

FIRST COMMITTEE: EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

SUB-COMMITTEE C: PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON EMPLOYMENT

THE PERMANENT MIGRATION COMMITTEE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

(Note Prepared by the Representative of the International Labour Organization at the Request of the Chairman of the Sub-Commission on Economic Development of the Economic and Social Council and circulated on that occasion as E/CN.1/Sub.3/17; circulated on the present occasion in connection with the proposed Resolution on Employment)

The Permanent Migration Committee of the International Labour Organization was established in 1939 to assist in carrying forward the work in migration in which the Organization had been engaged since its inception and which had resulted inter alia in the adoption of various Conventions and Recommendations* by the International Labour Conference, and in publication of the texts of migration laws and treaties, a number of special reports and other material on the subject by the International Labour Office.**

Establishment and Terms of Reference

The Committee was set up by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office as the result of a Recommendation made by the Conference of Experts on Migration for Settlement held at the Office in 1938. Its terms of reference were originally limited to migration for settlement*** but in 1944, when it had become clear that migration for employment might also become a problem of considerable importance after the war, the terms of reference of the Committee were broadened to enable it to deal with all forms of migration.****

* Cf. The International Labour Code, 1939 (Montreal, International Labour Office, 1941), Book XI and Appendix II, pp. 700 and following.

** Cf. Idem, pp. 519, note 1, and 705, note 2.

*** International Labour Office, Minutes of the 83rd Session of the Governing Body, (April 1938), pp. 30 and 69-70 and Idem, 83th Session (June 1939), p. 37. The original title of the Committee was: Permanent Committee on Migration for Settlement.

**** Idem, 93rd. Session (May 1944), p. 30.

Membership

The membership of the Committee consists of representatives of the Governments of all States Members of the International Labour Organization which wish to participate, representatives of the Governing Body, and three experts appointed by the Governing Body, together with advisory members representing the United Nations and certain other inter-governmental organizations concerned with migration.*

First Session, August 1946**

The Committee met for the first time in Montreal in August 1946. Representatives were present from twenty-five Governments and three others sent observers. The United Nations, UNRRA and the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees were also represented.

The Agenda for this session was as follows:

- I. Exchange of views on post-war migration prospects;
- II. Forms of international co-operation capable of facilitating an organized resumption of migration;
- III. Racial discrimination in connection with migration;
- IV. The technical selection of immigrants;
- V. The resolution concerning migration adopted by the Third Conference of American States Members of the International Labour Organization.***

The Committee adopted four resolutions, two of which are in the nature of general statements of the principles which should govern international migration.

General Principles

The first of these drew attention to various factors upon which the development of migration on a large scale chiefly depends, namely, measures for the development of the industrial or agricultural resources of the countries concerned, satisfactory financial arrangements, and adequate transport and housing facilities for immigrants, and urged all countries to

* For the full membership of the Committee as at December 1946 see the Appendix to the present note.

** For a fuller account of this session see International Labour Review, January-February 1947, pp. 98-108.

*** This resolution called attention to the necessity of supplementing unilateral regulations by bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of migration, and to the lower living standards which may result from the influx of a larger number of immigrants than a country can absorb. It was considered by the Committee together with Item II, "Forms of international co-operation".

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co-operate with one another to the maximum possible extent through the appropriate organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, as well as through bilateral agreements, in order to solve these problems.

In the second general resolution, the Committee, while taking note of the right of each nation to adopt rules and regulations aimed at protecting the legitimate interests of its own population as well as of migrants, condemned practices based on racial discrimination.

The resolutions adopted on the second and fourth items on the agenda recommend further action in the field of migration by the ILO and by other international organizations concerned with this question.

International Co-operation

The resolution on the second item, namely "Forms of international co-operation capable of facilitating an organized resumption of migration movements", is comprehensive and detailed and contains a number of suggestions for action. Some of the more important of these suggestions, together with the action taken on them to date, may be summarized as follows:

(a) The Committee recommended to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office that it should consult Governments on the desirability of revising the Convention and Recommendations concerning Migration for Employment, which had been adopted at the 1939 session of the International Labour Conference, but on which so far no Government had taken action. The Convention and one Recommendation concern general principles, and methods of applying them, with respect to information and assistance to migrant workers, the regulation of recruitment, the introduction and placing of workers, and equality of treatment for foreign workers and nationals. The second Recommendation advocates the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral migration agreements, in order to ensure the application of these principles.

The suggested consultation has been undertaken and it is expected that the subject will be reconsidered shortly by the Committee.

(b) The Committee invited the Governing Body to place on the agenda of the second session the question of a model agreement to be used by the Governments in negotiating Conventions and agreements regarding migration, and to authorize the Office to consult the Governments on the points that might be inserted in such an agreement.

This consultation also has taken place and it is expected that the results will be considered in the near future by the Committee, with a view to the submission of a draft text to the International Labour Conference.

/(c) The Committee

(c) The Committee considered the question of temporary migration for employment, and suggested that the International Labour Office should continue and expand its work in this field, and in particular should study the question of guaranteeing a reasonable amount of paid employment in the country of immigration to temporary migrants.

(d) On the subjects of the assimilation of immigrants and equality of treatment the Committee suggested, among other things, that the Office should continue to study the best methods of preventing migrants from accepting inferior conditions of work, including the fixing of specific minimum wage and other labour and social standards for incorporation into international agreements concerning migration.

(e) The Committee expressed the view that there should be co-ordinated international responsibility for migration problems, more particularly for: the collection of information on migration; the sending of study missions at the request of the Governments concerned with a view to investigating settlement conditions and migration schemes; the placing at the disposal of the Governments of qualified experts and the giving of advice for formulating and carrying out migration schemes; and co-operating with Governments and with the international organizations concerned in promoting and financing migration in relation to industrial or agricultural development schemes.

(f) The Committee noted that the transportation of large numbers of workers, their reception, and in some cases their vocational training require a considerable outlay of money; and it recognized that the problem of financial assistance is one to which Governments of certain immigration countries attach great importance. It therefore invited the Governing Body to urge the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, when it considers projects of economic development, to take into account the extent to which such projects contribute towards the solution of migration problems, and, when it makes loans for economic development, to include migration costs in appropriate cases within the scope of such development.

In accordance with a decision of the Governing Body, these recommendations have been transmitted to the Bank.

Selection and Training of Migrants

The fourth item on the agenda was the question of the technical selection of migrants. The resolution on this subject calls for the establishment of criteria for such selection, for appropriate vocational training of migrants, and for the elaboration of bilateral schemes of
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training and instruction by the countries of emigration and immigration. The Committee invited the Governing Body to place on the agenda of an early session of the International Labour Conference the question of the technical selection of migrants and provisions for their training.

The Governing Body agreed at its 100th Session in October 1946 that the Office should study the question of centralizing information for training purposes and of placing such information at the disposal of emigration countries and immigration countries, and that the results of this study should be placed before the Governing Body at a later session. Consideration of the desirability of placing on the agenda of the International Labour Conference the question of the technical selection of migrants and provision for their training was deferred to a later session of the Governing Body.

Next Session of the Committee

The date* and agenda of the next session of the Permanent Migration Committee are at present under consideration by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office. It is expected that the Governing Body will fix a date in the near future and the Office is at present preparing reports on the following topics which have been proposed for the agenda of this session:

- I. Revision of the 1939 Convention and Recommendation concerning migration for employment;
- II. Co-ordination of international responsibility in migration problems;
- III. Preparation of a model agreement;
- IV. Technical selection and training of migrants.

The Office also has in hand the revision and enlargement, with a view to publication, of a detailed memorandum on Immigration Policy which was submitted to the first session of the Committee.

* The Governing Body has now decided that the session will take place in Geneva on 23 February 1948.

APPENDIX
PERMANENT MIGRATION COMMITTEE OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
MEMBERSHIP

Representatives of the Governing Body

Government group:	BRAZIL
Substitutes:	POLAND
	BELGIUM
	AUSTRALIA
Employers' group:	Mr. A. N. MOLENAAR
Substitutes:	Sir John FORBES WATSON
	Mr. COWLEY HERNANDEZ
Workers' group:	Mr. A. E. MONK
Substitutes:	Mr. P. BENGOUGH
	Mr. O. LIZZADRI

Representatives of the following States Members of the Organization

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	HAITI
ARGENTINE REPUBLIC	HUNGARY
AUSTRALIA	INDIA
BELGIUM	ITALY
BOLIVIA	MEXICO
BRAZIL	NEW ZEALAND
CHILE	PANAMA
CHINA	NETHERLANDS
COLOMBIA	PERU
CUBA	POLAND
DENMARK	PORTUGAL
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	SWEDEN
EGYPT	SWITZERLAND
ECUADOR	CZECHOSLOVAKIA
FRANCE	TURKEY
UNITED KINGDOM	URUGUAY
GREECE	VENEZUELA

YUGOSLAVIA

Experts

(appointed on nomination by the International Labour Office)

Mr. Doria de VASCONCELOS (Brazilian)	Director of Immigration Department, Sao Paulo
Mr. George WARREN (United States)	Adviser on Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Department of State.

/Substitute:

Substitute: Prof. Joseph P. CHAMBERLAIN (United States)

Mr. P. van ZEELAND Senator
(Belgian)

Advisory Members

Representatives of other international organizations.

United Nations.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees.
