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Reply to the report on the activities of the International Labour Organisation

Report[1]
Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee
Rapporteur: Mr André MUTTER, France

1. 1954 - 6th Session - Second part

Draft Resolution

The Assembly has noted the change of approach adopted this year by I.L.O. in the Report which it lias submitted annually since 1951 to the Council of Europe. This change nappily coincides with the increase in the competence of the Council of Europe in respect of those social problems that are common to all its member countries, which, in turn, makes it more than ever necessary to establish close cooperation between the I.L.O. and the'Council of Europe. The Assembly accordingly welcomes the efforts made in the I.L.O. Report to define the principles on which such co-operation can be based.

The Assembly is, however, ' studying at the present moment the general problem of relations between the Council of Europe and inter-governmental organisations, which includes the specific question of the relations between the I.L.O. and the Council of Europe.

It would in these circumstances appear difficult to express an opinion on the ILO Report before agreement has been reached on the general principles which, in the view of the Assembly, should govern co-operation between the Council of Europe and the various intergovernmental organisations. The Assembly has therefore decided to postpone its reply until the First Part of its Seventh Session. This postponement will, moreover, make it possible to give to the report the careful and detailed examination which it merits.

In the meantime, however, the Assembly takes the opportunity of expressing its deep satisfaction with regard to the projected first European Regional Conference to be held by I.L.O. in March, 1955. It will follow the work of the Conference, and study the conclusions reached, with the closest attention.

The Assembly has learnt with satisfaction, that, when considering questions of the financing of social security and old age benefits, the Conference will have before it the Assembly's Recommendation 28 (1950) calling for the establishment of a European Code of social security which, would, in Europe, lead to "the raising, by various methods, of social security standards in every country to an equally high level". It trusts that in the conclusions of the Conference on these two points due account will be paid to the general framework into which they might later be inserted and to the general principles with regard to these two questions which were set out as follows in the Appendix to Recommendation 28[2] :

" Finance :

Provisions of each country will be financed either on a contributory or non-contributory basis ; the financial system selected must necessarily be based, on the one hand, on a collaboration between all the parties concerned and the State, and must take into account, on the other hand, the nature of the risks incurred, the national customs, and the specific social, economic or fiscal conditions, peculiar to each country.

Such a system should aim at preventing the costs from exceeding the potential productive capacity and national income of each country.

But it must aim, above all, at ensuring the regular payment of tbe benefits authorised.

Pensions ;

Schemes will be established in each country under which cash pensions will be payable for life, to workers who have reached old age and have retired from all but casual gainful employment ; for the duration of substantial incapacity for work, to workers who suffer from long-continued sickness or chronic invalidity ; and for the duration of dependent widowhood or of childhood, to the surviving wife and children of a deceased family breadwinner. As in most of the European countries the retiring age is 65 years, this age should be adopted in principle. This principle should, however, not be applied in such a way as to affect adversely the more favourable conditions in force in some countries, in particular for women and for workers employed in unhealthy industries, nor to render the ratification of the Code impossible for countries where the retiring age at present is higher than 65 years."

2. See Doc. 81, 1950, Appendix "Elementary principles Of the European Code on Social Security",