Resolution 214 (1961)[1]

Development of cultural co-operation in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

Introduction - Procedure

1. The Assembly notes with great satisfaction that the Council of Europe's cultural activities have developed considerably during the past year. It can be said without exaggeration that a new era in European cultural co-operation has begun.

2. Let us recall the stages in this development : on 12th December 1960, the Committee of Ministers adopted Resolution (60) 32 on cultural and scientific co-operation in Europe, stipulating the imperative need to develop this co-operation in the Council of Europe ; the Conference of Ministers of Education held its second meeting at Hamburg in April 196 ; and, finally, following the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers, an "ad hoc Committee" set up to draft concrete proposals for improving the machinery and programme of cultural action by the Council of Europe met in Strasbourg in May of this year.

3. The Report of the ad hoc Committee[2], on which the Assembly was represented by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Cultural Committee, summarises the preliminary work done at the various stages. It takes into account the orders of the Committee of Ministers, the Resolutions of the Second Conference of Ministers of Education[3]and is based on the recommendations and proposals of the Consultative Assembly, in particular those contained in Resolution 186.

4. This Report is, at present, being studied by the Committee of Ministers. The ad hoc Committee were unanimous in hoping that action would be taken on their Recommendation by 1st January 1962. That is also the date when the statute of the Cultural Fund is due to be revised. If the ad hoc Committee's proposals were adopted, the Fund would find itself incorporated in a new system.

5. In assessing the present situation, the Assembly can therefore concentrate attention on the ad hoc Committee's Report, the second Report of the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund[4]being, so to speak, merely an assessment of the work done so far by the present cultural organisations. It only remains for the Assembly to congratulate the Committee of Cultural Experts and the Board on the excellence of their work. It regards the recent trends in their activities as a new departure which, in the framework of the structures advocated by the ad hoc Committee, will reach their full flowering and open up new horizons.

6. This also applies to the Partial Agreement cultural activities which the Council of Europe inherited from Western European Union[5]. The transfer of these activities has considerably enriched the Council of Europe's cultural programme and may be regarded as one of the steps which made possible the present attempt to centralise European cultural co-operation in a single organisation.

7. The Partial Agreement contribution to the traditional activities of the Committee of Cultural Experts of the Council of Europe was threefold and should not be overlooked in the general re-organisation process. Under that Agreement, a particularly effective method of international co-operation was devised, that of

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1. Assembly debate on 27th September 1961 (18th Sitting) (see Doc. 1332, Report of the Cultural and Scientific Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27th September 1961 (18th Sitting).
2. Doc. 1316
3. Doc. 1321
4. Doc. 1325.
5. The Secretary-General's Report, European Co-operation in 1960, pp. 140-143 and 149-153.

national correspondents and of meetings and courses organised in the various countries and financed by the Government of the host country. The valuable lesson was also learnt that certain types of cultural activity may be initiated and carried to a successful conclusion by a limited number of countries, which may subsequently be joined by others. Lastly, important work has been done within the Partial Agreement in preparing the way for European co-operation in certain sectors which had not been included in the Council of Europe's programme, but which have turned out to be full of promise for the future, those of television and the cinema, for instance.

Summary of the ad hoc Committee's recommendations

8. Before making any further proposals, it is advisable to review the main points in the ad hoc Committee's recommendations :

COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

9. The main proposal made by the ad hoc Committee is the creation of a Council for Cultural Co-operation (already abbreviated to the "CCC") to be the sole organ of co-ordination, finance and policy in the cultural field. It would take over more or less all the rights and responsibilities of the present Committee of Cultural Experts and Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund. In composition, the CCC would closely resemble the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund in its present form but the non-governmental element would be reinforced, since the Consultative Assembly and the European Cultural Foundation would be represented by three and two members respectively having the right to vote.

FOUR MAIN SECTORS OF ACTIVITY

10. The activities supervised by the CCC would be divided into four main sectors :

higher education and research ;

general and technical education ;

out-of-school education (youth, physical education, adult education) ;

the arts and general cultural relations.

In each of the first three sectors the ad hoc Committee anticipates the setting up of a standing committee of experts. On account of the wide variety of activities it covers, the fourth sector would have to include several groups of specialised studies. It should be noted that the chairmen of the three technical committees would also sit on the CCC, thus increasing its representative character.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE11. In addition, the ad hoc Committee recommends that a large department of education and culture be set up at the Secretariat-General of the Council of Europe providing a sustained impulse and effective assistance for the various cultural bodies. This department would be headed by an eminent personality with the rank of Director or Deputy Secretary-General.

MAIN LINES OF A NEW PROGRAMME

12. The proposals of the ad hoc Committee regarding machinery for cultural co-operation are likely to be approved by the Assembly, which will recognise in them many familiar elements, and the ad hoc Committee's recommendations on the future programme entirely correspond with the Assembly's doctrine ; for years it has been asking for considerable extension of European cultural activities.

13. The Assembly will thus willingly subscribe to the following principles which the ad hoc Committee should like to see govern European cultural co-operation from now on :

"The European nations have undertaken to raise the cultural level of their citizens, to enlarge the bases and widen the horizons in accordance with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and the aspiration of all modern democracies. This task would be made considerably easier by increased international co-operation in the spheres of education, research, cultural activities and youth.

During the past twelve years this cooperation has developed with very modest means. It has not yet become accepted practice in the member States ; it has, sometimes, been dissipated over insufficiently co-ordinated projects.

The component parts of a new programme of European cultural co-operation might be the following :

a. to review the reforms and projects under way in the various countries, with emphasis on the three main sectors constituted by education at university and in andout-of-school ;

b. to facilitate the movements of persons and cultural material between countries ;

c. to pool certain teaching facilities or activities intended for Europeans and non-Europeans ;

d. to disseminate the ideas, conceptions and creations of the European mind among European and non-European nations".

Assembly Agreement

14. It should first be stressed that the ad hoc Committee has accomplished its task with flying colours. Its proposals are likely to extend the scope of cultural activities considerably and simplify the machinery. The Assembly has consequently no hesitation in giving them its full support and in recommending their immediate and integral realisation.

Suggestions from the Assembly

15. The following comments are offered in the hope that they may make a valuable contribution to the proposed scheme by indicating to Governments the way in which the Assembly would like to see the new structures and their action develop.

(a) ROLE OF THE CCC[6]

16. Assuming that the proposed Council for Cultural Co-operation becomes the principal organ of cultural co-operation in Europe the Assembly should like to repeat its conviction that such co-operation should be carried out within the widest possible geographical framework.

17. It hopes that advantage will be taken of the possibility provided by the Cultural Convention of associating in this cultural co-operation the European countries which are not members of the Council of Europe[7]. It welcomes the presence in its midst of Swiss observers - even if only to examine economic questions at present - and should like to express its conviction that the beginning of a new stage in European cultural co-operation is a favourable moment to associate Switzerland with that co-operation. It would therefore urge the Committee of Ministers to issue an immediate invitation to the Swiss Confederation to accede to the Cultural Convention.

18. The Assembly further considers that the role of the CCC should not be restricted to the institutional limitations of a single organisation, even if it were the Council of Europe. Its structure should be sufficiently flexible to enable it to co-ordinate the activities of all intergovernmental European organisations.

19. Having regard to the possible changes in European organisations after the expansion of the European Economic Community, the CCC should continue to serve as the one agency of European cultural co-operation whatever the new organisational structure of European political and economic co-operation may be.

20. Recalling its Recommendation 242, and noting with satisfaction the opinion expressed by the Committee of Ministers, the Assembly wonders whether the future CCC would not be the appropriate organ for carrying out, in the widest possible framework[8], the scheme to set up a European University as well as the other recommendations drawn up by the Interim Committee of the European Organisation known as the "Six"[9].

21. Governments of all Council of Europe member countries will find this possibility the more interesting since a recent declaration by the Heads of State or Government of the EEC countries advocates the formation within the "Six" of a "Council made up of the Ministers of Education, or Ministers who are responsible for cultural relations, assisted by a Committee of Experts". The setting up of such a Committee outside the CCC would call in question the principle of organising European cultural co-operation within the single framework of greater Europe, a principle which the Assembly has always defended and which was applied in the project under discussion.

22. Co-operation between a limited number of member countries in carrying out a specific project is, in the Assembly's opinion, one of the methods which the CCC should adopt within its system[10].

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6. Cf. Recommendation 300 on the development of cultural co-operation in Europe.
7. Cf. Recommendation 205.
8. Cf. Recommendation 301 on the cultural activities of the "Six".
9. Report of the Interim Committee to the Councils of the European Economic Community and Euratom, Florence, 27th April 1960.
10. Cf. Recommendation 300 on the development of cultural co-operation in Europe.

23. Lastly, the Assembly hopes that the Committee of Ministers will confer a maximum of authority and autonomy on the CCC to enable it to act on its own responsibility and deal directly with national authorities whenever it deems necessary.

24. As regards relations between the future CCC and the Assembly, the latter notes with satisfaction that, according to the proposals of the ad hoc Committee, three of its members will have the right to sit in the Council and vote. The Assembly proposes to delegate as its representatives the Chairman and the two Vice-Chairmen of the Cultural and Scientific Committee.

CCC Report to the Assembly

25. If, as is planned, the future CCC is to take over the entire rights and responsibilities of the Committee of Cultural Experts and the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund, the Assembly assumes this to mean that CCC's annual progress report to the Committee of Ministers will still be transmitted to the Consultative Assembly and presented by the Chairman of the new Committee.

(b) METHOD OF ACTION

26. The foregoing remarks on the advisability, should the need arise, of applying the Partial Agreement system have touched on problems concerning the CCC's methods of procedure. Once again the Assembly would like to stress the need to hand over part of the cultural activities to the non-governmental sector, bearing in mind at the same time the important role which will fall to Government authorities in establishing the new system.

27. Faithful to its tradition, the Assembly still believes that the CCC is likely to receive valuable support from certain non-governmental bodies - provided that support is organised methodically - such as local authorities, Europe Houses and Cultural Centres.

(i) Local authorities

28. Since 1957, a European Conference of Local Authorities has been convened and consulted periodically by the Consultative Assembly. This Conference is a very effective means of disseminating information about Council of Europe activities among the municipalities of member countries. It has proved its worth on several occasions, for instance in the development of town-pairing and exchanges and in giving the name of "Europe" to streets and public squares.

29. At the next meeting arranged for the beginning of 1962, a report will be studied on how local authorities can most effectively contribute to the work of the national Committees of the Cultural Fund[11]

Furthermore, a plan to develop municipal exchanges, aided financially by the Cultural Fund, will bring these exchanges within the comprehensive programme for European cultural co-operation co-ordinated by the Council of Europe.

30. This co-ordination could be extended to other sectors, for example : the systematic establishment of Europe Houses, the reception of itinerant European exhibitions the distribution of publications and the celebration of a "Europe Day" as much cultural as political in character.

(ii) Europe Houses

31. On the initiative of the Cultural Committee, representatives of 22 Europe Houses in seven member countries have begun examining ways and means of facilitating collaboration between the Council of Europe and its cultural bodies.

32. The Europe Houses are anxious to direct their activities towards promoting the aims and policies of the Council of Europe. Their work could be greatly aided by the achievements of the CCC in certain fields such as the cinema, exhibitions, and audiovisual material now being prepared for youth organisations.

11. Cf. paras. 36-38.

33. Europe Houses might also be asked to collaborate in organising courses and conferences. "Standard courses" such as the annual Council of Europe course in "European studies" could perhaps be repeated by Europe Houses, using the same programme and to a certain extent the same lecturers. This would extend their sphere of influence.

(iii) Cultural centres

34. The foregoing remarks could also apply to European cultural centres such as the Cultural Circle at Royaumont in France and the Cini Foundation in Venice.

35. While preserving their independence, these Centres might be informed of the broad outlines of the CCC programme and could, on occasion, contribute to it either by organising courses or conferences, or simply by directing part of their own activities towards the main objectives fixed by the CCC.

36. A preponderant role will fall to the European Cultural Centre at Geneva. There is a danger that the Centre's activities may duplicate those of the CCC if a definite task is not assigned to it in the general programme of cultural co-operation. The Centre's contribution would then be particularly valuable, thanks not least to its eminent Director.

National Committees

37. The Assembly should also like to emphasise the role which the Joint National Committees of the Cultural Fund and the European Cultural Foundation are called upon to play in the future.

38. In the Assembly's view, after the CCC has been set up, they should adopt the uniform name of "National Committee for Cultural Co-operation", as the French National Committee has done.

39. These Committees were set up in the first instance to collect funds and stimulate interest in European cultural co-operation in their respective countries by disseminating the relevant information. Their role, which did not at first seem important, will prove increasingly to be an essential one, that of marshalling within each country the forces likely to be of service to the European cause.

40. The Assembly would therefore now like to see the work of the National Committees arranged in such a way that they will be able to assume, at the earliest possible moment, functions similar to those exercised throughout the world by the National Committees for UNESCO.

(c) PUBLIC RELATIONS

41. The Assembly is anxious that the CCC should avoid the pitfall of working only behind closed doors and suggests that, to give its work a wider impact, it might be advantageous to have recourse to public relations officers to bring certain points home to the desired sector of public opinion.

42. The Cultural Committee has been favourably impressed by a scheme submitted to the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund. Drawn up by public relations experts, it was a plan for a shrewd campaign on the theme "Birth-places of Art and Industry in Europe" to arouse the interest of all sections of the public in questions of European cultural unity. It must have been its unusual character and wide scope which prevented the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund from adopting this plan in the first place. However, it must be regarded as a prototype of the action which the CCC should consider to make its programme widely known among the general public

(d) FINANCE

43. Finance questions are closely bound up with methods of action.

44. The Assembly takes this opportunity of congratulating the Committee of Ministers on the substantial increase in Government contributions to the Cultural Fund which was decided in Resolution (60) 32. The Committee should also like to thank those Governments which have availed themselves of the possibilities offered by Article IV, 1 (b), of the Statute of the Cultural Fund to make sometimes very substantial voluntary contributions to the Cultural Fund.

45. The Assembly foresees, however, that in the long run, even very large payments to the Cultural Fund will be insufficient to meet the growing needs occasioned by the implementation of the programme of cultural co-operation as it stands at present. The ad hoc Committee has, therefore, very rightly indicated the need to draw upon national budgets which have greater and more readily available facilities ; this brings us to a system of mixed finance which has long proved its worth in countries with a federal structure.

46. This method will prove very useful in collecting private funds through the national Committees. These funds will demonstrate the sincere desire of the private sector to participate in the CCC's activities. Such support will be more readily forthcoming if it is used to carry out, in a given country, some specific project which has received the approval of the authorities.

47. The Assembly believes it advisable, for this reason, to adopt the principle of earmarking donations from private as well as from public sources .[1]

(e) DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

48. Recalling what it said in the last paragraph of its Resolution 186, the Assembly should like to stress the important role which will fall to the Secretariat in realising the projects in question. If success is to be assured, the Secretariat staff will have to be reinforced and provided with the necessary means to carry out its work.

49. The role of the future head of these services will be a vital one. The ad hoc Committee therefore considers, and rightly, that he should be given a particularly high grade, the implication being that only a person of the highest calibre will be considered. The Assembly can but express the hope that the Secretary-General and the Committee of Ministers will find such a person, someone who by his authority, forcefulness and experience will achieve success in the important task entrusted to him[12]

(f) THE PROGRAMME

50. As stated above, the Assembly welcomes the directives of the ad hoc Committee with regard to the future CCC programme. Everything will clearly depend on the implementation of what is, for the moment, simply a declaration of intent.

51. The Assembly will follow proceedings very closely. A beginning has in fact been made and the progress already achieved in the field of youth activities holds out great promise for the other sectors.

52. The Assembly would wish to call attention to the fact that a Youth sub-Committee and a Scientific sub-Committee have been set up within the Cultural Committee with instructions to follow developments closely and to elicit the necessary parliamentary support.

53. Furthermore, the Assembly is proposing, on the suggestion of the Cultural Committee, to organise two debates at one of its next Sessions, the first on European cooperation in youth activities and the other on co-operation in scientific research. It will, in the course of these debates, attempt to take stock of the situation. It intends to put forward, on that occasion, practical recommendations concerning these subjects.

54. The Assembly would, at the present stage, merely state the prime importance it attaches to cultural and educational problems connected with technical and economic assistance to the developing countries.

55. In this connection, the Assembly has adopted Recommendation 279, advocating the organisation of a clearing-house service with regard to technical assistance in the field of education and youth questions. Would it not seem appropriate that this clearinghouse and the other tasks which we intend to entrust to the Council of Europe should be placed under the authority of the CCC ?

12. Cf. Recommendation 300 on the development of cultural co-operation in Europe.