Resolution 248 (1963)[1]

Reply to the 12th report of the International Labour Organisation

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Consultative Assembly has taken careful note of the 12th report presented to it by the International Labour Organisation, covering the period from August 1961 to July 1962.

2. This report shows again that the ILO and the Council of Europe have, in many respects, not only common aims and ideals, but also concrete and practical common interests. On this basis, common action has been taken in the past, and the Assembly sincerely hopes that this close collaboration will be continued and indeed strengthened in future.

3. Recognising that vocational training is one of the key social problems today, the Assembly takes a great interest in the activities of the International Vocational Training Information and Research Centre (CIRF) which is a joint realisation of the two Organisations. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that the European Coal and Steel Community now participates in the work of the Centre. It hopes that the Centre will continue to develop to the full satisfaction of all those concerned. On the basis of Recommendation 307 (1962), to which the Assembly referred in its reply to the 11th Report of the ILO, steps are now being taken to inquire into the possibilities of creating a European office to supply films and other educational material, within the framework of the CIRF. The Assembly is also pleased to learn about the other activities of the ILO in the field of vocational training and rehabilitation, particularly the assistance given to individual European Governments.

4. The Assembly finds these activities of ILO, as well as those concerning manpower planning and organisation, to be in full harmony with the full employment policy which the Assembly has always advocated and which is also expressed in Article 1 of the European Social Charter. In this connection, the Assembly would also note with satisfaction that the International Labour Conference at its 46th Session adopted a Recommendation fixing the 40-hour week as a social standard to be reached and a Recommendation on vocational training. The principles of both of these Recommendations may, when applied by Parties to the Social Charter, help to facilitate the application of the Charter. As the ILO, no doubt, is informed, three countries - Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom - have ratified the Charter, and ratification procedures have been started in several other countries. The Assembly is doing its utmost to encourage ratification of the Charter by all member States.

5. Social security is another field where the interests of the ILO and the Council of Europe coincide and where a close collaboration exists. The Assembly has been informed and is grateful that considerable progress has been made towards the preparation of a new European Convention on the social security of migrants and foreigners, thanks to the very active cooperation of the ILO. On the other hand, the International Labour Convention concerning equality of treatment of nationals and non-nationals in social security, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 46th Session, goes a good way in the direction of the liberal policy towards non-nationals which the Assembly has always advocated. On several points the new International Labour Convention will mark a progress in relation to the European Interim Agreements on Social Security of 1953.

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1. Assembly debate on 10th May 1963 (8th Sitting) (see Docs. 1514,Docs. 1514, 12th report of ILO, and 1569, draft Resolution presented by the Social Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 10th May 1963 (8th Sitting).

6. With regard to the conditions of rural workers, the Assembly is particularly pleased to note that a number of European countries are among the countries that will profit from the intensive ILO rural development programme. In fact the Assembly, and particularly its Committee on Agriculture and its Social Committee, would have liked to see included in the European Social Charter special provisions to cover the conditions in agriculture. It is encouraging to note that the number of ratifications of International Labour Conventions by member States of the Council of Europe is constantly increasing and that these countries also contribute considerably towards the operational activities of the ILO. The Assembly is very conscious of the role that Europe should play in relation to developing countries, and it welcomes any initiative taken by other organisations, including the ILO, to assist such countries. The Assembly has itself adopted a Recommendation advocating the establishment of a European agency for the employment of young volunteers in European countries in programmes of technical co-operation for the benefit of developing countries.

7. However, Europe itself has also its needs and its problems in the social field. Under rapidly changing industrial and other conditions, young people, in particular, will meet difficult adjustment problems. Needs for vocational guidance and training, industrial protection, placing in employment, etc., may be expected to increase. The Assembly feels that the time has come for European countries to take stock of the situation and to plan ahead. Since the problems in question are of direct interest, not only to Governments, but also to employers' and workers' organisations, the best means of approaching them would, no doubt, be through a conference of a tripartite character. The Assembly therefore feels that steps should be taken to examine the desirability and possibility of organising such a conference on the basis of the appropriate provisions of the Agreement between the ILO and the Council of Europe.