Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 14
05 May 1951

Protection of children in the event of war

Motion for an Order
tabled by Mr Osman KAPANI and other members of the Assembly

Protection of Children in the event of war

Explanatory Memorandum

The world political situation and that of Europe remains hazardous. The countries of Europe, conscious as they arc of present dangers, arc taking all necessary steps to improve their defences in order to be able to confront any possible aggression. Yet the third World War, if the atomic bomb is used, may well bring about the virtual destruction of European civilisation.

In the new conditions of modern warfare the civil population incurs far greater dangers than the armies themselves; the aim of the aggressor will be to paralyse the entire economic system of the countries attacked, to break down the morale of the populations, and to spread disorder throughout the whole of civil life.

In such a situation the States have a particular duty to take all necessary steps to protect children from the dangers of war. Only by acting in this way will they be assuming their responsibility towards future generations. It may be added that the certain knowledge that their children are safe will strengthen the morale and be an incentive to the fighting spirit of the soldiers. Even if their country were to be occupied, they would not be beset by the fear of seeing their children in the hands of the enemy and serving perhaps as hostages.

The Council of Europe should take the initiative to bring about concerted action with this end in view. And to this end the following Motion is submitted to the Consultative Assembly :

" The Assembly,

" Considerin g the impending dangers which, In the event of war, will threaten civil populations and young children in particular,

" Considerin g that it is essential that steps be taken to decide upon neutral zones, remote from the field of operations, where it would be possible to receive children threatened by the dangers of war,

" Instruct s its relevant committees to proceed to the drawing up of a statute for an Organisation, to be set up within the framework of the Council of Europe, enabling the creation of reception areas or children's communities, and to get in touch with those countries remaining outside the conflict in order to ask them to give asylum to a certain number of children.

The Governments should be required to inform the Organisation of the number of children whose evacuation they deem to be necessary. They would make themselves responsible for the necessary financial charges and the provision of stocks of foodstuffs. The Organisation would work in close collaboration with the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

" The children's communities or the areas under the control of the Organisation would be made publicly known in peace time, and all the nations should be required to bind themselves to respect them in the event of war. This would constitute a valuable contribution to International Law in time of war, established in the interests of all nations, in order to save the lives of millions of innocent and harmless human beings."

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed:

KAPANI Osman, Turkey