

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

FACT-FINDING SUB-COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE COLOMBIAN DELEGATION

IMMIGRATION INTO COLOMBIA

At the request of working party A of Sub-Committee No. 1 (Fact-Finding), the Colombian delegation submits the following information on the general conditions in which the Colombian government would be prepared to co-operate in the solution of the problem of refugees and displaced persons at present in European countries.

Colombia is fully disposed to co-operate in the solution of this problem. Accordingly, the Government offers ample facilities as regards labour conditions to certain categories of immigrants able to assist in the development of the different branches of the national economy. Thus, the Colombian government would be prepared to welcome a steady flow of immigrants engaged in activities connected with the production of wealth, such as industrial technicians, mechanics, fishermen, engineers, agricultural workers, fruit growers, horticulturists, livestock breeders, mariners, industrialists and domestic servants, who, in the present phase of rapid expansion in Columbia, would have great prospects of success.

We must, however, point out to the Sub-Committee:-

1. that the Colombian economic system is based on private enterprise, which therefore supplies employment to labour;
2. that those persons who have already expressed their willingness to employ in Colombia the energy and skill of refugees of the above-mentioned categories have foretold of

their preference for persons of the Catholic faith, which means that persons of this faith would have better immediate prospects of success;

3. that Colombia does not at present wish to receive persons whose sole activity is trade;

4. that Colombia cannot receive immigrants who are unable to give satisfactory evidence of their intention to settle permanently in the country;

5. that immigrants wishing to acquire land must seek it in low-lying and hot areas of a tropical character, since practically all land at a higher altitude with a cold or temperate climate is already occupied and colonized by Colombian nationals;

6. that the Colombian government reserves the right to determine through its various Consuls whether the requisite qualifications for admission are present in each individual case.

With regard to the financial aspect of immigration, the Colombian government offers exemption from the immigration deposit required of voluntary immigrants, but it would not be in a position to contribute to expenses, nor could it provide transport for those persons wishing to find a new home in Colombia or to make it their new country.