



Geneva, July 10th, 1931.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION

UNEMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

The Unemployment Committee, which was appointed by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, met on July 1st and 2nd, 1931, at the International Labour Office, Geneva. The following delegates were present:

1. *Delegates appointed by the European Commission:*

Germany: Dr. Oscar WEIGERT (assisted by Mme. Margarete EHLERF);
Austria: M. Karl FORCHHEIMER;
Denmark: M. Kristian ERIKSEN;
Great Britain: Mr. James Alan BARLOW;
Czechoslovakia: M. Zdenek FIERLINGER (assisted by Dr. Eugène STERN);
Yugoslavia: M. Douchan YEREMITCH.

2. *Delegates appointed by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office:*

Government Group:

M. G. DE MICHELIS (Italy);
M. Jean ROSNER (Poland), substitute for M. F. SOKAL;

Employers' Group:

M. Gino OLIVETTI (Italy);
M. Hans VOGEL (Germany);

Workers' Group:

M. L. JOUHAUX (France);
M. Ch. SCHÜRCH (Switzerland);

3. M. Ch. PICQUENARD (France), who had been invited as the result of a decision of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to place before the Committee the point of view of France as a country of immigration.

The Committee elected M. DE MICHELIS as Chairman. It held two plenary sittings on July 1st, and set up three Sub-Committees to deal respectively with the following points:

1. Placing Work.
2. Public Works.
3. Co-operation of the factors of production.

At a plenary sitting held on July 2nd, the Committee adopted, in the following form, the draft resolutions presented by the Sub-Committees:

I. PLACING WORK.

“ The Unemployment Committee:

“ In view of the necessity of favouring an international migration of workers which might balance in Europe as exactly and rapidly as possible the supply of, and demand for, labour, in so far as this cannot be done within the countries concerned;

“ Recommends the development of the policy of bilateral agreements already adopted by several European countries for organising the migration of workers, and in particular for recruiting workers in one country for employment in another and also for ensuring to the workers thus recruited equality of treatment with nationals, together with suitable employment and living conditions;

“ And requests the Commission of Enquiry for European Union to submit to the Council of the League of Nations the following proposals:

“ 1. That a technical placing Conference should be convened by the International Labour Office in the near future;

“ 2. That Governments should be asked to send experts on placing as delegates to this Conference. The Governing Body of the International Labour Office should also be invited to send to the Conference as delegates representatives of the Employers' Group and of the Workers' Group of the Governing Body;

“ 3. That, as the object of the Conference will be to investigate the means of co-ordinating the national placing services on a European scale, its agenda should be as follows:

“ (a) The organisation of a permanent exchange of information on the state of the labour market and the creation of the necessary international bodies;

“ (b) The means of facilitating bilateral relations between the various national placing systems for the actual transference of labour from one country to another;

“ (c) A comparison of the methods of placing in force in the various countries.

“ 4. That a temporary secretariat (composed of a member of section, a clerk and a shorthand-typist) should be set up at the International Labour Office to prepare for the Conference.”

II. PUBLIC WORKS.

“ The Unemployment Committee:

“ Has taken note of the schemes for public works communicated to the International Labour Office by several Governments.

“ It observes that these schemes, taken as a whole, are capable of providing employment for a large number of workers, not only in the actual execution of the works, but also by securing orders for numerous industries.

“ It thinks that the execution of such schemes would offer a valuable channel for the use of capital now lying idle, and so contribute to a diminution of unemployment and to a general business recovery.

“ The Committee considers that a policy of co-operation in public works would contribute to the harmonious development of the economic resources of Europe, and would take continuous account of the situation in the labour market, with a view to making employment more stable.

“ It therefore requests the Credit Problems Committee to investigate at once the means of securing the permanent international co-operation required for the execution of any works recognised as furthering the economic development of Europe and to promote for this purpose a policy of long-term credits which may inspire the confidence indispensable to lenders and secure favourable conditions to borrowers.”

III. CO-OPERATION OF THE FACTORS OF PRODUCTION.

“ The Unemployment Committee was also instructed to study the proposal made by the International Institute of Agriculture for a better use of all the elements of production.

“ It considers that the economic equilibrium of Europe would be better re-established if the surplus population which it cannot make use of could be employed for the exploitation of territories which are in a position to absorb it to good purpose. This would give free play and lend vitality to the forces which make for the economic development of the world.

“ But the problem of the transfer of the surplus active population is closely related to the search for territories which are suitable for the rational settlement of groups of human beings, economically equipped for the purpose, for land development, the exploitation of the soil, the development of commerce and industry arising therefrom, and also for increasing the purchasing power of the native populations and the constitution of fresh markets for the production, not only of Europe, but of the whole world.

“ Such a programme, which must depend upon international co-operation, requires the support of capital and of credits. This involves the adoption of the international policy of credits which has been proposed for other forms of economic development.

“ The Committee has given its general approval to the programme referred to in the first paragraph above. Since a more exhaustive enquiry with a view to putting this programme into operation must necessarily extend beyond Europe, it suggests that the Commission of Enquiry for European Union should propose to the Council of the League of Nations that the matter be referred for study to its competent bodies, with a view to the adoption of practical steps. For these studies it would be desirable to invite the help of the International Labour Office and the International Institute of Agriculture.”