Opinion 40 (1963)[1]

Teaching and research in the field of human rights

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

Considering its Recommendation 286 of 28th April 1961, on the creation of an International Institute of Human Rights ;

Considering the report of the Committee of Experts on Human Rights, which has been submitted to it for an opinion by the Committee of Ministers (Doc. 1557),

Expresses the following opinion :

1. The Assembly is gratified to see that the Committee of Experts, sharing its opinion regarding the need for further action in the field of human rights, believes "that the promotion of knowledge and understanding of the European Convention on Human Rights and of the work of the organs set up by the Convention represents an important field of further activity for the Council of Europe".

2. The Assembly regrets that the Committee of Experts was unable fully to endorse the proposal to found an International Institute of Human Rights.

3. The Assembly would like to know whether the obstacles to the creation of an Institute of this kind independent of the Council of Europe might not be overcome by setting up a Centre for Human Rights within the Council itself.

4. The Assembly believes that in any event the proposals of the Committee of Experts represent an absolute minimum and should all be put into effect, as rapidly as possible.

5. As regards documentation, the Directorate of Human Rights should, as stated by the Committee of Experts, continue the collection of documentation relating to the Convention on the lines already started, and any necessary credits (particularly for the collection and translation of decisions of national courts) should be granted.

6. As regards publications, the existing programme should continue for the publication of the Yearbook, the Manual, the Concise Handbook and the Travaux préparatoires. Any necessary facilities should be accorded for this purpose, particularly as regards typing.

7. As regards teaching, the Assembly agrees with the Committee of Experts that study courses should be organised at the Head-quarters of the Council of Europe. More specifically, it proposes two courses per year of two weeks for about thirty participants each. It also proposes that every encouragement should be given to permit individual lectures or courses of lectures to be given by members of the Commission and the Court and by members of the Secretariat.

8. As regards research, the Assembly is of opinion that much remains to be done.

    1. As suggested by the Committee of Experts, there should be an increase in the number of research fellowships awarded for research in the field of human rights ; it is suggested that two a year would be a suitable arrangement to start with.

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1. Assembly debate on 20th September 1963 (13th Sitting) (see Docs. 1557Docs. 1557, request for an opinion, and 1620, report of the Legal Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 20th September 1963 (13th Sitting).

9. As regards the library on human rights, the Assembly proposes that steps should be taken to build up the collection of books that will be required.

10. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers should include in the budget for 1964 the credits necessary to give effect to the above proposals.