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Assembly of Captive European Nations

Report¹

Relations with European Non-Member Countries

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1. 1958 - 10th Session - First part



A. Draft Order

The Assembly,

Having examined the Report of its Committee on Non-represented Nations on the Assembly of Captive European Nations ([Doc. 787](#)),

1. Instructs the Committee to maintain relations with the Assembly of Captive European Nations for the purpose of exchanging information;
2. Instructs its Cultural Committee and , Social Committee—in agreement with the Committee on Non-represented Nations—to devote sympathetic attention to the cultural and social activities of the Assembly of Captive European Nations.

B. Explanatory Memorandum

1.

1. On 4th May 1957 the Consultative Assembly adopted Order No. 109, instructing the Committee on Non-represented Nations to report to it on the work of the Assembly of Captive European Nations.

2. Your Committee has carefully studied the information in its possession on the Assembly of Captive European Nations (A. C. E. N.), and submit to you the following paper on the history, aims and activities of that Assembly.

3. After the Soviet occupation of Central and Eastern Europe, a number of political leaders succeeded in escaping, and they organised in the free world groups representative of the nations of Eastern Europe. Later, with a view to concerted action these groups set up a common organisation for the captive nations on 20th September, 1954 in New York, with the title " Assembly of Captive European Nations " (A. C. E. N.).

4. According to its Charter, the main goal of the organisation is:

4.1. " to Work for the liberation from communist dictatorship and Soviet domination of the captive nations of Central and Eastern Europe. " (Art. 1, Para. 1 of the Charter);

4.2. " to affirm and sustain the right of the captive European nations to be represented in the United Nations only by their own legitimate Governments, responsive to the will of the respective peoples " (Art. 1, Para. 2, of the Charter);

4.3. " to co-operate with all free nations represented in the United Nations, with the view of attaining the effective and universal implementation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter" (Art. 1, para. 3, of the Charter).

The A. C. E. N. also seeks co-operation with the Council of Europe (Art. 1, Para., 8 of the Charter). In point of fact, it concerns itself actively with refugees from behind the Iron Curtain and tries to preserve the cultural heritage of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe (Art. 1, para. 12, of the Charter).

5. The Assembly of Captive Nations is composed of delegations from Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Esthonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Rumania. Each national delegation consists of 16 members and has one vote in the Assembly of Captive Nations. The delegations are appointed by the national groups formed by the exiled political leaders of the countries concerned. The federations of Christian Democrat, Liberal, Peasant and Social Democrat parties of Central and Eastern Europe have the status of Associate Member of t h e Assembly of Captive Nations. It should be noted that, generally speaking, these delegations are composed of representatives who left their countries immediately after t h e occupation of their respective countries by the Soviet Army and the ensuing installation of Communist Party dictatorship. As a matter of fact, the Hungarian delegation does not at the moment include any member of the Hungarian Revolutionary Council which, as is generally known, was formed by the leaders of the Hungarian revolution of 1956.

6. The Assembly of Captive Nations holds an annual session in New York, normally opening a t the same time as the General Assembly of the United Nations. It also arranges a special session in Strasbourg once a year.

7. The A. C. E. N. passes resolutions and recommendations making a special appeal to Governments and international organisations. It has, for example, repeatedly urged the United Nations Organisation to keep on the agenda of the General Assembly the " situation created by Soviet Russia's aggression and intervention in the internal affairs of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe ".

8. At its last special session in Strasbourg (26th to 30th April 1957) it adopted a resolution requesting the Council of Europe:

a. to examine, in co-operation with representatives appointed by the Assembly of Captive European Nations, ways and means of translating their concern for the enslaved countries into a programme of political action and of ensuring genuine co-operation between the representatives of the Captive European Nations and the Council of Europe;

b. 1. to examine, in collaboration with representatives appointed by the A. C. E. N., possibilities of keeping alive the traditional values of national cultures in harmony with the common basis of Western European civilisation ;

2. to help the cultural institutions of t h e refugees, enabling intellectuals to carry on research and publish text-books and other worth-while literature in their respective languages and young people to pursue their studies in the spiritual climate of their own cultures;
3. to set up a cultural fund for exiles;
4. to include refugee teachers and students from Central and Eastern Europe in the programme of university exchanges.

9. Your Committee regrets that it is not able to accept the proposal contained in paragraph (i) of the above-mentioned resolution. Such close co-operation would not be compatible with the Statute of the Council of Europe. The Committee believes, however, that it would be of advantage to meet representatives of the A. C. E. N. from time to time and to listen to the information which they may have to give. With regard to paragraph (ii), while generally sympathetic to the point of view expressed, they feel this to be a matter for the Cultural and Social Committees.