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Creation of a European fund for exiles, administered by a Specilized Agency placed under the supervision of the Council of Europe

Report¹

Relations with European Non-Member Countries

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A. Explanatory Memorandum

1.

Analysis of the present situation

1. Europe's value and significance for the world has always lain in the wealth and variety of its national civilizations. These civilisations have always been closely related to one another ; one civilization has inspired another; none could exist without the other; and this cultural unity of Europe has contributed throughout its history to the mitigation of political differences.

2. A body such as the Council of Europe cannot ignore this fact. Since the Council of Europe does not comprise all European States, and consequently not all European civilizations, it must determine its relationship towards those which are not included in its membership.

3. Cultural matters are of major political significance. No State can flourish without a living culture ; without a vigorous cultural life a State loses not only one of the fundamental sources of its strength but also its very *raison d'être*. What holds good for the individual State holds good for Europe as a whole, and by the same token for the Council of Europe, which is working to build the unity of the Continent in the Political sphere and already embodies this unity to a large extent. The weighty words of the Preamble and of Article 3 of the Statute, and of Articles 9 and 10 of the Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, should be remembered in this connection.

4. If it is true that a State cannot exist without a vigorous cultural life, it is equally true that a cultural life cannot exist independently of the State in which it has its roots. In considering the general situation of those European States which do not at present belong to the Council of Europe, due attention must therefore be given to the cultural life of those of their citizens who are in exile.

5. At first sight the non-Member States can be divided into two groups : the one consisting of those States whose system of government corresponds to the requirements of the Statute of the Council of Europe, but which for one reason or another do not feel that they are in a position to become Members of the Council; the other of those States whose system of government does not conform to the requirements of the Statute, and which have therefore not been asked to join the Council of Europe. Switzerland, Portugal, Austria and Finland belong to the first group. The States behind the Iron Curtain belong to the second. Spain and Yugoslavia, whose political, structure and whose attitude towards the principles laid down in Article 3 of the Statute are, it may be hoped, in a stage of development or of transformation, hold an intermediate position. These two countries, moreover, are not under foreign occupation, nor are they isolated from all free contact with Western Europe. The Special Committee is of the opinion that the Spanish and Yugoslav problem should be the subject of more detailed study. In this report, therefore, we have refrained from expressing our views on this problem.

6. In the case of Switzerland, Portugal, Austria and Finland no special problems arise in the cultural field, from the point of view of the Council of Europe. Full support is given to the development of culture in these countries, and their contributions enrich the cultural life of the Continent as a whole. As regards the links between the Council of Europe and these States in other fields, it is to be hoped that in certain cases they will become increasingly strengthened as a result of collaboration in the work of the O. E. E. C. and other international organisations. As far as Austria is concerned an even more favourable development is to be expected, since it is hoped that observers of the Austrian Parliament will be present at the Sessions of the Consultative Assembly.

7. It will always be an important and worthwhile task of the Special Committee to bear the interests of this group of States in mind during the work of the Council of Europe and, should the case arise, to submit proposals to the Consultative Assembly for the purpose of safeguarding their interests. In particular the Special Committee is of the opinion that when Specialized Authorities are established these countries should not be forgotten, and that provision should always be made for their subsequent adherence should circumstances permit.

8. With regard to the relations of the Council of Europe with countries behind the Iron Curtain, the Special Committee, recognising that this problem as a whole comes within the competence of the Committee on General Affairs, confined itself to examining it from a cultural point of view — and to considering also what measures might be taken in the social field on behalf of refugees.

9. The Special Committee is of the opinion that no free cultural life is possible behind the Iron Curtain, and that these distinguished and once-flourishing European civilizations are slowly perishing. This is a tragedy for all who are directly or indirectly affected; it is a loss not only for these countries themselves, but also for us who live in the freedom of the West. Europe, for its own sake, cannot afford to lose the heritage of the civilizations of the nations in Eastern and Central Europe, and the survival of their cultural life is essential if the peaceful development of our Continent is to be ensured. We recognise that this cannot be brought about unless human rights and fundamental freedoms are restored and guaranteed in the countries concerned.

10. The Council of Europe should therefore consider it as one of its most urgent duties to preserve the cultural inheritance and the national civilizations of these peoples. This can be done only among the exiles now living in the democratic countries of the West. Great responsibility rests upon the West; no one else can shoulder this responsibility; nor can the West evade it.

11. From a political point of view it would be most desirable that it should be the Council of Europe that assumes this task and carries it out in its own name. Any steps taken by individual States on their own initiative would be liable to political misinterpretation. If, however, the Council of Europe as a whole were to take action, this difficulty would not arise, because the measures adopted by individual States would be covered by the common responsibility of the Members of the Council of Europe. The successful fulfilment of the task which is suggested would, moreover, reinforce the Council of Europe itself, and greatly increase its influence and prestige.

12. In its earnest desire to maintain a cultural home in Western Europe for exiles from Eastern countries, the Special Committee trusts that effective material and moral aid will be granted to cultural associations founded by refugees; it does not, however, contemplate giving consideration to any claims of a political nature which such persons living in exile may formulate, especially where these claims have territorial implications.

13. The Special Committee wishes to point out, nevertheless, that the moral and political state in which the nations of Central and Eastern Europe at present find themselves is not the outcome of action by independent Governments freely expressing the will of their peoples. On the contrary, the Committee is convinced that the inhabitants of the countries at present subjected to foreign occupation remain fully conscious of their status as Europeans, are still imbued with those moral and political principles which have inspired the cultural development of Europe, and are deeply desirous of resuming their traditional relations with Western countries. The Committee therefore urges that the Council of Europe should lose no opportunity of proclaiming that the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe belong to the great family of European peoples and that a place will continue to be reserved for each of them in the community which we are attempting to build.

General nature of the measures to be taken

14. In considering what measures should be taken to fulfil the tasks outlined in the first section of this Report the Special Committee came to the conclusion that it would require the help and support of other committees of the Assembly, the competences of which do not, it is true, coincide with that of the Special Committee, but which, nevertheless, touch upon the sphere of the Special Committee at many points. The Special Committee has therefore been in correspondence with the Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions and with the Special Committee on Refugees. The final text of this Report has, however, been prepared upon the sole responsibility of the Special Committee to watch over the interests of European nations not represented in the Council of Europe.

15. Provision must be made for young exiles from the Eastern European countries to attend schools and universities. This necessitates their having free access to educational and research institutions in the Western countries. There is need for all kinds of material assistance, in particular for scholarships, suitable accommodation and medical care. Education and training must proceed in such a way that, while these young people are indeed able to acquire the intellectual wealth of the West on which, at least for the time being, their livelihood will depend, they are at the same time protected against becoming " de-nationalised. " Suitable measures must therefore be taken to ensure that they become thoroughly familiar with the history, the traditional culture and the present conditions of their native countries. In the near future these students will be the sole free trustees of their national civilisations. The longer the partition of our Continent continues, the greater the differences between East and West will become, not only from a political, moral, cultural and psychological , point of view, but also in the economic and social structure of town and country, industry and agrir culture. Any change in the present state of affairs may present these young people with tasks of historic dimensions; what they think and how they act will then be of immediate significance also for ourselves.

16. An estimate based upon the best available information of the number of students concerned is to be found in the First Part of the Memorandum in the Appendix to [Doc. 61](#).

17. Care must be taken in the education and the training of the growing generation, and, at the same time, scientific and research institutions such as institutes and libraries should be founded, or should be encouraged where they already exist. In addition, steps should be taken to bring together persons who are active in the various aspects of the cultural field, such as scholars, artists and journalists. Scientific and artistic work should be brought before the public, and new editions of the traditional classical writings should be produced, perhaps in two languages. Education and research are best carried out under the auspices of the existing universities of the West. It is desirable that it should not take place in exclusively " exile-universities, " since in the latter the original sources of Western culture and knowledge would be lacking, and because they would not be able to provide the necessary contact between the exiles, on the one hand, and the youth of the countries in which they were resident on the other. The technical education of exiles should be promoted in each country by the methods most suitable to that country's individual conditions and traditions.

18. In the case of adults careful examination should be given to the question of how far it is possible to provide material assistance for the exponents of the cultural life of Central and Eastern Europe who are at present living in exile. The first consideration is that these persons should be given the most favourable conditions possible to enable them to support themselves. They should therefore be treated as nationals in the countries in which they are living and should receive permission to work. Moreover, their national diplomas and academic degrees should be recognised, and freedom of movement granted to them. The Special Committee is glad to learn that the technical and juridical aspects of this question are at present being studied by the Special Committee on Refugees. But these are not the only aspects of the problem to be considered. From the cultural point of view it is essential that each country should provide for these exiles a reasonable opportunity for life and service.

19. It is necessary that the exiles, apart from what they themselves earn, should receive grants in order that they may be able to perform tasks of cultural value. There are numerous organisations and institutions working in this field, which have been brought into being by the exiles themselves at the cost of great personal sacrifice².

20. In addition to the organisations formed by the refugees themselves, both public and private organisations in the West have extended moral and material help to the cultural efforts of the exiles. The Committee sincerely trusts that the Member States of the Council of Europe will take an interest in this work and give it their support. Some Member States of the Council of Europe have indeed already taken appropriate steps. Examples of such action are the foundation of " National Houses " by the the British Council³ and the recent establishment of a " Free Europe College " in Strasbourg by the American National Committee for a Free Europe. Sweden has established a large number of salaried posts in Academies, official Archive Offices and other scientific institutions in order to appoint to such posts outstanding exiles able to make available to the organisations concerned the benefit of their knowledge and experience. As a result of these measures a large number of scholars are now in a position to pursue their academic careers, and are not reduced to earning a livelihood in a manner incompatible with work of a serious and scientific nature. Finally, it may be pointed out that a German law of 25th April, 1951, has already put into effect in the territory of the Federal Republic the desiderata expressed in connection with the legal status of exiles. The latter enjoy within Germany the same rights as German nationals and, in cases where they hold University degrees obtained in their own countries, the possession of such degrees (after their equivalence has been duly verified) enables them to exercise any liberal profession in the same circumstances as German nationals. But these measures are not sufficient : it requires only a comparison between what is available and what is needed to show how inadequate they are. The problem needs to be examined with great care from a financial point of view, and budgets drawn up for the cultural institutions of the exiles. A European Central Fund should then be created, out of which these expenses should be paid.

21. From this preliminary survey two particular questions arise : the need, first, for co-operation with U. N., and especially with the United States of America, and secondly, for the creation of an executive body. In maintaining the cultural life of the exiles, just as in the fields of defence and raw material allocation, Europe and America are very closely linked with each other. This fact is also of great importance for our task, as the exiles emigrate from Europe to America in large numbers. It is therefore necessary to co-ordinate our efforts with those of America and of U. N., and also to consider to what extent the limited means available in Europe could be supplemented from public or private sources abroad.

2. In implementation of the Resolution 4 (ii), adopted by the Consultative Assembly, 15th May, 1951, the Secretariat-General has drawn up a memorandum on such organisations and institutions. See : Recommendations and Resolutions adopted during the first part of the Third Ordinary Session (5th-15th May, 1951) pages 66-67.

3. See Part Two of Memorandum drawn up by the Secretariat General.

22. The administration of a Central European Fund would call for the creation of an executive body. It would seem advisable to entrust this task to a Specialised Agency of the kind envisaged in the Recommendation made to the Consultative Assembly by the Special Committee on Refugees. Such a Specialised Agency would come within the definition given by the Committee of Ministers in the First Supplementary Report to the Consultative Assembly.⁴

23. The Special Committee has not sought to define in this Report the precise characteristics and structure of the Specialised Agency to be set up. But, whatever its nature, such a Specialised Agency will be unable to function effectively unless it works in close liaison with the organisations which have been founded by the refugees themselves.

24. Should the Council of Europe and the Western countries decide to adopt the measures mentioned above, they would have the chance of creating a new spirit of good will, first of all among the various groups of exiles of the same nationality, then among the individual nations of Central and Eastern Europe themselves, and, finally, between those nations and the free countries of the West, between which the links have been so tragically severed by the Iron Curtain.

25. A cultural achievement of such magnitude resulting from a common European effort upon the ruins left by the war could not fail to make a profound impression upon the entire world; it would fill those living behind the Iron Curtain " that labour and are heavy laden " with new faith and hope. Thus the day would be brought nearer when the countries concerned will accept and put into practice the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which the Council of Europe has made its basic qualification for membership and its moral code.

26. Consequently the Special Committee to watch over the interests of European nations not represented in the Council of Europe submits to the Assembly the following draft Recommendation.

4. See 3rd Session, 1951 : [Doc. 18](#).

B. Draft Recommendation

The Assembly,

Recognising the urgent need of measures to :

- a. assist the young exiles from Eastern European countries to continue their studies;
- b. make available for exiled intellectual workers in the West employment in the professions, public administration, business and industry;
- c. give practical encouragement to cultural and scientific institutions founded by national groups of exiles;

to this end,

Recommends to the Committee of Ministers :

- a. the creation of a common European Fund to be maintained by contributions from Members of the Council of Europe, from other States and from interested organisations; and
- b. the creation of a Specialised Agency to administer and control the Fund in accordance with the instructions and under the general supervision of the Council of Europe. "