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Measures to be adopted for increasing emigration overseas

Report¹

Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

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A.

1. Explanatory Memorandum

1. It was unanimously recognised, both by the Committee of Experts on the problems of Refugees and Over-population and by the Consultative Assembly and the Committee of Ministers that a regular flow of emigrants from Europe to the overseas countries is essential to obviate the dangers arising from a surplus population in Western Europe. The competent international organisations have shown the same concern and have, in addition, pointed out that it was essential that the ad hoc organisations should facilitate the transport of emigrants and provide more openings in the immigration countries.

2. Now that I. R. O., after repatriating or resettling more than a million persons, has closed down, there is only one organisation which deals effectively with the transport of emigrants. This organisation, called the "Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe" or "P. I. C. M. M. E." was set up at Brussels in December 1951. The reason for its creation was the fact that the problem of surplus elements of population and refugees "is of such magnitude as to represent a serious obstacle to European co-operation and economic viability. It is, however, only provisional (from 1st January, 1952, to 31st December, 1952) and is concerned exclusively with organising transport, the national services being responsible for all operations preceding or following the actual movement of emigrant.

3. This organisation deals not only with the refugees who were formerly the concern of I. R. O., but also with the German, Austrian, Greek, Dutch and Italian emigrants. It does not therefore, like I. R. O., limit its activities to the cause of refugees but works on the lines recommended by the Council of Europe, which wishes that the refugee problem should be studied and solved concurrently with that of over-population.

4. Unfortunately, unless its mandate is renewed, P. I. C. M. M. E. is to cease operating at the end of this year. Any break in the flow of emigration would under present conditions have unfortunate social consequences. It would therefore be desirable that this organisation should continue its work for a longer period.

5. The organisation in question includes among its members the Governments interested in the question both from the emigration and immigration point of view, as well as Governments which, although not directly concerned, nevertheless wish to give their support to an international effort designed to assist the countries of Europe which are over-populated and to encourage immigration into the underpopulated overseas countries.

6. The following countries are members of this organisation²: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, France, the German Federal Republic, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway (subject to ratification), Sweden, Switzerland, U. S. A. and Venezuela. A certain number of the Member States of the Council of Europe (Iceland, Ireland, the Saar, Turkey, the United Kingdom), have not yet joined P. I. C. M. M. E., and the Council of Europe might invite the Governments in question to join the Organisation. They would be warmly welcomed. Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, France, the German Federal Republic, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway (subject to ratification), Sweden, Switzerland, U. S. A. and Venezuela. A certain number of the Member States of the Council of Europe (Iceland, Ireland, the Saar, Turkey, the United Kingdom), have not yet joined P. I. C. M. M. E., and the Council of Europe might invite the Governments in question to join the Organisation. They would be warmly welcomed.

7. The initial results obtained by P. I. C. M. M. E. give reason to hope that it will fulfil its programme for 1952 : namely, the transport overseas of 137,000 emigrants. In fact, of the 137,000 persons who are to emigrate this year, the number actually transported reached a total of 58,040 by 30th August, 1952. Nevertheless, the P. I. C. M. M. E. programmes are too limited to give the over-populated countries all the relief which they urgently need. The provisional nature of the organisation, moreover, precludes long-term plans which would facilitate migration operations from a technical point of view.

8. Thus our Committee recommends not only that P. I. C. M. M. E. continue in operation but also that measures be taken to intensify the rate of emigration. At the last meeting of P. I. C. M. M. E. held at Washington from 10th to 14th June, 1952, several delegates also urged the need to widen the scope of the organisation, which for the moment is limited to the transport of emigrants.

2. The countries in *italics* are Members of the Council of Europe.

9. It is clear that emigration is not merely a question of transport. That is only one aspect of the problem. If several hundred thousand persons are to be transported yearly, as is required for the attainment of the proposed objective, the necessary conditions must exist for their settlement in the receiving countries.

10. It is therefore necessary to improve the present absorptive capacity, by taking steps to develop the present methods of emigration, with regard both to the preparation of emigrants and to their receptions. Under the first head it will be necessary to extend the means of information and the preparatory schooling of emigrants and to improve or expand occupational and linguistic training. Under the second head it will be necessary to perfect the services for receiving emigrants and finding them employment.

11. The measures listed above, although enabling fuller use to be made of the present absorptive capacity, will not meet all the requirements of the over-populated countries of Europe. The absorptive capacity must therefore be increased by the economic development of certain under-developed countries. At its recent meeting in Washington, P. I. C. M. M. E. drew attention to this question also. It adopted a Motion on the lines indicated and instructed its Director-General to examine the matter.

12. The committee of Experts on the problem of Refugees and Over-population took the same view. The Committee recognised that " any substantial increase in migratory possibilities overseas would seem to depend on the increased economic development of the under-developed countries of immigration. " " any action designed to promote the latter, such as technical assistance programmes and the activities of the International Bank, would therefore seem to be a contribution to the absorption of European surplus manpower. From this point of view the solution of development programmes offering the greatest possibilities for this absorption of immigrant workers would be particularly valuable " (page 18).

13. To this end, the Member States of the Council of Europe should support and encourage all those international organisations, in particular the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation, which have undertaken this task.

14. Quite apart from these general measures for developing the under-developed countries, " special settlement projects " could be carried out at the request of Governments concerned, that is to say of the beneficiary countries. Such special projects, of limited and less ambitious scope, could be more easily carried out under present conditions. This would appear to be the objective of the work now being done by P. I. C. M. M. E. P. I. C. M. M. E. should therefore be assigned other tasks in the field of emigration, involving increased financial resources, so as to enable it to intensify the present rate of emigration and immigration and carry out special settlement projects in close co-operation with all the competent international organisations, in particular with I. L. O., in order to avoid duplication and wasted effort.

15. But it will also be the duty of the Council of Europe to adopt a common policy in the field of migration, in all its economic, financial, social and political aspects. The object of this common policy, which could be worked out through the Special Liaison Committee, would be to co-ordinate the action and decisions of Governments concerning the vocational training of emigrants, the number of emigrants from each country, their destination and the financial and material means (prefabricated houses, machines, etc.) to be assigned to P. I. C. M. M. E. The same would apply to the special settlement projects which might be contemplated by P. I. C. M. M. E. (scope of the projects, choice of beneficiary countries, etc.). The Member States of the Council of Europe would thus be able to achieve a certain unity of outlook and possibly to reach agreement on a general policy for emigration which might influence world opinion and so encourage emigration. The Committee of Experts advocated a common and co-ordinated attitude with respect to the problem of refugees and over-population. It is necessary now to achieve such an attitude in the field of migration.

16. The Committee on Population and Refugees, having regard to the above consideration, proposes that the Assembly should adopt the following draft Recommendation, which was unanimously approved by the Committee :

B. Draft Recommendation

The Assembly,

Aware that European emigration to the overseas territories is essential in order" to obviate the dangerous situation arising out of the existence of surplus elements of population in Western Europe;

Having noted with satisfaction the establishment of the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe, and the effective contribution which it has made to the solution of this problem despite the limited means at its disposal;

Considering that all the Member States of the Council should lend their support to this organisation and accede thereto;

Being of the opinion that the term of one year and the scope of action of this organisation are inadequate under present conditions ;

Considering that the present migratory movements do not give the emigration countries the relief which they need and do not allow all the possibilities offered by the immigration countries to be put to full use;

Convinced that emigration is conditioned by the problem of the economic development of the immigration countries;

Considering that all the necessary steps should be taken to maintain and increase emigration,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers should :

1. Invite the Governments of Member States which are not yet parties to the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe to accede to that organisation as soon as possible;
2. Propose that the Governments of the Member States of the Council of Europe which are members of the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe should take suitable steps to bring about an extension of the mandate of the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for a minimum period of four to five years ;
3. Suggest to the Governments of Member States that they extend the scope of this Intergovernmental Committee, while avoiding any duplication with the work of the compèlent international organisations, particularly I. L. O., and increase the financial resources of the Committee to enable it to intensify the present rate of emigration and immigration and to carry out special settlement projects at the request of the Governments concerned and in close co-operation with all the competent international organisations;
4. Support all action taken in the technical and economic field which furthers the economic assimilation of emigrants from Western Europe ;
5. Consult together, within the framework of the Council of Europe, in order to reach agreement on a common policy in the field of migration, with particular respect to co-ordinating their activities and decisions in regard to the financial and material resources to be assigned to the Intergovernmental Committee as also to the implementation of the special settlement projects (scope and choice of beneficiary countries) which might be proposed or contemplated by the said Intergovernmental Committee;
6. Suggest to the Governments of Member States that they invite the Inter-Governmental Committee to submit detailed reports of its work to the Consultative Assembly in order to enable it to keep in full touch with the whole range of the Committee's activities.