Resolution 183 (1960)[1]

Reply to the Report by OEEC on its scientific activities

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly :

1. Thanks OEEC for having agreed to the Assembly's request that it should present to the Assembly a report on the scientific work of the Organisation;

2. Thanks Lord Hailsham, Minister for Science in the United Kingdom, for having presented this report to the Assembly in person, and expresses the hope that the Ministers dealing with scientific questions in other member States will follow his example and participate in the Assembly's scientific debates;

3. Notes with satisfaction that there is an increasing awareness in member States of the extent to which Europe has been left behind by the United States and the U.S.S.R. in the training of scientists and engineers and in exploiting the results of their work; the facts, however, are still not fully recognised and much work remains to be done by Governments, in the national Parliaments and in the universities and technical colleges, because only public awareness of the dangers can prevent Europe becoming, by the end of this century, a backward area. It is particularly disquieting to learn that, by that time, China will be producing more scientists and engineers even than Russia. Where, we may ask, will Europe be then?

4. The Assembly endorses whole-heartedly the necessity of co-operative research on suitable projects. In an increasing number of fields the resources of each separate country are too small to permit the successful completion of major projects; as stated aptly in the report "economic interdependence necessitates scientific interdependence".

5. A specific project which the Assembly specially welcomes is for the creation of a European centre to make available translations of important scientific papers and reports from Russia, Chinese and other difficult languages. The Assembly hopes that this plan will be realised and requests that it should be kept informed of developments.

6. Other items which have particularly caught the Assembly's attention are :

a. The proposed international conference on "Economic Growth and the role of Investment in Education". The Assembly wishes it every success and hopes the Council of Europe will be represented and kept fully informed.

b. The arrangements made for the exchange of European secondary school teachers, to enable them to participate in special training courses in the United States.

c. The proposals to strengthen specialised education at the university level.

d. The establishment in certain Scandinavian and Benelux countries and the United Kingdom of centres for advanced specialised study and research, intended to be international centres.

e. The holding of special international courses, at university level, in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands.

---

1. Assembly debate on 23rd and 24th September 1960 (13th and 14th Sittings) (see Docs. 1186Docs. 1186, Report by OEEC, and Doc. 1205, Report of the Cultural Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24th September 1960 (14th Sitting).

f. The award of senior visiting fellowships to permit exchanges between scientific and educational institutions -of which over 100 have already been granted.

g. Post-graduate travel grants to supplement national fellowships and permit specialised training abroad.

7. These arrangements for the encouragement of advanced training and research recall again the proposals made by the Assembly in its Recommendation 242, when the Assembly asked the Committee of Ministers to ensure that the plans for a "European Council for Higher Education and Research" should be carried out in the framework of Greater Europe and not be limited to the Six. The Assembly reiterates the importance which it attaches to this proposal.

8. The Assembly has been particularly impressed with the work carried out by Mr. D. Wilgress as a special consultant to the OEEC and expresses its appreciation of the results of his investigations as set out in the now-famous Wilgress Report. The Assembly wishes to recommend to the Committee of Ministers this procedure of appointing some outstanding figure to conduct investigations in different member States and then formulate his conclusions in a plan of action; it suggests that the Committee of Ministers might look into the possibility of employing this formula in connection with its own work.

9. In view of the necessity for developing a greater awareness in parliamentary circles of the need for additional steps to encourage and exploit scientific research, the Assembly hopes that it will be possible to set up, in the different member States, parliamentary scientific committees analogous to that which already exists in the United Kingdom. For this purpose, a separate Order has been prepared instructing the Cultural Committee and the Working Party on relations with national Parliaments to take further steps designed to bring them into existence.

10. In conclusion, the Assembly wishes to congratulate OEEC on the first steps it has taken in this important new branch of its own work. It expresses the hope that these activities will be not only continued but actually expanded in the new Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, whose two members on the North American continent should be particularly qualified to make an important contribution in this field.