sponsored it and the organisations which by their financial contributions facilitated the enquiry and the publication of the report;

(3) suggests that reviews of the report and articles based on it be published in as many countries as possible and invites the members present to communicate to the International Student Service the names of suitable publications to which the report may be sent for review;

(4) urges that in each country a detailed study of the report be made by a qualified expert with a view to drawing conclusions applicable to the country in question and that the results of this study be published locally and also communicated to the International Student Service;

(5) asks Professor Castrilli to continue his study on the importance of demographic factors in relation to the problem of student enrolments;

(6) welcomes the creation by the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation of the Bureau international de Statistiques universitaires and the appointment of an advisory committee in connection with the Bureau;

(7) expresses the hope that the Bureau, in co-operation with other international bodies already dealing with the subject, will stimulate in each country the improvement of statistical and other information concerning higher education;

(8) requests the International Labour Office to pay special and continuous attention to

(*a*) the establishment and development of statistics of employment and unemployment of professional and technical workers; and

(*b*) any changes that may take place in the structure of the employment market (shifting occupational patterns) which bear especially on the demand for such workers;

(9) asks the International Bureau of Education of make two enquiries which would be of use to the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation in its studies, namely: (*a*) on the efforts made and the projects formulated in each country to give an adequate general education in secondary, technical and professional schools and higher institutions; and (*b*) the organisation of secondary education with a view to facilitating the educational and vocational guidance of the students;

(10) suggests that the International Student Service should resume its study of the ways and means of awakening students in institutions of higher education to the need for service in under-developed communities.

Labour Regulation in the French Colonies

Regulation of labour in the French colonies has undergone pronounced changes during recent months. The main intention of the reforms introduced is to secure general application of Book I of the French Labour and Social Welfare Code and thus to apply the contract-of-service system in force in the home country to all colonies where non-European labour is employed. The essential provisions of the Code had hitherto been extended to the " old " colonies and North

Africa only. Now, the long-term contract with criminal penalties for infringement (which was steadily growing less common in the French colonies) is tending to be replaced by an engagement of a purely civil character terminable by either party provided due notice is given. For the Native worker's old safeguards as against his employer, specified in a model contract the essential stipulations of which were laid down by law, present developments are substituting the safeguards enjoyed by the worker in the home country—namely, collective agreements between groups of employers and employed persons, the formation of trade unions, the fixing of minimum wage rates and the settlement of disputes by compulsory conciliation and arbitration. The three French Acts of 20, 21 and 24 June 1936, relating respectively to the 40-hour week, holidays with pay and collective agreements, have therefore been declared by Decree to be applicable to the colonies; and an appropriate amendment of local legislation has had to be considered.

Such is the system the main features of which were introduced in several French colonies by recent legislation. The Ministry for the Colonies has issued Decrees prescribing these reforms, which will only become actually operative in the territories in question when the necessary local administrative measures have been taken. The relevant Orders have already been promulgated in a number of oversea possessions.

Regulation of Native and European Labour in Indo-China

One of the earliest acts of the French Government was to promulgate in Indo-China the Decree of 19 January 1933, which constituted the first attempt to regulate the free labour of Native workers but which had not previously been operative. This Decree simply regulated women's and children's work and laid down minimum standards of hygiene for industrial and commercial establishments. Considering that the time had come to give Indo-China a homogeneous and complete set of regulations concerning Native labour, the Government issued on 30 December 1936 a Decree "to regulate the conditions of work of the Natives of Indo-China and assimilated persons"[1]; the principal provisions of this Decree are summarised below.

Compulsory labour is prohibited. It may, however, be exacted, on a transitional and exceptional basis, under the conditions laid down in the Decree of 21 August 1930 and the Orders of 5 and 6 February 1932.

Labour dues may always be commuted.

Contract labour remains governed by the special rules concerning it (Orders of 25 October 1927 and subsequent amending measures).

Chapter II of the Decree introduces Indo-China's first apprenticeship scheme. No child under 12 years of age may be engaged as an apprentice; at the age of 20 the apprentice becomes a worker. In workshops other than those of handicraftsmen the number of apprentices may in no case exceed one-third of the number of workers. Every undertaking engaged in an industry or trade in which technical training is required, and employing over 30 skilled workers, must have a number of apprentices not inferior to one-tenth of the number of workers.

[1] *Journal officiel de la République française*, 31 Dec. 1936. The Decree was promulgated by Order of 27 January 1937.

Chapter III concerns the contract of employment. This is subject to the rules of civil law, and may take any form which it suits the contracting parties to adopt. It may be oral or in writing. Services may be hired only for a period or for a specified job ; failing proof of an agreement to the contrary, the duration of a contract is determined by the custom of the locality.

Industrial, mining and commercial undertakings employing more than 25 workers must frame work-rules containing provisions relating to the organisation of work inside the undertaking, discipline, hygiene, safety, conditions of engagement, wages, etc. These rules must be approved by the factory inspectorate and posted at the workplace in French and in the Native language.

Fines are prohibited.

Services hired for an unspecified period may cease at any moment at the desire of either contracting party. The cancellation of a contract at the desire of one party may be a ground for the payment of damages.

Cessation of work by women for 8 consecutive weeks during the period of confinement may not be held to justify the breach of the contract by the employer ; and any agreement to the contrary is null and void.

The sub-contractor (*cai-tâcheron*) who has concluded a written or oral contract with the employer, relating to labour, supplies, or the performance of specified work, is required to treat his workers in accordance with the minimum standards laid down in the Decree. If the sub-contractor becomes insolvent, his responsibility for the payment of wages and other legal obligations devolves upon the employer.

General labour regulations must be drawn up after discussion by the employers or their representatives on the one hand, and by the factory inspectorate, representing the employed persons, on the other ; these regulations must contain provisions concerning basic wage rates, annual holidays with pay, the organisation of apprenticeship, and the procedure for the settlement of industrial disputes. If the representatives of a trade or industry and the factory inspector (representing the workers) fail to agree, the case must be submitted to an arbitration board. As a rule, regulations must be reviewed annually.

Binding minimum wage rates must be fixed in all industrial and commercial occupations, for each category of persons employed (men, women and children) and for each region, account being taken of their needs. Rates for piece work must be such as to permit a worker of average skill to earn in the statutory working day a wage at least equal to the minimum daily subsistence rate fixed for the region. Wages must be paid at least once a month, in legal tender. In case of dispute concerning the payment of wages, the onus of proof of discharge of his liabilities lies on the employer. The wages of workers and salaried employees have precedence as provided in Art. 2101 of the Civil Code. The employer may not make deductions from wages in respect of supplies furnished, except in the case of tools and apparatus needed for the work and not returned by the worker on his departure, materials, etc. used by and in the charge of the worker ; and sums advanced for the purchase of such objects.

Cash advances made to workers by employers may only be recovered by the latter by means of successive deductions from wages not exceeding one-tenth of the wages due on each occasion.

Employers' shops—i.e., any establishments in which the employer is interested in the sale or transfer of goods to the employee—are permitted on the following three conditions only : (1) that the workers are not obliged to buy ; (2) that sales bring no profit to the employer

or his agent; and (3) that the shop accounts are completely separate in each case.

The recruiting of contract labour remains subject to the general and local regulations already issued, whereas that of free labour will be governed by Orders of the Governor-General. Free employment exchanges will be established wherever the need is felt.

Chapter IV of the Decree deals with conditions of work. Any undertaking desiring to employ labour in commerce or industry must notify the local factory inspectorate to that effect.

Children may not be employed in industry, mining or commerce till they have reached the age of 12 years. Factory inspectors may at any time require children and young persons between 12 and 18 years, who are already employed, to be examined by a doctor in the public service with a view to ascertaining whether the work done by them is beyond their strength; if so, the inspector may require their transfer to other work or their removal from the undertaking. In orphanages and benevolent institutions giving primary education, the time devoted to manual or vocational training for children under 12 years may not exceed 5 hours a day.

In industrial, mining and commercial establishments of every sort, the actual hours of work of manual workers and salaried employees of either sex may not exceed 9 in the day from 1 January 1937, and 8 in the day from 1 January 1938. In underground work, the hours actually spent by a worker in the mine may not exceed 9 in the day until the end of 1937, and 8 as from 1 January 1938 onward. Any reduction in hours involved by the enforcement of these provisions may in no case give rise to a reduction in wages.

All night work—i.e., work between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.—is prohibited for boys under 18 and for women and girls of any age; these categories of workers must have a night interval of at least 11 consecutive hours. Temporary exemptions for specified industries, engaged in working-up raw or other materials subject to rapid deterioration, may be authorised by Order of the Governor-General.

Salaried employees, manual workers and apprentices employed in an industrial, mining or commercial undertaking of any sort may not be employed for more than 6 consecutive days.

The rest-period provided for women at the time of confinement does not entitle them to wages. During the first year following confinement the mother is allowed to nurse her child in the establishment where she is employed; she is entitled to a break of 20 minutes for this purpose during the morning spell of work and a second similar break during the afternoon spell.

Each manual worker, salaried employee and apprentice employed in industry, mining or commerce or a liberal profession is entitled, after one year's work in an undertaking, to an annual holiday with pay of not less than 5 days as from 1 January 1937 and not less than 10 days as from 1 January 1938.

Women and girls, irrespective of age, and boys under 15 years may not be employed on underground work.

No child of either sex under 12 years of age may be employed as artiste or extra performer in a theatre, *café-concert*, circus or itinerant exhibition.

Chapter VI of the Decree deals with the workers' health and safety. The principal provisions required in this connection concern the fencing of motors and movable parts of machinery and transmission gear, lighting and ventilation of workplaces, removal of fumes, dust, vapour, etc. In some cases the employer may be required to pro-

vide accommodation for all or part of his staff. A supply of chemically and bacteriologically suitable drinking water is to be made available at the employer's expense for the workers at their workplaces. The employer must also provide a prophylactic quinine service at the workplaces, and must in certain cases arrange for the presence of a doctor or male nurse. The different types of dangerous and unhealthy work which may not be done by women or children will be determined by Order of the Governor-General. The use of lead compounds in painting buildings is prohibited, both for inside and for outside work.

Chapter VII concerns industrial accidents. In industrial, commercial and agricultural undertakings, persons injured in such accidents or their surviving relatives will be entitled to compensation from the employer, provided the incapacity for work lasts for more than four days. Such compensation is payable whether or not the injured person was at fault, unless he deliberately caused the accident.

Chapter VIII deals with inspection. The enforcement of the Decree is to be supervised by the Inspector-General of Labour, the labour inspectors and their assistants. In certain cases the administrative officials may be authorised, by order of the principal administrative officer of each State, to enforce the Decree conjointly with the inspectors.

The provisions of the Decree of 30 January 1929, which give Labour Supervisors summary jurisdiction to punish infringements of contracts of work, remain fully in force.

Chapter IX deals with penalties. Most infringements of the provisions of the Decree are punishable by penalties of from one to 10 francs, or from 10 to 15 francs for a second offence.

Chapter X relates to jurisdiction. As regards collective disputes between employers and workers, the provisions of the Decree of 2 April 1932 (conciliation and arbitration) remain in force. As regards the settlement of individual disputes, the provisions of the Decree of 29 April 1930 remain in force although later on the procedure will be simplified by the issue of a Decree. The settlement of disputes not adjusted by the conciliation committees is referred to the competent courts.

The problem of adapting the social Acts of June 1936 to Indo-China had also to be solved. With this object, an Order of the Governor-General dated 13 July 1936 established a committee to prepare suggestions " concerning the means of applying in Indo-China the new conditions governing relations between employers and employed persons, and to draft the regulations required to bring local legislation into harmony with the social Acts recently voted in the home country ". This committee, over which the Secretary-General of the General Government of French Indo-China presided, comprised representatives of the French administration and population, the Native administration and population, and commerce, industry and agriculture. After consulting the local authorities, it came to the following conclusions : there being no occupational or trade association in Indo-China, collective agreements could not be introduced in the colony ; as regards enforcement of the Act limiting hours of work, the 48-hour week not having been introduced in the colony it would be impossible to introduce the 40-hour week at a single stroke ; the 40-hour week Act should, however, be introduced gradually.

The conditions of work of Europeans and assimilated persons

employed in Indo-China had never been governed by comprehensive regulations. The Ministry for the Colonies considered that the time had come to give this group of workers a charter as complete as that governing Native labour; and this was the object of the Decree of 24 February 1937.[1] The general intention of the measure is to give European workers established in Indo-China the benefit of the French labour code, while taking local conditions into account. Most of the provisions of this Decree are identical with those of the Decree of 30 December 1936 concerning Native labour, the essential features of which are summarised above; only the provisions for the protection of Europeans and assimilated persons which differ from those relating to Native workers need therefore be mentioned.

Articles of apprenticeship as concluded in France are not commonly found in Indo-China. In the absence of formal statutory regulation, section 7 of the Decree therefore empowers the courts to determine, having regard to the circumstances, the locality, and the state of social development, "what provisions should be applied by analogy to persons who, though not bound by such articles, should nevertheless be considered as apprentices". Moreover, the principal administrative officers of the States have power to regulate these matters by Order (which must take local conditions into account and requires the approval of the Governor-General), particularly as regards articles of apprenticeship not made out in writing. It should be noted that the minimum age for apprentices is fixed at 14 years (as against 12 years for Natives).

As regards the contract of employment, section 19 of the Decree provides that workers and salaried employees of French nationality, when leaving an undertaking at the end of an engagement or by reason of dismissal, other than for serious misconduct, are entitled to an inclusive payment of 100 piastres for each year passed therein. Undertakings which have already set up welfare funds providing benefits at least equal to the above may be exempted by Order of the Governor-General from the obligation to conform with this rule. Moreover, employers remain free to arrange that their employees shall receive compensation at a higher level at the end of their agreements or on dismissal.

It was considered that the travelling expenses of employed persons recruited outside Indo-China should normally be paid by the employer. Nevertheless, in order not to exclude a partial recovery of these expenses by the employer in certain cases, it is provided (section 46, paragraph 4) that deductions may be made from wages or salaries in respect of travelling expenses, if any; but such deduction is only permitted if an express stipulation to that effect has been made in advance, and may not apply to more than half the expenses in question.

Section 52 provides that the rights of married women of French nationality over the product of their labour and the savings resulting therefrom shall be determined by the provisions of the Act of 13 July 1907 concerning the individual earnings of married women and the contributions of husband and wife to household expenses.

The minimum age for admission to industrial or commercial employment is fixed at 14 years (as against 12 years for natives).

As regards hours of work, it was considered impossible, in view of the regulations already issued for Native labour, to accord to European workers the 40-hour week, and that the 48-hour limit prescribed by the Washington Convention must therefore suffice. This

[1] Cf. *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 3 March 1937.

limit will apply to Native workers as from 1 January 1938, the 9-hour day being authorised until that date ; consequently, up to 31 December 1937 there will be inequality between the schemes applying to Native workers and to European and assimilated persons respectively. In order to avoid any difficulties that might result, particularly as regards supervisory staffs in direct touch with Native workers, section 59 of the Decree provides that Orders of the Governor-General may allow overtime, to be paid for at a rate not less than 30 per cent. above the normal, so that the hours during which European employees are required to be present in order to conduct and supervise operations may coincide, if necessary, with the hours of attendance of Native workers.

The length of the annual holiday is fixed by the Decree at not less than a fortnight, including at least 12 working days (as against 10 days for Native workers).

As regards industrial accidents, the Decree refers back to that of 9 September 1934.

The following should also be noted : as no special scheme has been adopted for Chinese nationals in Indo-China, it follows from the Nanking Convention of 16 May 1930 that any regulation introduced for French nationals or Europeans is automatically applicable to Chinese.

Labour Regulation in French West Africa

The reform of labour legislation in French West Africa now being carried through, with the object of giving the Federation a genuinely modern and liberal labour system is not less important. A first Decree, dated 11 March 1937 [1], determined the conditions under which Chapters I and III of Book III of the French Labour Code, dealing with occupational organisations, should be applied in French West Africa.

The administrative authorities, however, considered it advisable, while laying down the principle of freedom of association, to make trade unions accessible only to those Native workers who are capable of grasping the significance of the institution. The Decree therefore states that only Natives able to speak, read and write French, and holding at least a certificate of education or some equivalent testimonial may be permitted to join unions together with Europeans. Further, in view of the organisation of the Native family in French West Africa, it seemed advisable to stipulate that a woman not enjoying European rights shall obtain the consent of her husband or the head of the family before she may join a union. It also appeared necessary to require that each union should communicate an annual statement of its financial position to the authorities, so that these may be able to follow with adequate attention the development of the first unions which may be established in the French West African colony. The unions for which provision is made may subsidise producers' and consumers' co-operative societies, and have full liberty to set up and administer offices to furnish information concerning the supply of and demand for labour.

The administrative authorities have also arranged for the representation of the occupational interests of Native workers who have not the education required for membership of a trade union proper. With this object, a Decree dated 20 March 1937 [2] enabled such workers to

[1] *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 17 March 1937.

[2] *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 24 March 1937.

form " occupational associations ". These may be set up by simple notification to the administrative authority ; but—unlike the unions proper—they cannot be bodies corporate, incorporation presupposing financial and administrative ability such as village Natives do not possess.

Another Decree dated 20 March 1937 [1] extends to West Africa the provisions of the French Act of 24 June 1936 relating to collective agreements, with such adaptation as local conditions may demand.

Collective agreements as provided for in this Decree are limited to commercial and industrial workers. The Department considered that, the state of social development reached by most persons employed in agriculture not being sufficiently advanced, it would be advisable to leave it to the administrative authorities to issue special measures giving these persons the benefit of the advantages conferred by collective agreements on more highly developed groups. The agreements must make provision for the following, *inter alia :* (1) freedom of association and freedom of opinion for workers ; (2) appointment of workers' delegates in undertakings employing more than ten persons ; (3) minimum wages for each category and region ; (4) notice of dismissal ; (5) organisation of apprenticeship in the trades in which this is called for ; (6) procedure for the settlement of disputes.

A third Decree of the same date [2] governs industrial disputes in French West Africa, and is based on the French Act of 31 December 1936, which provides that every collective dispute in industry or commerce shall be submitted to conciliation and arbitration proceedings before a strike or lock-out is proclaimed.

It is provided that associations competent to be parties to collective agreements must attempt conciliation before having recourse to strikes or lock-outs. The administrative authority will offer its services as conciliator in the case of associations not competent to be parties to collective agreements. Moreover, if a strike would be contrary to the public interest, arbitration becomes compulsory ; arbitrators chosen by the authorities then have two days in which to issue a ruling ; if unable to do so within this period, they must nominate umpires from among officials of specified grades ; after three further days' negotiation, arbitration by these officials becomes binding, but the parties may appeal against their ruling to an arbitration committee at Dakar.

Lastly, a Decree of 3 April 1937 [3] has empowered the Lieutenant-Governors of the different Colonies to issue Orders fixing the minimum wages payable to Native workers employed in commercial, industrial and agricultural undertakings.

The Decrees summarised above have already been followed by several local Orders governing their administration in the different colonies of French West Africa.[4]

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[1] *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 24 March 1937.

[2] *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 7 April 1937.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] The following may be mentioned : Administration of the Decree concerning collective agreements : Orders of 14 April 1937 for the Ivory Coast and Sudan ; administration of the Decree concerning conciliation and arbitration ; Orders of 14 April 1937 for the Ivory Coast and Sudan ; administration of the Decree concerning minimum wages ; Orders of 3 April 1937 (Niger), 14 April 1937 (Ivory Coast and Sudan), 8 June 1937 (Dakar) and 11 June 1937 (Senegal).

Regulation of Labour in Madagascar

A Decree dated 19 March 1937 [1] made the legislation concerning occupational organisations applicable in Madagascar under the same conditions as in French West Africa.

Members of trade unions must be able to speak, read and write French. Married women not enjoying European personal rights may not join unions without the written authorisation of their husbands, except where local custom does not require this. Trade unions are bodies corporate; they may subsidise producers' or consumers' co-operative societies, and have full freedom to set up and administer offices to furnish information concerning the supply of and demand for labour.

Regulation of Conditions of Work in the French Establishments in India

The French establishments in India had no labour regulation scheme until 1936. Industrial development in these possessions had made it clear that the first steps in labour legislation were called for, and a Decree of 23 May 1936 prescribed certain elementary measures relating to the workers' health and safety and to the protection of women and children. These measures proved insufficient, and it became evident that the development of the working class in the French Establishments entitled it to claim a share in the social improvements pursued in France. The Decree of 23 May 1936 was therefore replaced by another, much more complete, dated 16 April 1937. The principal provisions of the new Decree are summarised below.

Chapter I provides for the conclusion of collective agreements; by order of the Government, issued after consultation with the employers' and workers' organisations concerned, these may be declared binding for all employers and employed persons in the occupations and regions covered by them.

Chapter II concerns the payment of wages (at least once a fortnight). Fines are prohibited.

Chapter III fixes the minimum age for admission to employment in factories, workshops and works, whether public or private, at 14 years.

Chapter IV limits hours of work in the said types of undertaking to nine in the day from the date of the Decree, and eight in the day from 1 January 1938.

Chapter V prohibits night work in the said types of undertaking, unless special authorisation is given by the Governor.

Chapter VI entitles the workers to a weekly rest, and to an annual paid holiday of a fortnight after a year's consecutive employment in the undertaking.

Chapter VII entitles women to absent themselves from work for eight consecutive weeks during the period preceding and following confinement, and to receive wages for an absence of four weeks.

Chapter VIII contains provisions concerning the workers' health and safety.

Chapter IX concerns factory inspection.

Chapter X provides that trade unions may be freely established and shall be bodies corporate.

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[1] *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 19 and 20 April 1937.

Chapter XI prescribes a procedure of conciliation and arbitration in case of collective disputes.

Chapter XII lays down the principle that the employer is liable to pay compensation for industrial accidents.

Lastly, Chapter XIII fixes the penalties for infringement of the Decree.

Application of Social Legislation in the "Old" Colonies

Three Decrees dated 14 December 1936 [1] extended the provisions of the French Acts of 20, 21 and 24 June to Martinique, Guadeloupe, Réunion, Guiana, and New Caledonia. These Acts introduce the following provisions: annual holidays with pay in industry, commerce, the liberal professions, domestic service, and agriculture; the 40-hour week in industrial and commercial establishments; and collective industrial agreements. They constitute amendments to Books I and II of the Labour Code, which had already been made applicable by degrees to the "old" French colonies; and the basis for the enforcement of the new legislation therefore already existed there. The Decrees of 14 December 1936 provide that the measures required to adapt these Acts to conditions in each colony shall be issued by Orders of the respective Governors.

The three Decrees were promulgated in Guadeloupe on 14 January 1936, in Guiana on 5 February 1937, in Martinique on 13 January 1937 (Decrees concerning holidays with pay and the 40-hour week) and 3 April 1937 (Decree concerning collective agreements), and in Caledonia on 27 January 1937 (Decrees concerning the 40-hour week and collective agreements).

The first measures adapting the Decrees to conditions in the different colonies were issued as follows: in Réunion, Order of 30 April 1937 (40-hour week); in Martinique, Order of 31 January 1937 (40-hour week) and Order of 28 April 1937 (holidays with pay); in New Caledonia two Orders of 25 March 1937 (holidays with pay).

Inspection

In conclusion, mention should be made of a number of measures which either created entirely new labour inspection services in several French oversea territories or completed the inspection arrangements already existing in others.

In French Equatorial Africa, for instance, an Order of 24 July 1936 entrusted the supervision of the employment of labour, hitherto in the hands of heads of departments and sub-divisions, to a special labour inspection service under the Governor-General.

In the French Establishments in India, an Order of 2 April 1937 extended the duties of local government services as regards labour inspection, in order to bring these into conformity with the Decree of 6 April 1937 (summarised above). Henceforward these services will be competent to deal with collective disputes between employers and workers, with the workers' health and safety, occupational organisations, industrial accidents, etc.

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[1] *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 17 December 1936.

Local Native labour inspection services were established in the Sudan by Order of 26 May 1937 and at Dakar by Order of 13 March 1937.

Lastly, in Réunion an Order of 30 April 1937 placed the immigration service under the labour inspectorate.

Report of the Research Committee on the Reduction of Weekly Hours of Work in the Belgian Coal Mines[1]

The Act of 9 July 1936 provides that, a proposal having been made by the Ministers in Council, the King may progressively reduce hours actually worked in industries or branches of industries where work is done in unhealthy, dangerous or exhausting conditions to 40 in the week. Before issuing measures to apply this provision, the Government must consult the joint committee or the occupational associations of employers and workers most representative of the interests involved, as well as the Superior Labour and Social Welfare Council and, in so far as this is found necessary, the Superior Council of Public Health. The Government has therefore appointed three special Committees, one for the mining industry, one for iron and steel, and one for work in ports (dockers).

The Research Committee on the reduction of weekly hours of work in coal mines was set up by Royal Order of 21 September 1936; its terms of reference included a study of the following: (1) the means and the technical possibility of adapting the Belgian coal industry to a scheme involving shorter weekly hours of work; (2) the effects, on various hypotheses, of a reduction of hours on the cost price of coal, the activity of the coal mines and of the industry in general, the extraction of coal and the use of other industrial products; (3) the consequences to the working class of such a reform. The Committee was requested to submit its report within two months of the issue of the Order; in view of the brief period allowed, it could only study certain general aspects of the problem referred to it.

The Committee's report is divided into two parts. In the former, owing to the shortness of the time available, it examines the results of no more than a possible first step in the reduction of hours. Only two hypotheses are therefore considered: reduction to 46 and to 44 hours a week respectively. Various methods of effecting such reductions are discussed, but the Committee's study could only embrace the most immediate and the most probable consequences of certain of these methods, and then only to an incomplete extent.

The second part of the report is given up to a calculation of the variations in the cost of producing a ton of coal on the various hypo-

[1] SOURCE: *Revue du Travail* (organ of the Belgian Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), May 1937, pp. 709-783.