shall be no overlapping and duplication, or wasteful substitution, of which the competition between rail and road transport is such a striking example. Changes in the productive apparatus made necessary by changes in demand must be carried out with foresight and efficiency. The power to allot credits and raw materials is required to influence, and if necessary rigidly control, the volume, the quality and the nature of production. International trade is a channel to be exploited to the full to make up for the natural deficiencies of the economic unit.

If anarchy were allowed to prevail in the organization of work, there would be a danger of production missing the goal that was set. The location of industry, the choosing and improvement of equipment, the training of labour, the choice and standardization of working methods, the normalization of products, these are some of the matters about which the managers of the economy should give information, advice, and in some cases orders.

The position is analogous in the case of the management of individual economic undertakings. To permit of a judicious investment of capital, the capital accounts of undertakings should be drawn up according to uniform, or at least similar methods. As the methods of profit-making are not always desirable, there are various other matters which need to be subject to supervision. Workers, consumers, suppliers of materials and funds, social service institutions and the community, all have rights, rights which should have precedence over the making of profits. Only if these rights are respected will the object of economic management be attained : the general welfare by the total consumption of all that is produced.

A Practicable Proposition

Must doubts be entertained as to the practicability of a managed economic system ? It is not necessary to resort to purely theoretical reasoning to answer the question. The totalitarian governments control economic activity by abominable methods and with one single object—the waging of war. But they have taught us that it is possible to discipline economic activity and to attain objects that have been set. In the midst of war, Great Britain and the British Dominions are improvising methods for controlling large sectors of economic life, with the result that a situation which, in June 1940, seemed to hold out the prospect of early defeat, has been completely reversed in less than nine months. War economies in the one case as well as in the other ? Maybe, but economies all the same. The qualification cannot be applied, however, to the New Deal which was begun in peacetime for peace ends and according to methods freely

accepted by the American workers and people in general. Another instance of a planned economy, which is but partly a totalitarian economy for war ends, is Soviet Russia. Its successes have not brought happiness to the peoples of the Soviet Union, because the methods were cruel and inadequate, and because the object did not correspond to their subjective needs; but its failures, great though the suffering they inflicted, have not been greater than those of contemporary anarchical capitalism.

But even if experience did not show the practicability of economic government, it would have to be resorted to. It is known now that the old methods are wrong. It would be folly to persist in the error, and the only alternative to economic anarchy would seem to be an organized economy.

The Machinery

Those to whom will fall the task of building the machinery of economic government of their country or region will not be able to act according to a universally applicable formula. The nature of the economy they are called upon to direct, the degree of development of its material and human resources, and the needs requiring satisfaction immediately, that is to say, within the next one or two decades, will make it necessary to adapt the organs to be created to local conditions. Full allowance must also be made for non-material factors, such as the social system of the locality and the period, the mentality and traditions of the people or peoples concerned.

The economic organs will necessarily differ widely. In some countries and regions everything remains to be done. In others there will be certain starting-points: institutions dating from the war economy, machinery set up during the economic depression in order to cope with the unemployment problem; even certain private institutions, such as the cartels and trusts, may in certain conditions, provide the first instruments of economic control. In some countries or regions, it will suffice to take in hand two or three industries, in others very much more will have to be done. The measure of freedom which the economic governments will be able to allow their "subjects" will necessarily vary.

The Necessity of Vigilance

When, after the war, the idea of a managed economy has come to be accepted, the difficulty will not be to conceive and create the necessary national and international organs and institutions. An essential task will be to prevent a return to old evils: economic nationalism, exploitation of workers, consumers and the State for the benefit of one class, totalitarian methods of government, and revival of imperialism. If this task is not performed adequately, there will be a swift relapse into the old world of capitalism and imperialism. Organized labour must see that the task is performed. To ensure that the managed economy is not merely a continuation of the old system by other methods and with the same evils, it must be governed according to the principles of democracy.

FIRST CONGRESS OF THE SWEDISH AMALGAMATED RAILWAYMEN'S UNION

The first congress of the Swedish Amalgamated Railwaymen's Union was held in Stockholm from 19th to 22nd November last, and confirmed the amalgamation between the all-grades and the locomotivemen's unions.

The congress was an impressive and solemn event. The hall in which it was held had been decorated with care. The flags and emblems of the two unions and, prominently displayed, two I.T.F. flags, were seen beside the national flag and emblems of the moral unity of the Scandinavian countries. There were flowers in profusion.

A large number of fraternal delegates represented the Swedish trade union movement. Three delegates representing the Finnish railwaymen and the president of the I.T.F., Charles Lindley, were received with ovations which, more than any speech, showed the Swedish railwaymen's devotion to the working-class ideals of internationalism and democracy. The Danish railwaymen had advised their inability to send the traditional delegation, but instead sent the congress a floral greeting. The arrival of the bouquet called forth a manifestation of sympathy with the prisoners of the German armies. Standing the congress heard a speech dedicated to the railwaymen of Norway. In no undecided manner the delegates showed on which side

were the sympathies of the 50,000 organized railwaymen of Sweden in the struggle between Fascism and Democracy.

The business proceedings of the congress were preceded by two opening speeches by the two presidents, Axel Löfgren, representing all grades, and Anders Borgstedt, representing locomotivemen. Löfgren congratulated the locomotivemen on their decision, reached by 104 votes to 6, to consolidate the solidarity which had always existed between the two unions by so a practical and logical step as direct amalgamation. Borgstedt pointed out that the step was no hasty one but the result of considered and careful preparation since 1933, the year when the Locomotivemen's Union had applied for affiliation to the Swedish Federation of Trade Unions. The locomotivemen pursue a realist policy, they would preserve the gains of the past and win new ones, they aim to promote their own interests even better than in the past by uniting their own organized strength as closely as possible with that of other organized railwaymen, with the view of achieving the best possible conditions for railwaymen as a whole.

When, about the middle of 1940, the decision to amalgamate was taken by both the organizations, the question of the name to be borne by the amalgamated

union was left undecided. Some of the locomotivemen wished the name to include the word "Amalgamated," in order not to have the feeling that, after thirty-three years of existence, their union had been simply "swallowed" by the all-grades union. The name of the Railwaymen's Union dated from the time of its foundation in 1898, when it was a programme rather than a reality. It was only natural that many militant railwaymen keenly desired the retention of the old name. At the moment when they resigned themselves to a change of name, there came a splendid gesture from the side of the locomotivemen. When the discussion was to begin on the first item on the agenda, Anders Borgstedt mounted the rostrum and proposed, in the name of the old Locomotivemen's Union, the maintenance of the original name of the Railwaymen's Union, "Svenska Järnvägsmannaförbundet." The proposal was adopted amidst a storm of applause.

Much time was devoted to a discussion on the rules of the amalgamated union and on the proposals which had been submitted on the question. Throughout the discussion no difficulty of any consequence arose.

Many questions relating to working conditions were discussed, such as calculation of seniority, hours of work, regional scales of basic wages, but instead of adopting resolutions giving definite instructions to the new Executive Committee, the congress confined itself to expressing its wishes on the various questions. The economic and financial situation of the country is severely taxed by the heavy expenditure on national defence rendered necessary by the state of war existing in Europe. No delegate could deny the fact that the existing state of affairs placed limits on the demands which could be presented. An exception was made, however, in favour of the permanent way workers. The Executive Committee agreed to examine their position with the view of formulating and submitting to the railway managements proposals for improving the conditions of this backward category of railway workers.

The congress decided to make a grant of 1,500 crowns to the propaganda funds of the Railwaymen's Total Abstainers' Society. It also urged the Sectional

Committees and the Executive Committee to give every possible support to educational work and voted an expenditure of 12,000 crowns under this head. A proposal to establish within the union a benevolent fund, with an initial capital of half a million crowns, for the benefit of the families of railwaymen serving with the forces, was not accepted as put forward. The Executive Committee agreed to submit the principle for discussion by the trade union movement as a whole.

One of the sections of the union, supported by others, proposed that a substantial sum of the union funds should be invested in national defence savings certificates. The Executive Committee pointed out that the union had already loaned one and a half million crowns to the State, and asked that it be left to its discretion to do more, if this should prove possible, when further parts of the loan were issued. Other delegates took the opportunity of emphasizing the importance of a voluntary restriction of consumption to basic needs, and of appealing for individual saving in favour of national defence. A savings campaign among the members was calculated to produce much more than the most rigid economy on the part of these managing the funds of the union.

A pleasing moment in the proceedings was the honouring of the veterans of the two organizations: A. V. Ferm, president of the Railwaymen's Union during the years 1905 to 1918; Albert Forslund, president of the Railwaymen's Union during the years 1918 to 1936; Axel Löfgren, president of the Railwaymen's Union since 1936; Hj. Molin, president of the Locomotivemen's Union from 1909 to 1924; and Anders Borgstedt, president of the Locomotivemen's Union since 1924. With the exception of Forslund, absent owing to illness, the former presidents were attending the congress. Various other veterans who had played a prominent part in the two organizations were also present.

Axel Löfgren was elected president and Anders Borgstedt vice-president of the amalgamated union. General secretary is Gustaf Andersen, who was secretary of the old Railwaymen's Union, and assistant general secretary is John Sjöberg, former secretary of the Locomotivemen's Union.

A MINISTER ON TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION

The British Government has recently decided upon the fusion of transport and shipping into one department. The new minister of land and water transport in the following statement gave the reasons for the measure:

"The organization of our national economy for the maximum war effort demands that the entire transport system of this country should be considered as a unit. Our transport system begins at the ports abroad where our ships pick up the goods and raw materials which we require. From that point it extends to the factories in this country and to the doorsteps of the consuming public. In the other direction it starts with our factories here and carries their products to our forces overseas and to our customers abroad.

"Hitherto this vast organization has been the concern of two Government Departments, and this meant the drawing of an

arbitrary line in what should really be one continuous process. This line was drawn at the ports, but the distinction was never very satisfactory, for if the ports were under the control of the Ministry of Transport it was natural that they should be run with a view mainly to the conditions of internal transport. On the other hand, if the ports had been the concern of the Ministry of Shipping, their organization would have been directed more to the convenience of ships than of the railways or the roads.

"The fact that full information about ships' movements and cargoes was not under the same roof as full information about internal transport inevitably led to certain hitches and delays, though these have been steadily reduced to a minimum by the friendly co-operation of the two departments. No matter how friendly this co-operation might be, it was not possible completely to integrate the transport process under the control of two separate organizations. Indeed, for this reason, the Government has decided that the Ministries of Shipping and Transport shall be merged into one Ministry. . . ."

ORGANIZATION OF RAILWAY SHOP CRAFTS IN AMERICA

The large majority of the railway workers of North America are organized in craft unions, of which there are twenty or so. Some of these organizations are very old.

The great issue between organization by craft and organization by industry has split the American trade union movement in two. But the issue has been practically without repercussions on the railwaymen's movement. What are the reasons for this?

Tradition has no doubt played an important part. But the inertia of tradition does not explain completely why railwaymen's circles have taken no part in the controversy. Rail workers are no more willing than any other group of workers to remain loyal, for purely sentimental reasons, to organizations that prove incapable of solving their problems. In the railway industry, more frequently than in many others, problems relating to working conditions arise no longer in the individual workshop, as they did in the nineteenth century, which made the craft union the appropriate instrument for dealing with them, but arise for the industry as a whole, sometimes affecting the whole national economy.

American railway workers did not take part in the controversy because the matter had been solved within their movement long before it became acute within the American Federation of Labour. Their solution was on the same lines as that adopted by the Swiss railwaymen, namely a compromise between tradition, the subjective need for organization by craft, and the objective necessity for trade union action on an industrial and national scale. The craft unions continue their traditional function in regard to working conditions in workshop, yard, station, office, on locomotive and train. But at the same time they have been linked up federally to work, on concerted lines, for better conditions in the industry as a whole.

An important and interesting example of a federally organized craft are the workshops. Important because the number of workers covered is large; interesting because it presents the characteristics both of a craft and an industrial organization. An excellent survey of this organization, the Railway Employees Department of the American Federation of Labour, from the pen of Mr. B. M. Jewell, its President, appeared in the *American Federation* for April, 1941, from which we quote the following passages:

"The Railway Employees' Department (is) a federation of seven international unions.* Our affiliated organizations include the International Association of Machinists, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers, the International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths, Drop Forgers and Helpers, the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, and the International Brotherhood of Oilers.

* The term "international" is applied in America to unions which also have branches in Canada.

"The combined membership of these organizations totals more than 550,000 workers. *These men, who for the most part are skilled mechanics, are employed principally in the mechanical and maintenance departments of the railroad industry, although a considerable number are also employed in numerous other industries.* . . .

"Our affiliation with the American Federation of Labour dates back to our organization as a regular department in 1908. Beginning as an organization whose chief functions were legislative and educational, the Railway Employees' Department was later re-organized to permit broader activities on behalf of the membership of its affiliated organizations.

"Since that time our department, which was the direct result of a widespread desire for closer affiliation among railroad men, has actively participated in the efforts of the American Federation of Labour to increase wages, better working conditions, and improve the social and economic standards of the workers.

"The plan of organization, which was adopted and is followed by the Railway Employees' Department is such as to provide for co-operative action among the various craft organizations while preserving craft autonomy, which is so essential to the successful functioning of an organization where skilled men of various crafts are involved.

"Previous attempts to organize all of these employees into one big union by the Knights of Labour, the American Railway Union and the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees, were failures because craft autonomy was not recognized. The best proof of this is the fact that the Railway Employees Department has functioned successfully for more than three decades.

"The Executive Council of our Department is composed of the presidents of seven affiliated organizations. Each of these organizations maintains local lodges and a district or system-wide organization on each railroad. The local and district organizations are also organized along federated lines—that is, the local lodges of each craft in a particular locality are organized into local federations and the district organizations of each craft are organized into system federations, which are in turn under the jurisdiction of the Railway Employees' Department.

"This enables each craft to carry on the functions which are peculiar to that craft, but where the interests of two or more crafts are involved, it also facilitates co-operative action. The policies of the Railway Employees' Department are decided and its officers are elected at quadrennial conventions. . . .

"Fundamentally, the first job of any labour organization is to organize the unorganized and secure agreements covering wages and working conditions. To accomplish this purpose the affiliated organizations have a large force of organizers in the field under the direct supervision of the Railway Employees' Department.

"As the result of a vigorous organizing campaign which has been carried on for the past several years, the Railway Employees' Department has been successful in establishing representation and securing agreements with a few exceptions on substantially all of the railroads in the United States.

"More important, however, is the fact that many of the agreements already in force have been greatly improved. With the campaign to secure representation on the railroads now practically complete, the efforts of the Department have been directed toward raising substandard wage rates where they exist for certain classes of employees and eliminating undesirable rules.

"It should be observed that as a result of many years of company union domination, the wages and working conditions that were found on many railroads when representation was established by the Department were generally poor and in some cases deplorable. Due to satisfactory negotiations, the conditions on these roads have been greatly improved. . . .

"As far back as 1912 we set forth as one of our objectives the establishment of a minimum wage scale for all employees in all branches of railway service. On March 1, 1941, such a scale went into effect.

"In accordance with the provisions of the Fair Labour Standards Act, an industry committee was established for the railroad industry in 1939 . . . and recommended the establishment of the minimum wage of 36 cents an hour for employees of trunk lines and 33 cents an hour for those working on the short lines . . . and wage increases totalling more than \$27,000,000 went into effect. Approximately 70,000 railway employees are benefiting from this wage increase, which is the third largest to be ordered under the Wage and Hour Law.

"Over a period of years the level of railroad wages has been increased. It should be emphasized, however, that, contrary to a popular impression, railroad wages are not too high. As a matter of fact, the wages paid to railroad employees are generally lower than those

paid in other industries for comparable service. It is, therefore, the purpose of the Department to exert every effort to secure for the employees represented wage rates that will compensate them more adequately for their skill, responsibility and efficiency."

The activities of the Department, then, whilst being federal in scope, are primarily based on the craft. The object is to secure "substantially uniform wage rates and fair working conditions on all railroads." But at the same time the need for industry-wide action is recognized: "The organizations affiliated with the Railway Employees Department are also members of the Railway Labour Executives Association, which is a voluntary organization composed of the chief executives of the twenty standard railroad labour organizations. This association, through which various organizations co-operate where their mutual interests are involved, has greatly facilitated the handling of numerous important matters on an industry-wide basis, and has been particularly effective in the handling of legislation. Here, too, the idea of promoting co-operation between various autonomous organizations is carried out." ". . . through the Railway Labour Executives Association" . . . the Railway Employees' Department has "pioneered in a number of broader reforms, some of which were the forerunners of legislation which was subsequently adopted generally to cover employees in all industries."

The reforms in question are the establishment of adequate machinery for the settlement of disputes, a national retirement scheme for railroad employees, the railroad unemployment insurance scheme, compensation for employees adversely affected by mergers of railroad establishments, the adoption of the Transportation Act of 1940, which will enable railroads to compete on a more equitable basis with highway and water transportation.

To-day the principal reform for which the standard railway labour organizations are striving is the extension of vacations with pay to all railway employees.

THE ARGENTINE RAILWAYMEN'S UNION IN 1940

The year 1940 was not particularly favourable to trade union and social progress in Argentina. The unfavourable effects of the war on the economic life of the country caused the capitalist interests to take from the working class some of the gains won in past years as a result of trade-union effort.

The Railwaymen's Union nevertheless did what it could, and was successful in certain directions. Thus after long and patient effort, it secured an acceptable regulation of the wages and working conditions of the restaurant car personnel of a big company. A more striking success was a revision of the wages scale of the permanent way workers of the National Railways and the Central Cordoba system, involving an increase in aggregate annual wages of over 191,000 pesos. The union also sought to secure improvements for many more or less important local groups. The principal

results obtained under this head was in the workshops of Tafi Viejo, where 376 out of 450 workers had their wages increased.

In the field of social legislation, an end was put to an injustice which had been a source of irritation to all railwaymen. In August, 1939, the Supreme Court had issued a judgment according to which a worker invalid as the result of an accident at work had to choose between the benefit provided under the Act on Workmen's Compensations and that provided under the act on Workers' Pensions. The judgment did not allow of a cumulation of the two benefits. The union carried on a vigorous campaign in the press and in Parliament, and secured an amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act. In future compensation paid in respect of industrial accidents will not affect claims to pension benefits.

Within the organization a happy event took place: the restoration of unity. A group of former members who had founded a breakaway union returned to the fold after an arrangement had been come to satisfying the grievances on both sides.

In association with the Locomotivemen's Union, the Railwaymen's Union continued to work for a scheme for a hospital for railwaymen. Such a hospital was duly opened on 14th October, 1940. This is an achievement of a pioneering character, as it is the first institution of its kind to be established by the working-class movement in South America.

In October, 1939, the Railwaymen's Union purchased a site of 102 hectares for the purposes of a holiday camp. During 1940 the union carried on vigorously with the preparatory work, and it is hoped that before very long sufficient funds will be available for putting the scheme into effect.

Unfortunately it is not possible for the leaders and militant members of the union to confine their attention to constructive work. For some time past Communist cells have been showing considerable activity in the union. These cells take every opportunity of sowing confusion and busily circulate a Communist daily paper in which the leaders of the Argentine Trade Union Centre and of the Railwaymen's Union in particular are attacked in the most violent and unfair manner. Time and effort had to be spared to counteract these elements, whose object is either to gain control of the union for the purpose of political ends—ends which serve the interests of foreign powers and are contrary to the interests of the workers—or to wreck it.

We are confident that the Argentine railwaymen will be able to deal with those who thus aim to destroy the results secured in nearly twenty years of constructive trade-union and social effort.

Motorbuses in U.S.A.

According to a publication of facts and figures 1939, relating to the Motor Bus Industry, issued by the American National Association of Bus Operators, there are some 140,000 buses in use in the U.S.A.

91,616 of these vehicles are school buses. They carry daily 3,742,240 children to and from 42,452 schools. The cost of operation of the school buses amounts to roughly 73 million dollars per year.

51,550 buses run on regular routes covering approximately 360,000 miles of highway. 34,746 buses belong to companies earning over \$100,000 annually. These companies employ 78,909 persons (exclusive of staff in terminals and agencies) or slightly more than two persons per bus. The total number of persons employed in all bus undertakings is about 120,000. Of a bill of \$411,650,000 for operating expenses, wages and salaries amount to \$185,000,000.

168 electric railway companies and subsidiaries own 16,859 buses covering 16,168 miles of highway.

58 railroad companies and railroad subsidiaries own 1,569 buses covering 41,930 miles of highway.

MISCELLANEOUS TRADE UNION NEWS

The International Federation of Trade Unions

The Executive Committee of the I.F.T.U. met in Washington on 30th and 31st January, 1941.

The I.F.T.U. at present embraces fourteen national trade union centres functioning normally, with an aggregate membership of twelve and a half million. The headquarters of the I.F.T.U. are provisionally to remain in London.

The National Joint Committee of South African Trade Unions, comprising the Trades and Labour Council (consisting of European trade unions) and the Cape Federation of Labour Unions (European and African trade unions), has affiliated to the I.F.T.U. The membership of the National Joint Committee is 50,000.

Foreign trade union centres are being set up in Great Britain. A Belgian and a French group have been in existence for some time past already. A National Group of German Trade Unionists in Great Britain has been formed more recently. Groups of Polish, Austrian and Czechoslovakian trade unionists are in course of being constituted with the assistance of the British Trades Union Congress and the I.F.T.U.

The American Federation of Labour

The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labour at its meeting in February last took up a vigorous attitude towards various bills designed to restrict the rights and liberties of trade unions in industries connected with national defence, in particular the right to strike. It stated that the American workers and their organizations are completely in sympathy with the cause of national defence as conceived by the Government and the President of the United States, and that the trade unions had already given during the war of 1917-18, and will give again in the present perilous situation of the country, convincing proofs that they are prepared to deal with all differences over working conditions by means of voluntary negotiation, conciliation and arbitration, a method of which the efficacy has been proved.

The Executive Council further instructed President Green and Vice-President Woll to submit to their next meeting a comprehensive plan for the revitalization of the Pan-American Federation of Labour. The A. F. of L. is eager to have the Pan-American Federation of Labour functioning again within a reasonably short time in view of the great threat of European and Asiatic totalitarianism against the Americas. When rehabilitated, the Pan-American Federation will work only with the free democratic trade unions, and would shun any relationship with trade union centres controlled by governments or Communists.

The Finnish Federation of Trade Unions Fights Communist Infiltration and Progresses

The Finnish Federation of Trade Unions held its ordinary congress from 26th to 30th October, 1940. It coincided with the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Federation.

Of the 73,000 members which the Federation had before the Russo-Finnish war broke out, 900 lost their lives on the battlefields. During that war the Federation signed with the Employers' Association an agreement recognizing trade unions as the legal representatives of the organized workers, on a footing of equality with the employers and their organizations. It implies the conclusion of collective agreements everywhere where a trade union feels capable of ensuring observance. The number of agreements thus concluded is still small, as in many industries the proportion of workers organized is small. In the important wood and paper and pulp industries, for example, it is 10 per cent, in the metal industry 25 per cent.

At the congress the Executive Committee of the Federation was attacked by a minority, comprising a little less than one-third of the delegates, on most of the decisions it had taken in 1939. Thus it was reproached with the "bellicose" nature of its policy and propaganda, with having voted against the admission of the Russian trade unions at the Zurich Congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions, with failure to nominate a road transport worker as Technical Adviser to the International Labour Conference in Geneva which discussed a draft convention on working hours in the road transport industry, and with the "betrayal" of which it was guilty by the pact entered into with the employers. With reference to the Russo-Finnish war, the Executive Committee replied to the minority that the Finnish trade union movement had been too

weak to prevent the war. The Russian trade union movement, on the other hand, would have been in a position to take much stronger action if it had felt inclined to use the means at its disposal. In the vote, however, the minority approved the Executive Committee's report on its policy and activities in the Russo-Finnish question and on the agreement signed with the Employers' Association. The position taken up in the question of the admission of the Russian trade unions to the I.F.T.U. was approved by 67 votes to 26.

After the minority had sought various other opportunities of introducing political debates, the Executive Committee proposed a resolution instructing the governing bodies of the Federation to rid the trade union movement of interference by non-trade union bodies, to take steps to prevent the funds of an affiliated body being used to subsidize non-trade union organizations, as well as all other steps necessary to keep trade union activity within its proper sphere. The resolution was carried.

At the end of June, 1940, the Federation's membership had fallen to 53,000, to rise again to 66,000 by the end of the year. The increase continued during the present year. In the months of January and February the affiliated unions enrolled 17,000 members, bringing the total to 83,000.

Swedish Federation of Trade Unions

Membership of the Swedish Federation of Trade Unions advanced 1.03 per cent in 1940, the result chiefly of large numbers of women joining the affiliated unions.

The Federation at present comprises 46 affiliated unions with a total of 7,862 local and district branches. On 31st December, 1940, total membership was 971,103 (compared with a population of 6,000,000), of whom 175,094 were women. Female membership during 1940 increased 6 per cent, and male membership by 0.1 per cent.

In 1940 the Federation registered the affiliation of the Union of Employees of State Water Power Stations.

The Confederation of Workers of Mexico

The general secretary of the C.T.M. (*Confederación de Trabajadores de México*), Vicente Lombardo Toledano, has laid down his office and withdrawn from the Confederation. His successor is Fidel Velasquez, previously organizing secretary of the Executive Committee of the Confederation.

On 17th March last the National Committee of the C.T.M. issued a declaration urging all the workers' organizations of the country to join the Mexican Revolutionary Party.

In the declaration the National Committee states that the present war is a grave menace to the independence of Mexico,

"which to-day more than ever needs to be based on crystal-clear conduct of good relations of mutual respect with all nations, and especially with the United States of America." The danger lurks inside the country where there is a Fifth Column composed of organizations "hoisting deceitfully the Mexican flag," which "are in reality groupings of Fascist character, and are under the direct influence, as veritable appendages, of the German Nazis, Spanish Phalangists and Italian Fascists, who act as political leaders or technical instructors. All of them now come out as 'anti-Imperialists,' rabid anti-Yankees and defenders of our sovereignty . . ." but "are in reality serving the interests of the Fascist Axis, which would like to make use of Mexico as a springboard in its struggle against the United States."

The National Committee calls for vigilance against these provocateurs in the service of foreign powers, and for "the repression with iron hand of the harmful work which is being carried on. . . ."

The National Committee then defends the right of workers' organizations to have international relations, and affirms its "desire to remain united in aspirations with the workers throughout the world." But with the object of avoiding "that the popular organizations genuinely composed of Mexican patriots and workers of unblemished revolutionary conscience should be confused with those who call themselves patriots and pacifists, but who are only instruments of the Axis powers," the Confederation urges the workers' organizations, first, to join the Mexican Revolutionary Party, and second, "the suspension of the links of friendship and revolutionary ideology which they maintain with European institutions. . . ." With regard to international relations, the Confederation envisages "the maintenance and strengthening, exclusively, of the links which unite our organizations and our people with the peoples and labour organizations of the American Continent, which constitute a bundle of wills in favour of peace and genuine democracy."

The declaration concludes:

"Our proposal that the P.R.M. (Mexican Revolutionary Party) shall be the institution under whose revolutionary banner shall march all, absolutely all, revolutionary groups, of every shade of opinion, will be interpreted, we believe, as one step further towards the great national unification for which President Avila Camacho has asked in the interests of the Fatherland."

The C.T.M. has approached the C.R.O.M. (*Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana*), a rival national federation of trade unions, with a proposal for a "solidarity and non-aggression pact." The National Council of the C.R.O.M. has agreed to enter into negotiations on the subject.

An agreement on such lines was come to in March last between the two local federations of trade unions in Orizaba, which are respectively members of the C.T.M. and the C.R.O.M.

INTER-AMERICAN SOCIAL SECURITY COLLABORATION

A meeting held at Lima on 12th December, 1940, discussed the bringing about of collaboration between social security institutions existing in American countries. Representatives attended from the governments of Peru, Argentina and Chile and from the social security institutions of Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Chile, United States and Bolivia. Four resolutions were adopted, providing for the constitution of an inter-American Committee to Forward Social Security, which is to arrange a Conference on Social Security and to work in relation with the International Labour Office. The I.L.O. is asked to interest the American states in the work planned and to set up a general secretariat. The first two tasks assigned to the committee are the preparation, in conjunction with the I.L.O. and the social security institutions of the American states, of a handbook on social security and an analysis of the various

approaches to social security which have been and are being developed in the different countries of the world.

The director of the I.L.O., Mr. John G. Winant, and the chief of the Social Security Section of the I.L.O., Mr. O. Stein, were present at the meeting and promised to give the committee the utmost possible support. The diplomatic representatives of Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela promised to recommend their governments to take part in the work of the committee.

Unemployment and Old Age Pensions

Statistics recently published in Switzerland show that about one half of all unemployed persons are over 50 years of age, and that over a quarter are more than 60 years of age.

Swiss trade unions conclude from this fact that a reorganization of the system of old age pensions, involving a reduction of the pensionable age, should have priority to all other social measures.

END OF WORKERS' ADMINISTRATION OF THE MEXICAN RAILWAYS

On 1st May, 1938, the Mexican Government handed over to the *Sindicato de Trabajadores Ferrocarrileros de la Republica Mexicana* (Railway Workers' Union of the Mexican Republic) the administration of the 8,000 mile long Mexican National Railways. Though it inevitably gave rise to misgivings, it was an interesting experiment, and it is with regret that we have to report that it has proved a failure. The railways were handed over, on 6th January, 1941, to a public Corporation set up by an Act adopted unanimously by the Mexican Congress a few days earlier.

In the atmosphere of criminations and recriminations which inevitably surrounds a change of policy of such importance, it is somewhat difficult to disentangle the causes of the failure, but there is no doubt that they are many. One of them undoubtedly lies in the divided nature of the responsibilities which the Union assumed as administrator of the railways. On the one hand it was responsible to its members, in whose interests it presumably agreed to manage the railways, and who naturally looked to it for a progressive improvement of their working conditions; on the other hand it had conflicting responsibilities towards the users of the railways, who expected a cheap and efficient service, and the Government, as representing the nation, which not only required that the railways should be self-supporting, but even that they should contribute 5.64 per cent of their gross revenue in relief of taxation—or, if you like, as a return on the capital invested. The preamble to the Bill submitted to Congress refers to this point. It says:

"The Railway Workers' Union at present plays, within the system of Labour Administration of the railways, a dual rôle which denaturalizes its functions and leads to frequent contradictions and disadvantages both for the workers and the Government. If the Union manages the railways it is very difficult for it to fulfil its task as a free defender of the economic and social interests of its members, and it is also very difficult for it to carry out the reorganization of the railways themselves . . . without its function as a trade union coming at every moment into conflict with its function as administrator. This duality of functions can only be properly resolved by leaving to the Union its rôle as representative of the workers of the railways, subject to a collective agreement which will determine the relations between these workers and the undertaking, and attributing to the Government the rôle of administrator of a public service which forms part of the national patrimony. . . . If the Administration of the Railways is organized in this way it will not only be able to carry out the full programme of reorganization of this public service, but it will be possible to secure better discipline among the elements concerned, and a greater sense of responsibility. . . ."

There is no doubt that the difficulties inherent in this duality have made themselves felt on more than one occasion. In July, 1940, the General Manager and Board of the Workers' Administration were forced by the Union to resign when the proposed certain changes in working conditions for the purpose of affecting savings.

A further likely cause of failure that immediately suggests itself—particularly in the case of a country like Mexico, with relatively low educational standards—is lack of ability among the persons appointed to manage the railways. It does not seem to have been operative in the case under review, however, for not

only does the Government, in the Articles of Constitution of the new Corporation which has taken over the railways, provide that three of the seven members of the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Union, but one of the four members it has appointed to represent its own interests is also a member of the Union, and a former general manager in the Workers' Administration. Independent reports we have received from Mexico, further testify to the high level of intelligence and capacity, relatively to other classes of workers, among the Mexican railwaymen. On the other hand social and educational development in Mexico has hardly reached a stage that would seem to justify so advanced an experiment, particularly as the trade union movement is still a comparatively young one.

There is little doubt, however, that the main causes of the failure of the Mexican Railway Workers' Union to make a success of the job they had undertaken lie in the nature and magnitude of the job itself. It must be remembered that they took over a railway system that the Government had previously been unable to manage any more successfully than the private companies that had previously owned it.

The Railway Committee of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, reporting on the Bill to transfer the railways to the new Corporation, had some interesting remarks to make on this subject:

"The railways in our country were not planned mainly for the purpose of serving its economic and social interests. They were conceived as mere appendages of the great network of railways in the United States, and as complementary to the shipping companies whose vessels call at the port of Vera Cruz, so that foreign capital might draw from our country the raw materials needed for the industries of other nations, and so that foreign manufactures might be sold in our territory. In other words, our railways were planned to perpetuate, through the services they would offer, the semi-colonial character of Mexico. To this purpose we owe the fact that two important parallel lines were built from Mexico City to the United States frontier, and two almost parallel lines from the capital of the Republic to the port of Vera Cruz, while the country's great centres of population were left without easy means of communication, and important centres of production of many articles necessary to the life of the country remained cut off from the chief areas of consumption.

"Many of the evils from which our railways now suffer, and especially the lack of a complete programme to transform them into a public service that would further the economic development of the Mexican nation, spring from this defect of origin.

"It would take too long to relate all the vicissitudes through which the Mexican National Railways have passed since Mexican workers replaced those of the United States in operating the different departments of the undertaking—for at the beginning not only were our railways planned for the purposes we have already described, but they were run for years by foreign personnel. The causes of these vicissitudes were all the same: the aim of foreign interests to use the railways for their own profit, without paying any heed to the interests of Mexico; and their action—offensive to our national sovereignty—in requiring our Government to pay them damages for all the difficulties which the Revolution placed in the way of the operation of the railways; all this in accordance with the universally known imperialist tactics of forcing colonial and semi-colonial countries to guarantee to the privileged foreigner the maintenance of his privileges, without any risk or worries."

Writing as far back as 1930, T. E. Obregón said, dealing with the railway situation:

"As I see it the Administration may aggravate or attenuate the evil, but its disappearance does not depend on the Administration, since the National Railways were born condemned to bankruptcy, and are living and will continue in that state."

So much for the general aspect of the question. To come to the more particular ones, the Workers' Administration was handicapped from the very beginning by a heavy burden of debt left by previous administrations, and by the fact that tracks and rolling stock badly needed renewals and repair. In this connection rates of exchange presented a further difficulty. For their supplies and material the Mexican National Railways are naturally largely dependent on the United States. The annual bill for materials was something like \$18,000,000, and for hire of U.S. vehicles a further \$9,000,000. In addition a considerable part of the indebtedness was in U.S. dollars. At the time that the Workers' Administration took over the railways they had to pay \$3.60 Mexican for every U.S. dollar, but shortly after the rate rose to \$6.15. This meant a 70 per cent increase in these particular costs, while the terms of their agreement with the Government prevented them from raising their rates to compensate for the increase. Freight rates were in many cases quite inadequate. They have remained unchanged for many years: the Union quotes instances in which they are at present one half of what they were in the year 1908. This is aggravated by the recent great increase in motor transport which, as often happens, takes the cream of the traffic.

Another difficulty is connected with certain privileges Government departments enjoy on the railways. The first four classes of mail must be carried by the railways free of charge, and the Union quotes cases in which advantage has been taken of this fact to send motor cars, human bodies and horses by post! All further Government traffic must be carried at half the ordinary rates, and it frequently happens that a good deal of privately owned goods are carried under shelter of this privilege.

Compensation paid to former officials of the railways has also been a heavy financial burden. For

some reason or other the Federal Arbitration Board awards are nearly always in favour of such officials, and consequently claims have been frequent and heavy. The total amount of such claims at present pending—quite apart from those already granted—is no less than \$28,000,000.

This does not exhaust the difficulties with which the Workers' Administration has had to contend, but enough has been said to show that its task has been by no means an easy one, if indeed it were at all possible under the conditions imposed upon it.

The terms under which the new Corporation takes over the railways have been made easier, in that it is not rigidly bound, like the Workers' Administration, to an operating ratio of 85 per cent, as this may be increased in case of "imperious necessity," while the obligation to pay the Government 5.64 per cent of gross revenue has also been dropped, and the manner in which the remainder is to be disposed of is not specified.

For the rest the new regulations follow generally the lines of the old ones. As already mentioned, four of the seven members of the new Board of directors are appointed by the Government, and three by the Union. In both cases they are removable at will by the parties appointing them.

A novelty is the provision that the General Manager, though apparently responsible to the Board of Directors, is not appointed by them, but by the President of the Republic, an arrangement which seems likely to be a source of conflict on occasion. Such a conflict has, indeed, already arisen. At the end of March the General Manager made some changes in personnel which did not meet with the approval of the Union, and followed it up by accusing the workers of sabotage. As a result the Union withdrew its representatives in the Board of directors of the railways.

IRREGULARITY OF EMPLOYMENT ON AMERICAN RAILROADS

In the issue of January, 1941, of the *American Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen's Magazine* is published a letter received from a member of the Brotherhood.

We give here two extracts of the letter, which indicate how technical progress affects the conditions of the American railwaymen:

"Three years ago our engines carried a steam pressure of from 180 to 190 pounds per square inch; during the past two years the company has raised the pressure to 225 pounds and increased tonnage from 1,850 to 2,500. In every three trains now moving, a crew has lost a trip.

I have fifteen years rights here and 1939 was the first year that I was not able to hold the "Board" throughout the year. This year business is better than it was last but I was cut off all summer. This is

directly due to the increase in steam pressure and the greater tonnage handled.

As everyone knows who has been hitting the extra boards through the depression years, it is difficult to make a living. Every man who has alternatively been furloughed and called back during the fluctuations of business knows just how hard and uncertain that is."

* * *

"The variations in employment here result in the expenditure of everything that I make in the winter to pay off the bills that I incur during the summer when I am cut off. The same thing is true of other men in similar circumstances and I hope that the amendments recently made to the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act will serve to improve to a considerable extent conditions for those irregularly employed."