Recommendation 30 (1950)[1]

Urgent necessity of assistance to Refugees

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

Deeply moved by the situation that has been caused in Europe by the migrations of populations and by the wretched conditions under which refugees of all categories are living,

Recognising the common obligation of all members of the Council of Europe to alleviate the sufferings of European refugees,

Convinced that the solution of this problem demands the closest collaboration, on an international scale, and more particularly between the members of the Council of Europe, in accordance with the principles of European solidarity and civic morality as defined by the Statute of the Council,

Considering, finally, that the immediate establishment of a provisional service to attend to the most pressing needs is a matter of the greatest urgency,

Calls the attention of the Committee of Ministers to the urgent necessity of affording assistance to all refugees, and requests the said Committee in the first place, to recommend the Governments of the Members of the Council of Europe to take all such measures on the national level as may be calculated, in their opinion, to improve the lot of the refugees and, secondly, to set up immediately, within the framework of the Secretariat-General of the Council of Europe, a provisional service for the study of problems involved in the legal position of Refugees and to satisfy the most pressing needs of refugees of all categories, in particular those who do not at present receive assistance from any international organisation[2].

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1. Adopted 26th August 1950, at the conclusion of the Debate on the Report from the Special Committee on Refugee Questions. See Doc. AS (2) 102 and Sitting of 26th August 1950.

2. This Recommendation formed the subject of an explanatory letter from the Chairman of the Special Committee on Refuges Questions to the President of the Assembly. The text of this letter was as follows:

Mr. President,

Now that, on 261h August, 1950, thee Assembly has adopted the Recommendation to the Committee of Ministers relative to the problem of European refugees (Doc. AS (2) 109), may I define below, what, in the opinion of the Special Committee on Refuge Questions, would be thee main duties of the provisional service whose establishment has been requested.

The Special Committee considers that the provisional service should above ail direct its efforts to the solution of the following problems:

To draw up lists of the number and categories of refugees in all the Member Countries of the Council of Europe;

To examine the problems arising out of the legal position of refugees, especially by assembling as complete as possible documentation on the legislation, the administrative practices and the international agreements (in force, signed or under negotiation) of the Members of the Council of Europe. The provisional service should also pay close attention to the work of the United Nations and other international organisations in this field, especially with regard to plans for emigration.

To assist refugees who are not at present in receipt of aid front any international organisation.

Such refugees comprise, firstly, certain categories of refugees not covered by the I. R. O. owing to the constitution of this organisation – for instance German refugees – secondly, refugees who, when the I. R. O. closes down, will not receive material help from any international organisation. To fulfil this latter task the provisional service could perhaps be authorised to make contact with governments to obtain the necessary funds for limited aid to be given in certain well-defined cases.

I am, Mr. President, your obedient servant,

G. PERNOT, Chairman of the Special Committee on Refuge Questions.