

**United Nations**  
**ECONOMIC**  
**AND**  
**SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**Nations Unies**  
**CONSEIL**  
**ECONOMIQUE**  
**ET SOCIAL**

UNRESTRICTED

E/CN.1/70  
9 May 1949

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION

Fourth session

REPORT OF MR. JOHN DEUTSCH,  
THE COMMISSION'S REPRESENTATIVE ON THE POPULATION COMMISSION

Item 3 of the agenda, document E/CN.1/64/Rev.1

1. The Economic and Employment Commission was represented at the third and fourth sessions of the Population Commission by Messrs. Sidney Pollock and K. W. Taylor, respectively, as alternates for Mr. John J. Deutsch, who was unable to attend.
2. At the third session, the Commission gave considerable attention to a re-examination and redefinition of the functions and responsibilities of the Commission and their relationship to similar activities carried on by other commissions and the specialized agencies. More specific terms of reference were formulated as follows:

"The Population Commission shall arrange for studies and advise the Economic and Social Council on:

- (a) The size and structure of populations and the changes therein;
- (b) The interplay of demographic factors and economic and social factors;
- (c) Policies designed to influence the size and structure of populations and the changes therein;
- (d) Any other demographic questions on which either the principal or subsidiary organs of the United Nations or the specialized agencies may seek advice."

These revised terms were later unanimously adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its seventh session.

3. The Commission also complied with a request from the Economic and Social Council that it examine its specific responsibilities in the field of migration and provide "a practical plan for the allocation of functions without duplication of work among the various organs concerned in the field of migration". In defining its own functions in this field, the Commission recognized the interest in special aspects of migration of many other bodies, including the functional and regional commissions and certain specialized agencies. It, therefore, emphasized the need for proper integration and co-ordination of all these activities.

/4. During

4. During the third session of the Commission, there was some discussion on matters of common interest to the Population Commission and the Economic and Employment Commission. A record of this discussion was reported in the summary records of the 31st and 34th meetings of the Population Commission and is included as appendix "A" to this report. As a result of this discussion, the Population Commission decided to include the following section in its report:

"TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS  
OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"26. The attention of the Population Commission was drawn to the interest expressed by the Economic and Employment Commission, at its third session, in population trends in under-developed areas and to its recommendation that the Economic and Social Council inform

"those countries which require expert assistance in connexion with their economic development programmes that the Secretary-General of the United Nations may, upon request, arrange for the organization of international teams, consisting of experts provided by or through the United Nations and the specialized agencies for the purpose of advising them in connexion with their economic development programmes".

"27. The Population Commission notes with satisfaction this comprehensive approach to the problem of under-developed areas and recommends that such international teams as may be organized should, at the request of the governments concerned, include provision for technical assistance to ensure adequate consideration of the demographic aspects of developmental programmes.

"28. The Population Commission also calls to the attention of the Economic and Employment Commission the studies of the inter-relationships of economic, social and demographic factors, now being undertaken by the Secretariat. The Economic and Employment Commission is invited to refer to the Population Commission any specific problems involving the inter-relationship of population and economic factors, with the assurance that the Population Commission would regard it as a primary obligation to co-operate with the Economic and Employment Commission in the study of such problems."

5. At the third session of the Commission, the representative of UNESCO recommended that the United Nations should convene a conference on world population problems. The Commission noted the proposal and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with UNESCO and other interested specialized agencies, to prepare more detailed documentation on this question

/for consideration

for consideration at the Commission's next session. At the fourth session, the Commission registered its belief that it would not be appropriate to hold such a conference until the principal results of the 1950 and 1951 census are available. It was estimated that 1954 would be the earliest suitable date. The Commission, therefore, decided to postpone any detailed consideration of this proposal to a later session.

6. There was not as much discussion of the more general aspects of the functions of the Population Commission at its fourth session but one or two broad problems were raised. The first of these was the study of the inter-relationship of economic, social and population changes. After careful discussion, the Commission decided, as a first step, to request the Secretary-General "to prepare definite plans and undertake the necessary preliminary work for a study of the inter-relationship of economic, social and demographic factors in specific areas, paying special attention to the economic, social and ethnic characteristics of the various groups in the populations concerned." There was some dissension on the grounds that the Commission should confine its work to purely statistical research and factual service since broader analysis would necessarily be "based on certain convictions about the nature of man and society" which "cannot be based on rational grounds but are of an intuitive character". The Commission rejected this view and recorded its belief that analysis of the relationship between demographic factors and social and economic development, though requiring a high degree of technical competence, are of a highly practical nature and will be an important contribution to the work of the Economic and Social Council. Therefore, the Commission at its fourth session recommended increased emphasis on the analysis of available data with special reference to the relationship of demographic factors to the development of economic and social policies.

7. Problems of a more technical nature were also discussed by the Population Commission at its third and fourth sessions:

(a) Demographic Year Book

Consideration was given to the progress which had been made in compiling the first Demographic Year Book which will probably appear in July, 1949. The first issue is to include at least 34 topics falling into the following general categories: (i) area and population; (ii) economically active population; (iii) international migration; (iv) natality; (v) incidence of disease; (vi) mortality; (vii) marriage and divorce. The Secretariat was requested to make a special effort to include in the second and subsequent issues data on the demographic aspects on unemployment and, as far as possible, data on occupational diseases and still births and greater detail on infant mortality.

/(b) Population

(b) Population censuses to be taken by various Governments in or about 1950

Plans for these censuses were examined with a view to improving the quality and comparability of results. The Commission made considerable progress in recommending comparable methods of tabulation, standardized definition of terms and other related questions. It emphasized the importance of including population classifications by economic characteristics and noted the progress that had already been made by the Statistical Office and the International Labour Organisation in the development of international standards for industrial and occupational classifications. Attention was drawn to the need for developing census techniques adapted to the special circumstances and need of each country. Sampling methods were suggested as a valuable means for assessing and improving the quality of data and of extending coverage to subjects and population groups which it might not be feasible to include in complete enumerations. Countries with limited experience in census taking were urged to concentrate on a limited list of the more essential kinds of data.

(c) Population estimates and forecasts

The Commission reviewed the progress made by the Secretary-General in the development of population estimates and forecasts and urged him to expedite this work as quickly as practicable in view of the needs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

(d) Population of Trust Territories

At the fourth session, the Commission received a report from the Secretary-General that two additional studies in this field would soon be completed and urged their prompt publication. The Commission suggested that further studies of this nature be pressed forward as rapidly as possible.

(e) Migration statistics and migration studies

At its third session, the Commission adopted a work programme in this field which falls into five main sections:

- (i) The improvement of migration statistics through an examination by the Secretariat of this problem in consultation with the International Labour Office, as had been recommended by the Statistical Commission.
- (ii) Analysis of change in the size and structure of populations in the countries of origin and destination resulting from migration.

/(iii) Analysis

- (iii) Analysis of the influence of migration on the size and characteristic of the labour force in countries of immigration and emigration.
- (iv) Analysis of the influence of economic and social factors on migration.
- (v) Influences of legislation on migration.

At its fourth session, the Commission, with the help of detailed documentation prepared by the Secretariat, was able to draw up a series of draft recommendations for the improvement of international migration statistics. These are to be circulated to governments by the Secretary-General for their comments. The Commission also expressed interest in the migration studies now in preparation by the Secretariat and urged their early completion.

(f) Infant mortality statistics

The Commission noted at its fourth session the progress being made in studies in this field in collaboration with the World Health Organization and urged their early completion.

(g) Multilingual demographic dictionary

The Secretary-General was requested to commence preparation of a demographic dictionary, and at the fourth session the Commission noted the progress being made in this work and made further suggestions looking towards its completion.

(h) Vital registration systems

At the third session of the Commission, the Secretary-General was requested to initiate studies of vital registration systems.

(i) Recent trends in the birth rate

The Secretary-General was requested to study the recent rise in the birth rate in various countries with a view to ascertaining to what extent there has been an actual change in fertility levels. This study was designed to provide assistance in the construction of more realistic population projects. Progress was reported at the fourth session and the Commission noted the preliminary documentation on this subject.

8. The Commission's future work programme includes a number of matters of particular interest to the Economic and Employment Commission, including an analysis of available data on the relationship of demographic factors to the development of economic and social policies. The Secretary-General has been requested to submit a report to the next session of the Population Commission on work now being undertaken in all related fields by other commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations.

/9. Although

9. Although these activities of the Population Commission will undoubtedly be of considerable interest and importance to the Economic and Employment Commission, there is some doubt whether this justifies having a special representative of the Economic and Employment Commission attend future meetings of the Population Commission, particularly in view of the tendency of the Commission to hold meetings both at Lake Success and Geneva. It would appear that a representative of the Secretariat conversant with the activities of both Commissions would satisfy their requirements with considerable economy to the United Nations.

APPENDIX A

Extract from Document E/CN.9/SR.31 of 19 May 1948

(Summary Record of the 31st Meeting of the Population Commission)

Co-operation with the Economic and Employment Commission

"Mr. POLLCK (Economic and Employment Commission) drew the attention of members of the Population Commission to certain questions of common interest discussed at the third session of the Economic and Employment Commission.

"The Economic and Employment Commission recognized the significance of population factors in economic problems. Population trends, particularly as they affected manpower in under-developed areas, were important in connection with long-range economic planning.

"Mr. Pollock referred to the Economic and Employment Commission's suggestion that the Economic and Social Council should inform Member States requiring technical assistance for the furtherance of their economic development that the Secretary-General would, on request, arrange for the organization of international teams of experts provided by or through the United Nations and the specialized agencies, which would advise such States. In that connection, he raised the point that the Population Commission might wish to take action designed to ensure that technical assistance in the demographic field would also be available.

"After thanking the representative of the Economic and Employment Commission, Mr. HAUSER (United States of America) pointed out that among the most important objectives of the United Nations were the improvement of standards of living throughout the world and the development of economically under-developed areas. In the achievement of those objectives population factors played a vital part. He, therefore, proposed a resolution (copies of which were distributed unofficially to the members) which would provide a basis for co-ordinating the work of the Population and the Economic and Employment Commissions.

"Following a brief procedural discussion, the Chairman stated that consideration of the United States proposal would be deferred until members of the Commission had had time to study it.

"He expressed the Commission's appreciation of the report of the representative of the Economic and Employment Commission."

Extract from Document E/CN.9/SR. 34 of 24 May 1948

(Summary Record of the 34th Meeting of the Population Commission)

Consideration of resolution proposed by the United States representative

"Mr. GLASS (United Kingdom) remarked that he had no comment to make on the substance of document E/CN.9/W.27. He thought, however, that it was unnecessary for the Commission to take note of the Economic and Employment Commission's work in a formal resolution. It might be left to the Rapporteur to incorporate the substance of the resolution in the report.

"Mr. RIABUSHKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. HAUSER (United States of America) agreed.

"Mr. POLLOCK (Economic and Employment Commission) also agreed. So long as the Population Commission took into consideration the relevant matters in the Economic and Employment Commission's report, it was immaterial in what form that consideration was expressed.

"It was agreed that document E/CN.9/W.27 should be referred to the Rapporteur who would incorporate the substance of it in the report."