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Work of the Bureau and Standing Committee (15th April 1956-15th October 1956)

Progress report
Rapporteur: Mr Hayrettin ERKMEN, Turkey

1.

Since the opening of the 8th Ordinary Session, the Bureau has met nine times : on 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st April, 1st, 2nd and 5th June and 7th September, 1956.

The Standing Committee has held three meetings : on 21st April, 1st June and 13th October, 1956.

2. Opening date and Agenda of the second part-Session

The date of resumption of the Session was fixed by the Assembly for 15th October.

In accordance with Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure, the Agenda was adopted by the Standing Committee on 1st June and issued as Document 517.

In accordance with Rule 16, the Bureau adopted the draft time-table for the second part-Session on 7th September.

3. Third part-Session

The Standing Committee decided on the holding of a third part-Session during January 1957, the precise date to be fixed at the close of the second part-Session.

4. Participation of Ministers in debates

The Bureau took steps to secure the participation of Ministers of member countries in the debates of the first part-Session.

Seven Ministers spoke in the Assembly :

M. Figl, Austrian Foreign Minister, on the accession of Austria to the Statute of the Council of Europe;

M. Martino, Italian Foreign Minister and Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, on the Committee of Ministers' Seventh Report and in the debate on general policy;

M. von Brentano, Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany; M. Pineau, French Foreign Minister and M. Theotokis, Greek Foreign Minister, in the debate on general policy;

M. Blücher, Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Economic Co-operation of the Federal Republic of Germany, on the Seventh Report of O.E. E. C;

M. Seebohm, Minister of Transport of the Federal Republic of Germany, on the Second Progress Report of E. C. M. T.

5. Relations between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers

At their forty-first meeting, the Ministers' Deputies heard : (1) M. Rolin, Chairman of the Committee on Legal and Administrative Questions, who set forth the Assembly's views on Recommendation 83 concerning individual applications under the Convention on Human Rights and on Recommendation 79 concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes; (2) M. Her-mod Lannung, Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal and Administrative Questions, who submitted a proposal for emerging from the dead-end reached in the question of simplification of frontier formalities; (3) Mr. Nigel Nicolson, Rapporteur of the Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions, who presented commenon Recommendation 93 concerning the propagation of the European idea.

The new formula for meetings of the J o i n t Committee, approved by t h e Standing Committee on 21st April 1956 (Opinion No. 20) was p u t i n t o p r a c t i c e on 4th J u n e , 6th J u ly a n d 1st October 1956, when Assembly Repres e n t a t i v e s met with t h e Ministers' Deputies. I t would be d e s i r a b l e for members of t h e J o i nt Committee t o come t o meetings w i t h o u t prior i n s t r u c t i o n s so t h a t by a free exchange of views t h e y may seek solutions which they m a y s u b s e q u e n t l y advocate in t h e Assembly a n d in t h e C o m m i t t e e of Ministers r e s p e c t i v e l y.

6. Relations between the Assembly and the North American Parliaments

This question was examined by the Bureau on 1st June and again on 7th September. On 1st June, the Bureau instructed the Secretariat- General to approach the Secretariat of the NATO Parliamentary Conference. On 7th September, the Bureau took note of the programme of the next conference, to be held on 19th November in Paris.

7. Preparation of reports by the Bureau to the Assembly

The following Rapporteurs were appointed :

M. Dehousse : Relations between the Consultative Assembly and the national parliaments (Doc. 529);

Lord Layton : Procedure for the appointment of the senior officials of the Council of Europe (Doc. 542);

M. Kiesinger : Relations between the Consultative and WEU Assemblies (Doc. 541) ;

M. Teitgen : Interpretation of Article 15, paragraph 3, of the European Convention on Human Rights (Doc. 540).

8. Appointment of Assembly Representatives to the Joint Committee

On 21st April 1956, in pursuance of Rule 46, paragraph 2, the Standing Committee appointed the following members to serve on the Joint Committee in addition to M. Dehousse, ex-officio Chairman; MM. Edwards, Federspiel, Margue, Rodopoulos, Schmid and Teitgen.

At the same meeting, the Standing Committee renewed the mandate of the Joint Working Party instructed to examine procedure for appointments to the three senior posts in the Secretariat-General, composed of Lord Layton, M. Smitt Ingebretsen and M. Kie-singer, under the chairmanship of the President of the Assembly, M. Dehousse.

9. Working methods of the Joint Committee; appointment of substitutes

On 21st October 1956, the Standing Committee examined, on behalf of the Assembly, a report by the Committee on General Affairs (Doc. 510) on the improvement of the working methods of the Joint Committee. Presented by M. Mommer, Rapporteur of the Committee on General Affairs, the report was unanimously adopted and forms the subject of Opinion No. 20.

The Standing Committee instructed the Committee on Rules of Procedure to consider whether an Assembly Representative on the Joint Committee may have himself replaced at his own discretion by another Representative of the same nationality. The Committee on Rules of Procedure will inform the Bureau of its views.

10. Appointment of the new Clerk of the Assembly

The Bureau examined Resolution (56) 6 of the Committee of Ministers recommending to the Assembly two candidates for the office of Clerk : M. G. Schloesser and M. G. Rodel. Having interviewed both candidates, the Bureau proposed M. Schloesser, whom the Assembly appointed Clerk on 21st April 1956.

M. Schloesser took the oath before the Standing Committee on 1st June 1956.

11. Questions of procedure

11.1. Messages of the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly

The Standing Committee decided to invite the Committee of Ministers to address to the Assembly once more a message of a political character.

11.2. Replies to international organisations

The Standing Committee decided upon the following procedure for action to be taken in regard to reports received by the Council of Europe from international organisations :

– Firs t stage : The report is tabled in the Assembly and referred to the competent committee, the organisation concerned being informed of the tabling of the report.

– Secon d stage : If the Committee to which the report has been referred is in a position to formulate a reply of interest to the organisation, the draft reply is tabled and discussed in the Assembly and, when adopted, is transmitted to the organisation in question.

If the Committee is unable to formulate a pertinent reply, it will await further reports and draft a comprehensive reply which, when adopted by the Assembly, should be of real interest to the organisation concerned.

11.2.1. Procedure for inclusion of items in the Agenda subject to no debate being held

In order to simplify procedure in adopting texts of secondary importance, the Standing Committee arranged that these might be placed on the Agenda on condition that they should give rise to no debate. If the adoption of a resolution or recommendation without debate is opposed by a Representative either verbally at a public sitting or in writing, the item will be deleted from the Agenda and referred back, to be examined, possibly without debate, at the next part-Session.

Three questions were placed, subject to the " no debate " condition, on the Agenda for the second part of the 8th Session (Doc. 517).

11.3. Administrative Activities

With due regard to the criteria laid down in point 3 of the Standing Committee's Resolution of 12th February 1955, the Bureau approved the holding of the f ollowing committee meetings in towns other than Strasbourg or Paris :

Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs : Berlin, 24th-26th May 1956;

Special Committee on Non-represented Nations: Berlin, 15th-18th June 1956;

Special Committee on Agriculture: Rome, 26th-29th June 1956;

Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions : Oslo, 31st Aug.-3rd Sept. 1956;

Committee on Economic Questions: Vienna, llth-12th Sept. 1956;

Committee on General Affairs : Vienna, 13th- 15th Sept. 1956;

Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs : Frankfurt, 5th-6th Oct. 1956.

12. Functioning of political groups

In pursuance of Order 94 on improving the functioning of political groups, the Bureau instructed the Secretariat-General to place at the disposal of the groups the necessary services (interpreters, translators, typists, messengers, reproduction and distribution of documents) and supplies (paper, typewriters and office materials). These facilities will be made available to groups at the second part of the 8th Session.

13. Reference of questions to Committee

On 17th April 1956, the Bureau referred to the Committee on Rules of Procedure the problem of written and oral questions.

On 19th April 1956, the Bureau referred to the Committee on Rules of Procedure a proposal to increase the membership of the Budget Committee to eight.

On 21st April 1956, the Standing Committee referred to the Committee on Legal and Administrative Questions a motion for an order concerning the establishment of a European minorities office (Reference No. 109).

On 1st June 1956, the Standing Committee referred to the competent committees all reports addressed to the Council of Europe by international organisations before the second part of the 8th Ordinary Session of the Assembly (Reference 110).

On 13th October 1956, the Standing Committee referred

to the Special Committee on Agriculture : the Motion for a Recommendation on the forestry situation in Europe (Reference 111);

to the Committee on Legal and Administrative Questions : the Communication from the Committee of Ministers containing the Opinion of O.E.E.C. on Recommendations 84 and 85 of the Consultative Assembly with regard to the simplification of frontier formalities and of formalities at airports (Reference 112); the Request by the Committee of Ministers for an Opinion on the Draft of a European Multilateral Convention on Extradition (Reference 113);

to the Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions : the Motion for a Recommendation on the need for increased scientific education and research in Western Europe (Reference 114); and the Motion for a Recommendation proposing that the cultural activities of W.E.U. be regarded as based upon partial agreements concluded within the framework of the Council of Europe (Reference No 115);

to the Committee on Social Questions : the Motion for a Recommendation on the conclusion of an agreement concerning reciprocal travel facilities for the war disabled when travelling abroad by railway (Reference No 116).