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Broadcasting station Europe No. 1

Report¹

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Mr William van REMOORTEL, Belgium, Socialist Group

1. 1956 - 8th Session - Third part



A. Draft Recommendation submitted by the Committee on General Affairs²

The Assembly,

Noting that the settlement of the Saar question has placed the broadcasting station Europe No. 1 located at Sarrelouis in an anomalous position;

Noting that the French Government has certain claims on this station and could, with the consent of Parliament, offer to purchase it;

Noting further that a proposal to this effect made in the French National Assembly has been rejected because the intention is to demolish the station;

Considering that the equipment of the Europe No. 1 station might, if transferred to a suitable place, such as Strasbourg, provide the European institutions with a valuable means of disseminating information,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers consider jointly, with other European institutions, the possibility of concluding an agreement with the French Government for operating the broadcasting station.

2. (a) Adopted unanimously by the Committee.

B. Explanatory Memorandum

1.

1. The author of the proposal explained in the Committee that urgent procedure was warranted by the fact that the French Government had an option (with a time-limit) on the station which was now up for sale. It was understood, however, that the French Government would only want to acquire the station for demolition.

2. Faced with this urgent problem on the eve of the last day of the Session, the Committee has not had the necessary time to look into the financial aspects of the matter : the outlay required from the Council of Europe, the creation of a broadcasting service, and operating costs.

3. One member of the Committee thought that it would be sufficient, for the time being, to recommend that the Committee of Ministers consider the advisability of acquiring a broadcasting station for the Council of Europe.

4. Another member reminded the Committee of the regrets expressed in public session on 9th January 1957 about the scanty publicity given by official and other broadcasting stations to the work of the Council of Europe and to the idea of European integration.

5. It was also pointed out that, from the financial standpoint, various other European organisations interested in using a broadcasting station (E. C. S. C, UNESCO, etc.) would probably associate themselves with the scheme.

6. The additional point was made that it would be a pity to let a highly efficient and powerful station be demolished—and to miss the chance of giving the Council of Europe a broadcasting system of its own.

7. The Committee finally decided to amend the text proposed so that the Assembly could recommend the Committee of Ministers to study all the various aspects of the problem.