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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 654
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Bureau and Standing Committee (8th January 1957 - 29th April, 1957)

Progress report
Bureau of the Assembly
Standing Committee

1.

1. Following the beginning of the third part of the 8th Session, on 8th January 1957, the Bureau met daily from 8th to 12th January, after which it held a meeting in Brussels on 1st February and a further meeting in Paris on 18th March. The Standing Committee met at the end of the third part of the Session, on 11th January 1957, and held further meetings in Paris on 9 th February and 18th March.

2. Date and Agenda of the first part of the 9th Session

Before the close of the third part of the 8th Session, on 11th January 1957, the Assembly decided, on the proposal of the Bureau, to hold the first part of its 9th Ordinary Session from Monday 29th April to Saturday 4th May 1957.

The Agenda for this part-Session was adopted by the Standing Committee in Paris on 18th March and forms the subject ofDoc. 626.

3. Relations with the Brussels Inter-Governmental Conference (Common Market and Euratom) and joint meetings of the Bureaux of the three European Assemblies

In accordance with Order 103, adopted by the Assembly on 9th January 1957, the Bureau appointed a delegation of the Consultative Assembly which on Saturday 19th January was received at the Chateau de Val-Duchesse by the Brussels Inter-governmental Conference, under the chairmanship of M. Spaak, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Assembly delegation was composed as follows : the President of the Assembly, the Chairmen of the Political Groups and the Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteurs of the Committee on General Affairs.

Also in accordance with Order 103, the Bureau initiated a joint meeting of the Bureaux of the three European Assemblies. The three Bureaux held their first meeting in Brussels on 2nd February, when they adopted a Recommendation, which was presented on 4th February to the Inter-governmental Conference at Val-Duchesse by a delegation headed by M. Dehousse. In the course of the interview it was agreed that the latter would transmit a memorandum summarising the views of the delegation. This memorandum was drafted and submitted on the same day to the Inter-Governmental Conference, which was still in session at Val-Duchesse.

The three Bureaux were successful in achieving their main objective, which was to avoid the creation of a fourth European assembly, for the Brussels Conference decided that the new Assembly, in which the number of seats allotted to each country would be the same as in the Council of Europe Assembly, would act as the parliamentary organ not only of the Common Market and Euratom, but also of the Coal and Steel Community, thus absorbing the Common Assembly.

Many practical details remain to be settled. On behalf of the Assembly, the Standing Committee adopted Resolution 122 (Appendix I) on 18th March 1957, which follows up Recommendation 117 previously adopted by the Assembly. The three Bureaux are to meet again on 14th May at Strasbourg.

4. Relations between the Consultative Assembly and the WEU Assembly

In accordance with the decisions adopted by the Assembly on 25th October 1956 (26th Sitting of the 8th Session), your Bureau resumed its negotiations with the Bureau of the WEU Assembly with a view to reaching agreement upon methods of co-operation between the two Assemblies in the cultural and social fields.

The Bureaux of the two Assemblies settled this question on 12th January by adopting the joint Resolution which is attached to this report (Appendix II).

5. Relations between the Consultative Assembly and the North American Parliaments

As stated in its previous Progress Report, Doc. 598, the Bureau of the Assembly-decided, in pursuance of Order 101 of the Assembly and after consulting American and Canadian Members of Parliament, to propose the holding of a Second Strasbourg Conference from Monday 18th to Friday 22nd March 1957. The speakers of the two Chambers of the United States Congress and the two Houses of the Canadian Parliament replied that they were unable to accept this invitation for the time being. Since the impossibility of holding a second Strasbourg Conference this spring-was due to the work of the United States Congress and the approaching general election in Canada, your Bureau intends to follow up the matter in the hope of being able to hold the Conference this autumn.

6. Independent Group of Experts on the economic and social development of Africa

On 11th January 1957, after hearing a statement by the Acting Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, the Standing Committee adopted Order 105 amending Order 77 issued in July 1955. The main purpose of this amendment is to extend the terms of reference of the Group of Experts set up by Order 77. Its result will be to ensure wider representation of the various countries concerned.

Pending an amendment of Order 77, the Working Party felt unable to submit more than an interim report. This report is the subject ofDoc. 641.

7. Candidatures for the European Commission of Human Rights

On 18th March 1957, in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention on Human Rights, your Bureau transmitted to the Committee of Ministers the list of candidates put forward for the 6 seats on the European Commission of Human Rights which will fall vacant on 18th May next, under the terms of Article 22, paragraphs 1 to 3, of the Convention. The following countries are affected : Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden and Turkey.

8. Committee meetings outside Strasbourg and Paris

The Bureau authorised the following meetings :

1. Committe e on Non-represented Nations in Berlin.
2. Committe e on Agriculture in Lyons, 26th-27th April 1957.
3. Committe e on Economic Questions in Stockholm, June 1957.

9. Procedure for granting consultative status to non-governmental organisations

At its meeting on 18th March, the Bureau decided to recommend to the Committee on Rules of Procedure a method of simplifying the procedure for granting consultative status.

Appendix 1 APPENDIX

Resolution 122 (1957)[1] on European parliamentary institutions

The Standing Committee, on behalf of the Assembly,

Recalling Recommendation 117;

Expressing its satisfaction at the outcome of the representations made by the Bureaux of the three existing European Assemblies to the six Ministers of the countries which have negotiated the Common Market and Euratom Treaties, representations which have resulted in removing the danger of the creation of a fourth assembly;

Noting with satisfaction the interest taken by the United Kingdom Government in the problem of rationalising European institutions and the fact that the Council of Western European Union is to undertake a study of this problem, the conclusions of which ought to be communicated to the Consultative Assembly;

Regretting that the Foreign Ministers of the Six did not communicate to the delegation of the Bureaux of the three Assemblies the text of the articles of the draft Treaties dealing with the Assembly, so as to enable them to put forward in due course such comments as they might deem advisable and, more particularly, to allow the Assembly of the Council of Europe to fulfd its consultative role;

Noting that the draft Treaty setting up the European Economic Community does not specify the methods of co-operation with the Council of Europe,

Expresses the wish :

1. that the principles laid down in the memorandum submitted by the delegation of the Bureaux of the three European Assemblies to the intergovernmental Committee at Brussels on 4th February 1957 be respected in the Treaties;
2. that it should be specifically mentioned in the Treaties that the new Assembly must include a certain number of members of the Consultative Assembly and that the Assembly may adopt the practice of having substitute representatives;
3. that, immediately on the creation of the new Assembly of the Six, joint meetings should be provided for with the Consultative Assembly, on the model of the joint meetings which the Common Assembly holds with the Consultative Assembly;
4. that, immediately after the Treaty setting up the European Economic Community is ratified, an agreement should be concluded with the Council of Europe in order to establish close collaboration between these two international organisations;
5. that the study envisaged by the Brussels Conference on the direct election of European parliamentarians by the countries concerned be carried out pari passu with the study of the plan for creating a single Assembly.

1. This Resolution was adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, at its meeting on 18th March 1957 (see Doc. 628, Report presented on behalf of the Committee on General Affairs, by M. Mommer).

Appendix 2 APPENDIX II

Joint Resolution of the Bureaux of the Consultative Assembly and the Assembly of Western European Union on co-operation in regard to social and cultural questions

The Bureau of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Bureau of the Assembly of Western European Union,

Having met in Strasbourg on 12th January 1957;

Being desirous to reinforce united action between the two Assemblies, already similar in composition insofar as the Representatives of seven States are concerned, by developing organic collaboration "in order to promote the unity and encourage the integration of Europe ";

Wishing to avoid overlapping between the activities of the two Assemblies,

Have agreed as follows :

1. The Assembly of Western European Union will communicate to the Consultative Assembly its draft reply to the cultural and social chapters of the annual. Report submitted by the Council of W. E. U. in conformity with the provisions of Article IX of the Brussels Treaty as amended by Protocol No. 1 signed in Paris on 23rd October 1954. The WEU Assembly will at the same time indicate at what period it wishes to adopt the final text of its reply to the Council of W. E. U.

2. The Consultative Assembly, or its Standing Committee on its behalf, will express its opinion on these texts following upon the report of its competent committees, and this opinion will be communicated to the Assembly of Western European Union within the requisite period.

3. Before adopting its reply to the Council of W. E. U., the Assembly of Western European Union will refer this opinion to its competent committee. The opinion of the Consultative Assembly will be considered by the General Affairs Committee of the Assembly of W. E. U. which shall take account thereof in its draft Reply to the Council. Should this Committee be unable to accept the conclusions contained in the opinion in their entirety, the text of the opinion as communicated by the Consultative Assembly will be appended to the reply sent to the Council of W. E. U.

4. In the event of proposals of a social or cultural character being presented on the initiative of the members of either Assembly, whether or not they form the subject of the cultural or social chapters of the Report of the Council of W. E. U., the Bureaux of the two Assemblies will, by the intermediary of the clerks and insofar as it is possible, consult each other before these proposals are included on the Agenda.