



Doc. 979

16 April 1959

Certain measures destined to strengthen the cultural ties between Western and Eastern Europe

Report¹

Committee on Culture, Science and Education

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1. 1959 - 11th Session - First part



A. Draft Recommendation on the radio courses sponsored by the College of Europe, Bruges, for broadcasting to European countries behind the Iron Curtain

The Assembly,

Noting that the College of Europe is sponsoring radio courses for broadcasting to European countries behind the Iron Curtain;

Considering that these courses are designed to build up an awareness in Eastern Europe of belonging to a European civilisation united by its cultural and spiritual traditions;

Considering that the Board of Management for the courses has requested the Council of Europe to sponsor them and appoint a representative to the Board of Management,

Recommends to the Committee of Ministers :

1. that it accord the patronage of the Council of Europe to the radio courses to European countries behind the Iron Curtain sponsored by the College of Europe, Bruges;
2. that it appoint a representative of the Council of Europe to the Board of Management for the said courses.

B. Draft Recommendation concerning a Programme of Cultural Exchanges with countries of Eastern Europe under the auspices of the Cultural Fund

The Assembly,

Having regard to the need to avoid as far as possible a final division of Europe;

Believing that cultural exchanges may help to preserve among the European peoples, whatever their political system, the consciousness of belonging to a common cultural tradition ;

Considering that a large number of scientists from Central and Eastern Europe are desirous of remaning direct contact with the scientific world of Western Europe;

Considering, moreover, that many students from those countries would like to receive part of their training in Western universities ;

Considering the wish expressed by intellectual and university circles in Eastern Europe for books and publications of Western European origin and having noted with interest the scheme launched in this connection by the Comité d'écrivains et d'éditeurs pour une entraide européenne ;

Considering that considerable funds must be raised if this demand is to be met,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers should request the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund to include in its programme of future activities, to be undertaken when means are available, measures to develop cultural links with the countries of Eastern Europe, among which should be included :

1. scholarships enabling students from Eastern Europe to pursue part of their studies in Western universities;
2. financial assistance to the work of the Comité d'écrivains et d'éditeurs pour une entr'-aide européenne in making available scholarly and scientific books and publications to intellectuals and scientists in Eastern European countries.
3. a grant in aid for the publication of the radio courses organised by the College of Europe, Bruges.

C. Explanatory Memorandum - presented by M. VEDOVATO

1. Background of the question

The Cultural Committee has for some time now been concerned with the question of cultural exchanges between Eastern and Western Europe. It has, indeed, been the subject of a general debate in the Assembly (20th October 1955), which opened with an introductory statement by Mr. Nigel Nicolson, Rapporteur of the Cultural Committee (Doc. 410). It emerged from this debate that the Assembly was very much in favour of the establishment of cultural exchanges between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe, although it was recognised that any scheme of this kind would have a strong political flavour.

After this debate Mr. Nicolson was asked to draw up a report containing concrete recommendations, and this was closely studied by the Cultural Committee in September 1956.

This was at the time of the relaxation of tension which followed the Summit Conference at Geneva, and your Committee felt that in any event there was a tendency for exchanges of every kind between Western countries and those in the Soviet bloc to become more frequent. It decided that no action on the part of the Council of Europe in this field was called for and that recommendations to the Assembly were not needed.

Since then there has been a profound change in the situation. The world has seen the Hungarian rising and its suppression by Russian tanks. It has witnessed the Poznan insurrection and the setting up of the Gomulka Government in Poland. Not only has there been a considerable heightening of Western interest in the fate of Eastern European countries but completely new possibilities of establishing contacts with these countries have emerged.

During the first phase of discussion on cultural exchanges between East and West, the West was faced with a monolithic Communist bloc. Establishing cultural exchanges then meant in the first place negotiating with totalitarian Governments. We could hardly expect to come in direct contact with those who, finally, were to benefit from these exchanges. Today, on the other hand, we can get in touch directly with people in Eastern European countries, at any rate in Poland and Hungary, who wish to become acquainted with our cultural life. We have the certainty that the intellectual elite of Eastern European countries are fully conscious that they belong to Europe and at no price do they wish to be identified with the U. S. S. R.—although, politically speaking, their countries are dependencies of it. There has been abundant evidence during the last few years to confirm the profound longing of all intellectuals in those countries to identify themselves with Western Europe as a cultural entity, to remain "Europeans" and not be "Asianised".

Indeed, we cannot fail to note the striking dualism which exists in Eastern European countries : the desire to adhere to our civilisation and cultural tradition while actually belonging to a different political system. Faced with this situation, Western Europe has a great responsibility. She cannot abandon those whose heartfelt wish is to retain their bonds with her. We must look into the possibilities of taking appropriate action.

Up to now all activities in response to this moral challenge have been privately organised, although mention should be made of certain governmental bilateral agreements under which programmes of cultural exchanges have been and are still being organised for similar motives. An instance of these is the Cultural Agreement of February 1958 between France and Poland.

The attention of the Committee was drawn during the last session to two extremely interesting schemes designed to strengthen the bonds between Eastern and Western Europe by making contemporary forms of Western culture more accessible to the intellectual elite of Eastern European countries. The first is the Writers' and Publishers' Committee for European Co-operation and the second the radio courses of the College of Europe, Bruges.

These two schemes are in keeping with a motion for a Recommendation from the Committee on Non-represented Nations calling for assistance to scholars and students from Central and Eastern European countries, which was referred to the Cultural Committee during the same period. The main proposal here was that a fund should be set up to subsidise courses for Polish intellectuals in Western Europe.

Brought once more face to face with the crux of the problem, the Committee again asked itself whether the great task of stretching out a helping hand to the peoples of Eastern Europe—a European problem by its very nature—ought not to be carried out on a European basis with the Council of Europe playing an important role.

After thoroughly considering all aspects of the question the Committee decided that, without venturing upon proposals of too rash a nature, the Council of Europe could properly give its support to the two above-mentioned schemes and include in the programme of its Cultural Fund some of the suggestions previously put forward by the Committee on Non-represented Nations.

In submitting these two draft Recommendations, the Cultural Committee hopes, however, that the Assembly will not confine itself to supporting a series of concrete measures but will make a more general pronouncement on the problem of cultural exchanges between Eastern and Western Europe in the light of present conditions and on the policy which the Council of Europe might adopt in this field.

2. The Writers' and Publishers' Committee

The Writers' and Publishers' Committee for European Co-operation was created in March 1957, in Paris, by a group of writers and scholars anxious to provide their opposite numbers in Eastern Europe with books of great cultural value published in Western Europe.

The Committee is made up as follows :

President : Guido Piovene.

Members : Raymond Aron, Heinrich Boll, Peter Calvocoressi, Andre Chastel, Nicola Chiaromonte, Paul Flamand, Georges Friedmann, Livio Garzanti, John Lehmann, Hans Oprecht, Philip Toynbee, Lionel Trilling, Morton White, J. C. Witsch, C. M. Woodhouse.

Secretaries : Eric de Dampierre, K. A. Jelenski.

During the first six months of its activity the Committee has sent some twelve thousand dollars worth of books in English, French, German and Italian. In most cases the Committee received confirmation that the books arrived safely at their destination, and only exceptionally were we informed of the loss of a consignment.

The Committee has compiled lists of the most important works of scholarship published in the West since 1939. The Committee limited itself to giving the titles of, say, twenty of the most important books published in any given branch of knowledge in any one of the following languages : English, French, German, Italian. The Committee has chosen special advisers in all of these languages for sociology, economics, philosophy, psychology, art and literature. It has circulated these lists, which have been very well received in Poland, and which have greatly influenced the choice of books.

In addition, the Committee has supplied libraries, universities, writers and scholars in Eastern Europe with books published in the West. Although, during the initial period, the main field of activities of the Committee was Poland, relationships have been developed with Hungarian scholars and writers, and the Committee has begun to send books to Rumania and to Lithuania. Attempts to establish relations with Czechoslovakia have so far proved unsuccessful. As a consequence of the continued exchange of letters with Eastern European scholars, the Committee has also enlarged its field of action outside the mere sending of books. It has on some occasions served as an intermediary between Eastern European writers and Western publishers or editors of magazines. It has—on the request of the Museum of Modern Art in Lodz—started a scheme of collecting paintings of Western contemporary artists for the Museum. It has also succeeded in obtaining some scholarships in the West for Eastern European intellectuals.

Hitherto the Committee has been financed by grants made to the Congress for Cultural Liberty by the Ford Foundation. In May 1958 the Committee obtained from the "Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie" a further grant of 20,000 Marks, 16,000 of which were earmarked for the purchase in Germany of German books to be sent to Eastern European countries and 4,000 transferred to the Committee's Swiss account for the purchase of books in other languages.

Despite these generous subsidies, demands for books reaching the Committee from Eastern Europe far exceed supply. It is for this reason that the Committee hopes to interest European organisations in the expansion of its project. The Committee considers that a grant from the Council of Europe, perhaps within the framework of the Cultural Fund, would have a special significance, in that it would bring the nature of European solidarity, as demonstrated by its action, to the attention of correspondents in Eastern Europe, who would be informed of it.

In the view of your Committee, the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund should envisage that such a grant be made to this Organisation.

3. Radio Courses of the College of Europe, Bruges

It appears from the information obtained by the Committee that these courses are prepared by a non-profit making organisation legally independent of the College. A drafting Committee, with Don Salvador de Madariaga as its Chairman, is so constituted as to provide the widest possible range of backing, and includes experts on all subjects. In addition to the Chairman, the Committee includes the following :

MM. Georg Eckert, Director of the International Text-book Institute, Brunswick,

Paul Guggenheim, Professor of International Law at the University of Geneva,

Erik Hazelhoff, Director of Radio Free Europe,

Bertrand de Jouvenel, French writer and economist,

Gerhard Leibholz, Professor at the University of Gottingen and member of the Constitutional Court, Karlsruhe,

Andre Philip, economist and former Cabinet Minister,

Michael Polanyi, Professor at the University of Manchester,

Paul de Visscher, Professor of International Law at the University of Louvain,

Wladimir Weidle, writer and Professor of Art History,

Henri Brugmans, Rector of the College of Europe, Bruges.

The authors intend these talks more especially for intellectuals and for young people. Although designed for the Central and Eastern European countries, they include no political propaganda or polemics. The main concern in the presentation of subjects is to stress their European aspect.

By way of introduction, an initial series of 24 lectures was broadcast by Radio Free Europe from Munich in Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Rumanian and Bulgarian, beginning in June 1958. A very full programme has been prepared for the academic year 1958-1959 and is given in the Appendix. It includes talks on European civilisation in its permanent aspects, and from the standpoint of its historical development, on recent progress in such subjects as social science, political economy and international law, and on "current events" in Europe in the fields of science, literature, art and political and social life.

The authors of this programme intend to develop from it a series of publications in which the courses of greatest interest to the European public would be grouped under subject headings. The first volume would deal with Europe and the European idea and would include the series of courses given by Dr. Brugmans, that given by Wladimir Weidle (on the diversity and unity of European civilisation) and two series on the European idea by Denis de Rougemont and Don Salvador de Madariaga. A further volume would deal with economic problems, a third with contributions in the field of political science and international constitutional law, etc.

The main idea throughout would be to introduce to readers several authors of different nationalities and several "approaches" to the same sort of problem, and so gradually to build up a continuous sequence of works on different aspects of the main humanistic problems of contemporary Europe.

These publications would have to be put in hand either simultaneously or successively in the principal Western European countries. The public to which they would be mainly addressed would consist of European students and intellectuals—not specialists in each subject but all those interested in a general perspective of the problems raised transcending purely national considerations. On account of this, such books ought also to interest the "élite" of overseas countries, who are, indeed, often interested by anything sent from Paris, London and Brussels, but, actually, would like to have a thorough knowledge of Europe as a whole. The size of the first editions, will, of course, depend on arrangements made with publishers and on orders from international and national organisations, if any. However, 3,000 to 5,000 copies would appear to be a minimum.

In approaching the Council of Europe, the sponsors of the courses are, above all, seeking to have its moral support. Should the Council of Europe see its way clear to sponsoring this scheme, they would like a representative of the Council of Europe to be appointed officially as a member of the Board of Management for the courses. Through this representative, the Council of Europe could supervise closely and help to work out the general lines of the programme.

In view of the special interest of this scheme, your Committee proposes to recommend to the Committee of Ministers :

that it should extend the sponsorship of the Council of Europe to the radio courses broadcast from the College of Europe to Euroappoint a representative of the Council of Europe to the Board of Management for the courses;

that it should propose that the Administrative Board of the Cultural Fund earmark funds for facilitating the publication of these courses (or of a selection thereof) as soon as the necessary means are available.

It should here be stressed that moral support by the Council of Europe for the Bruges scheme is not conditional upon possible financial support.

4. University scholarships for students from Eastern Europe

As long ago as October 1957, M. Goedhart and others tabled a motion for a recommendation ([Doc. 727](#)) to the Consultative Assembly calling for financial assistance for Polish students. The authors of the motion were impressed by the obvious desire of many Polish students to pursue part of their studies in Western Europe—and the fact that what prevented them from doing so was no longer political obstacles but the impossibility of obtaining sufficient Western currency. They therefore decided to suggest to Member Governments that they should offer as many scholarships as possible to Polish students.

The Cultural Committee, to which the motion was referred, is wholeheartedly in favour of the scheme. It has reason to believe, however, that the desire to pursue a part of their studies in Western Europe is not confined to Polish students but is shared by those in other Eastern European countries. It therefore proposes, in paragraph (i) of the draft Recommendation, that scholarships to Western universities should be awarded to any students from Eastern Europe who vouchsafe the wish to study in the West.

The Committee is aware that in several member countries scholarships for students from Eastern European countries already exist under bilateral arrangements with one or more Eastern European countries. Without wishing to question the value of such bilateral arrangements, the Committee would like to see these schemes co-ordinated in future, in order that they may emerge more clearly as a feature of European solidarity. The Committee therefore considers that the Cultural Fund has an important part to play in this field.

Appendix College of Europe Radio Courses Index of lectures - Academic year 1958-1959

SERIES I - Structure and history of European civilisation

Reflections on a common history of Europe

3 lectures by Henri Brugmans, Rector of the College of Europe, Bruges (Original language : French).(1) Reflections on a common history of Europe.

(1) Reflections on a common history of Europe. (2) The Interdependence of the European Nations. (3) Europe and its Internal Differences.

Portraits of Europe

13 lectures by Henri Brugmans, Rector of the College of Europe, Bruges (Original language : French).

(I) Europe in 330. (2) Europe in 800. (3) Europe in 1000. (4) Europe in 1300. (5) Europe in 1492. (6) Europe in 1555. (7) Europe in 1648. (8) Europe in 1789. (9) Europe in 1815. (10) Europe in 1848. (II) Europe in 1900. (12) Europe in 1917. (13) Europe in 1947.

The unity and diversity of European civilisation

13 lectures by Wladimir Weidle, Writer, Historian, Programme Director of radio courses, College of Europe, Bruges (Original language : French).

(1) One Civilisation among others. (2) The Measure of Europe. (3) Europe : Dwarf and Giant. (4) The Frontiers of Europe .(5) The Plurality of Styles. (6) North and South in European Art. (7) North and South in European History. (8) Italy, Renaissance, Europe. (9) The Polymorphism of Europe. (10) The Plurality of Languages. (11) European Literature. (12) The Literary Unity of Europe. (13) Unity, Union, Unification.

Human Geography today

13 lectures by Maximilien Sorre, Professor of Geography at the Sorbonne (Original language : French).

(1) Introduction. (2) Human Types and Climate. (3) The Inhabited World : its Maintenance and Defence. (4) The Conquest of Life and Matter (Agriculture and Industry). (5) Industrial Activities. (6) to (13)

SERIES II - Evolution and methods of contemporary social sciences

Present trends in economic thought

6 lectures by Jan Tinbergen, Professor of Economics, University of Rotterdam (Original language : English).

(1) Introduction. (2) Short-term Dynamics and Macro-planning. (3) Micro-planning. (4) The Economics and Planning of Development. (5) The Theory of the Optimum Regime. (6) The Nature of Economic Thinking.

Present trends in sociology

7 lectures by Leo Moulin, Member of the Economic Research Service, Caisse Générale d'Épargne et de Retraite de Belgique; Secrétaire Générale du Groupe de Terminologie des Sciences Sociales de V UNESCO (Original language : French).

(1) Introduction. (2) The Wrong Questions. (3) Present Problems. (4) The Concept of Social Class. (5) The Middle Classes and the Tertiary Sector. (6) Agricultural and Industrial Working Classes. (7) Elements of Social Psychology.

The structure of western society

3 lectures by Leo Moulin, (as above). (Original language : French).

(1) Social Classes in Modern Society. (2) Bourgeoisie and Capitalism in Modern Society. (3) The Dynamics of Western Society.

Introductory course in International Law : the Nation State and International order

3 lecture s by Emile Giraud, Professor of International Law, University of Lille (Original language : French).

(1) The Nation State and its Development. (2) International Order, the United Nations Organisation. (3) Basic Principles of European Federalism.

The bases of International Law

6 lecture s by Paul Guggenheim, Professor of International Law, University of Geneva (Original language : French).

(1) Nature and Content. (2) Sources and Interpretations. (3) Subjects of International Law. (4) International Responsibility and the Settlement of Disputes. (5) War and Neutrality. (6) International Organisations.

The bases of Constitutional Law

7 lectures by Gerhard Leibholz, Professor of Constitutional Law, University of Gottingen (Original language : German).

Theory of Political Regimes

9 lectures by Raymond Aron, Professor of Sociology at the Sorbonne (Original language : French).

(1) Of Politics. (2) The Primacy of Politics. (3) From Political Philosophy to Political Sociology. (4) Philosophy of History and Political Sociology. (5) The Sociological Approach to Political Regimes. (6) Political Functions. (7) Multiple Parties and Monopolistic Parties (I). (8) Multiple Parties and Monopolistic Parties (II). (9) Genera and Species of Political Regimes : the main variable.

Social progress and the weakness of Sociology

4 lectures by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessi, Professor of Sociology, University of Vermont (Original language : German).

(1) Introduction. (2) Science of Nature or Study of Society? (3) University or School? (4) Revolutions or Revolutionaires?

SERIES III - Europe today : Political, Cultural and Scientific developments

Trade unions and working class movements in the West

7 lecture s by Loo Moulin, (as above) (Original language : French).

(1) The Diversity of the Working Class Movement. (2) Current problems of Trade-unionism. (3) Trade Union Attitudes towards Nationalisation and Joint Consultation. (4) The Future of Trade-unionism. (5) Communists, Socialists, and Christian Socialists. (6) Labourism and Socialism. (7) The Doctrinal Crisis of Socialism, and Grounds for Hope.

Present-day urbanism and town and country plaining

6 lecture s by George Duggar, Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Berkeley, California (Original language : English).

(1) The City Planner and the Problems of Population Increase. (2) Five Utopias. (3) The Common-sense of City Planning. (4) Planning the City's Vital Networks. (5) The Momentum of Recent Changes in City Building. (6) City Planning and the Question of Scale.

The problem of under-developed countries

6 lecture s by André Philip, Professor of Political Economy at the University of Paris (Original language : French).

(1) Definitions and Basic Data. (2) Preliminary Conditions of Economic Development. (3) Means of Internal Development. (4) Foreign Aid (I). (5) Foreign Aid (II). (6) Political and Cultural Conditions of Economic Development.

European Institutions

3 lecture s by Pierre Desjacques, Assistant Professor, College of Europe, Bruges (Original language : French).

(1) The Council of Europe and O. E. E. C. (2) The European Coal and Steel Community, the Common Market, Euratom. (3) European Institutions : Conclusions.

Political Psychology 1914-1945

6 lecture s by M.-J. Lory, Assistant Professor, College of Europe, Bruges (Original language : French).

(1) The Two Mobilisations. (2) The Two Armistices. (3) The Two Ideas of Reparations. (4) The Problems of Disarmament. (5) Diplomacy and Public Opinion. (6) New Terms, New ideas.

French Literature since 1940

6 lecture s by Gaétan Picon, French Literary Critic and Director of the French Institute in Ghent (Original language : French).

(1) The New Literary Climate. (2) The French Novel (I). (3) The French Novel (II). (4) Present State of French Poetry (I) (5) Present State of French Poetry (II). (6) Ideology and Contemporary French Literature.

Revolution in Modern Physics

6 lecture s by Jean Ullmo, Lecturer, Ecole Polytechnique, Paris (Original language : French).

Evolution of the main political parties in Europe

3 lecture s by M. Drachkovitch, Professor, College of Europe, Bruges (Original language : French).