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Prix de l'Europe et son attribution pour l'année 1955 à la ville de Coventry

Communication

M. Jakob ALTMAIER, Allemagne

1.

1. The institution of a " European Prize " to be awarded each year " to the municipality which has done most to propagate the ideal of European unity " was requested by the Assembly on 24th September, 1953, in its Recommendation 53. That Recommendation was adopted after M. Ebüzziya had presented the Report of the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs, on the best means whereby the national or international bodies connected with local government and the local authorities themselves might help in the propagation of the European idea.¹

2. The principle was finally accepted on 22nd October, 1954 by the Committee of Ministers, which decided to allocate a sum of 250,000 French francs for this purpose in the 1955 Budget and stated, that the Prize would be awarded by the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs. That decision was announced in the following passage of the Sixth Report of the Committee of Ministers : " In fulfilment of the request put forward by the Assembly in its Reply to the Fifth Report, the Committee of Ministers has decided to set aside in the Budget for 1955 the sum of 250,000 francs for the establishment of a 'European Prize' which will be awarded annually by the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs. " ²

3. Rules governing the award of the Prize have been drawn up as follows by the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs.³

2. Rules and further provisions

2.1. Rules

Article 1

A " European Prize " offered by the Council of Europe shall be awarded each year by the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs of the Consultative Assembly' to the municipality which it considers has done most to propagate the ideal of European unity.

Article 2

1. [Doc. 210](#).
2. Sixth Report of the Committee of Ministers, 1 [Doc. 307](#), paragraph 100, " European Prize ".
3. Meeting of 8th July, 1955; see AS/SM (7) PV 1.



The Prize shall consist of a trophy to be held by the winner for one year; a reproduction of the trophy; and a cash grant to be spent on arranging a journey abroad for young people who are resident in the winning municipality.

Article 3

The Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs shall designate the winning municipality from among those which have submitted their candidature.

Article 4

Municipalities shall submit their candidature either through their senior official or through the association of local authorities of which the municipality is a member. Candidatures shall reach the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe at Strasbourg before 1st May each year.

Each candidature must be accompanied by a statement of the measures taken by the municipality concerned to propagate the ideal of European unity.

Municipalities which have been unsuccessful on previous occasions may maintain their candidature in succeeding years.

Article 5

Further provisions shall be made by the Municipal and Regional Affairs regarding the detailed application of the present regulations.

2.2. Further Provisions

(a) Form of Prize to be awarded

The Prize shall consist of the following :

1. A trophy in the form of a shield, made of wood or bronze, with a bronze plaque decorated with allegorical figures and with a Latin inscription.

This trophy shall be retained for the period of one year by the winning municipality after which it shall pass to the winner for the following year.

The name of each municipality that has won the Prize shall be engraved or otherwise inscribed on the shield;

2. A small bronze reproduction of the trophy, suitable for fixing to a wall, to be retained permanently by the winning municipality;

3. A cash grant to be spent on arranging a journey abroad for young persons resident in the winning municipality;

4. Any additional money grants which the Government of the country in which the winning municipality is situated, the associations of local authorities or any other body, may agree, at the request of the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs, to award.

(b) Manner in which the Prize shall be presented

1. The trophy shall be presented to the winning municipality each year in the course of a ceremony held during the second part of the Session of the Consultative Assembly. It shall be handed to the chief member of the municipality in question, whom the Council of Europe will invite to Strasbourg for the occasion.

2. The reproduction of the trophy shall in due course be affixed to a wall in the Town Hall of the winning municipality in the presence of the members of the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs, on the occasion of a "Europe Day "

3. The cash grant shall be handed by the Chairman of the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs to the chief official of the winning municipality on " Europe Day ".

(c) Publicity to be given to the creation of the Prize and to the opening of the competition

The necessary publicity shall be ensured in the following manner :

1. As soon as the regulations and other provisions have been agreed by the Special Committee for Municipal and Regional Affairs, a statement on the Prize will be broadcast by the Chairman of the Committee.
2. An official communiqué will be issued to the European press announcing the creation of the Prize and giving details of the regulations.
3. Governments will be invited to inform their local authorities of the creation of the Prize.
4. The associations of local authorities will provide their members with any information that they may require.
4. On the 26th July, 1955 a statement was broadcast by the Chairman of the Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs and an official communiqué published in the European press declaring the competition open. In addition a circular was sent to all the associations of local authorities in member countries.
5. On this occasion, the closing date for presenting candidatures was 1st September, 1955. Sixty applications were received within the stipulated time, ten after the final date. They came from :

Austria

Baden bei Wien

Mayrhofen (Tyrol)⁴

Belgium

Bruges

Deurne

Lot1

Ougrée

Roeselare⁵

Verviers

France

Arzens (Aude)

Bagas (Gironde)

Barenton (Manche)⁶

Bordeaux

Boulogne-Billancourt proposed by Zaandam (Netherlands), Anderlecht (Belgium), Hammersmith (United Kingdom),

Berlin-Neukölln (Federal Republic of Germany)

Caen

Colmar

Puteaux

Regny (Loire)

St. Hilaire du Harcouët (Manche)

Selles-sur-Cher (Loir-et- Cher)⁷

Italy

5.1. *Venice⁸*

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4. Application received after the closing date.
 5. Candidature parvenue après le délai.
 6. Application received after the closing date.
 7. Application received after the closing date.

Netherlands

Alkmaar
Arnhem
Bolsward
Culemborg
Delft
Hoogwoud
Kerkrade
The Hague
Roermond
Velsen

Federal Republic of Germany

Bad-Wörrishofen
*Bentheim*⁹
Birkenfeld-Nahe
Breisach-am-Rhein
Celle
Dortmund
Ettlingen (Bade)
Frankfurt-am-Main
Freiburg-im-Breisgau
Castrop-Rauxel
Höchstadt (Danube)
Hof (Bavaria)
Hohenfelde (Schleswig- Holstein)
Kandel (Palatinat) arlsruhe
Marienberg (Wester- wald)
Monschau
Montabaur
Neustadt (Schleswig- Holstein)
Offenbach-am-Main
Passau Preetz (Schleswig- Holstein)
*Reeklinghausen (Wes- phalie)*¹⁰
Rothenburg - ob - der- Tauber
Schwarzenbek
Soest
Weiden-Opf
Weilburg

8. Application received after the closing date.

9. Application received after the closing date.

10. Application received after the closing date.

Witten

Zell-an-der-Mosel

Zweibrücken

United Kingdom

Brighton

Cardiff

County of Essex

Coventry

Harrogate

Lambeth

Thornbury (Gloucester-shire)

6. The Special Committee on Municipal and Regional Affairs met at Rome on 23rd September, 1955, and awarded the prize to the City of Coventry. The text of Coventry's application is attached to this document. Wishing, however, to pay a tribute to the City of Berlin, which did not enter for the competition, the Committee decided to meet in that City as soon as should circumstances permit.

Annexe Candidature of Coventry for the European Prize

29 th August, 1955

Dear Sir,

I have been instructed to enter the City of Coventry for the « European Prize » offered by the Council of Europe for the municipality considered to have done the most to propagate the idea of European unity. In support of the City Council's candidature, I enclose a formal statement, the receipt of which I shall be glad if you will kindly acknowledge.

European Unity

1. It is with pleasure that the Council of the City of Coventry (Great Britain) learn of the offer of a prize to the municipality which has done the most to propagate the ideal of European unity. This is an ideal which is close to the hearts of the members of the City Council, and I have been asked to submit this statement of the measures taken by the City Council in support of their candidature for the « European Prize ».

2. The City Council have for long considered that much good can be done in the cause of international understanding by mutual contacts at the level of local government and that municipalities can best assist by encouraging the free interchange of views and the first-hand discussion of problems between representatives of local government in those countries. In a letter which he recently addressed to the Lord Mayor, Sir Anthony Eden expressed his belief that such visits were one of the best ways of promoting understanding and friendship between nations and, in thanking Coventry for the entertainment which that city had provided for foreign visitors, went on to say that the visitors had all made it clear how much they had appreciated their reception and had gained from their experience. It is indeed Coventry's claim that amongst the Cities and Towns of the United Kingdom it has taken the leading part in the development of friendly relationships and understanding with their counterparts in other European countries.

As a consequence of its war-time experience and the interest aroused by its post-war reconstruction and development, Coventry has become a centre of interest for people from many countries, and representatives from all the countries of Europe have visited the City since the end of World War II —representatives who have included Ambassadors, members of Governments, members of local authorities and public officials. It has been the constant policy of the Council to foster such visits and to entertain the visitors in a manner befitting the dignity of the City and its reputation for hospitality. Both the elected representatives and the officers of the Council devote considerable time to the reception of these representatives. A complete list would be too extensive, but for illustration the following are some of the visitors received and entertained during the past year alone, apart from visitors from those towns with which Coventry has specific associations (referred to in paragraph 7 hereof). A party of visitors to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, including representatives of France, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Denmark, Italy, Greece, Norway and Sweden; A Co-operative Society party including representatives of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland; Members of the German Federal Parliament; German Press Editors; German delegation to the - International Housing Conference at Edinburgh; Members of the Le Havre Architects Association; A party of French schoolgirls; A party of teachers from Netherlands; Austrian Travel Agents; Austrian and German Motor Car Agents. Students from Moscow University; Waterworks Engineers from Denmark; Portuguese Press Editors and Broadcasters; Five Mayors from Yugoslavia; Members of the Yugoslav Shop Workers Union; Members of the Architectural Students Society from Greece; Hungarian Government representatives; The Hague Youth Orchestra; The Burgomaster of Ryssen (Netherlands); The International Summer School of the National and Local Government Officers' Association (200 visitors).

Coventry has also actively assisted such authorities as the British Foreign Office and the British Council in the organisation of study tours for visitors from many European countries, for example, Austrian and German elected representatives, and officials studying local government generally and Dutch, French and German architects and planners studying housing development and reconstruction problems. The City Council has encouraged, too, the actual employment temporarily of foreign students and newly qualified technical and professional men and women seeking to enlarge their experience by working with a British municipality. Coventry has also been happy, at the request of the national authorities, to release its Chief Officers for periods of service abroad where it has been thought that they might assist in the consideration of local government problems, e.g. in the then British Zone of Germany during the period 1947-1951.

Coventry has not contented itself merely with the receiving of visitors. It supports the International Union of Local Authorities (one of the members of the City Council sits on the Executive Committee of the British Section, and a number of other organisations such as the Comité Technique International de Prévention et d'Extinction du Feu, the International Water Supply Association and the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, which have as their objects the study of comparative techniques, the exchange of information and the free discussion of problems of mutual concern. The City Council encourages the active contribution, both by its elected representatives and its officials, to the deliberations of these organisations and supports their international conferences, e.g. the Vienna and Rome Conferences of the International Union of Local Authorities, the Edinburgh Conference of the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning and the 1955 Seminar of European Social Workers and Administrators at Taunus near Frankfurt. In addition, Lord Mayors of the City have made official visits to Paris and Rome and to other cities and towns in both France and Italy.

The conviction of the City Council that the municipalities can make a contribution to the cause of European unity and that this is a matter which should receive constant and careful consideration has found further expression by the City Council in the recent appointment of a separate committee—named the International Friendship Committee—to supervise, co-ordinate and develop this aspect of the Council's activities.

The City Council's activities in this field are further evidenced by the specific links which have been developed between Coventry and a number of European towns.

- a. between Coventry, Caen (France) and Arnhem (Netherlands), there is an association born of the common suffering and sacrifice of war and supported by mutual interchange visits. The bond of sympathy which exists between the Netherlands and Coventry was evidenced by a gift of flowering shrubs by the Netherlands National Committee—"Bloemen-Tolk can Onze Dankbaar-lieia"—in 1948 and which now adorn the City's new central square, and by a substantial grant of money from the balance of the Coventry Air Raid Distress Fund to the Netherlands Flood Disaster Relief Fund. (It may be added that the City Council made a similar donation to the Greek Earthquake Relief Fund) ;
- b. with Graz (Austria)—an association developed under the aegis of the Educational Interchange Council and supported by an exchange of delegations and maintained by correspondence;
- c. with Belgrade and Sarajevo (Yugoslavia)— a link which has not only been supported by the mutual exchange of delegations, but by a gift of timber from Belgrade towards the reconstruction of Coventry and a visit by Coventry children to Yugoslavia this summer;
- d. with Kiel (Germany)—an association resulting from the foundation of the 'Friends of Coventry Association' in Kiel, supported by a number of visits to the annual 'Kieler Woche' by Lord Mayors of the City and other prominent citizens and by a visit to Coventry by the Burgomaster of Kiel;
- e. with Stalingrad (U. S. S. R.)—a bond of friendship which has existed ever since the contemporaneous battle of Stalingrad and the 'blitz' of Coventry, and which was evidenced by a substantial gift from the people of Coventry towards medical relief in Stalingrad during the war and by the exchange of other gifts—and further supported by the recent exchange of official delegations;
- f. with Lidice (Czechoslovakia)—Coventry took a prominent part in 1942 in the 'Lidice Shall Live' campaign. The City was officially represented at the laying of the foundation—stone of the new Lidice and again recently, on the occasion of the opening of the commemorative rose garden at Lidice;
- g. with St. Etienne (France)—the most recent foreign link, developed under the auspices of "Le Monde Bilingue ". The outstanding feature of this association has been the large number of exchange visits by organised parties of children and individual family exchanges which have promptly taken place. Coventry is concentrating on making this a link between the ordinary citizens of the two Cities, and " Le Monde Bilingue" has testified to the noteworthy contribution which Coventry has already made to the movement. I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant, Signed : Charles BARRATT, Town Clerk The Secretary-General, Council of Europe, STRASBOURG, France.