Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Opinion on the Special Message of the Committee of Ministers

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Mr Jacques BICHET and other members of the Assembly

It is today more urgent than ever that the European peoples should become aware of the community of their interests; and that they should create supranational institutions with real powers such as may enable them to control their own destiny, while preserving those institutions that already exist.

It is within the framework of a united Europe that these peoples can, and must, seek to improve their welfare, restore or develop their freedoms, safeguard their security and ensure peace.

Only insofar as they are directly associated in the life of the European institutions, will they genuinely become conscious of their community of interests.

That is why it is urgent that the existing European assemblies should be elected by direct universal suffrage.

The Treaty instituting the European Coal and Steel Community makes provision for the election of the Common Assembly by direct universal suffrage. Article 21 of that Treaty lays down that :

"The Assembly shall be composed of delegates whom the parliaments of each of the Member States shall be called upon to designate once a year from among their own membership, or who shall be elected by direct universal suffrage, according to the procedure determined by each respective High Contracting Party."

As regards the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, Article 25 of the Statute lays down that :

"The Consultative Assembly shall consist of Representatives of each Member elected by its Parliament or appointed in such manner as that Parliament shall decide..."

Thus, by virtue of these texts, each country may even now decide to elect members of the existing European Assemblies by direct universal suffrage.

At a decisive moment in the history of the world, when a united Europe appears to provide the only chance of peace and progress, the free peoples should be consulted and allowed to choose their own destiny.

For this reason, we request the Assembly to adopt the. following Motion for a Resolution :

Motion for a Resolution

The Assembly

1. Invites the six Member Governments of the European Coal and Steel Community, in accordance with Article 21 of the relevant Treaty, within one year to elect Representatives to the Common Assembly by direct universal suffrage, by whatever procedure each country may determine ;

2. Invites the Member Governments of the Council of Europe — and particularly the six member countries of the European Coal and Steel Community — to adopt a procedure for the election of Representatives to the Consultative Assembly by direct universal suffrage, as provided for in Article 25 of the Statute, and to hold such elections within a period of one year.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed:

BICHET Jacques, France