

Rationalising the World of Work

*A Study of the ILO's Post-war Migration Efforts,
1946-1951*

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Master's Thesis, Spring 2022

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Abstract

This thesis aims to study the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) post-war migration effort, from 1946-1951. It does this by studying the Permanent Migration Committee sessions and the 1951 Naples Migration Conference, where a proposal for an extended ILO migration administration was tabled, and ultimately buried. The proposal entailed the ILO organising migration movements based on a 'rational' view of the surplus and lack of labour in different countries, to combat the 'manpower problem' that the world was facing. The administration was to be financed by the ILO's member states, and both the emigration and immigration countries were to be subjected to several provisions which aimed to protect the migrants but also prevent further difficulties after the migrant had arrived. The ILO's proposal does today seem like an unrealistic endeavour that was doomed to fail. This reading does however lack the context of the situation the world found itself in after the war. The financial, social, and political problems which emerged because of the 1929 stock market crash, and the two World Wars, had created the idea of the need to 'rationalise' labour, in effect getting the most out of a global workforce. The post-war reconstruction efforts and the believed destabilising effects of unemployment, made the world-society desperate to find an encompassing solution. The ILO was also an organisation that experienced a major shift in its areas of operation after the Second World War, and the attempted ILO migration effort had the possibility of being a part of this shift. The question was whether or not the ILO was to be restricted to the traditional instruments it worked through – being the passing of Conventions and Recommendations – in their migration effort, or if it were able to increase its own agency and impede the national sovereignty of its member states.

Acknowledgement

The last two years of pursuing my MA degree have been far from what I expected. The lack of physical teaching stemming from the pandemic challenged not only my learning experience, but also at times my motivation. Nevertheless, this paper did ultimately see the light of day, owing to perseverance, but first and foremost from the help and support of the people around me.

My journey at the University of Oslo has taken me to new places, including Dar es Salaam, Australia, Puerto Vallarta, New Delhi, and Rome (the latter not only in spirit, but in person as well). It has provided me with insights and experiences I would be remiss to be without, as the tools they have given me to understand the world around me are invaluable.

My deepest thanks go out to my supervisor, Daniel Maul, who helped my curiosity about internationalism and the potential of international co-operation flourish into what it is today. His expertise and insights helped immensely, especially as it turned my attention to the ILO, and their attempt to change the world for the better.

Special thanks to my peers, especially Märtha Örnberg. Without her insightful comments, but most importantly her cheerful disposition, my motivation and joviality would be far from what it is today. Also, thank you to Magnus Eiterjord, who so generously titled me “the second-most authority on ILO in the greater Oslo-region” (which is far from the truth, but nice nonetheless). Lastly, thanks to my girlfriend Jackie, who managed the highs and lows of my mood through the arduous experience which is thesis-writing, with grace.

This thesis is as much a group effort as an individual one.

John Follerås Grønn, Oslo, June 2022

Abbreviations

GB: Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation

GSP: Global Social Policy

ICEM: Intergovernmental Commission for European Migration

ILC: International Labour Conference

ILO: International Labour Organisation

IRO/PCIRO: International Refugee Organisation/ Interim Commission for the Intergovernmental Refugee Organisation

Office: International Labour Office

PMC: Permanent Migration Committee

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

US: United States

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“The problem is one of human waste in a world which cannot afford to dissipate its human resources”.¹ – David Morse’s message to the Naples Migration Conference.

Speaking to the 1951 Naples Migration Conference, the International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) Director-General, David Morse, voiced his concern about the pressing manpower problem that the world was facing. It was a problem accentuated after the Second World War, where a surplus of manpower in certain areas brought unemployment, while a lack in other areas hindered post-war reconstruction efforts and effective economic growth. Therefore, the Naples Migration Conference presented a radical solution, being the creation of organised migration schemes relating countries with a surplus of manpower, to a country with a lack of manpower through an ILO migration administration. The proposal had been in the workshops since the ILO’s first Permanent Migration Committee (PMC) session in 1946, and during the next five years, representatives of governments, employers, and workers acted in tandem to find a serviceable solution to the manpower problem.² Still, the proposal failed. Governments were sceptical of allowing the ILO too much agency in migration policies, a field that traditionally had been a domestic affair. The failure of the ILO’s migration administration happened only a few months before the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) was established on an American initiative, based on the same plans presented in Naples, only with membership limited to Western nations.³ Subsequently, the ILO’s migration budget decreased so much that it ultimately ceased to exist in 1953.⁴

With the benefit of hindsight, one can brand the ILO’s effort as unrealistic and overly idealistic. However, with the context of the period, we can see how the effort fit into the idea of the need to “rationalise” labour, in effect getting the most out of the global workforce.⁵ It was a development which infringed on an area which traditionally had been a domestic affair, but where an increasingly large part of the global community saw more positives than drawbacks of organised international migration, even if it infringed upon national sovereignty.

¹ David A. Morse, “Message from David A. Morse, Director-General of the International Labour Office” (Naples, October 1951), 1.

² This is due to the ILO’s tripartite structure, where governments, employers, and workers can discuss and pass Conventions and Recommendations through the ILO on equal footing.

³ Gerry Rodgers, et al. (eds.), *The International Labour Organization and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*, 1st ed. (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2009), 80.

⁴ Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, “A Brief and Somewhat Sceptical Perspective on the International Organization for Migration”, (February 1, 2019), 8-9.

⁵ Lorenzo Mechi, “Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation: the International Labour Organization and Western Europe in the Early Post-war years”, *The International History Review* 35, no. 4 (2013), 846.

Through the socioeconomic effects of the Great Depression, unemployment was seen as a powder keg, capable of undermining liberal democracies, and the international world order as a whole. This made the ILO Director-General at the time, Harold Butler, pronounce that unemployment was the worst of all social evils, and argue that it was imperative to not separate financial from social policy.⁶ It was also a solution that fit well into development policy discussions that emerged at the time, as Anthony Alcock noted, there was a “realisation that the deficit in human skill was a major bottleneck to economic development overseas”.⁷ The post-war development, such as the emergence of the liberal free trade order, and the ILO’s goal to globalise welfare policies, made the proposal seem like a non-zero-sum-game.

This thesis will explore the evolution of the ILO’s migration efforts through the PMC, how these efforts were tied to the manpower problem, and why the ILO’s proposal to establish an extended migration administration ultimately failed. The study of the ILO’s post-war migration efforts will contribute to a larger discussion on the visions international organisations and their proponents had on the post-war world order. Where some saw the possibility of a world where national sovereignty could be encroached in the spirit of utilitarianism and the good of the world community, where international ailments could be solved without the selfish interests of nations with power coming in the way, and how one could craft a world where the effects of world wars and economic recessions were a thing of the past. To the actors pushing for an expanded ILO migration administration, the future of labour was a rational one.

The Thesis will be divided into four chapters and answer the following questions: (1) “How did the ILO’s migration efforts manifest themselves during the Permanent Migration Committee sessions?” and (2) “Why did the ILO’s efforts to establish a migration administration fail?”. The first chapter introduces the topic and states the topic’s state of research, as well as the thesis’ analytical and methodological approach. The second chapter will focus on the background of the post-war migration discussion within the ILO. The third chapter will engage with primary sources, with the discussion anchored in the three sessions of the PMC in 1946, 1948, and 1949, as well as in the 1951 Naples Migration Conference. The last chapter will conclude the thesis’ findings.

⁶ Jasmien van Daele, et al. (eds.), *ILO histories: Essays on the International Labour Organization and its Impact on the World During the Twentieth Century*, International and Comparative Social History v. 12, (Lausanne: Peter Lang Verlag, 2010), 299.

⁷ Antony Alcock, *History of the International Labour Organisation* (London: Macmillan, 1971), 220.

State of Research

To understand the history of migration within the ILO it is important to understand some basic characteristics of the ILO in general, and the ILO in the post-war period. It would be beneficial to start with Jasmien Van Daele's "The International Labour Organization (ILO) in Past and Present Research". She describes the ILO as a trendsetter among international organisations, "in standard-setting (...) as well as in technical cooperation and international expertise on labour matters".⁸ Daniel Maul has also written about the ILO and their goal to achieve what they call 'a global social policy' (GSP) in the book *The International Labour Organization: 100 Years of Global Social Policy*.⁹ Maul looks at the ILO as both an actor and as an arena, and how the organisation, in their goal to achieve a GSP,¹⁰ moved beyond primarily passing labour conventions to achieve their goal, migration efforts were one of these ventures. Maul also argues that the ILO is far from a passive conduit for its member states' interests. Generally, histories of post-war ILO have revolved around the organisation turning into what Antony Alcock brands a "specialised agency"¹¹, where its Conventions increasingly became concerned with the social aspects of labour, and generally of human rights, as well as the ILO's increasing focus on technical assistance. Poverty reduction, social protection, and health also increasingly became parts of the ILO's areas of operation, showing how the ILO's perception of their field of work changed, and also how the instruments they worked through also changed.¹² Migration needs to be seen as a potential part of the ILO's 'specialized agency'. Unfortunately, little is written on the ILO and their involvement in the topic of international migration. Dzovinar Kevonian has written on the ILO and their migration efforts during the inter-war years.¹³ Parts of the book *The ILO and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*, deal with the migration topic concerning the ILO's social justice goal. The parts in question are mostly based on an unpublished paper written by W.R. Böhning, titled, "A brief account of the ILO and policies on international migration". The paper gives a chronological account of the ILO's policies, and attempted policies, in regard to international migration from 1919 to the early 1990s. The

⁸ Jasmien van Daele, "The International Labour Organization (ILO) in Past and Present Research", *International Review of Social History* 53, no. 3 (2008), 485.

⁹ Daniel Maul, *International Labour Organization: 100 years of Global Social Policy* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019). For older encompassing works on the general history of the ILO see: G. A. Johnston, *The International Labour Organisation: Its Work for Social and Economic Progress* (London: Europa, 1970).

¹⁰ Further reflections on what GSP entails and how it relates to the ILO's migration efforts will be discussed in the Key Concepts chapter.

¹¹ Alcock, History of the *International Labour Organisation*, 208.

¹² For research on how this all fits into a wider goal of achieving global social justice, see: Rodgers, et al. (eds.), *The International Labour Organization and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*.

¹³ Dzovinar Kevonian, "Enjeux de Catégorisations et Migrations Internationales: Le Bureau International du Travail et les Réfugiés (1925-1929)", *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales* 21, no. 3 (2005).

relevant parts of the book limit its research to descriptions of policies, interests, events, issues and the historical contexts the migration question found itself in. In the book, the ILO is posited as an actor looking to “impose sensible and humane rules for international migration”, although, “the approaches [the ILO] has supported have come up against the reluctance of governments, of immigration countries in particular, to accept any restrictions on their actions”.¹⁴ It therefore serves as a good starting point, but the central actor’s motivations need to be explored and contextualised to a larger degree.

The grade of which the ILO has been successful in its aims is central to the thesis,¹⁵ and can be measured in several respects. In Marcel van der Linden’s 2019 article “The International Labour Organization, 1919-2019: An Appraisal” he aims to critically appraise the ILO’s record over the preceding century. He argues that because of the centrality of colonial powers in the organisation, the ILO pursued two lines of action from the onset: the alignment of labour standards in industrialised countries, and the improvement of labour conditions in underdeveloped or ‘backwards’ countries. A fundamental tension present in the organisation was the fear that lesser developed countries would become too competitive in international labour markets based on cheap labour standards, and its prevention was one of the ILO’s stated purposes. The ILO then realigned through the 1944 Philadelphia Declaration, to focus “towards development and free trade as a promise for a better life globally”.¹⁶ It is important to note how ‘backwardness’ was seen within the ILO after the war. It was not the Global North-South context we see it as today, but rather backwardness defined by low labour standards and low cost of production. In this respect, Italy, one of the primary emigration countries, could in some respects be seen as ‘backwards’. As shown by Leonardo Baccini and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, the ratification of labour standards is historically dependent on two factors, firstly the “normative obligation that sorts ‘good’ from ‘bad states’”, and secondly the theme that ratification is tied to the state not meeting competitive disadvantages regarding trade because of it.¹⁷ The latter point also turned into what we now call the ‘social clause’.¹⁸ The post-war

¹⁴ Rodgers, et al. (eds.), *The International Labour Organization and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*, 84.

¹⁵ Reflections on *what* the ILO attempts to achieve will be discussed in the “Key Concepts” chapter further on.

¹⁶ Marcel van der Linden, “The International Labour Organization, 1919–2019: An Appraisal”, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 16, no. 2 (2019), 20.

¹⁷ Leonardo and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi Baccini, “Why do States Commit to International Labor Standards? Interdependent Ratification of Core ILO Conventions, 1948–2009”, *World Politics* 66, no. 3 (2014), 484.

¹⁸ The social clause refers to core labour standards, which are believed to be a prerequisite to reducing poverty and achieving decent living standards in a country. It is therefore believed that these standards should be applied to countries regardless of the level of development. These standards are also believed to make up for the flaws of trade liberalism which might make the acquirement of the highest form of welfare impossible. Maryke Dessing, *The Social Clause and Sustainable Development* (Geneva: International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, 2001), 3.

period showed how the ILO moved beyond mostly passing labour conventions, as ratification of the standards could improve drastically if social and economic discrepancies disappeared, something migration could help with. Although, the book *Globalizing Human Rights*, edited by Sandrine Kott and Joëlle Droux makes the point “that at the ILO, as in all international arenas, not all nations are equal”.¹⁹ In conclusion, the ILO was an organisation where different actors often pursued the same goal, but with different motivations, while equality between its member states was missing. The ‘rationalisation’ of labour through migration was therefore not necessarily rationalised in the spirit of utilitarianism, but by wealthy ILO member states rather seeing it as a way to minimise discrepancies in the cost of production among nations.²⁰

The migration effort would undoubtedly be a major change in the ILO’s area of operation, and the ILO as actors in this change needs to be explored. Frey, Kunkel, and Unger describe international organisations as “policy entrepreneurs” in the field of development policies.²¹ This view is central to this thesis, as the ILO was in many ways ‘on the ball’ with respect to labour migration in general. On a similar note, Klaas Dykmann reflects on the “civilizing mission” present in international organisations, how this is “a perceived moral obligation and personal dedication to ‘do good’ (...) often [ignoring] cultural peculiarities, the ‘otherness’ of non-Western societies”.²² This lack of cultural relativism is one which naturally would be present in an organisation which in many respects went from being a European controlled organisation in 1919, to becoming American influenced after the Second World War. International migration was a topic that often crossed socioeconomic and geopolitical lines, and the organisation’s objectivity is therefore subject to scrutiny. This goes in line with Mark Mazower’s reflection on the United Nations (UN) and the League of Nation’s ideological foundations as being “*no enchanted palace*”, but rather an attempt from the ruling powers to ensure further decades of power.²³ It would be naïve to understand the ILO as only an arena

¹⁹ Sandrine Kott and Joëlle Droux (eds.), *Globalizing Social Rights: The International Labour Organization and Beyond*, ILO century series, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 6.

²⁰ A history of the ILO and the effects of human rights, development, and decolonization discourse can be found in Daniel Maul, *Human Rights, Development and Decolonization: The International Labour Organization, 1940-70*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

A history of the ILO and the nations bordering the pacific can be found in: Jill M. Jensen and Nelson Lichtenstein (eds.), *The ILO from Geneva to the Pacific Rim: West Meets East*, 1st ed., (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

²¹ Marc Frey, Sönke Kunkel, and Corinna R. Unger (eds.), *International Organizations and Development, 1945-1990*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 12.

²² Klaas Dykmann, “Only With the Best Intentions: International Organizations as Global Civilizers”, *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 23, no. 4/5 (2014), 44-45.

²³ Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton,: Princeton University Press, 2009).

and an actor working towards the achievement of ‘global social justice’, and not recognise that the high politics of the most powerful states influenced the debate climate within the arena, and therefore the agency of the organisation.

Unsurprisingly, plenty has been written on the history of international migration. Andrés Solimano, in his book *International Migration in the Age of Crisis and Globalization*, describes that international migration has historically met barriers from both immigration and emigration countries. The immigration country often put-up policy barriers due to the fear that increased immigration would lower wages, living standards, and economic security. While emigration countries traditionally showed “a certain indifference, or benign neglect” when it came to emigration being a solution to unemployment and its connected problems. He also describes 20th-century migration as increasingly restrictive compared to periods before as “free immigration has evolved into visas, walls, [and] deportation”. It is in this restrictive environment we need to contextualise the ILO’s effort. He also points out that “the main variation in inequality in the past 150 years has been among countries rather than within countries”, and that “these international disparities create powerful incentives for international migrations”.²⁴ Susan Martin describes how states long have been wary of putting international migration on the global agenda in her book *International Migration*. However, Martin uses Stephen Krasner’s concepts of “international regimes”, regimes being “encompassing norms, principles, rules, and decision-making procedures that enable the convergence of views on issues in which divergence might otherwise predominate”. Martin then states that this makes states willing “to modify their behaviours to the dictates of the regimes, because the alternative may be far worse. In effect, international regimes emerge to preserve the prerogatives of states, not constrain them”. This posits the possibility that states might forgo short-term gain, in favour of long-term benefits.²⁵ Which, in the context of the thesis, opens up the possibility of states possibly giving up financial resources and national sovereignty in favour of the long-term benefit of a rational organisation of labour and its subsequent economic profit.

Periodisation

1944 to 1951 was a period where the ILO had to redefine itself in a post-war setting, while the post-war political landscape had yet to settle into the Cold War and decolonisation dynamics usually attributed with the post-war period. For now, we can state some characteristics of the

²⁴ Andrés Solimano, *International Migration in the Age of Crisis and Globalization: Historical and Recent Experiences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1-11.

²⁵ Susan F. Martin, *International Migration: Evolving Trends From the Early Twentieth Century to the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1-5.

period for the ILO. Firstly, the ILO redefined its goals through the declaration of Philadelphia. Whereas now the ILO stated that “poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere”,²⁶ poverty was now seen as one of the main issues the ILO had to combat after the war, and migration was seen as a tool to combat it. Secondly, even if this change led to a rhetorical change in who the organisation attempted to benefit and which regions they aimed to focus their work on, it remained a largely Western organisation. Large parts of what we today might call the ‘global south’ was still colonised, and therefore not ILO members, while the Soviet Union did not join the ILO until 1954. Lastly, lack of a major counterweight to the United States’ (US) influence led to the organisation being in danger of being used as a tool in the process to internationalise New Deal policies. US influence within the ILO was therefore almost uncontested for several years after the war. Guy Standing stated that 1944 ended the previous period which “cemented a labourist and sectoral way of looking at the world of work and economic activity” and started a period of an ILO influenced by works such as Polanyi’s *The Great Transformation* published in 1944. Polanyi looked at the market economy and the nation-state as intertwined elements, and that such societies should rather be understood as a “Market Society”. It “provided a framework for understanding how societies could recover from the horrors that stemmed from financial market hubris and the Great Crash of 1929”. The state re-embedded the economy within the society through regulation, redistribution, and social protection, a transformation the ILO was ready to assist in. Standing argues that the ILO, although aiming to spread labour standards to developing countries to reduce the idea of labour as a commodity, ushered in “an era of ‘fictitious decommodification’”, due to the need to combat an emerging Leninist model in the Soviet bloc.²⁷

Actors

Central to the study of the post-war migration effort of the ILO is to reflect on who the narrative’s actors are. This would naturally be the ILO’s tripartite actors, the government, employer, and worker delegates. The executive head of the organisation, the Governing Body (GB), and the International Labour Conference (ILC), which negotiates and adopts international labour standards, both have 2 delegates from the governments, one employer delegate, and one worker delegate. The ILC has delegates from all member states, while the GB is restricted to members being represented *de jure* by their industrial power. The GB’s role has been considerably strengthened since 1919, and the list of members has rarely changed since the last

²⁶ International Labour Organisation, *Declaration of Philadelphia*.

²⁷ Guy Standing, “The International Labour Organization”, *New Political Economy* 15, no. 2 (2010), 308-309.

modification dates in 1938.²⁸ Marieke Louis also remarks that the ILO have been described as “quadripartite” by ILO delegates because of the International Labour Office (the secretariat of the organisation, hereafter: Office) being an influential key player in the institution.²⁹ It is therefore key to view the organisation as an actor in itself, with a large degree of agency in the narrative. This mirrors Daniel Maul’s approach of seeing the ILO as an actor, as well as an arena.³⁰ It also fits well into the ILO’s first Director-General, Albert Thomas’, perception of the ILO as a ‘living thing’.³¹ Robert Cox also describes the ILO as a “Limited Monarchy”, being “a political system in which influence is structured around one central figure – the executive head – who though he plays a leading role does so subject to very real restraints”.³² The influence of the Director-General will therefore also be subject to investigation in the thesis. Lastly, while Clive Archer points out the fact that interests can be coalised within employer or worker blocs across national divisions, he also points out the fact that delegates aren’t always free from government influence and direction.³³ Lucio Baccaro’s study of two policy proposal and their adoption was based on whether or not governmental delegates coalised across the north-south divisions present in the 1990s.³⁴ Although the study was done on proposals during the 1990s, the ILO’s lack of institutional change leads me to assume that the case would be the same in 1951 as at the end of the century. In this thesis, international organisations are therefore viewed as agents seeking to promote their own goals while being restricted by the traditional agents which in effect dictate their areas of work.

Key Concepts

The concept of GSP is central to the thesis to understand how organised migration fit into the ILO’s overarching goal. On the ILO’s website, their stated goal is to “[promote] social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace”.³⁵ The manpower problem, and unemployment, were seen as problems because it undermined this peace. To the ILO, migration

²⁸ Christophe Gironde, Gilles Carbonnier (eds.), *The ILO @ 100: Addressing the Past and Future of Work and Social Protection* (Brill, 2019), 43.

²⁹ Gironde and Carbonnier (eds.), *The ILO @ 100*, 45.

³⁰ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 2.

³¹ Stephen and Nigel Haworth Hughes, “The ILO Involvement in Economic and Social Policies in the 1930s”, (unpublished paper, 2009), 9.

³² Robert W. Cox and Harold K. Jacobson, *The Anatomy of Influence: Decision Making in International Organization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 102.

³³ Clive Archer, *International Organizations*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 162-163.

³⁴ Kenneth W. Abbott, et al. (eds.), *International organizations as Orchestrators* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 284-285.

³⁵ “Mission and impact of the ILO”, 2022, accessed May 18, 2022, <https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/mission-and-objectives/lang--en/index.htm>.

might necessarily fall under their competence. The ILO did try to handle labour migration through labour standards as well, and most of the post-war migration discussions revolved around handling migration through the ILO's traditional instruments of conventions and recommendations. Generally, the ILO's labour standards have also gone beyond only dealing with the labour environment and passed into the fields of "matters of social justice, development, the alleviation of poverty, special mobility, and the distribution of wealth in an international context".³⁶ As the first Director-General Albert Thomas stated himself, the separation of the social and economic realm was a constructed one.³⁷ To achieve a GSP, the ILO needed to remove economic discrepancies between nations, as social justice could not be reached without equal opportunities. One way the ILO aimed to accomplish this was through the 'rationalisation' of manpower through migration. We also need to see social justice as removed from what it is seen as today. As Nicolas Valticos points out, social justice is not a static concept, as "the growth of a stronger sense of justice, equality and human dignity, people have become more aware of certain wrongs".³⁸ A pragmatic definition is needed in the context of the thesis. Therefore, GSP will be defined as: *the aim to achieve social justice to workers of all countries, going beyond the strict confines of labour environments*. The concept of social justice can change and mould over time, but its global applicability cannot. Although, what the ILO defined as 'global' can, as the ILO was an organisation with a relatively Western member base at the time as well, and as the discussion will show, globality in relation to the topic at hand mostly covers Europe and the Americas.

This leads us to the next key concept relevant to the thesis, the difference between *manpower* and *migration*. The concepts will be contextualised further on in the text, but at the moment we can establish that the term manpower relates to a nation or region's qualitative or quantitative labour value and that manpower programmes aim to either increase or develop the manpower in an area. The post-war world had what many described as a *manpower problem*, being a surplus of manpower in one country and a lack in another. International labour migration was therefore an imagined solution. However, compared to other manpower efforts, it also involves the ILO impeding nation-states' sovereignty in the traditionally domestic concern of migration. Even if international migration had the dual positive of helping both immigration and emigration countries, in turn increasing living standards in underdeveloped

³⁶ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 1-2.

³⁷ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 87.

³⁸ Nicolas Valticos, "Fifty Years of Standard-setting Activities by the International Labour Organisation", *International labour review* 135, no. 3-4 (1996), 394.

countries, and increasing competitiveness of the industrialised countries, manpower activities did not run the risk of giving the ILO too large of an agency and therefore met less resistance. For the ILO, ‘manpower’ became a buzzword, while ‘migration’ stayed taboo.

Theoretical and Methodological Approach

In the context of the thesis, I propose to look at the ILO as a ‘policy entrepreneur’, and in this context, we need to remember that the ILO at this point was a Western-centric organisation.³⁹ This also allows us to look at the organisation critically, and on its idealistic foundation being ‘no enchanted palace’. On the point of the ILO’s idealistic foundation, there is a chance that there was a sizable gap between the different actors in play, as the Office’s motivation might be more in line with the ILO’s stated principles than the motivations of the different national delegates. The ILO will be seen as quadripartite in this respect, and as both an actor and an arena where international labour migration was discussed. The ILO as an agent in its own organisational change also needs to be explored, as the period was one where the organisation had the need, or luxury, to reinvent itself. Laurence Helfer reflects on the use of historical institutionalism and change within the ILO, and wrote that:

[H]istorical institutionalism considers the particular historical and social contexts in which [international organisations] are born and in which they must survive. It recognizes that institutions are established by multiple actors with divergent and often conflicting preferences (...) The result is an unavoidable gap between the founders’ goals and the design features they selected to achieve them. This gap between goals and institutional structures implies that even the most homogenous founding coalition will have difficulty dictating an [international organisation’s] functions as it matures.⁴⁰

Helfer does mention that change can happen from both exogenous and endogenous sources, and it can be path-dependent or fluid and adaptive. Generally, change is hard to trace. He also brings up Barnett and Finnemore’s analysis that “view [international organisations] as ‘active agents in their own change’ with a ‘propensity toward dysfunctional, even pathological behaviour’”, and Barnett and Coleman who consider international organisations as “strategic actors that seek to ‘further their mandate (...) protect their autonomy, and minimise organisational insecurity’”.⁴¹ To conclude, changes within international organisation are

³⁹ The Western centrism stemmed from the ILO being largely US influenced, with a lack of “Southern” and Soviet membership at the time. As will be shown, Migration was a topic where the solution ended up having a very “Western” viewpoint.

⁴⁰ Laurence R. Helfer, “Understanding Change in International Organizations: Globalization and Innovation in the ILO”, *Vanderbilt Law Review* 59, no. 3 (2006), 666.

⁴¹ Helfer, “Understanding Change in International Organizations”, 667-668.

dependent upon the context it happens within, and often the organisation itself is an actor in the change. When we then reflect on the ILO's post-war migration effort we need to look at the ILO as an organisation in change, with the organisation's organs and central actors as principal catalysers for the change in question. The change which occurs needs to be contextualised in a larger history of the ILO and of the period from 1944 to 1951. The primary sources will therefore be read with this in mind.

The sources I chose to work with were the PMC session papers, as well as the Naples Migration Conference papers. These sources were chosen as it gives us a direct look into the migration debates and understanding of the evolution of the actor's stated intentions and the justifications of their viewpoints. It does also indirectly give us the political powerplay which to a large extent defined these viewpoints, which will be supplemented with the reflections on the background of the ILO's migration effort in the period. Reading these sources does not give us the entire narrative, as there undoubtedly are other primary sources available, such as internal ILO papers, and the memoirs and writings of the central actors in play. They were nonetheless chosen as it gives us the most concrete outliers of the narrative and fits into the scope of the thesis. The history of the ILO's migration efforts is still largely unexplored and begs for future research.

Chapter 2: The Evolution of Migration Questions within the ILO

After the First World War, migration across borders was controlled at an unprecedented level. The need to control and limit migration became written into several government and trade union statements during the war. Labour was now seen as a resource, and with the need to rebuild economies after the war, it was one resource countries did not want to squander. Now emigration countries became hesitant in letting workers leave the country, while immigration countries wanted to select migrants based on the type of labourers they needed. As the Great Depression also stopped large-scale migratory flows to industrialised countries, xenophobia towards immigrants increased as well. As labour immigration to industrialised European countries decreased, it increased to Latin American countries which were eager to put the labourers to use.⁴² It was only natural that the ILO would have migration as a topic, especially as the inter-war era was increasingly defined by an emerging focus on manpower.

The ILO and Migration in the Interwar Years

Migration as a topic within the ILO did start in Versailles in 1919, as emigration countries such as Italy worked in vain to get migration clauses into the Labour Charter. The main stumbling block proved to be strong US and British influence, the former did simply not want an international organisation to have any interference in their immigration affairs, while the latter preferred to leave migration matters within its dominion. At the first ILC in Washington, the topic of migrant workers was partly covered by a Convention – which only covered migrants as the Convention did aim to cover all labourers within member states – as well as two Resolutions and Recommendations. However, the Italian and French delegates pushed forward the idea of an International Emigration Commission, which subsequently was established in August 1921. It was clear that the GB was lukewarm on the Commission and handled it at arm's length. It was supposed to be permanent but could only be assembled if the Office instructed it to. This led to Italy attempting to circumvent the GB by establishing an intergovernmental conference on migration in Rome in 1924, where the Office was only given a role as an observer. The pressure that this subsequently put on the ILO did lead to the now shelved Inspection of Emigrants Convention (C021) in 1926. Which aimed to simplify the inspections of migrants onboard ships.⁴³ Nevertheless, the interwar years did show that the ILO was not ready to organise any large push to become the primary international organisation for migration,

⁴² Rodgers, et al (eds.), *The ILO and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*, 74-75.

⁴³ “C021 - Inspection of Emigrants Convention, 1926 (No. 21)”, 1926, accessed May 18, 2022, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12100:19255158787418::NO::P12100_SHOW_TEXT:Y.

and discussions on the establishment of another separate international migration body did emerge. No such body was established, and the discussions were shelved as the Great Depression and the Second World War gave the world community more pressing issues.⁴⁴ The ILO did nevertheless pass some conventions which did protect the rights of migrants⁴⁵, but as with all ILO Conventions, ratification was limited.

Migration was however a topic that bled into other areas the ILO worked with. Such as the topic of social insurance. As the ILO attempted to incorporate standards of social insurance within their Conventions, it also became apparent that these social standards had to apply to all workers, regardless of nationality, as labour migration had increasingly started to cross borders before the Great Depression. It was a sensitive topic for the ILO, as the ILO was hesitant on becoming an institutional defender for non-national workers as the organisation simply did not have the capacity to do so. What the ILO did in the beginning, was encourage states to set up mutual agreements between the immigrant and emigrant countries.⁴⁶ This promotion of bilateral agreements was relatively unproblematic and proved to be an effective way to protect migrant workers. It did of course have its limits, as the ILO could only attempt to give rights and protections to migrant workers internationally through the few conventions they passed that covered migrant workers. This preference to handle labour migration and protect labour migrants through bilateral agreements would prove to be a popular solution during the PMC sessions as well. Not only did it limit the potential influence of the ILO in national spheres, but it also made sure the states in question could control the level of dividends they would get from the other party. Whereas the ratification of ILO Conventions did involve strategic consideration of the likelihood of other states also ratifying, which more often than not led to slow ratification rates. The ILO proved to be a good facilitator in these matters, due to their statistical competence. However, as this was an ineffective way of protecting labour migrants in a global setting, the ILO did continuously look for a better method of protection.

The work the ILO did concerning the placement of refugees after the First World War also proved to be a way to experiment with migration schemes to fix labour shortages. The 1920s refugee crisis, following the First World War, had led to wage dumping, an increased

⁴⁴ Rodgers, et al (eds.) *The ILO and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*, 76-78.

⁴⁵ The Conventions passed covering migrant workers in the interwar period were: the shelved Unemployment Convention (C002), 1919; the Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention (C019), 1925; the shelved Inspection of Emigrants Convention (C021), 1926; and the Migration for Employment Convention (C066), 1939. "Conventions", 2022, accessed May 18, 2022, <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12000:0::NO>.

⁴⁶Van Daele, et al. (eds), *ILO Histories*, 178-179.

burden on social systems, competition among the poorest, and social tensions in receiving countries. It was in this view organised migration was justified, as there was a need to maintain and regulate labour markets and social systems in countries with a high number of refugees. The ILO had settled around 50 000 refugees between 1925 and 1928, many of them in France, which needed workers at the time. The efforts to place refugees in Latin American countries were however unsuccessful, as legal and financial reasons came in the way.⁴⁷ The ILO could in this way choose to have minimum requirements of social protection of incoming refugees as a precondition before an immigration country could receive the workforce.

The ILO was effective in establishing their autonomy during the period as well. Yann Stricker describes how during the 1920s, the ILO labour statisticians actively worked towards replacing the categories im-/emigration with the single category of “international migration” within the organisation’s statistics. In this way, migration could now be seen as a global phenomenon. As Stricker stated, “the category of ‘the migrant’ was in-between or above countries and therefore potentially in the scope of action of international organizations”.⁴⁸ This development was not long after the Americans and the British firmly shut down the question on if migration was going to play a role in the future of the ILO, and it showed a way the ILO could work strategically to increase their agency. What the development also shows, is that the ILO quickly managed to manufacture the foundation to further their agency within migration matters. In this instance, we could see how the labour statisticians actively worked to create the foundations for further ILO relevancy in the years to come, and as we will see in the discussions during the PMC sessions, the ILO’s bid to become the primary international body concerning migration was partly accepted because of the ILO’s statistical expertise.

There was still a watershed event that would influence the migration question within the ILO and the international community, the 1929 stock market crash, and the mass unemployment that followed. The Great Depression both helped and hindered the proposal for the ILO to become the primary international migration body. Hindered as the Great Depression contributed to a sharp decrease in migration and an increase in xenophobia in previously immigration-friendly countries such as France. It also put a serious damper on the desire to organise solutions internationally, but the primary reasons for international co-operation not

⁴⁷ Legal reasons were the states’ refusal to renew the “Nansen passports” for stateless persons and the tightening of immigration controls. Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 64-65.

⁴⁸ Yann Stricker, “‘International Migration’ Between Empire and Nation. The statistical Construction of an Ambiguous Global Category in the International Labour Office in the 1920s”, *Ethnicities* 19, no. 3 (2019), 482-483.

falling completely to the wayside was the collective fear that the depression would favour Communism. Mass unemployment was believed to be “politically and socially explosive”.⁴⁹ Herein lies the positive effect, the belief that the solution to unemployment may lay in international labour migration. Previously the ILO mostly dealt with migrant workers from a protective view, but the development helped to lift the migration debate out of the framework of the nation-state. Now the management of migration streams became a slightly more popular solution, by channelling workers from a country with a surplus of workers to a country with a lack of workers.⁵⁰ International co-operation was also seen as a must by several people. This development was summed up by ILO economist E. J. Riches, stating:

*There is a tendency, not without reason, to regard the causes of the depression as almost entirely international, and the possibilities of recovery as dependent wholly on international co-operation. Lip service to the ideals of freer trade and international co-operation is, however, accompanied, as in other countries, by tariff, trade[,] and currency problems of the very kind which tend to aggravate the world situation.*⁵¹

The 1929 stock market crash proved to make the ILO able to renew its migration claim, and in 1931 the GB offered a catalogue of measures to fight the crisis, among the claims were the coordination of labour migration.⁵² This could be interpreted a myriad of ways, all from the coordination of bilateral existing migratory schemes, or the creation of new international efforts. It did, nevertheless, prove that people within the ILO looked at migration as the solution to the manpower problem, and the socioeconomic problems it brought with it. During the 1930s, working hours, paid leave, leisure time, and night work regulations were increasingly discussed in a Keynesian framework.⁵³ A very innovative element of the new unemployment debate was regarding international public works. The subsequent ILO issued report “Unemployment and Public Works” included a call for national schemes, but also for public works which expressed an early pan-European vision of the topic.⁵⁴ As Lorenzo Mechi points out, the economic crisis had swept the possibilities of European co-operation under the rug, but its effects strengthened the foundations for a “democratic regionalist perspective”, which created the course of events that culminated in the European integration process now present through the European Union. However, more important was the development of European labour migration in post-war

⁴⁹ Hughes and Haworth, “The ILO Involvement in Economic and Social Policies in the 1930s”, 4.

⁵⁰ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 91.

⁵¹ Hughes and Haworth, “The ILO Involvement in Economic and Social Policies in the 1930s”, 7-8.

⁵² Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 88.

⁵³ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 55.

⁵⁴ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 90.

Europe.⁵⁵ Although the topic of free European labour migration was much easier to swallow than free international labour migration, it did set a precedent that these schemes might be tried on a global scale. After the Great Depression, mass unemployment had become a worldwide phenomenon, and the fear of another financial crisis set the tone for discussions on migration in the post-war years.⁵⁶

Americanisation and International New Deal Policies

To understand the motivations behind ILO's post-war migration effort, it is undoubtedly essential to understand which interests the organisation primarily served. Large economic, political, and social discrepancies defined the differences between the world's populations, and even if the ILO talked about their work in a global sense, it is unrealistic to expect an objective sense of globality in their policies. The US chose not to become an ILO member in 1919, but during the 1930s, the ILO's gravity shifted westward as the future hegemon, the US, slowly took the driver's seat, in turn starting a process of Americanisation of the ILO. This process started when the ILO moved their focus toward international public works, which got the attention of a prominent American politician, Franklin D. Roosevelt. In 1930, an ILO delegation met with the then Governor of the state of New York, who took a great interest in the ILO as he had begun to launch his own public works programmes. Two years after, Roosevelt was elected President and started a process of rapprochement with the ILO, which ended with the entry of the US in 1934.⁵⁷ This led to a period that can be defined by the 'Americanisation' of the organisation. The ILO's second Director-General, Harold Butler, made sure ILO activities focused on a new awareness of the problems of the world beyond Europe through the regionalisation of the organisation's structures and making sure non-European GB members increased. Strikingly, Butler also commissioned reports which stated that the ILO's activities should stray away from the traditional standard-setting activities of the organisation, and rather increase the work which "[regulated] 'unfair' competition and stimulate international trade".⁵⁸ The ILO's migration effort proved to benefit from this shift, as the prevention of social dumping in many ways was done through ensuring rights and protection of migrant workers in the immigration country.

The appointment of the American Republican John G. Winant as assistant director in 1934 proved that the US was committed to the ILO despite the strong isolationist sentiments

⁵⁵ Mechi, "Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation", 847.

⁵⁶ Hughes and Haworth, "The ILO Involvement in Economic and Social Policies in the 1930s", 8.

⁵⁷ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 101.

⁵⁸ Van Daele, et al. (eds.), *ILO histories*, 300-303.

within the country, and that the Roosevelt administration attached importance to the work of the ILO. Winant was appointed as Director-General in 1939, following Butler's resignation. This change manifested that the ILO's centre of gravity shifted westward, while the Roosevelt administration's lobbying of Winant to take the position showed that the process of de-Europeanisation led to an Americanisation instead.⁵⁹ As a consequence of the effects of the Great Depression, most US delegates to the ILO were New Dealers, who saw the advantages of rationalising labour migration to increase global welfare, which would subsequently, through the social clause, improve US' trade competitiveness. The Second World War also expedited a new focus on reconstruction policies. John G. Winant pointed this out in 1940 in a speech to the American Federation of Labour, where he said: "[t]he task of the ILO (...) is concerned with working at a democratic pattern for the world of tomorrow. The ILO provides machinery through which the free labour movement of the world can make known and discuss their programmes and policies of reconstruction".⁶⁰ Central for the reconstruction of the warring nations were manpower policies, and central to manpower policies were migration. At least according to the Director-General who would define a post-war ILO, David Morse.

In 1948, the American liberal, New Dealer, and internationalist, David Morse became the ILO's next Director-General.⁶¹ His election proved to make manpower take precedence as the main problem the ILO was to concern themselves with in the years to come, and migration as one of its solutions. In a speech to the GB in December 1948, he called on the ILO to use their experience on manpower and migration to achieve three objectives. Firstly, the study of the manpower problem of the world as a whole. Secondly, the Office's embarkment into the field of technical training. Lastly, as Antony Alcock stated: "the migration problem would be brought to the point where action must be taken and where the world would recognise that the ILO assumed responsibility not only for stimulating nations and organisations to go ahead with the job, but for itself taking the leadership in these activities".⁶² As will be shown in the PMC discussions, Morse's focus proved to give fuel to the ILO's migration efforts. From the onset, Morse felt the course of the ILO needed to change. As he previously had been active in

⁵⁹ Van Daele, et al. (eds.), *ILO histories*, 304-307.

⁶⁰ Van Daele, et al. (eds.), *ILO histories*, 309.

⁶¹ David Morse had devoted most of his life to issues of labour and social policy. During the 1930s he had worked with New Deal agencies, and during the war Second World War, he had worked with drafts on the re-democratization of labour relations in countries such as Germany and Italy. He had also been an advocate of extending Marshall Plan policies beyond Europe. The election of Morse was also supported by the US in the hopes that this would generate support for the Marshall Plan and early international development policies. Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 145-146.

⁶² Alcock, *History of the International Labour Organisation*, 213-214.

involving American trade unions in the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, he now used his influence to make sceptical parties agree to the European Recovery Programme. He also believed the ILO needed “a shake-up”, both in terms of their geographical scope, and in terms of the parties which traditionally proved to be the pillars of the ILO’s work, the Western states and the workers’ camp.⁶³ Under the leadership of Morse, the ILO became an international development agency, mostly through technical assistance missions. This change towards becoming a development agency, also showed that the ILO had come some way in becoming less homogenous, as Latin American countries “put increasing pressure on the ILO to respond in a concrete way to the stipulations contained in the [Declaration of Philadelphia] that poorer independent nations should also be helped in their efforts towards economic and social progress”.⁶⁴ This plea was in the end responded to in the form of technical assistance missions and manpower programmes, but not before it was attempted to be solved through migration schemes. However, the migration effort would also have to fit within the revised direction the ILO was to take after the war.

Migration within the 1944 Philadelphia Declaration

As the Second World War had shown that the international community had failed in its peacekeeping mission, the 1944 Philadelphia Declaration aimed to redefine the ILO’s post-war mission statement, and therefore also argue for the ILO’s continued relevancy. Though, the Declaration should also be studied as to how it could be used to argue for an increased ILO migration effort. And, as with the discussions during the interwar years, securing employment possibilities was vital in this respect. At the 1941 ILC in New York, acting Director-General Edward Phelan presented a report titled “The I.L.O. and Reconstruction”, which committed the ILO to the cause of liberal democracy, as well as calling for the organisation’s inclusion in post-war planning. The aim was to guide post-war policies toward the overarching social objective of the ILO. The report also stated the goal that “all men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want”, and “the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field”. Securing employment was seen as the single biggest problem to solve, as no one wanted a repeat of the same problems Europe faced in 1919. On the list of what defined the “social mandate” of the ILO, was the organisation of migration. Although, much was still to change from 1941 to 1944, and Great Britain and the US were sceptical of the ILO’s commitments.⁶⁵

⁶³ Van Daele, et al. (eds.), *ILO histories*, 368-370.

⁶⁴ Daniel Maul, “‘Help Them Move the ILO Way’: The International Labor Organization and the Modernization Discourse in the Era of Decolonization and the Cold War”, *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 3 (2009), 390.

⁶⁵ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 116-127.

The landmark 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia ended up only briefly mentioning the topic of migration, however, it poised it for discussion in the years to come. The declaration stated that it was an obligation that ILO member countries attempted to achieve “the employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainment and make their greatest contribution to the common wellbeing” (IIIb), and “the provision as a means to the attainment of this end and under adequate guarantees for all concerned, of facilities for training and the transfer of labour, including migration for employment and settlement” (IIIc).⁶⁶ Furthermore, the Philadelphia Declaration stated the importance of “high and steady volume of international trade” and the “great contribution that the international exchange of goods and services can make to higher living standards and to high levels of employment”.⁶⁷ If the ILO could weave organised migration into this mission, then they had a stronger case.

Manpower, Migration, and the Problem of Globality

After Philadelphia, it was clear that the ILO’s imagined manpower and migration efforts in many respects were interwoven. Especially as the provisions of IIIc stated that ensuring workers make use of their skills was to be achieved through means of ‘facilities for training *and* the transfer of labour, including migration’. It was however a larger international consensus of the positives of manpower initiatives, as it signalled efforts with several positive aspects and few drawbacks. Manpower initiatives were mostly about increasing qualitative or quantitative labour force values in the region in question. In turn helping underdeveloped nations increase their production capacity, while increasing the trade competitiveness of industrialised nations, realising the social clause. A similar point was brought up by Charles S. Maier in 1977, which can help us understand the hegemony of US economic policy present in the world community during the period. Maier brands it a “consensual American hegemony”, as “European leaders accepted Washington’s leadership in view of theory needs for economic and security assistance”.⁶⁸ Both the American consensual hegemony and manpower initiatives were non-zero-sum-games. As manpower policies were less contentious than migration policies, since it didn’t necessarily impede national sovereignty, it was already present in Philadelphia in 1944. The 1944 Recommendation 71 (R71) ‘Employment During the Transition from War to Peace’, tackled the problem of re-employment after the war, identifying solutions that shaped a genuine

⁶⁶ The International Labour Organization, *Declaration of Philadelphia*.

⁶⁷ Maul, *The International Labour Organization*, 131.

⁶⁸ Charles S. Maier, “The Politics of Productivity: Foundations of American International Economic Policy after World War II”, *International Organization* 31, no. 4 (1977), 630-631.

“manpower policy”, to complement the “full employment policy” invoked by European states after the War. R71 also called for precise data on labour supply and demand, and centrally administrated public-employment services,⁶⁹ setting the ILO up to stay relevant in the gathering of labour statistics.

Still, the main problem of the ILO’s migration effort might not have been migration itself, but the globality of how they viewed it. As stated previously, and as will be shown, the ILO did not give any normative value to globality but attempted to explore the possibilities of cross-Atlantic migration during the PMC sessions. However, intra-European migration seemed much more feasible and unproblematic for the ruling powers. As exemplified by the topic of European economic integration, as European labour migration turned out to have a significant role to play in the process. The ILO’s discussions on European economic migration started during the interwar period. A commercial opening was imagined if one could remove the inefficiencies related to national protectionism and could represent a “fundamental factor of rationalisation”. For politicians such as the French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand, who were positive about the idea of European economic co-operation, the main roadblock was the social obstacles to liberalisation within Europe. The Office was a bit more explicit in their reflection, stating that the lack of freedom of circulation of workers, and inadequate protection of migrant workers were the biggest problem for European economic co-operation. No consensus was reached during the interwar years, but the homogenisation of European needs after the Second World War, made the discussions take off. Now aspects such as the improvement of social security and the reconstruction of strong trade-unions were seen as the fundamental pillars of democratic reconstruction, and even more fundamental was the aim to achieve and maintain full employment.⁷⁰ The ILO did in turn participate in European stabilisation in the early post-war years, mostly through manpower efforts, and more specifically manpower efforts which aimed to “[increase] mobility of manpower” within Europe. The ILO did get the task of increasing mobility through:

The development and maintenance of well-functioning and comprehensive employment services, retraining facilities, provisions for removal grants and arrangements enabling workers to retain acquired seniority and compensation rights when they change their employment. In other words, exactly what it always had done.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Mechi, “Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation”, 847-848.

⁷⁰ Mechi, “Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation”, 848-849.

⁷¹ Mechi, “Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation”, 856-858.

The ICEM did in the end become the migration administrator. This was due to the ICEM membership being restricted, to not admit communist nations into the organisation. This was a much more favourable migration organ to the US, and to other Western European nations. Intra-European migration proved to be much easier to reconcile than global-, or 'semi-global' migration, and the ILO seemed unfit to act in the process of European economic integration because of its globality.

Chapter 3: The Evolution of the ILO's Post-war Migration Efforts through The Permanent Migration Committee

The Permanent Migration Committee was created by the GB in February 1940. It was first limited to dealing with migration for settlement but was soon expanded to also deal with industrial and agricultural migration during the Philadelphia Conference in 1944, as the GB felt the need for migration had increased, and that the ILO should have a major role in post-war migration efforts.⁷² The three PMC sessions do give us three distinct parts of the discussion on the ILO's Migration Administration. The first session was mostly about putting the issue of the manpower problem, and how migration was one of its solutions, on the agenda of the ILO, and to rally the attention of the ILO's member states to the issue. The second PMC session included reports on the revisions of the 1939 Migration for Employment Convention (C066), and the following Recommendation with an attached bilateral Model Agreement on migration, which throughout the sessions were seen as the main instruments in the ILO's migration effort. C066 aimed at ensuring the rights of labour migrants in the immigration country and prevention of "misleading propaganda".⁷³ However, the Convention had no ratifications in 1946, and therefore proved to not be of any practical use.⁷⁴ It was not before the third PMC session the discussions regarding the creation of an extended ILO migration administration were had, on the initiative of the new Director-General, David Morse, and the GB. It was at this stage clear that limiting the migration instruments to the revision of the Convention and the Recommendation would not solve the manpower problem to a degree adequate for some of the PMC representatives, while other representatives wanted widely 'ratifiable' and 'workable' instruments.

Montreal August 1946: Setting the Stage and Harmonising Interests

The first session of the PMC in Montreal in August 1946 mostly aimed to frame the manpower problem of the post-war world, and to put the efforts of how to solve the problem on the agenda. Present were 25 government representatives, three government observers⁷⁵, three advisory members from the UN, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and the

⁷² ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session" (Montreal, 1946), 2.

⁷³ "C066 - Migration for Employment Convention, 1939 (No. 66)", 1939, accessed May 18, 2022, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_SHOW_TEXT:Y.

⁷⁴ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 7.

⁷⁵ Countries represented: Australia, Argentina, Belgium, Canada (observer), Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK (observer), the US, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia (one observer one representative). ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 31-34.

Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees (IRO), three representatives from the GB, and three migration expert members appointed by the GB. The agenda was fixed as; (1) the Exchange of views on post-war migration prospects; (2) Forms of international co-operation capable of facilitating an organised resumption of migration movements after the war; (3) Racial discrimination in connection with migration; (4) The technical selection of immigrants; (5) The Resolution concerning Migration adopted by the Third Conference of American States Members of the International Labour Organisation.

On the first item on the agenda, most of the representatives agreed that a great increase in migration was favourable if the manpower problem was to be solved, but countries of immigration pointed out that migration on a large scale could not happen in the near future. Transportation was a problem, especially for migration overseas, and shipping methods were tied up in getting armed forces back to their home countries. There was also a lack of housing in immigration countries, and what was available would first go to members of their armed forces who have been demobilised in large numbers. In general, immigration countries lacked the financial resources to admit large numbers of migrants, and since migration was of international interest, “there should be consideration of aid in financing such movement”. Some emigration countries did not want to resume any migration at the time, as they needed their nationals to help with the restoration of their home country, but they would want migration to resume when possible. There was also a problem of refugees and displaced persons which needed to be resolved, which took priority over other migrations. Still, the manpower problem was pressing. The representative from France did for instance state the need for upwards of one million migrants to aid in the French restoration, while Italy had already concluded a number of bilateral migration agreements with several European countries to increase migration, although not to the scale needed to solve the manpower problems of the parties. The representative from the Inter-Governmental Committee told the conference that several Latin American governments had shown interest in the resumption of large-scale immigration, but that they were at present time unable to make definite statements as some countries did not have definite immigration policies in place.⁷⁶ A resolution was subsequently passed, which stated that the PMC:

5. Draws attention to the fact that migration on a considerable scale depends mainly on: (a) measures for the development of the industrial or agricultural resources of the countries concerned; (b) satisfactory financial arrangements; (c) adequate transportation facilities; and

⁷⁶ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, First Session”, 2-5.

*(d) housing facilities for Migrants; 6. Believes that in many cases these conditions can be fulfilled only on the basis of international co-operation.*⁷⁷

When discussing items 2 and 5, an Office report was brought forward. The Office particularly brought up three aspects of the migration problem, being the question of international co-operation in the field of financing, the need to safeguard against the lowering of national social and economic standards by immigrants, and the position of the 1939 Migration for Employment Convention.⁷⁸ The revision of C066 would during the next PMC session take centre stage in most discussions, as it proved to be the ‘safest’ option where the migration effort could be covered to some extent, while national sovereignty would be impeded the least as it didn’t involve saying yes to an ILO migration administration. It aimed at protecting the rights of working migrants, against exploitation from employers, giving them the same rights as nationals in working environments, and protecting them against “misleading propaganda”. It quickly became clear that international co-operation would only become possible with co-operation between the various international organisations. As the acting Director-General Edward Phelan pointed out: “migration is one of the general problems which cannot be the preserve of any single organisation, since it involves labour conditions, economic and financial matters[,] and political questions”.⁷⁹ The Belgian senator, and expert representative, Paul van Zeeland, did state some general characteristics which would prove to characterise the PMC discussions in the years to come. The first characterised the general traits of migration. Such that it covered all types of migratory movements, whether permanent or temporary, and secondly that they are, or are becoming, increasingly international. In the migratory movements, there are four interests concerned, “that of the migrant himself; that of the country of emigration; that of the country of immigration; and that of the world society”. As the discussions in later sessions will show, was that the migrants were seen as resources in many respects, but there was a concerted effort to protect the individuality of the migrants. The rights of the individual were not to be impeded. Van Zeeland also stated that it would be beneficial to create “a central organ for migration[,] which would have the duty of co-ordinating the activities in the respect of migration”. Lastly, on the role of the ILO, he hoped a Model Agreement might be drawn up, based on Conventions, Recommendations, and resolutions

⁷⁷ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, First Session”, 17.

⁷⁸ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, First Session”, 5.

⁷⁹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, First Session”, 2.

accepted in the past. This Model Agreement would promote the creation of bilateral agreements and ensure that the four interests previously stated would be harmonised and not diverge.⁸⁰

On the third item on the agenda, regarding racial discrimination in connection with immigrants, there was a consensus that no migrant workers were to be discriminated against on any level. Although there was consensus on the rights of nations to not admit people which didn't fit with the 'composition' of the nation in question. The Indian representative even stated that "Indians had no wish to go where they were not wanted[,] and India recognised that the right of countries to regulate the composition of their population could not be altered without their consent". The representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, New Zealand, the US, and Uruguay even pointed out that discrimination because of race was rare, but that countries "had to select those immigrants whom they considered could best be adapted and assimilate to their conditions".⁸¹ A subcommittee was subsequently created, which drafted a Resolution on the third item on the agenda, which was adopted unanimously. Stating that

*The [PMC] [a]ffirms unanimously its conviction that the principle of non-discrimination in regard to race is one of the fundamental conditions of progressive and orderly migration movements; Takes note of the statements made by several members of the Committee designed to reserve the right of each nation to adopt rules and regulations aimed at protecting the legitimate interests of its own population (...) as regards [to] the conditions of labour and the absorption of new elements in the national community(...).*⁸²

The words 'assimilation' and 'naturalisation' would be used as preconditions for migratory movements in the subsequent PMC sessions, as well as in the Convention, Recommendation, and Model Agreement that was to come. One can therefore definitely see that there was a hesitancy to accept migrants of a substantially different cultural or racial background to the immigration country from both the immigration and emigration parties. The emigration countries were hesitant in sending their population to areas where they could be subjected to discrimination, or in danger of being sent back if assimilation or naturalisation failed.

Item four on the agenda was on the technical selection of immigrants. This was particularly important to not organise the migration of individuals who would be a burden to the immigration country upon arrival, either through lack of vocational expertise, medical

⁸⁰ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 6-8.

⁸¹ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 11-13.

⁸² ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 26.

difficulties, or the lack of adaptability, as it would just shift the manpower problem from one region to another. As with the topic of racial discrimination, the discussion was centred around migration turning into a positive for both nations and the individual migrant. All speakers stressed the importance of technical selection and the importance of vocational training for migrants. On the topic of technical selection, there was an agreement that the criteria of selection were not to be used with restrictive means, but rather as a means to help and protect the migrants. The qualification criteria would also depend on the situation in question. It could be whether or not the immigration country preferred married migrants,⁸³ but a lot of the time it was based on the physical or psychological aptitudes of the migrant, or what kind of workers the immigrant country needed. The psychological qualifications were to a large extent the migrant's adaptability to new conditions of work or livelihood, and in many respects very similar to the immigration countries' reservations about letting migrants in who didn't fit their 'national composition'.⁸⁴ A subcommittee drafted a resolution to the fourth item, which stated the desirability to create criteria for the technical selection of migrants. Such criteria were to be established, or improved, by immigration countries, and entailed physical and health requirements, psychological qualifications, age and family composition, and occupational qualifications. The criteria should be based on past experience and sufficient data, a field in which the ILO would be useful as they had been an information clearinghouse on the adaptation of migrations for employment previously. This selection should also be done through co-operation between the relevant agencies in the immigrant and emigration countries, as well as with international agencies "in appropriate cases".⁸⁵ In effect leaving the door open to further ILO influence on migration topics.

Vocational training was to be a topic central to the ILO in the years to come and did naturally play a part in their migration efforts as well. The PMC was of the opinion that vocational training was primarily to be executed in the country of immigration, but general courses in the language of the immigration country were to be given in the emigration country before the migration took place. Once in the country of immigration, the migrant was to be given other relevant training. It was also pointed out that migrants given vocational training were to be paid wages "adequate to assure their livelihood and reasonable in relation to prevailing wages in the country of immigration". Also, speaking from "practical experience",

⁸³ This was particularly relevant if the immigration country wanted to increase the population of an underpopulated area. In this instance, quantitative migration triumphed qualitative migration. ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 13.

⁸⁴ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 13-14.

⁸⁵ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, First Session", 28-29.

several members stated that they “did not consider it desirable to recommend the establishment of international centres for vocational training of ordinary migrants”. Rather that collaboration on the collection of information in regards to the selection and vocational training of migrants was desired, and that “such information (...) should be centralised internationally and made available to the governments concerned”.⁸⁶ The subcommittee’s resolution stated that the migrants should receive instruction regarding hygiene, adaption when it comes to nutrition and housing, initial knowledge of the immigration country’s language, initial knowledge of the basic duties and rights of immigrants, naturalisation, and initial knowledge of the basic economic and social conditions of life in the immigration country. Bilateral schemes for such training were at this time the favoured approach, and the GB was rather instructed “to study the best methods of centralising information material (...) and making such material available to the countries of emigration and immigration”.⁸⁷

In the areas of vocational training and selection, the ILO’s role was initially reduced to its traditional one, and if we were to go by the first PMC sessions, the ILO’s migration efforts seemed especially unambitious. There seemed to be a general unwillingness of government representatives to give the ILO a substantially bigger role in large scale migratory efforts, even if there was an apparent consensus that these efforts were absolutely essential. The Governing Body representatives were also notably restrictive in their comments and did not seem to exert themselves to extend the agency of the ILO in the topic to any large degree. The ILO managed to make the PMC one of the primary arenas in the discussion of large-scale labour migration. However, the ILO’s, and particularly the Office’s views on the matter did manifest itself to a much larger degree in the next session of the PMC, in Geneva February 1948.

Geneva February 1948: Technical Studies for the ‘Well Ordering’ of the World

The second session of the PMC showed substantial progress in substantiating what the ILO’s migration efforts would entail. Although the Office still showed restraint in proposing much which would impede the national sovereignty of its member states. The second PMC session was also held the month after the Rome Conference on Manpower⁸⁸, which aimed to solve the problem of manpower in Europe, proving to potentially derail a global effort to solve manpower problems, as well as the ILO being the primary organisation in the migration effort. The Office did produce reports to the PMC on all the different agenda items. Being: (1) Consideration of

⁸⁶ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, First Session”, 14.

⁸⁷ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, First Session”, 30.

⁸⁸ Mechi, “Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation”, 849.

proposals for revision of the Migration for Employment Convention, 1939 and relating Recommendations; (2) Draft model migration agreement. (3) Technical selection and training of migrants; (4) Co-operation of the International Labour Organisation in measures for the co-ordination of international responsibilities in the field of migration.⁸⁹ The preface also stated that the function of the second PMC session “was to provide the Office with the elements for the preparation of a proposed Convention, a proposed Recommendation and a draft model agreement”. The plan was then to submit these propositions to the governments, before convening during the third session of the PMC.⁹⁰ The session does however give us more material when it comes to who the proponents of an encompassing migration effort were, and who the proponents of the protection of national sovereignty were, as the representative’s explicit opinions on the migration efforts were expressed to a larger degree than in the first session. We can also see the start of discussions of a wider ILO migration administration. 28 countries sent representatives⁹¹, 3 representatives from the GB were present, as well as one of the three migration experts appointed by the GB, and one representative from the UN, the Interim Commission for the International Refugee Organisation (PCIRO), and the Food and Agriculture Organisation, as well as the Director-General, Edward Phelan. Phelan, although also restrictive in stating anything too explicit on the migration effort, stated that: “in a world in which strains and stresses show no signs of diminishing, a body which can give the technical study to these international problems may make the greatest possible contribution to the ‘well ordering’ of the world”.⁹²

The first item on the agenda, the revision of the 1939 Migration for Employment Convention, proved to take up most of the discussion of the PMC session. The imagined solutions to the migration problem were still being discussed along the lines of a new Convention and a new Recommendation, where a bilateral Model Agreement for migration would be included with the Recommendation. During a discussion of the form in which the revision of the Convention should take, the Italian representatives voiced the opinion that the most effective way in which migrants were to be protected, was not simply just a revision of the Convention, but that a comprehensive charter should be passed⁹³. This view was however

⁸⁹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session” (Geneva, 1948, February), 6.

⁹⁰ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 1.

⁹¹ Countries represented: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, India, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK, The US, Uruguay, and Venezuela. ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 42-45.

⁹² ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 29.

⁹³ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 30.

not shared with the PMC, as the majority believed that the Office's proposed Convention went beyond the old one, as regards to the protection of migrants and equality of treatment.⁹⁴ The representatives were generally in agreement that a revision of the 1939 Convention was imperative, but disagreements came into light when the discussion centred on whether or not provisions should be included in the Convention, Recommendation, or the Model Agreement, the Convention being much more binding if ratified. As shown with the proposal given by the Indian representative, who stated the need for an article on naturalisation and assimilation in the Convention, which the PMC decided to limit to the Recommendation and the Model Agreement.⁹⁵ This was similar to the sentiments shared during the first PMC session, where governments were against proposals which would alter the national composition of sovereign states without their consent. There was undoubtedly a racial aspect present in the migration question. The PMC had the aim that any permanent migration movement would end in the successful naturalisation of the migrant after some time, but the immigration countries did not want to bind themselves to the obligation of naturalising the migrants if they found out they were hard to assimilate. This echoed most of the representatives' conservative nature when it came to committing to any provision to a larger degree. Even with the stated need by the representatives to solve the migration problem, this need did not justify every means.

The United Kingdom's (UK) representative urged that the goal of the PMC should be to formulate "workable instruments" which would apply to migration for employment as well as displaced persons. 'Workable' in this instance meant a vague, but widely ratified, convention. The Dutch representative stressed the need to place only basic principles in the Convention, leaving details to the Recommendation and Model Agreement, something the Danish representative agreed with. Albert Monk, the representative of the Workers' group of the GB, strangely enough, supported the proposal of the UK. This does show there naturally was a range of opinions among the Worker's group as well. Social dumping was a problem that workers from immigration countries feared, and the presence of the social clause through wide ratification of Conventions would to a certain extent prevent this. Monk also suggested attention be given to the question of the conditioning of the migrant before they leave the emigration country, as well as further conditioning when they arrive in the country of immigration. This was to be done to make it easier for the migrant to be "assimilated into the community (...) [and] be absorbed as an ordinary citizen in the general community". The Polish representative

⁹⁴ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 8.

⁹⁵ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 22.

stated that Polish nationals had “been subjected to misleading propaganda and had suffered intolerable conditions in the countries to which they had been recruited”, and therefore asked the PMC to adopt a formal resolution recognising that recruitment should only be carried out based on bilateral agreements between migration and immigration governments. Formal denials were given by the representatives from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the Netherlands, and the US, on the alleged treatment of Polish workers.⁹⁶

During the discussion, one can see the contours of the fundamental division of the emigration and immigration countries on the matters of how to organise mass migration. The former did naturally want as many rights and protection as possible to be awarded to their nationals who made the journey, while the latter, although in need of labour, wanted to make sure the Convention struck the right chord between not being too encompassing, and not contradicting the rhetoric the PMC was built upon. This division would become clearer in the third PMC session, where the proposals would be discussed and altered to a much larger degree. In the meantime, the representatives in the PMC were in more of an agreement on the next agenda point.

The second agenda point, the drafting of a Model Agreement, showed how the ILO’s migration efforts would entail the promotion of bilateral agreements to a large degree. The Office’s report on the topic looked to the bilateral migration agreements created between Italy as the emigration country, and Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and France as the immigration countries, and the drafted agreements with Argentina and with the UK just signed. The agreements are limited to collective migration and relate only to certain occupations or occupational groups of workers. As the Office stated, “the most characteristic feature (...) is the attempt to organise migration movements so as to adapt them to the real possibilities and needs of the economic life of the immigration country and its employment situation”. Still, problems arose, such as the Italian employment market not being able to provide a labour force with the necessary vocational qualities needed for the immigrant country, one instance being the lack of vocational expertise for Italian migrants to work in Belgian coalmines. Administrative provisions entailed the method of collaboration between the emigration and immigration countries. The first provision concerned the procedure of recruitment and the information the migrants needed before migrating, the second provision concerned the protection of the migrant’s interest, and the last provision covered the agencies responsible for

⁹⁶ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 30-32.

the application of the agreement's provisions. The second provision also laid the protection of migrants "in the hands of the occupational organisations of the two countries", as was the case with French labour organisation representatives being present in Italian selection centres.⁹⁷

On the topic of financial provisions, we can see a problem arising when it comes to cross-Atlantic migration. The cost of travel, including food while travelling, was to be paid by the immigration country when it came to intra-European migration. In Italy's agreement with Argentina, the cost of travel:

[W]ill be borne by the worker himself, If, however, migrants are unable to pay this sum, or part of it, the necessary money will be advanced to them. Refund of this advance must be made, if possible, in 40 monthly instalments by means of deduction from wages or from the savings which the workers wish to transfer to Italy.

The PMC's conclusion was that the provision of the different agreements was so similar in most cases, that a Model Agreement was a natural tool to increase migration.⁹⁸ The problem showed up when overseas migration was in question, as the immigration countries were sceptical, or not able, to cover the transportation of the migrant. In the case of Latin America, there was certainly a developmental aspect of the migration, as the migrant in many cases could help achieve an increase and development in countries' production.⁹⁹ The problem was that the cost of transportation was a risk, and not one they necessarily wanted to take. Nevertheless, as we will see, it did create the argument that this financing might be done through an international body, ILO being the candidate. In the Model Agreement, it was suggested that a Bilateral Technical Committee, should be established.¹⁰⁰ This would be comprised of representatives from both nations in question, "or other authority which had assumed responsibility for recruitment, and also representatives of other international agencies having a direct interest in these questions".¹⁰¹ This agency being a reference, but not limited to, the IRO/PCIRO.

The Model Agreement proved to be a relatively unproblematic 'working instrument' in the ILO's migration efforts, and the voluntary nature of the Model Agreement made it lack opponents and meet little opposition. This might, however, prove to be an early nail in the coffin for the ILO's migration efforts. If the agreement could protect the migrant when and after migrating, ensure that emigration countries get rid of their superfluous workforce, ensure that

⁹⁷ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 78-86.

⁹⁸ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 86-87.

⁹⁹ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 78-86.

¹⁰⁰ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 112.

¹⁰¹ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 88.

immigration countries could control the type of workers they admitted – while qualifications, in theory, could be based exclusively on vocational aptitude, but also in practice on grounds of lack of assimilability –, and ensure that the manpower problem of the world was solved, then all of van Zeeland’s outlined interests were covered. The Office would then be hard-pressed to claim any larger agency within migration matters, other than with their traditional areas of work. The question remained whether or not these bilateral agreements had the capacity to increase migration to the level believed necessary.

On the third agenda item, the technical selection and vocational training of migrants, the PMC did not consider that this would be done by a newly established international instrument at the time. Technical selection would rather be done through “close collaboration between the authorities of the two countries concerned, or between the country of immigration and the international organisation responsible for the migrants”. The latter case being a reference to the displaced persons and refugees under the protection of the IRO/PCIRO. It was therefore decided that the establishment of standards of selection would be done on a case-by-case basis and that the Model Agreement should state the provision of the establishment of these standards. After a general agreement was reached by the PMC, three provisions were suggested to be included in the Recommendation. (1) “That rules of technical selection should in no case be applied to such a way to restrict migration”; (2) “That the responsibility of selection should be entrusted to official bodies, or the very least be supervised by them”; and (3) “Technical selection should take place before departure”. There was also a discussion on to what degree vocational training should be done before departure, but little development on international regulations on the topic made it hard to reach any substantial conclusion.¹⁰² Recruitment, introduction, and placing was a topic which was to be covered by the Recommendation as well. What it mostly covered was who was to conduct it, as private agencies were seen as potential actors who could exploit any migration system put in place. In the view of the representatives, it was therefore imperative to make sure that recruitment, introduction, and placing were done by public bodies, “including organisations established under the provision of international instruments”. Although they did open up to private contractors which were not established to make a profit from migration efforts, “so far as the laws and regulations of the country permitted and with the approval and supervision of the Government or Governments concerned”. These measures were to “provide a basis for the protection of the migrant worker against fallacious promises”. Other than regulating the role of private agencies, the Recommendation would also simplify the

¹⁰² ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 12-14.

administrative formalities of the departure and arrival of the migrants. The emigration country should establish selection and recruitment centres, where the migrant would be entitled to free food as well as lodging, even in some cases a daily allowance, while the Model Agreement would aim to protect the migrant on the entire journey. That also included journeys from their home to the selection centres. As the migration effort to a large degree was conducted to help with the world's manpower problems, the immigration countries would also have an obligation to not admit workers if there was "a sufficient number of national workers capable of doing the work in question", and that if the country admits labour migrants "it should in equity assume certain obligations towards [national] workers in respect of their employment". A final opinion was voiced as to not let the cost of repatriation go to the migrant if they find it impossible to get work. This would be stated in both the Convention and the Model Agreement.¹⁰³

There was also a view to give the migrants special protection and assistance during a period after their arrival. This would be given through two principles. Firstly, the conditions of employment of migrant workers should be the object of special supervision by authorities in the immigration country, and secondly that in the performance of this duty the authorities should call on the co-operation of authorities in the emigration country, alternatively the international organisation responsible for the migrants, or the appropriate private bodies. The representatives also agreed on the equality of treatment of migrants, such as equality in admittance to all occupations, the membership of trade unions, social insurance and assistance schemes, and the acquisition of property. The migrants' individual contracts would also in no instance take the place of a collective agreement or rules applying in the country of immigration.¹⁰⁴

Agreeing on technical selection criteria of migrants seemed relatively unproblematic for the PMC, they rather stated that "the problem is to find immigrants for certain jobs rather than to ensure there are jobs available for prospective migrants".¹⁰⁵ The ILO report on "International Co-operation with a View to Selection" discussed the topic of bilateral and multilateral co-operation. On the former point, it was stated that "the organisation of the recruitment has been regulated by agreements to conciliate the interests of the countries concerned and to protect those of the migrant". In these cases, it seemed all of van Zeeland's presented concerns were covered. In the case of refugees and displaced persons, the emigrant country would be

¹⁰³ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 15-17.

¹⁰⁴ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 19-22.

¹⁰⁵ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session", 130.

substituted by the IRO/PCIRO. On the latter point, there had been no agreement in place regarding multilateral co-operating, but there was a draft convention between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, which aimed to establish a common Northern European employment market. Still, it was stated that although “ample precautions have been taken to prevent the creation of a central body from stimulating migration movements which would be contrary to the interests of the countries concerned”, the ILO could create a migration administration as “the convention would open the way, if it was enforced, to a multilateral co-operation for the selection of migrants to the best interests of the signatory countries”.¹⁰⁶ Also, the need for vocational training in different countries also proved to open the way for the ILO to become a primary organisation within the field of technical assistance. The PMC even explicitly stated that mass transfer of populations “must be accompanied by measures for the organisation of vocational training if they are to attain their end which is to bring about a qualitative and quantitative compensation for the supply and demand of manpower”.¹⁰⁷ At the time, the conclusion was that the expense of vocational training would be carried by the immigration and emigration country together. The financing did however prove difficult, as even European countries had to limit their resources as reconstruction still proved to be a problem. At this point, the ILO’s role was imagined as the administrator of information on vocational training to contribute to the solution.¹⁰⁸ Through the reports submitted by the Office, they also asked the PMC to consider if the technical selection and vocational training should be the subject of interest to discuss at the next ILC.

When it came to the fourth item on the agenda, the co-ordination of international responsibilities, the PMC believed that the ILO would have the competence on all questions arising when it came to the rights of migrants as workers and the general provision of general assistance and advice to Governments on migration schemes. While the UN “would be competent for the problem of migration from the population point of view, the rights and situation of migrants as aliens, and the economic, financial, political[,] and legal aspects of migratory movements”. The PMC did hope that the ILO would receive exclusive jurisdiction when it came to the labour phase of migration if a permanent arrangement was in place to divide this work between the international agencies. The PMC did also point to the “urgent character

¹⁰⁶ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 137-139.

¹⁰⁷ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 144.

¹⁰⁸ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 145.

of the present migration problems and to the advisability of an attempt by the International Labour Organisation to find solutions through regional action”.¹⁰⁹

The Steering committee had the task of discussing the fourth agenda point. The committee stated that they saw it as impractical to establish a single international agency that would treat all the different phases of migration, as several international agencies already had responsibilities concerning the overall problem of migration. The Committee also stated that as the ILO was formed on a tripartite basis, it “is in a unique position to deal with the phases of migration assigned to it”, and that they felt it was imperative to “ensure to the [ILO] an exclusive jurisdiction in regard to the labour phases of migration”.¹¹⁰ The Steering Committee also had the task of discussing a Peruvian resolution as well as a resolution submitted by the Belgian, French, and Italian representatives. The Peruvian resolution stated that there was “the need to co-ordinate the international efforts of Latin-American countries able to assimilate in the immediate future the large-scale flow of immigrants from Europe which is essential for European recovery”. Also, that the financing of these migratory flows should lay on “international organisations concerned in migration movements”. The Steering committee’s response to the proposal was “to transmit the Peruvian resolution to the [GB] for consideration with the urgency indicated”, as well as stating that they “[recall] that it recommends in another resolution an extension of the regional activities of the [ILO]”.¹¹¹ The proposal from the Belgian, French, and Italian representatives was in regards to the establishment of a Permanent Co-ordination Committee for European Migration Movements during the Rome Manpower Conference in early 1948. The Steering Committee, therefore “[expressed] the wish that there shall be as close a co-operation as possible between the Labour Office and that Committee”.¹¹² The Office report on the topic did state that they “consider it desirable that there should be co-ordinated international responsibility for migration problems”. Several areas in which this responsibility would apply were then mentioned, most being about the collection and distribution of information, but also the “co-operating with Governments and with the international organisations concerned in promoting and financing migration in relation to industrial and agricultural development schemes”. The report further drew the framework of what topics the ILO and UN respectively would cover in any migration efforts. Stating this divide in areas of operation was needed to “avoid the elimination from the competence of the

¹⁰⁹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 27.

¹¹⁰ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 39.

¹¹¹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 40-41.

¹¹² ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 41.

[ILO], of the responsibilities which have been the object of many years of achievement by the [ILO]”.¹¹³ It seemed as though ‘international co-operation’ was the buzzword for the Office during these discussions, which might also stem from the fear that the ILO would lose agency when it came to their traditional areas of work to other international administrative committees of organisations. The creation of the Permanent Co-ordination Committee for European Migration Movements did also run the risk of making the ILO lose its foothold on migration matters entirely. What then turned essential, was to highlight the areas of expertise that would be lost without the ILO in any international co-operation on migration efforts.

This did in turn make the PMC focus on the ILO’s potential role as the information hub on migration statistics. When discussing the lack of international labour mobility, “the [PMC] also suggested that the [GB] should consider the establishment of an international employment information service”. The Office should then “publish a periodical summary of manpower needs and manpower available, first of all for the European countries and subsequently, for the others also”. Manpower was very much still seen as a European issue. There was also a need to develop a classification system of occupational qualities, as even if migrants had the qualities needed to migrate to the immigration country, it was not always possible to ascertain this information in the selection process, leading to the migrant’s skillset being squandered. The Office had already been asked by the Rome Manpower Conference held in Rome in early 1948 to create this occupational classification, although only related to European countries. Problems had generally shown up due to the lack of co-operation on the international level, as the primary source of information for migrants came from relatives, acquaintances, or from private agencies of “doubtful” character.¹¹⁴ There was a general consensus that the states in need of migrants were to ascertain information of the number and type of migrants themselves, through the establishment of their own statistical and administrative machinery, but that the ILO would then be the central hub to centralise this information.¹¹⁵ The PMC realised that occupational classification also had to be set on a universal scale as well, as the lack of vocational qualification was a major bottleneck when it came to development in poorer countries.¹¹⁶

In conclusion, the second PMC session did revolve around the discussion of safe and relatively vague migration instruments, and little was stated on any larger migration administration by the ILO. During the discussions, any ILO administration on migration matters

¹¹³ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 153-155.

¹¹⁴ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 23-25.

¹¹⁵ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 10-11.

¹¹⁶ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Second Session”, 26.

seemed to already have been reduced to the gathering of labour statistics concerning migration, with the possibilities of extending their areas of work to also cover technical assistance. Funding of transportation seemed to remain a sticking point, but a sticking point that proved to work to the benefit of the proposition of an extended ILO migration administration. During the next session, the funding of migratory movements was discussed to potentially fall within the ILO's area of operation, but where a financial commitment from member states was needed. However, the ILO was to a certain extent stressed for time. The post-war order was gradually falling into the Cold War dynamics which hindered international co-operation to any large degree, as the US for instance, would not give agency to an organisation that potentially could fall victim to communist influences. The ILO's migration efforts would however get a major boost through the appointment of a new Director-General.

Geneva January 1949: A 'Considerable Contribution' to the Manpower Problem

The biggest change which happened from the second to the third PMC session was the appointment of David Morse as a new Director-General, who set the ILO on a new course where manpower became the organisation's main focus. The general discussions stated Morse's particular interests in the manpower problem, also stating his regret on not being able to attend, as the session coincided with a visit to Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Secretary-General of the PMC, the Assistant Director-General Jef Rens, explicitly stated that "the Director-General was particularly interested in the problem of manpower", further stating:

The Director-General and the [GB] considered that the ILO should assume leadership in the manpower field, and it was therefore proposed to convene a meeting of representatives from all these international organisations in Geneva in the following month with the object of studying the measures for the co-ordination of manpower including migration activities. (...) Whatever this meeting can do to start effective migration, in accordance with the needs of people, it is the governments themselves which must make the greatest effort.¹¹⁷

Still, to the detriment of the GB and David Morse, the third PMC session was to take place and could create an ILO migration instrument sufficient enough for most member states. Most relevant on the agenda was the first point, the revision of the Migration for Employment Convention and Recommendation from 1939, with the attached Model Agreement, and the third point, "Migration within the Manpower Programme of the ILO".¹¹⁸ The goal was naturally to

¹¹⁷ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session" (Geneva, 1949, January), 3.

¹¹⁸ Further agenda points: (2) "Formulation of Principles concerning Migration for Land Settlement, including preparation of a Model Agreement for Land Settlement"; (4) "Migration and Resettlements of 'Specialists'"; and

find an acceptable solution to the manpower problem. The revisions of the 1939 instruments had been in the workshops since the first PMC session, but the discussion surrounding the third item on the agenda was undoubtedly new and discussed a migration instrument not explored to a large degree during the previous PMC sessions. This solution was to be the establishment of a larger ILO migration administration. During the third PMC session, 25 governments were represented with 2 government observers¹¹⁹, with a delegation of six representatives from the GB, advisory members representing 8 international organisations¹²⁰, and observers from the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, and the International Co-ordination for European Migratory Movements.¹²¹

The general discussions centred around the texts on the new Convention, Recommendation, and Model Agreement, provided by the Office based on the discussion during the second PMC session. During these discussions, Jef Rens “noted that certain governments had indicated that they considered that the obligations imposed by the Office text went too far”. What these obligations were, and who the governments were, were not stated explicitly, but will be made clearer in the subsequent discussions. The 1949 discussion did seem to have a tonal shift from the previous PMC sessions, where the critical nature of the manpower problem was emphasised to a larger degree. As shown by how the representative from the Government group of the GB, Helio Lobo, saw the world. Lobo “[pointed] out that the world was divided into two groups – countries with a surplus of manpower, and countries with a shortage of manpower and underdeveloped areas”. The Employer group representative from the GB, Pierre Waline pointed out that “many governments were awaiting the formulation of plans for large-scale migration[,] and they counted on the ILO for assistance. Migration, as well as assisting in the development of new countries, could make a contribution to international understanding”. The issue was pressing and showed that the ILO was ready to provide a push toward a larger proposal. Interestingly, the issue was also to a larger degree seen as more global than previously. A similar opinion was voiced by Albert Monk on behalf of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East of the Economic and Social Council, who thought “the

(5) “Methods to Further Exchanges of Trainees, including Preparation of a Model Agreements”, were also discussed, but not of interest to this thesis. ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session”, 1.

¹¹⁹ Representatives from: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, France, India, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK, and the US. Observers from: Uruguay and Venezuela.

¹²⁰ From the UN, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, The IRO, the World Health Organisation, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, and the Interim Commission of the International Trade Organisation.

¹²¹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 174-180.

general opinion had been that the ILO was the most useful body to deal with manpower and training in the Far East”.¹²² The solution to the manpower problem was still seen as best studied regionally, but as we will see during the discussions on the third agenda point, certain actors still saw the solution as a global one.

Perhaps best describing the shift in the general discussion between the second and third session was the UN representative, Witold Langrod’s, statement. Langrod:

*[W]as glad to see that under a new line of policy proposed by the Director-General of the ILO, the activities of the ILO would not be restricted to the drawing up of international Conventions and Recommendations, but that the Organisation would be in a position to attack problems by the direct method. He recalled that a report, submitted by the Secretary-General of the [UN] to the Economic and Social Council, after consultation with the ILO had shown the need for preparing the establishment of an international employment service which would facilitate migration without infringing on national sovereignty.*¹²³

Morse’s focus on manpower problems clearly had an impact on the discussions, although his absence at the third PMC sessions did not help Langrod’s hopes of the establishment of an international employment service. Still, certain countries did voice their opinion on the need for a larger effort. Such as the Italian representative who stated that “without a large-scale solution to this problem all efforts at reconstruction in his country would be in danger of failing”. He was sure that “[g]iven the support of all countries, (...) the plans of the ILO could be brought to fruition”.¹²⁴

The representative from New Zealand stated that his government supported Morse and the GB’s proposed meeting, on the grounds that it would limit the overlapping of the specialised organisations’ roles. He “emphasised the need for the careful assembly of factual data”, while stating the New Zealand government’s position that assimilation of the migrant was of utmost importance, and that the migrant could not claim special assistance or reparation if the migrant could not “follow the same occupations to which they were accustomed”. He also stated that the drafts by the Office were “too detailed, and consequently unacceptably rigid in various parts”. The UK representative shared similar sentiments, expressing basic statements on the rights of migrants would be preferred through a charter, and “the draft instrument circulated by the Office went beyond such basic principles and entered the field of practical detail”. The point

¹²² ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session”, 3-5.

¹²³ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session”, 6.

¹²⁴ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session”, 5.

of the UK representative was that the instrument would prevent countries' migration efforts on the grounds of difficulties. As the world needed more migration, the representative stated the ILO should rather draft up a statement "capable of world-wide acceptance". This would be preferred through a bilateral agreement. The Swiss representative stated that migration was a problem, but that "the text proposed seemed to him to be still too detailed because of the care taken to provide adequate protection for migrants in all circumstances". Also thinking that the Convention should be confined to "broad principles capable of general application". The Swedish and US representatives shared similar sentiments.¹²⁵

On the other hand, the Indian representative pointed out their government's need to assure that no migrant should be subjected to discrimination of any sort, and that no member state should be expected "to accept conditions for its migrants less favourable than those accorded to the migrants of more favourably placed states". The Argentine representative agreed with the Convention, although he did not agree with the protectionist element¹²⁶ of the Convention and that indigenous workers were to be excluded from its application. The Mexican representative stated that the proposed instruments "although necessarily imperfect, were a step forward in the field of relations between capital and labour and he hoped that the next [ILC] would raise them to the status of international treaties". Lastly, the Italian representative voiced his opposition to limiting the Convention to government-sponsored group migration, as it would leave people who migrate individually exposed to a lack of individual rights. He also stated he "wished to associate himself fully with the initiative by the Director-General and the [GB] to provide that migration should be carried out through multilateral or bilateral agreements of the countries concerned under the auspices of the ILO".¹²⁷

As much of the third PMC session was about nailing down the provisions in the Convention, Recommendation, and Model Agreement, we can see the policies of the different representatives more explicitly stated in their proposed amendments to provisions. Revisions to the proposed new revised Convention, had the character of giving states more leeway upon ratification. It seemed the instruments proposed by the Office were too rigid for most of the Government representatives. In article 3, regarding the correction of misleading propaganda regarding emigration and immigration, the wording "appropriate steps" was changed to "practicable steps", while the wording "so far as national laws and regulations permit" was also

¹²⁵ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session", 7-10.

¹²⁶ The protectionist element was that migration should not take place if there is a sufficient number of nationals who can perform the work at hand.

¹²⁷ ILO, "Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session", 11-14.

added. The main proponents for these changes were the Australian and the UK representatives.¹²⁸ In article 8 paragraph 3, on the supervision of the migrant by competent authority during recruitment, introduction, and placing, the New Zealand representative proposed to add the wording “if necessary in the interests of the migrant”, which was adopted.¹²⁹ Article 11 stated that the cost of the return journey for the migrant, if they fail to find suitable employment in the immigration country, should not fall on them. However, amendments from the UK and New Zealand representatives were adopted, the former making the provision only apply to group migration and not individual migration, and the latter amendment stated that the cost would only be borne “when the migrant would suffer hardships by remaining”.¹³⁰ These changes were mostly to the detriment of the migrant, and to the benefit of the immigration country. The emigration country would naturally not suggest these changes, but often not object either, as it could lead to the instrument not necessarily being ratified and therefore useless. It is also important to note that vague and widely ratified instruments were to the benefit of *wealthy* immigration countries. Especially when it came to financing, as wealthy countries could shoulder the financial burden of transportation, while some Latin American countries had to rely on the migrants to finance the journey through loans if financial support was not given in the process.

The Revisions of the proposed Recommendation and the attached Model Agreement had the same character as the Convention revisions. The Office’s Recommendation did not meet as much scrutiny as the Convention, but changes were still pushed through. In paragraph 5 of the Recommendation, regarding the information that was to be made available to the ILO, the UK representative thought the information that was asked to be too detailed. Therefore, he presented an amendment, which was subsequently passed, changing the wording from “indications of the number, technical qualifications, family composition and the financial resources of the persons wishing to emigrate” to “details concerning the field of persons desiring to emigrate”. The UN representative stated their desire for paragraphs 5 and 6 to go much further in providing the ILO information, but other representatives pointed out the Office could always request information directly.¹³¹ Subparagraph 1 of Paragraph 14 was amended from stating that technical selection which aims at facilitating the migrant’s adaption to the immigrant country “should not be applied in such a way as to restrict migration”, to stating

¹²⁸ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 4-6.

¹²⁹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 17-19.

¹³⁰ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 23.

¹³¹ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 41-42.

“should be applied in such a way as to restrict migration as little as possible”. This was suggested by the New Zealand representative and backed by the UK representative.¹³²

On the Model Agreement, more notable changes were added. When it came to Article 7 titled “Selection Testing”, the UK representative proposed to change Paragraph 1(a) from stating that a “preliminary examination, [was] to be given as near as possible to the place where he is recruited”, to “there should be an appropriate examination (...) in the territory of emigration”. In paragraph 1(b) it was suggested to change the provision from stating that a further examination would be done at the selection centre, and rather just state the “examination should inconvenience the migrant as little as possible”.¹³³ In Article 9 titled “Education and Vocational Training”, a UK proposal to delete paragraph 2 which stated; “The parties shall provide for the exchange of experts on vocational training”, and a French proposal to delete paragraph 3 which stated; “where necessary, the parties shall provide for the method of meeting the resulting expenses”, were both adopted¹³⁴. In article 12, titled “Travel and maintenance expenses”, a UK proposal was adopted first deleting the sentence “in no case shall the cost of maintenance while travelling be borne by the migrants”, then another amendment deleting the provision that the price of overseas passage should not be borne by the migrant, on the grounds that “passage on board ship was a matter of shipping companies”. Albert Monk objected to the first amendment, and the Italian representative objected to both, but to no avail. The Italian representative also tried to amend these changes in the plenary sitting but was not successful.¹³⁵ These amendments show that even if there was a substantial positive attitude towards increasing vocational training, this did not involve making it a prerequisite in bilateral migration agreements. Even if this kept the door open for the ILO to act within the field of technical assistance in the long term, it did in the short term take away rights afforded to migrants. Also, perhaps most significant, were the changes regarding travel costs, as they made it substantially harder for migrants to travel overseas. Costs would either have to be borne by the migrant, or through financing from a larger administration, such as one established by the ILO.

In conclusion, changes were made which made the instruments more widely applicable, but also vaguer as they bound the states to fewer provisions. It also gave migrants fewer rights and protections when migrating, depending on the nation’s laws in question, or extra provisions which would be added in the bilateral migration agreement. The UK certainly had the most

¹³² ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 46-47.

¹³³ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 59.

¹³⁴ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 60.

¹³⁵ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 61.

influence over the representatives, as most of their amendments were adopted, or adopted after tweaks in wording. Naturally, there was a divide between the immigration and emigration countries, and between wealthy and not-so-wealthy immigration countries. It seemed that in the end, the Convention, Recommendation, and Model Agreement were seen as acceptable by most of the present parties. Italy, by far the biggest proponent for unequivocal instruments of regulation on migration, stood their ground but found little resonance among the other representatives. Surprisingly, the different International Organisation representatives argued for instruments more encompassing than what they did in previous sessions. David Morse's rallying cry did have an effect, which was manifested to a larger degree in the discussion on the third agenda item.

A Steering Committee was created to discuss the third item of the agenda, "Migration within the Manpower Programme of the ILO". This was the first proper discussion during the PMC sessions which explicitly stated the desirability of creating a larger ILO migration administration. This discussion was opened by Jef Rens, who thought that the manpower programme "had three aspects, concerned respectively with employment service organisation, vocational and technical training[,] and migration". He further stated that the GB had set up Manpower Committees for both Europe and Asia, with technical missions being sent to Latin America to investigate the manpower problems there. Rens also mentioned that "the ILO could not, of course, solve the manpower problem alone but could make a very considerable contribution in association with the [UN] and other specialised agencies". On the co-operation of these agencies:

[T]he Committee [was] unanimously of the opinion that the [ILO] is right in taking the initiative in migration questions. It recognises, however, that the [UN] (...) and other specialised agencies are closely concerned with the problem of migration, and that a co-ordinated programme should be worked out, within the framework of the general manpower programme.

Rens also asked the Steering Committee "to consider the future programme of the ILO and in particular the [PMC]'s own future programme within the framework of the general manpower programme". It was further stated that several countries could increase their number of immigrants if suitable economic assistance was given. They would then make "a considerable contribution both to their own economic development and to the easing of the economic situation in the countries of emigration". Also, it was stated that "if economic development were intensified, this would facilitate the immigration of increased numbers of workers in order

to carry through the development plans”.¹³⁶ Development of underdeveloped areas were seen as a way to increase migration, and migration was seen as a way to develop underdeveloped areas. The rationalisation of manpower was in full swing.

The Steering Committee referenced three problems they believed should be dealt with by the ILO. Firstly, the study of the absorptive capacity of the possible immigration countries. Secondly, the adaptability of migrants “from particular countries to the conditions in the different countries of immigration”. Lastly, the general mobility of labour, to which the Steering Committee drew attention to these aspects: “(a) the simplification of administrative procedures; (b) the provision of adequate housing; (c) increased transport facilities, (d) vocational training of migrants; (e) periodical enquiries on manpower surpluses and deficits, and (f) classification of occupations”. It was pointed out that the ILO already engaged in the two last points. This suggestion did raise a great deal of discussion within the Steering Committee, and as the suggestion had not been circulated to the representatives beforehand, few representatives had received the necessary instructions from their governments. Nevertheless, it was stated that: “the Committee thinks that the suggested programme is one calculated to bring about successful results provided that the ground is sufficiently prepared”. Albert Monk also said that he found it desirable to set up more regional Manpower Committees, but that “while the regional approach is extremely useful and, indeed, indispensable, manpower problems and, in particular, migration problems, must be looked at from the point of view of the world as a whole”.¹³⁷

The idea of an extended ILO migration administration evolved from several problems which remerged during multiple discussions in the previous PMC sessions. As previously stated, the ILO had started gathering information on manpower surpluses and the creation of occupational classifications, setting up the ILO to be a natural foundation for an administrative expansion. While administrative procedures, selection of migrants based on the need for labour in the immigration country, the problems of transportation (particularly overseas), and vocational training, were not something the Steering Committee believed could be adequately solved through either the Convention, Recommendation, or the Model Agreement. This suggestion then became an all-encompassing solution. If the ILO got the means to finance technical selection, vocational training, and transportation, they would become able to find a ‘rational’ and encompassing solution to manpower problems. Migration was here also framed as a part of the manpower problem, on the same lines as the organisation of employment

¹³⁶ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 139-140.

¹³⁷ ILO, “Permanent Migration Committee, Third Session. Appendix”, 141-143.

services, technical selection, and vocational training. In the worst-case scenario, migration was framed as a necessary evil, and in the best-case scenario, a rational way of structuring a global employment market. Still, even if an extended ILO migration administration were to solve any problems not covered by the instruments proposed during the third PMC session, it seemed less likely as time went on that the Western nations would give any large agency to an organisation working across the idealistic divisions which defined the world, if not strictly required. Before the Naples Migration Conference, the Convention, Recommendation, and Model Agreement were all passed by the ILC, becoming, and staying, the ILO's main migration instruments.

Naples October 1951: Combatting 'The False Prophets of Disorder'

The PMC sessions, and David Morse and the Office's focus on solving the manpower problem culminated in the Naples Migration Conference in October 1951, where the proposal for an ILO Migration Administration was tabled. The proposal was encompassing, with plans on the administration's structure, cost of operation, and funding all outlined.¹³⁸ It reads as a prime example of the utopian and revolutionary nature which encapsulated some of the immediate post-war internationalism. Present at the Conference were 27 governments and 3 observers¹³⁹, representatives from 11 international organisations, representatives from 33 non-governmental organisations, as well as Paul Ramadies and Léon Jouhaux, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Governing body respectively. A proposal on the structure of an ILO Migration Administration was tabled. Its stated primary objective was "to promote [a] solution of urgent European manpower problems by furthering by all appropriate means migration within Europe and from Europe to all other Continents in conditions which provide adequate security and reasonable opportunities of success for all concerned". This migration administration would "assist national governments, on request, in implementation of their respective migration policies and will promote co-ordinated action by the various international organisations concerned with migration".¹⁴⁰

As with the third PMC session, the Director-General David Morse was not present. He did however send a letter that presented his view on the matter explicitly. He started his letter by stating the Conference was:

¹³⁸ ILO, "Plan for Establishment of ILO Migration Administration" (Naples, 1951, October), 5-27.

¹³⁹ Representatives from: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK, the US, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Observers from: the Holy Sea, Bolivia, and Costa Rica. ILO, "Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference" (Naples, 1951, October), 3.

¹⁴⁰ ILO, "Plan for Establishment of ILO Migration Administration", 5.

[O]ne of the most important meetings that has ever been called by the [ILO] (...) This problem of migration is immense. It is complicated. Time presses upon us. But there is nothing about the problem so huge or so complex that it will not yield to your constructive labours. You can demonstrate that international co-operation will lift us above the obstacles and barriers that sometimes seem to divide us.

Morse further stated that the attached figures of labour surplus represented people that “live in a semi-idleness that, if too long continued, will deteriorate their skills and make them fall prey to the false prophets of disorder”. On the other side of the coin, he described countries with untapped potential and natural resources. Stating “[w]hat they lack is not the vision nor the constructive determination to take their appointed places in the world’s economy – they lack primarily workers without whom food cannot be grown nor goods manufactured”.¹⁴¹ The Belgian, French, and Italian delegations seemed to agree with Morse, stating in a memorandum to the subcommittee on general principles that “[t]he problem of overpopulation in Europe is among the urgent preoccupations of democratic countries because of the dangers, even more menacing, which it presents for the political and social stability of Europe and for peace”.¹⁴² Once again, the problem was not the manpower problem’s lack of urgency, or its lack of understanding among the member states. It was, as it often is when it comes to the agency of international organisations, scepticism of the presented solution’s effect on national sovereignty, especially as ILO membership was universal, making it harder to ensure the solution was in line with Western needs in the future. Morse naturally understood this and argued that they were not presenting a grandiose plan which would take care of all surplus workers, stating “[w]e do not wish to be too ambitious nor to overestimate our powers nor to inflict too heavy a financial burden on Governments”. The effort was, in Morse’s view, a practical one, aiming at placing 1 700 000 migrants within five years, while “[a]ll that [the ILO] require are the financial resources”. With the backdrop of rearmament efforts in Europe, Morse felt the presented budgets were modest, especially compared to “the loss of production resulting from economic under-development in certain countries. [While] they are utterly dwarfed compared with the billions of dollars now being devoted to rearmament and defence”.¹⁴³ The budget ILO presented was just shy of \$36 million divided over five years of operation.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ David A. Morse, “Message from David A. Morse, Director-General of the International Labour Office”, 1-2.

¹⁴² ILO, “Subcommittee on General Principles: Memorandum Submitted by the French, Belgian and Italian Delegation” (Naples, 1951), 1.

¹⁴³ David A. Morse, “Message from David A. Morse, Director-General of the International Labour Office”, 2-5.

¹⁴⁴ ILO, “Migration Conference: Plan for Establishment of ILO Migration Administration”, 19.

Still, the plea for further action fell on deaf ears. In the report of the programme committee, we can see how very few wanted this migration administration to be established. Australia, Canada, and Sweden from the onset stated they would abstain from voting. Argentina stated they were “opposed to the establishment of new international bodies and to the extension of the activities of existing international organisations in the field of migration”. The provisions on finance proved to be a stumbling block as well.¹⁴⁵ Paragraph 7 stated that “[t]he Council should consider what appropriate steps should be taken to ensure the necessary funds”, while Paragraph 9 stated that they hoped the governments concerned “are prepared to contribute funds or facilities for the solutions of the problems of European migration”.¹⁴⁶ The Conference’s conclusion was that the paragraphs did not involve any financial commitment at this stage, but scepticism still crept up. Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Venezuela all reserved their positions as the provisions in the paragraphs also included refugees in the arrangements. Canada and the US also felt obliged to vote against paragraphs 5 and 6.¹⁴⁷ The former stated the need to “ensure that full use is made of the knowledge, experience, and organisational resource of the various non-governmental organisations concerned with migration from Europe”, the latter calling for the establishment of an ‘Executive Committee’ which was to be established with the technical staff of the ILO and other international organisations.¹⁴⁸ The representative from Argentina, who felt the need for unanimous support of the two paragraphs for them to be effective and practical, then felt the need to also vote against them. Lastly, the Peruvian representative also decided that his government reserved its position concerning the proposal.¹⁴⁹

In the end, the ILO’s effort to create a migration administration hit a dead end in October 1951 in Naples. Perhaps the most telling statement was that of the US representative, who, when indicating that his government would abstain from voting, further stated that he “fully reserved the position of his government in respect of future measures which might be taken at the international level”.¹⁵⁰ This statement foreshadows the establishment of ICEM, on an American initiative, aimed at solving the manpower problem through intra-European migration. As Lorenzo Mechi argues, the ILO’s migration efforts failure was due to the political climate of McCarthyism, as the US did not want to pass resolutions that would tie them to grant financial aid to organisations with Communist countries as members. It was therefore safer to

¹⁴⁵ ILO, “Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference”, 6.

¹⁴⁶ ILO, “Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference”, 11.

¹⁴⁷ ILO, “Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference”, 7.

¹⁴⁸ ILO, “Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference”, 11.

¹⁴⁹ ILO, “Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference”, 7.

¹⁵⁰ ILO, “Notes on Proceedings of the Migration Conference”, 6.

confine any such programme to an organisation with a restrictive member base, such as the ICEM.¹⁵¹ We can conclude that the rationalisation of labour did prevail. Through organised migration in Europe, and technical assistance missions in other regions, labour was rationalised. The ILO did contribute to this to a large degree. Although their role was not realised to the extent that some hoped. The globality of how rationalisation happened is, nevertheless, under scrutiny. This scrutiny would also be present if the ILO's migration administration was realised as well. The manpower problem was realised on a European, North American, and South American basis. Even if additional regional Manpower Committees were to be established, normative globality would take time, and it certainly begs the question if it were something the ILO would ever achieve.

¹⁵¹ Mechi, "Economic Regionalism and Social Stabilisation", 851.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In this thesis, I have set out to answer two questions: “How did the ILO’s migration efforts manifest themselves in the Permanent Migration Committee sessions?” and “Why did the ILO’s efforts to establish a migration administration fail?”, by studying the PMC session papers, as well as the proceedings from the 1951 Naples Migration Conference. The thesis aimed to add substance to what little is written on the ILO and their post-war migration efforts and fits into a larger research trend aiming to look at international organisations as actors themselves, removed from the political influence of the states which in practice gives them their agency.

The ILO’s post-war migration efforts were an effort defined by the belief of the need to rationalise the world of labour, in turn getting the most out of the global manpower stock. It was an effort formed by two world wars and an economic crisis. It was believed that the rationalisation of labour could bring about world peace, as the problem of mass unemployment led to politically and socially explosive societies, while untapped production capabilities hindered free trade, and therefore economic and societal progress. The problem was a global one, and migration was seen as increasingly relevant to solving the problem of inequality, as inequality was mostly between, and not within, nations. Even at a time when international co-operation seemed to have failed, international co-operation was also seen as a solution to the problems of the world. What the ILO needed, was to stake its claim in the post-war international order, and distance itself from the interwar international order which had failed in its peacekeeping mission. The 1944 Philadelphia Declaration defined the ILO’s mission for the post-war world. It was a mission to achieve global peace helped by the achievement of increased international trade and the attainment of this peace was to be done by getting workers to make ‘their greatest contribution to the common wellbeing’. The ILO subsequently turned into a ‘specialised agency’, moving away from only passing conventions and recommendations as their sole instruments to achieve its goal of a global social policy. The effort to create a migration administration needs to be seen as part of this change as well, even if it was a failed one. The ILO was an actor in its own right, the Office, the GB, and the Director-General all actively shaped the migration policies of the ILO, even when there was a lack of resonance among its tripartite delegations. The change within the ILO was both exogenous, and endogenous, the ILO was a ‘living thing’ and an entrepreneur in post-war global migration policies. The central actors within the ILO naturally had their allegiances, or at the very least ideological preconceptions which naturally influenced the migration discussions. During the period, the ILO had endured a prolonged period of ‘Americanisation’, turning it into a tool to

internationalise New Deal policies. David Morse's election as Director-General led to manpower efforts being put on the agenda of the ILO, and subsequently forming the ILO's migration efforts, and the organisation in general, for the post-war world.

Workable and Widely Ratifiable Instruments: The Manifestation of the ILO's Migration Effort

The ILO's migration effort did manifest itself in traditional instruments. The 1939 Migration for Employment Convention was revised, as well as the subsequent Recommendation with the attached Model Agreement, which would guide bilateral migration agreements between emigration and immigration countries. This solution was, however, not encompassing enough for several member states. Primarily for emigration countries, who wanted assurances of their citizens during and after migration, as well as assurances when it came to assimilation and naturalisation. Italy was the biggest proponent for more encompassing instruments, which would increase the ease with which migration would happen, while emigration countries such as India emphasised the discriminatory aspect which often was tied to migration. Several Latin American countries did throughout the PMC sessions, voice their desire and need for more European migrants, but also stated they needed financial and administrative provisions to help admit a large number of migrants.

The financial aspect proved to be the sticking point, as several member states were opposed to financing migration movements through the ILO, preferring financial provisions to be agreed upon through the Model Agreements. Even if there was an overall consensus on the need to increase migration to combat manpower problems, most of the Western European nations, Australia, New Zealand, and the US, wanted widely ratifiable and 'workable instruments'. Most insistent were the UK representatives, who often amended the semantics of provisions in the different instruments to in effect get vaguer, and often proposed to delete certain provisions entirely. The instruments turned widely ratifiable, and relatively modest. However, once we read through the PMC session papers, it is not surprising that a larger ILO migration instrument was never established. There was no main proponent for a larger ILO migration administration during the two first PMC sessions. When the ILO was discussed as being involved in migration efforts, it was either through the aforementioned instruments or through the gathering of labour statistics, a field the ILO traditionally worked through. There was talk of co-operation between international organisations, but no talk of establishing a new international organ, or substantially expanding the areas of work of existing international organisations, to facilitate a larger migration effort. The election of David Morse and the focus

on manpower did contribute to the creation of the ILO's manpower activities, but the ILO's expanded migration administration did not realise itself.

Fear of Globality: The Failure of the ILO's Migration Administration

Despite David Morse's focus on the manpower problem, and migration as a solution to it, the ILO's migration administration never came to be. Perhaps it was not surprising after all, as several member states, in the discussion of the Convention, Recommendation, and Model Agreement wanted widely ratifiable instruments. To then accept a much more encompassing and financially binding instrument just two years after, would be rather unrealistic. Also, when the proposal was presented in Naples in 1951, even Latin American representatives, who previously stated their optimism of collective financing of migration, abstained from voting. The Conference was surrounded by an air of defeat from the onset, and it seemed as though the US influence over the organisation had put the nail in the coffin of an ILO migration administration. The ILO's potential universality made western nations, primarily the US, wary of giving it too much agency in migration matters. The ILO allowing communist states membership was a scary prospect to the Western liberal democracies of the time. If a migration administration was to take place, it was safer to leave the administration to the soon-to-be-established ICEM, where membership was limited. In the end, the manpower problem was solved through migration, although the solution did not realise its global possibilities, it turned into a regional solution, benefiting European integration and the rationalisation of European labour.

The ILO's migration effort was a utopian one, where national borders had to give way for the betterment of the world society. The ILO tested the waters to see if we could see migration as removed from nation-state frameworks. Utilitarianism trumped national sovereignty and to some extent the individuality of the migrant. It does give fuel to the argument of the ILO entering an 'era of fictitious de commodification', as one could argue it commodified labour to a scale never been realised previously. With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to think the ILO's effort was doomed to fail due to its idealistic and unrealistic nature, and, even if true, this narrative is lacking insight into the lengths the world community would go to solve the manpower problem. It is also a topic that begs for future research, as there is untapped primary source material in internal ILO papers, as well as in the writing, letters, and memoirs of the individuals who pushed for this change. To study the motives behind this administration at a deeper level, we can get a profounder understanding of how international organisations change, how international co-operation was imagined in the post-war world, the limitations and benefits

of the rationalisation of labour, and how the ILO's accused fictitious decommodification was justified. Also, it helps contextualise the limited globality of international organisations.

Today, migration is in many respects seen as a result stemming from necessity, and often seen as bringing problems of its own. However, the ILO saw migration as a phenomenon bringing opportunity, where poverty would be reduced, and expertise shared. If the ILO had succeeded in its aim, migration would perhaps to a larger degree be seen as a net positive. The world might have turned out to be more connected than ever, and the ILO would perhaps have come further in achieving global social justice. However, international organisations are not enchanted moral beacons, and a larger migration effort might not have resulted in a "better" world. As we know, in international arenas, countries were not equal, and arguably still are not. The ILO's effort might have aimed to remove discrepancies between nations, but the question will always remain if they would be able to at the time. Globality in the ILO was in need to be put to practise, and the ILO's migration administration was an attempt to pay homage to the enchanted stipulation present in the idea of a *global* social policy.

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