

Resolution 73 (1955)¹

Opinion on the First Report on the activities of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly has examined with interest the First Report of E. C. M. T. It can but express satisfaction that an exchange of views should thus have been instituted with the Ministers of Transport similar to that which, on the basis of regular reports, exists with O. E. E. C., and E. C. S. C. This, indeed, represents an essential element of European co-operation, and the Assembly is fully aware of the importance to be attached to a public opinion that is fully informed on these matters.

The Assembly has taken special note of certain points made in this Report.

(a) Railway deficits

In view of the burden which such deficits impose upon public funds in most of the member countries, the Assembly learns with satisfaction that the International Union of Railways has undertaken a study of this question and hopes that it will be kept informed of the results obtained.

(b) Transport for private account

In view of the increasing importance of road transport for private account, it would appear desirable to undertake a study of such developments and of its impact on other means of transport, particularly rail.

(c) Eurofima

The Assembly has learned with interest of the forthcoming establishment of this company which would appear to be a particularly welcome materialisation of the idea, emanating from Strasbourg, of European companies.

(d) European road fund

It would appear to be essential to finance roads of international importance on an international basis. It would be desirable to this end to establish a European road fund which would in part be financed by a European tax imposed upon road users.

(e) The problem of through rates

The Conference should make a study of the effects of the measures of this kind taken by the six countries of the European Coal and Steel Community on the transport system and, in a general way, on the economy of the six countries and of the other member countries which may also have been affected.

(f) Air transport

1. (see [Doc. 359](#)[Doc. 359](#), Draft Resolution of the Committee on Economic Questions and Explanatory Memorandum by M. Lemaire, Rapporteur). This Resolution was adopted by the Assembly at its 9th Sitting, on 9th July, 1955



The Assembly expresses the wish that the Member States of E. C. M. T. should ensure that the same united action which prevails in most member countries between surface and air transport should be ensured at the European level, due regard being paid to the essential technical independence of air transport.

1. In a general manner, the Assembly notes that while the First Report of E. C. M. T. reveals substantial achievements in various fields, the Conference appears to have endorsed the activity of the great specialised organisations rather than to have inspired and coordinated it. The co-ordination of the various means of transport on the European plane would nevertheless appear to be of vital importance. In order to ensure this co-ordination and afford the continuity which is essential to the work of the Conference, the Assembly considers it necessary that there should be established a structure the form of which would be based on the experience of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community - that is to say, a Standing European Transport Committee.

(a) Composition

The Standing Committee would be composed of a very small number of eminent persons. Delegates, appointed by common agreement by Governments, should attune themselves to a European outlook without receiving any instructions from Governments to which they would not be responsible. Members of the Committees should be so chosen as to represent expert knowledge not necessarily limited to transport alone.

The Governments would also appoint the Chairman of the Committee who would be responsible for the manner in which it worked and, in order to ensure necessary liaison, would be an ex officio member of the Conference of Ministers of Transport whenever it met.

(b) Operation

The Standing Committee would establish its own programme of work, but the Conference of Ministers, specialised organisations and the Consultative Assembly could suggest to the Committee any questions they might wish to be studied.

For any necessary study the Committee would, in conditions to be formulated, call upon such persons as technicians of the major existing specialised organisations and representatives of the economic organisations and trade unions concerned ; thus, small working parties of a very flexible nature could be formed to study each individual question and, according to the nature of the question, could be presided over by one or other member of the Standing Committee.

The national point of view would be represented in a twofold manner : by the participation in these working parties of national professional representatives and of the Ministers' Deputies of countries interested. In the light of these various points of view the Standing Committee would form its own conclusions which would be made public.

These reports would be referred to the Consultative Assembly for opinion, and an appropriate procedure would be worked out whereby such opinions could be rendered promptly. Both the reports and the opinions would be transmitted to the Ministers who would then be in full possession of the facts before reaching a decision.

The Ministers would remain free to accept or to reject the recommendations of the Standing Committee, but in the case of rejection they should indicate their reasons for such rejection to the Assembly.