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Cultural Fund or the Council of Europe

Report
Committee on Culture, Science and Education
Rapporteur: Mr Christopher HOLLIS, United Kingdom

A. 1. Draft Recommendation on the establishment of a Cultural Fund of the Council of Europe

The Assembly,

Recalling that Article 1 of the European Cultural Convention requires that cach Member State of the Council of Europe shall take appropriate measures to safeguard and to encourage the development of its national contribution to the common cultural heritage of Europe;

Believing that the interest of the citizens of Europe in the cause of European unity would be stimulated if they were given the opportunity of contributing personally to certain of the measures taken to further that cause,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers should set up, under the auspices of the Council of Europe, a Cultural Fund, constituted and administered in the manner described hereunder :

Purposes

1. To enable the Council of Europe to give effective support to cultural and scientific activities which go beyond the national framework.

2. To facilitate, through the medium of the Council of Europe, the establishment of special Foundations and the maintenance of European cultural and scientific institutions.

3. To conclude agreements with other special Foundations concerned with European cultural activities, both in respect of the use of available credits and the division or co-ordination of the cultural tasks to be undertaken.

4. To facilitate cultural and scientific exchanges between Member States and between those States and other countries and regions of the world.

Contributions

5. The Fund shall be financed by contributions from commercial and industrial organisations, public or private institutions, associations or bodies, private individuals, trade unions, Governments and municipalities.

6. The list of subscribers shall each year be published and donations formally acknowledged by the Consultative Assembly.

The Committee of Administration mentioned in paragraph 15 may decide on any measure designed to meet the special wishes expressed by the donors.

7. The collection of contributions shall be made under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

8. A national Committee shall be set up in each country which has agreed to take part in the establishment of the Fund; this Committee shall he composed of at, least three Representatives appointed by the Consultative Assembly, who will co-opt other eminent persons;

9. This National Committee shall be responsible for planning and carrying out measures to obtain support for the Fund.

10. The subscription campaign shall be conducted in accordance with the customary methods of appealing for public subscriptions in the country concerned.

The National Committees may request the assistance of non-governmental organisations and may seek the advice of experts with a special knowledge of such methods.

The Governments may give their official support to the campaign.

11. The National Committees shall periodically report to the Assembly.

Legal and Fiscal Measures

12. The Cultural Fund shall constitute an asset of the Council of Europe; it shall be distinct from the other assets and property of the Council of Europe and shall he administered in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 15 to 20 below.

13. The Member Governments shall, as far as possible, apply to the contributions to the Cultural Fund the same privileges and exemptions as are in force in their respective countries in respect of social, cultural, scientific and other activities of a charitable or nonprofit- making character.

Expenditure

14. The sums contributed to the Fund shall, in accordance with the aims set forth in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above, be applied to any cultural and scientific activities approved by the Committee of Administration of the Fund.

Administration

15. The administration of the Fund shall be entrusted to a Committee of Administration whose membership shall include at least one representative of each country which takes part in the Fund.

The membership of the Committee shall be established in three stages.

In the first stage, the Committee of Ministers shall nominate three representatives of the Committee of Cultural Experts to be members of the Committee.

In the second stage, the Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions of the Consultative Assembly shall elect three of its members to be members of the Committee.

Finally, the remaining members of the Committee shall be selected by the Committee of Ministers from a list of persons eminent in the cultural and scientific fields, drawn up by the six members of the Committee appointed as indicated above, in such a way as to ensure as far as possible an equitable geographical distribution and after consultation of the National Committees of the countries concerned.

The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe shall be ex officio a member of the Committee.

16. The Committee of Administration shall draw up its own rules of procedure.

17. The administration of the Fund shall be sufficiently flexible for the Fund to fulfil its purposes with the minimum of administrative formalities.

18. The annual report and accounts of the Fund, after audit by the same procedure as for the Budget of the Council of Europe, shall be submitted to the Committee of Ministers and to the Assembly (cf. Financial Regulations, Article 10).

19. The Committee of Ministers shall approve the said report and accounts after recommendation by the Assembly.

20. The costs of the secretarial services connected with the administration of the Fund shall be borne by the Council of Europe and inserted in its Budget on the proposal of the Committee of Administration, in accordance with the procedure laid down for the establishment of the said Budget.

Date of the establisliment of the Fund

21. The Cultural Fund shall be regarded as established as soon as five member countries have decided to accede to it.

B. II. Draft Resolution on the amendment of Article 38 of the Statute ivith a vieio to the establishment of a Cultural Fund of the Council of Europe

The Consultative Assembly,

Having adopted Recommendation..... on the establishment of a Cultural Fund of the Council of Europe;

Having regard to paragraph 12 of this Recommendation;

Having regard also to the provisions of Article 38 (b) and Article 41 (d) of the Statute of the Council of Europe;

Considering the need to amend Article 38 of the Statute in order to permit the establishment within the Council of special funds for particular purposes financed by gifts,

Adopts the following amendment which will be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for its approval :

to add the following two paragraphs to Article 38 of the Statute of the Council of Europe :

(f) The Committee of Ministers, with the approval of the Consultative Assembly, may establish special funds for particular purposes which fall within the general scope of Article 1.

(g) The Committee of Ministers, with the approval of the Consultative Assembly, shall adopt regulations for each special fund set up in accordance with the preceding paragraph. Such regulations may depart from the terms of paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of this Article.

C. Explanatory Memorandum (presented by Mr. HOLLIS, Rapporteur)

1. The Assembly has always considered that the Council of Europe should possess financial resources commensurate with the responsibilities devolving on it in the cultural field as an organisation representing the will to unite of fifteen countries.

2. The Assembly considered that these resources should have the dual purpose of :

financing projects which the Council of Europe wished itself to implement;

supporting " private international organisations the object of which is to promote European culture " and more especially to defray the costs of implementation, through these organisations, of certain recommendations that have been adopted (Recommendation 35 (1950).

3. The Assembly has, furthermore, already made it clear that it considered the Council's present cultural budget to be inadequate.

4. Your Committee has accordingly tried to find new methods of raising funds and recommends the establishment of a Cultural Fund of the Council of Europe.

5. The chief advantages of this solution are threefold :

1. Need for a Cultural Fund in Europe

(i) In the first place, the existence of a Fund which benefits by the prestige of an important international organisation will fill a real need in Europe.

The Fund will, in fact, play a part similar to that played on the other side of the Atlantic by the American Foundations whose importance in respect of cultural life is sufficiently familiar and of which one alone—the Rockefeller Foundation—spends in Europe for the benefit of scientific work a sum ten times greater than the total credits allowed for the cultural budget of the Council of Europe. It must be admitted that this state of affairs, which as a rule, goes unnoticed, is not one of which we Europeans can be proud.

The Fund will, furthermore, at the European level, become what, at the national level, is represented by the various official institutions devoted to the systematic financial support of cultural and scientific activities (the Nuffield Trust, the Deutscher Stifterverbanal, etc.). Since, like theni, it will enjoy Government siqoport as well as benefiting principally by private contributions, the Fund will in more and more frequent cases provide a European solution for interesting projects which cannot be carried out at a national level. This is the case not only of projects of too specialised à nature or which are too extensive for them to be considered in any practical way by a single country, but also of any undertaking the purpose of which is to show that culture and science know no frontiers.

2. The Fund as a means of strengthening European consciousness

(ii) It should in the second places be stressed that the existence of the Fund could exert a beneficial influence upon public opinion.

By the very fact that it seeks nongovernmental contributions, the Fund offers every European the possibility of helping, within his or her means, to preserve and develop the European cultural heritage. The appeal thus addressed to the European consciousness of a vast public will not only make it possible to exploit hitherto untapped resources but also to release latent moral forces. The man-inthe- street will be in a position, as much as any great industrial firm, to assume personal responsibilities with regard to the success of an undertaking of which he appreciates the historic need and which he will consider to be his.

3. The Fund as an instrument of Council of Europe policy

(iii) Lastly, the Fund is likely to be of great value to the Council of Europe itself.

As explained in the cultural chapter of the Reply to the Special Message of the Committee of Ministers (Doc. 334), the Fund has been conceived in terms of the implementation, within the framework of the European Cultural Convention which came into force on 5th May, 1955, of a European cultural policy of which the Council of Europe would make itself the protagonist. In order to allow for subsequent wide and effective action, this long-term policy is aimed, in the first stage, at grouping organisations and institutions engaged in cultural activities in Europe around the Council of Europe with a view to co-ordinating their efforts and giving

substanee to their initiatives. The influence which the Council of Europe can exercise upon those organs that it has grouped around it will largely depend upon the financial assistance it is able to afford them. Only the resources provided by the Fund can ensure the establishment of a tolerably solid system of co-operation capable of sustaining the efforts of the Council of Europe to succeed in its main purpose, as set clown in the Statute, which is : to achieve a greater unity between its member countries.

4. Amendment of the Statute

6. The institution within the Council of Europe of a Fund deriving its resources from donations will be made possible, in accordance with Article 41 (d), by the amendment of Article 38 of the Statute. Since amendments of this kind come into force on the date when the ad hoc declaration of the Secretariat-General has been duly approved by the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly, the Assembly is invited to vote, together with the Recommendation on the Fund, Resolution... appended thereto.

5. Protection of member countries by the Governments

7. The Fund must enjoy the prestige and privileges of the Council of Europe. It makes no call upon member countries for a contribution, but it does call for heir protection. It will, as a separate asset of the Council of Europe benefit by the same advantages in respect of transferability and convertibility as are enjoyed by the other assets of the Council of Europe.

The Governments of member countries will be invited to grant to donors, in respect of sums intended for the Fund, the same fiscal advantages and exemptions as are granted for donations to similar national institutions.

Your Committee, furthermore, proposes to pay particular attention to this aspect of the establishment of the Fund and at a later stage to put forward a recommendation proposing that gifts to the Fund should, in all member countries, benefit by those fiscal privileges now granted, for example, in the United States and the German Federal Republic.

Governments may give their patronage to subscription campaigns in favour of the Fund carried out in the various countries by National Committees.

6. Contributions

8. Your Committee has judged it necessary to extend to the maximum the range of sources from which contributions to the Fund may be drawn. The terms of paragraph 5 of the Recommendation are by no means exhaustive.

Although the intention was to avoid calling on Governments to accept additional financial obligations, those Governments wishing ;to contribute to the Fund may, of course, do so. This seemed desirable in view of the possibility that certain Governments might be prepared to increase their contribution to the Council of Europe on condition that such further sums should be devoted to cultural purposes alone.

The terms of Article 6 will also meet any special wish expressed by donors that their contributions should be devoted to any special purpose they may desire.

7. Administration of the Fund

9. The administration of the Fund will be entrusted to a Committee of Administration responsible both to the Committee of Ministers and to the Assembly.

In this way the Fund will enjoy all the advantages of European parliamentary control, which will not only reassure the donors but will also enable them publicly to make any suggestions or put forward any legitimate claims with regard to this institution which, it is hoped, will become a symbol of European solidarity.

Your Committee considers that the administration of the Fund should be as simple and flexible as possible. It has considered, however, that representation on the Committee of Administration of all the countries which have taken part in the establishment of the Fund should be secured.

Other detailed administrative provisions can be agreed hereafter, since the provisions of the present Recommendation have deliberately been couched in general terms.

8. Constitution oj the Fund

10. In order not to delay unduly the realisation of such an important project, it has been considered desirable that the agreement of five Governments only would be sufficient.

The decision in favour of the Fund could thus, if necessary, take the form of a partial agreement. The Assembly should request as a matter of urgency—and preferably before the autumn Session of 1955—that the Committee of Ministers approve in principle the establishment of the Fund; This would make it possible for the Assembly to prepare more concrete and detailed proposals with regard to the implementation of the Recommendation, particularly in respect of the establishment of National Committees and the subscription campaign to be carried out in the various countries.