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Second report on the work of the Standing Committee

Report
Standing Committee

1. Meetings of the Committee

Since the first part of the Fourth Session was closed on the 30th May last, the Standing Committee has met three times,— at Strasbourg on the evening of 30th May, at Paris on 3rd. July and, finally, again at Strasbourg on the morning of the 15th September, the date of the resumption of the Session.

During these meetings, the Committee fixed the date for the resumption of the Fourth Session, appointed the representatives of the Assembly to the Joint Committee, adopted the Reply by the Assembly to the Report of the Committee of Ministers and, finally, set up the Ad Hoc Committee with instructions to study the question of a preliminary draft Statute of the European Political Community.

2. Date for the resumption of the Fourth Session.

At its meeting of 30th May, the Committee decided that the principle adopted earlier, whereby the Session should be resumed every year on 15th September, should be departed from only if insuperable difficulties made it necessary to choose another date. Accordingly it delegated to the Bureau the power of fixing 22nd September as the date for the resumption of the Session, if it were not possible to keep to 15th September.

After studying the question, the Bureau decided at its meeting on 5th July finally to adhere to 15th September as the date of resumption. Despite the objections raised by certain delegations, the Committee ratified the decision taken by the Bureau.

3. Appointment of Representatives of the Assembly to the Joint Committee

At its meeting on 30th May, the Standing Committee appointed the representatives of the Assembly to the Joint Committee, namely M. de Menthon, Chairman and ex officio member of the Joint Committee, MM. von Brentano, van der Goes van Naters, Mercouris, Persico, Robens and Wistrand.

4. Reply of the Assembly to the Report of the Committee of Ministers

At its meeting on 5th July, the Committee considered the draft Reply of the Assembly to the Report of the Committee of Ministers (4th Session, 1952 : Doc. 28) and, at the request of one of its members, amended paragraph 9, which was worded as follows :

" (h)Conference on Private International Law.

9. The reply of the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly's objections to the conclusion of an Agreement with the Hague Conference on Private International Law leads the Assembly to request that it be consulted before any final decision is taken."

The full text of the draft reply thus amended was adopted.

5. Appointment of the Ad Hoc Committee entrusted with the preparation of a preliminary draft Statute for a European Political Community

Following the adoption by the Assembly on 30th May, 1952, of an Order for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate a preliminary draft Constitution for a European Political Community and instructing the Standing Committee to appoint its members, the Committee decided, at its meeting on the evening of 30th May, to request the opinion of the Committee on General Affairs, concerning the composition- of this Ad Hoc Committee.

On 5th July, acting upon the Report of the Committee on General Affairs submitted by M. Margue, the Standing Committee adopted the following Resolution :

a. Terms of reference of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee on the European Political Community shall be entrusted with the task of elaborating the preliminary draft Constitution of a supranational European Political Community which would remain open to all Member States of the Council of Europe and offer the possibility of association to those States not acceding to it.

b. Composition of the Committee. The Special Committee shall be composed of :

1. Representatives of the Member States of the Council of Europe participating in the Coal and Steel Community and European Defence Community, as also, should the case arise, representatives of Member States the Governments of which may express the wish to participate in the Political Community, as defined in Resolution 14;

2. Representatives of the other Member States of the Council of Europe attending as observers, entitled to speak but not to take part in votes.

c. Number of Seats. Seats on the Ad Hoc Committee shall be allotted by the Standing Committee, both to representatives participating as full members and to observers, in accordance with the rules already adopted by the Assembly with regard to the composition of the 28-member General Committees.

In accordance with this decision, the Committee appointed the Ad Hoc Committee as follows :

Belgium - MM. Bohy, Struye

Denmark - Jakobsen

France - Mollet, Reynaud, Teitgen

German Federal Republic - Merkatz, von Re-chenberg

Grèce - Mercouris, Stefano-poulos

Iceland - Mlle Thorsteindottir

Ireland - MM. Boland

Italy - Azara, Benvenuti, Persico

Luxembourg - Margue

Netherlands - Bruins Slot, van der Goes van Naters

Norway - Moe

Saar - Braun

Sweden - Elmgren, Wistrand

Turkey - Ergin, Erkmen

United Kingdom - Lord John Hope, Lord Layton, M. Robens.

The Committee further instructed a Committee of lawyers to draw up a preliminary draft for submission to the Ad Hoc Committee.

6. Inclusion of new items in the Agenda of the Assembly.

During its meeting of 15th September the Committee, in accordance with Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure, considered the requests for the inclusion in the Agenda of items submitted since the first part of the Session. With regard to the request submitted by M. de Menthon to include the question entitled : " Statute of a supranational Political Community " (Doc. 35), the Committee, after considering whether the Assembly should

deliberate on a question which had already been submitted to the Ad Hoc Assembly of the Community of " the Six ", decided to include the item in the Agenda of the Assembly, for possible reference to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Council of Europe.

The request for the inclusion of the Saar question, submitted by the Representatives of the German Federal Republic, gave rise to a somewhat delicate debate on procedure. The Committee decided by 13 votes to 8, with 5 abstentions, that the request was not in order.

The request by Mr. Beamish for a " Re-affirmation of the Assembly's faith in the unity of the whole of Europe " (Doc. 44) was duly placed on the Agenda and referred directly to the Special Committee appointed to watch over the interests of Nations not represented in the Council of Europe.

Lastly, the request submitted by Lord Layton for the inclusion of the question of " Co-ordination between the economies of the Member States of the Council of Europe and those of the overseas countries having constitutional links with them " (Doc. 45) was also approved, and the matter referredto the Committee on Economic Questions.