ORGANIZED LABOUR is an integral part of Canadian society, and so it was only fitting that the CLC should have a place in the celebrations of the Centennial Year, marking the 100th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada. In summer 1964 the federal government invited organizations, including the CLC, to sponsor significant projects to mark the occasion. The Congress officers, in turn, asked departmental directors to submit ideas.

A thought which seemed appropriate had been germinating in my mind for some time, and I drafted a memorandum recommending that the Congress and the ICFTU jointly sponsor a World Conference on Labour Education during our Centennial Year. I suggested the conference be held in Montreal at the time of the World Fair, Expo '67. This, I felt, would be an additional attraction to delegates.

The memorandum dealt with the objectives and administrative details and I asked authorization to invite the ICFTU to participate. Executive Vice-President Joe Morris informed me that the officers approved the project in principle, though they were naturally anxious to know the extent of the Congress' financial obligation. While I was unable to provide figures, I assured him I was confident, very confident, that the greater part of the budget could be raised in Canada. I felt he was more impressed with my enthusiasm for the conference than with my assurance that we could meet a significant share of the cost; but, in any event, I was authorized to approach the ICFTU.

I wrote Herbert A. Tulatz, the Assistant General Secretary at Brussels, outlining the proposal. In due course the Executive Board of that organization gave its approval, accepting our invitation and instructing the ICFTU secretariat to proceed with the necessary arrangements. The sum of $73,500 was set aside from the Solidarity Fund as the ICFTU's maximum contribution, on the understanding that this amount was to be reduced by funds raised by the CLC and a contribution from the ILO, which together had been estimated at $30,000.

In August 1965 Tulatz came to Ottawa to discuss the general composition of the conference, its scope, aims, finances, and a host of other matters. It was agreed that:

1) The conference would be held in Montreal, 16-26 August 1967.
2) The number of participants would not exceed 200.
3) Participants would be trade union officials responsible for labour education in their own unions, directors of labour colleges, and representatives from international agencies, such as the ILO and UNESCO.
4) The conference would be conducted in four languages (English, French, Spanish, and German), with simultaneous translation.
5) Tulatz and I would be co-directors. In the main he would oversee all sessions, as well as approach international agencies for financial support. I would be responsible for all technical and financial arrangements, including the solicitation
of funds from Canadian sources.

Arrangements were finalized at a meeting in Brussels, 30 March 1966, attended by a number of European education consultants. The aims of the conference were also defined. They were:

1) To examine and evaluate labour education programmes of the free trade union movement in light of the significant and rapidly — changing technological, economic, and political conditions.

2) To discuss ways and means for increasing the allocation of resources for educational activities.

3) To formulate broad policies for encouraging and convincing governments, international agencies, and the general public of the constructive and essential role that labour education plays in national development.

After the Brussels meeting I became involved in a myriad of technical and financial responsibilities. This, of course, was in addition to my duties as Director of Education, Registrar of the Labour College, and as a member of a number of committees. My life was full of interesting and exciting activities, but to complicate the situation still further, in the summer of 1966 I was about to become involved in an ICFTU assignment in Trinidad and Tobago. This was to eventually lead to a significant change in my life, that of my family, and in my career.

Early in August 1967, I took a month off from this assignment to return to Montreal and take part in the World Conference. There were some 299 delegates from 60 countries. Many of the Asian and African delegates were in their traditional multi-coloured costumes. At the back of the platform was a large mural, designed by the CLC’s own artist, the late Harry Kelman. This graphically illustrated the solidarity and vitality of the world labour movement. It was an inspiring spectacle with a truly international atmosphere.

Herbert Tulatz, as Chairman of the plenary sessions, opened the conference with a thoughtful and challenging address. He said the conference marked a turning point for the tradition-bound labour movement; labour education had to prepare trade unionists for the technical age. He expressed the hope that the conference would stimulate a broadening of the aims and methods of education in light of labour’s increasing role and responsibility in influencing economic and social policies.

CLC Executive Vice-President Joe Morris urged the delegates to welcome and propagate new ideas. The labour movement, he reminded them, was founded on principles that were often not generally accepted. Unions in both developed and underdeveloped countries needed to improve their capacity and ability to play their new role in society effectively.

There were a number of other speakers. Bernard Tacks, Vice-President of the West German Trade Union Federation (DGB), spoke of the need for greater emphasis on labour solidarity and the inclusion of political issues in educational programmes. Peter Rosenfeld, Educational Officer of the British Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, read a thoughtful paper on the necessity of preparing for such responsibilities. His presentation led to considerable discussion.

Walter G. Davis, AFL-CIO Educational Director, reported on increased polit-
ical activity on the part of the labour movement in the United States. The AFL-CIO had played a decisive role in the passage of the American Civil Rights Act in 1964. Manuel Penalver, press officer of the Venezuelan Confederation of Workers (CTV), gave an overview of the difficult political conditions unions were facing in many Latin American countries. In some their survival as free associations was tenuous. His own union, however, was growing and was giving high priority to labour education, stressing programmes that trained and encouraged workers to participate more fully in social and economic affairs.

Kalmen Kaplansky, Director of the ILO's Canadian Office, said the full utilization of human resources was the most important, pressing, and decisive issue for economic development.

The delegates were divided into five working groups for detailed discussion of various aspects of both labour and public education. Each group reported its findings and recommendations to the plenary sessions. After these reports were discussed, and in some cases amended, they formed the general consensus of the conference, which might be summarized as follows:

1) That national labour movements make every effort to increase their resources for labour education.

2) That labour education officers re-examine their programmes with a view to making them more relevant to changing economic and social conditions.

3) That education programmes include specialized training for union representatives on various public bodies; and for active involvement in political affairs, without compromising the independent status of the labour movement.

4) That free public education be made available to all people in all countries; and that vocational education be broadened to include training in the fundamentals of a number of related jobs within a trade.

5) That unions make every effort to include in their agreements provision for educational leave with pay.

In my remarks at the closing session I tried to relate the broad objectives of the conference to the discussions and recommendations of the delegates. I felt that, while the conference had succeeded in meeting its objectives, conferences and resolutions did not in themselves effect changes and improvements. There was a need for labour leaders to elevate education to a higher priority. I suggested that in countries which received United Nations assistance for their economic development, unions should press more vigorously for the inclusion of allocations for labour education as an element for achieving economic development. I also told the delegates that, through the experiences of some foreign students participating in our Canadian programmes, I had learned the importance of designing and constructing programmes in the context of local conditions. These students had found it difficult to apply or adapt Canadian problems to those prevailing in their home localities. This lesson was being reinforced by my experiences in the Caribbean.

The conference adjourned on a note of satisfaction and high expectation for the future development of labour education.