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Policy of Member States of the Council of Europe in the light of the present international situation

Report[1]
Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
Rapporteur: Mr Kurt Georg KIESINGER, Germany

1. 1957 - 9th Session - Second part

A. 1. Draft Recommendation presented by the Political Committee

The Assembly,

Considering that the peoples of the six-Power Communities have decided to unite in a closely integrated economic community;

Considering that other European countries are seeking to associate with the Common Market through the formation of a free trade area;

Considering that the political integration of Europe will be assisted by the economic developments over the next twelve or fifteen years, but that other preparatory steps must be taken to strengthen Europe's position in the world;

Considering that there should be full and effective consultation on foreign policy, if possible within a broad European framework;

Recalling its Recommendation 133 of 11th January 1957 urging the Committee of Ministers " to work out... a concrete and effective method for co-ordinating their national foreign policies as a preparation for drawing up a common policy"—which has not been answered by the Committee of Ministers;

Recalling also Recommendation 139 of 4th May 1957, which requested that Member Governments " should do everything possible to develop the habit and practice of effective prior consultation in all major matters which affect the partnership of European nations " and went on to propose that " the Prime Ministers of Europe should meet from time to time... to try to work out a common policy ",

Recommends to the Committee of Ministers :

1. that they should give a complete and detailed reply to Recommendation 133 and Recommendation 139;
2. that they should develop a system of full consultation with a view to the ultimate formulation of a common European foreign policy; it being understood that if certain countries do not find it appropriate to follow this course others must proceed without delay;
3. that they should take into consideration the following as means to achieve this end :
    a. meetings of Prime Ministers from time to time for informal discussions on major questions of policy;
    b. regular and more frequent meetings of Foreign Ministers to discuss all major questions affecting the European partnership of nations;
    c. the setting up of a standing group of personalities and permanent officials of suitable rank and calibre, possibly attached to a European organisation, to prepare in common the work of the regular meetings of the Foreign Ministers;
4. that they should develop a common policy in particular on the following specific questions :
    a. Disarmament — The Western Powers should continue their efforts to stop the arms race through the conclusion of a first disarmament agreement providing for a suspension of nuclear tests related to a controlled cut-off in the production of nuclear materials for military purposes.
    b. German Reunification — The Member Governments should try by joint efforts to bring about a general settlement with Soviet Russia within which German reunification can be achieved. They should tell the Soviet Union once again that there can be no permanent settlement if the Soviet Union continues to insist on the partition of Germany and to refuse free elections.
    c. Eastern Europe — The Member Governments should make it clear to the Soviet Union that they will never cease to raise the issue of the freedom of the countries of Eastern Europe, an issue so tragically illustrated by the events of Budapest. At the same time they should re-state their willingness to contribute to solutions that would establish good-neighbourly relations between these countries, once they are independent, and the Soviet Union.
    d. The Middle East — Member Governments should be aware of the need for large-scale economic and technical aid and for regional development schemes in the Middle East under United Nations auspices—with a view, in particular, to solving the refugee problem. They should

jointly try and encourage technical, economic and social progress there. If asked to do so, they should help the Middle East States to develop their resources for the benefit of the peoples of these States.

A joint effort should be made to induce the Arab States and Israel to open direct negotiations without prior conditions prejudicial to either side in order to bring the state of war to an end and reach a lasting agreement to ensure peace.

B. 2. Draft Order

The Assembly,

Considering that the Committee of Ministers have in the past to a large extent failed to act on a large number of its recommendations, especially those of a political nature, and that some, notably Recommendation 133, have been ignored;

Considering that it is of major importance that there should be full consultation among Member Governments on foreign affairs with a view to co-ordinating policies and eventually formulating a common policy,

Invites the Political Committee to set up a Special Group from among its members, to be assisted by the Secretary-General, and to enquire into the machinery or procedure required to establish fuller and more effective consultation among Member States on foreign policy; to meet Members of Parliament, members of the Governments and senior officials in member countries; and to make a report.

C. 3. Explanatory Memorandum presented by M. KIESINGER, Rapporteur

1. On the 21st October 1957 the Assembly referred back to the Political Committee its report, draft Recommendation and draft Order on the policy of the Member States of the Council of Europe in the light of the present international situation (Doc. 718), together with five amendments tabled by Members of the Assembly.

2. On 24th October 1957 your Committee reconsidered the texts originally proposed to the Assembly in the light of the debates held on the 17th, 18th and 21st October, as well as the above-mentioned amendments.

3. Certain other amendments were put forward in the course of the discussion in committee. These were dealt with by the Committee and, in accordance with normal practice, they are not mentioned here.

4. The purpose of this explanatory memorandum is to inform the Assembly of the position of your Committee in relation to the five amendments tabled in the Assembly before the end of the debate on 21st October 1957.

5. Your Committee rejected Amendment No. 1 (M. Molter) by a majority.

6. Your Committee gave careful consider-ration to Amendment No. 2 (Rt. Hon. John Edwards). The first part of paragraph 1 was adopted by your Committee as follows : " Member Governments should be aware of the need for large-scale technical and economic aid, and for regional development schemes in the Middle East, under United Nations auspices, with a view in particular to solving the refugee problem. " The words " with a view to resettling the refugees ", in Mr. Edwards' amendment, were rejected by a majority, in favour of the words " with a view, in particular, to solving the refugee problem ". The word " technical" was inserted. The sense of the remainder of the paragraph was considered to have been embodied in the Committee's text.

7. As regards paragraph 2 of Mr. Edwards' amendment, the Committee decided by a majority, that it should not be included in the text to be submitted to the Assembly at this stage but that the substance of the question raised in it should be dealt with within the framework of the report which M. Devinat is preparing on assistance to underdeveloped areas.

8. Amendment No. 3 (MM. Lefèvre, Mon-tini and Pezet) was agreed to, the word " political " having been deleted.

9. Amendment No. 4 (M. Kiesinger) was agreed to.

10. Amendment No. 5 (MM. Cottone, Mon-tini and Santero) was accepted in the following wording : " Invites the Political Committee to set up a Special Group from among its members to be assisted by the Secretary-General and to enquire..."

11. The draft Recommendation, as amended, was adopted by 20 votes to 0 with 1 abstention. The draft Order was adopted unanimously.

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