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Promotion of a European policy for assisting refugees

Report¹

Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

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1. 1953 - 5th Session - First part



A. Explanatory Memorandum

1.

1. The Committee on Population and Refugees met at Paris on 9th and 10th April to examine the situation of Berlin refugees, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who had been invited to attend this meeting, submitted his plan of action for assisting them.

2. There is no need to recall the tragic situation of West Berlin refugees, whose wretched conditions are well known and have repeatedly been described in the Western press. It need only be said there is a daily influx into West Berlin of some 1500 to 2000 persons who have left all they possess in the Russian Zone.

3. The Committee examined the plan of the High Commissioner for immediate assistance to Berlin refugees for the building of dwellings in Western Germany to house the refugees in places where they could be employed and for the encouragement of immigration.

4. All these measures were approved by the Committee, and their implementation was recommended to the Special Liaison Committee. This Committee, at its meeting held directly after that of the Committee on Population and Refugees, duly endorsed this Recommendation and submitted it to the Committee of Ministers urging the latter to take a decision on the subject.

5. The Committee on Population and Refugees decided to refer the Recommendation to the Assembly and to request it to point out to the European peoples the gravity of the refugee problem and the inadequacy of the means available for its solution. The Committee also suggested that the Assembly stress the European character of this problem and once again emphasise that only concerted action on the part of all Member States could remedy such a situation.

6. To this effect the Committee recommended the Assembly to adopt the following draft Resolution, unanimously approved by the Committee :

B. Draft Resolution

The Assembly,

Emphasising once more t h e imperative need to assist refugees, and more particularly those of Berlin, the considerable influx of whom sets a grave problem for the social and economic consolidation of Europe;

Welcoming the action undertaken by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on behalf of the Berlin refugees, and acknowledging the generous gifts made by some Governments,

1. Reminds the peoples of Europe of the gravity of the refugee problem, the inadequacy of the means so far employed for its solution, and the need to ensure t h e close co-ordination of efforts made in the fields of aid, rehabilitation in Europe, and emigration overseas ;
2. Re-affirms that the problem of refugees, whose tragic plight has been acknowledged by all international bodies, is European in character ;
3. Considers that the remedy for such a situation can only be found in common action on the part of all Member States ;
4. Invites its Representatives to uphold and further these two principles in their respective countries.