

Report on the Tindemans Report and the Council of Europe (6 September 1976)

Caption: On 6 September 1976, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe analyses the impact of the Tindemans Report on European Union.

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REPORT on the Tindemans Report and the Council of Europe (6 September 1976)

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(Rapporteur: Mme GRADIN)

I. Draft Recommendation presented by the Political Affairs Committee

The Assembly,

1. Considering that the Tindemans Report to the heads of state and government of the Members of the European Communities about a future "European" union gives a realistic view of the possibilities of making political progress within the Communities through institutional improvements during the second half of the seventies;
2. Aware of the possible repercussions of such a development on the Council of Europe and its statutory activities;
3. Recalling Resolution (74) 4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as well as Recommendation 704 (1973) and Resolution 607 (1975) of the Assembly, which include largely similar proposals for widening the scale of European cooperation in the framework of the Council of Europe;
4. Conscious of the responsibility borne by democratic Europe with regard to the urgent political, economic and social problems which must be resolved within the European continent and in that continent's relations with other parts of the world;
5. Recalling the hope expressed by the President of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities, in his speech to the Assembly on 23 April 1975, that advantage would be taken of any opportunities that may arise to strengthen the relationship between the institutions of the Council of Europe and the European Communities;
6. Noting with satisfaction that the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe confirmed in his address to the Assembly on 27 January 1976 that the Tindemans Report will be discussed by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;
7. Recalling the readiness expressed by the President of the Commission of the European Communities, in his address to the Assembly on 6 May 1976, to work closely and very actively with the Council of Europe;
8. Noting the statement of the Federal Chancellor of Austria in his address to the Assembly on 5 May 1976 that it is the duty of the European democracies to carry on the policy of détente more constructively, and welcoming his proposal that the Council of Europe should serve as a coordination point between Western democracies inside and outside Europe, with special reference to the implementation of the CSCE Final Act and the preparation of the Belgrade Conference of June 1977, as well as with regard to the development in North-South relations,
9. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - a. consider what consequences the follow-up action taken on the Tindemans Report could have within the European Communities and should have on the achievement of closer unity within the whole of democratic Europe;
 - b. promote such closer unity:
 - i. by the further application of Resolution (74) 4 within various sectors clearly defined for the Council of Europe's intergovernmental activities;

- ii. by increased utilisation of the Council of Europe's Conferences of specialised Ministers;
 - iii. by encouraging the participation of the European Communities as such in certain intergovernmental activities of the Council of Europe, and by proposing their accession to conventions and agreements elaborated within the Council of Europe;
 - iv. by urging the European Communities to continue the furtherance of the effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights;
- c. contribute, notably through regular discussions of political matters, to the development of a common European policy within the framework of the Council of Europe:
- i. by continuing close exchange of views among member governments with regard to the follow-up of the CSCE, as well as by watching over action taken by member governments to implement the principles and proposals contained in the Final Act in so far as these fall within its responsibility;
 - ii. by furthering an independent European position for any multilateral negotiations in the politico-economic field with special regard to North-South relations; and
 - iii. by furthering closer cooperation between member states with respect to the discussion of fundamental issues within world organizations;
- d. increase the flow of information between the Council of Europe and the European Communities, in order to work closely and actively together for more economic and social progress and justice, as well as closer political unity in democratic Europe.

II. Explanatory Memorandum by Mrs. GRADIN

A. The Europe that we all mean

1. In December 1974 the heads of state and heads of government of member states of the European Communities asked Mr Tindemans, the Belgian Prime Minister, to define what was meant by the term "European union". Although this demand was strictly limited to the future development within EEC, the somewhat pretentious title of the exercise - "European union" - induced a general debate on the political future of Western Europe in its widest geographical sense, and this debate developed before Mr Tindemans' report to the European Council had been published. Throughout 1975 all the political, economic and social forces within and outside EEC voiced their opinions about Europe's future.

2. On the occasion of the Council of Europe's twenty-fifth anniversary, in May 1974, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr Vedovato, gave a timely reminder of the Council of Europe's responsibility as regards European policy and called for a "Charter of European Union" to be drawn up. The debate of the Parliamentary Assembly held in October 1975 showed the complexity of the question of Europe's future, and in particular the danger of speaking about a union" before greater European unity was achieved in coordinating solutions for the daily problems of European citizens. In this respect, I should like to quote Mr Hattersley, British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, participating in the discussion on the Tindemans Report of the House of Lords' Committee on the European Communities: "If we continually talk about Europe in grandiloquent terms, referring to union as a historic, philosophical and almost metaphysical concept, and we have an obsession with the institution of Europe, I do not think we can ever convince the voters that Europe is the real prospect that it ought to be".

I should like to add another remark which demonstrates the danger of increasing the confusion which exists among the citizens of our countries in regard to Europe and its institutions. I refer to the "creation of a new institution" called the European Council. European citizens already have enough difficulty in making

distinctions between the Council of Europe, the European Community, so-called European summits of heads of state and government, the various European assemblies etc. Although this seems to be "only" a question of semantics, the negative political effect appears to me to be of the greatest importance, and, in particular, coming as I do from a non-EEC member state, I do not feel that it is acceptable that the institutions and activities of the nine EEC member states, because of their name, give the impression to the public of being "Europe".

3. The Assembly's debate in October 1975, however, greatly contributed to better mutual understanding among its members and to the demystification of the term "European union" in replacing it by the practical approach of enlarged cooperation and coordination amongst all democratic states of Europe. On this occasion I expressed myself as a "warm advocate of intense European cooperation in various fields. Political matters can and should be discussed in the European context and we should by all means favour a more intense debate within the framework of the Council of Europe of political matters of common interest to our countries. This intensified cooperation should not be limited to the work in the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly but should be enlarged to the different specialised Ministers' Conferences. We dealt with these problems two years ago when we discussed the mission of the Council of Europe. I should like to see a deeper dimension of what can be done in concrete terms in order to further this intensified work within the Council. On the other hand, cooperation already exists, not only in trade matters, among the European Communities, the countries belonging to EFTA and other countries. Here, our task must be to seek to deepen and widen the common work already going on." This exchange of opinions enabled the Political Affairs Committee to work out, under the guidance of Mr Leynen, a resolution on the Council of Europe and closer unity among European democracies which was unanimously adopted by the Standing Committee in November 1975 and which, in view of the publication of Mr Tindemans's report, clearly expressed the standpoint of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe with regard to the role of this organisation in the process of closer European cooperation.

4. During the Assembly's debate in October 1975 it was also proposed to create a subcommittee after the publication of the Tindemans Report in order to work out, on the basis of what Mr Tindemans proposes, practical guidelines for some kind of work for the Council of Europe to do in the field of European unity. This subcommittee was established. As Mr Tindemans's report focuses almost entirely on future European development within EEC, and only incidentally mentions the significance of EEC relations with "those European countries which have a democratic system similar to ours", the subcommittee's report, in the choice of its terms of reference, has to go beyond the report on "European union". In its meeting with Mr Tindemans, on 26 April 1976, the subcommittee had the opportunity to discuss with him the background, the aims and the significance of various statements in his report; Mr Tindemans explained his view on the role of the Council of Europe with regard to the future development of a "European union" amongst EEC member countries. Furthermore, during the last two years the Assembly had on various occasions been addressed by European statesmen on the subject of Europe's political future in general and cooperation amongst European intergovernmental organisations in this respect in particular. I should like to recall the speech by Mr Garret FitzGerald, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland, who was the first President of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities to address the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in that capacity (23 April 1975). Mr Bruno Kreisky, Federal Chancellor of Austria, addressed the Assembly on 5 May 1976 and devoted a great part of his speech to European integration and in particular to the importance of close cooperation between democratic Europe and its democratic partners in the world. Mr François-Xavier Ortoli was, after a period of sixteen years, the second President of the Commission of the European Communities to address the Assembly (6 May 1976), and he stressed the necessity for both European organisations to work together and to avoid competition. Furthermore, the deliberations of the subcommittee, based on a working paper presented by its Chairman, Mr Leynen, gave the Rapporteur guidance for the drafting of the report which follows.

B. There is no single European authority

5. It might be useful, in this context, to call attention to the fact that there exist at least three conceptions of Europe. First, the boundaries of Western Europe are very close to those of the Council of Europe states, seen as a whole. Secondly, there are the nine states of the European Communities. Finally, according to classical

geopolitical theory, Europe is the part of the world that includes all countries from the Atlantic to the Ural.

Without wishing to be the Assembly of European theoreticians, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe cannot agree to the nine member states of EEC usurping and monopolising the European idea. It is the duty of our organisation to point out that the first objective of European policy remains to maintain and further closer cohesion amongst all the democratic states of Europe. The Council of Europe has to oppose the formation of a "mutilated Europe". We must speak out for the interests of those of our eighteen member states-nineteen in September 1976 (Portugal), and probably soon twenty (if the situation develops democratically in Spain)-which are unable to join the Communities' institutions immediately or in the future.

7. Adopting a pragmatic approach, Mr. Tindemans keeps in his report to the framework of the existing EEC institutions, which he proposes adapting for the sake of greater efficiency and for achieving a qualitative leap forward by the Communities. We consider, however, that apart from the consideration of the Council of Europe's political role in future dialogue on the development of closer unity between democratic European countries, the Tindemans Report, which offers a wide range of practical suggestions for breathing fresh life into Europe, commands the Council's interest directly in so far as the "qualitative change" toward greater European unity is in keeping both with the philosophy of the Statute of the Council of Europe and with the specific activities in its Work Programme.

The chapters and passages of the Tindemans Report dealing with EEC's objectives, organisation and institutions can almost be left out of our consideration, and we will confine ourselves to the possible implications of the Tindemans proposals for the Council of Europe and those European democratic countries outside EEC, as well as to the few comments made by Mr Tindemans on EEC cooperation with the other democratic Europe. Your Rapporteur deplores that Mr Tindemans, in considering the political prospects of "European union", devoted only very few remarks to a "wider" European cooperation.

9. In his exchange of views with the subcommittee, Mr Tindemans confirmed that he had not mentioned the Council of Europe by name in his report because it was outside his terms of reference. However, he pointed out to the sub committee that a "European union" needed to pay particular attention to all democratic European states and that it ought to establish preferential relations with them; he underlined that the Council of Europe could form the framework for such special links.

10. From the European point of view, in the broad sense, the basic problem is primarily one of structured relations between the national families which make up democratic Europe; those relations should be coordinated by close cooperation between the existing European organisations. Chapter IV of Mr Tindemans's report, "A citizen's Europe", is certainly the most significant for the Council of Europe. It is couched in language very familiar to us, and in fact many of the fields mentioned are identical with or similar to those formulated in a number of Council of Europe documents. I should like to mention Recommendation 704 (1973) of the Parliamentary Assembly on the mission of the Council of Europe and Resolution (74) 4 of the Committee of Ministers on the future role of the Council of Europe, as well as Resolution 607 (1975) of the Assembly on the Council of Europe and closer unity among European democracies. Your Rapporteur recalls, in this context, the text adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Resolution (74) 4 concerning the organisation's fields of activity:

"Decides to concentrate the intergovernmental activities of the Council of Europe on clearly defined sectors so as to give the organisation a distinctive profile;

Accordingly instructs the Ministers' Deputies and the Secretary General to plan for the near future the organisation's intergovernmental activities in the following sectors:

- safeguard and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- social and socio economic problems, such as those concerning migrant workers;
- educational and cultural cooperation

- questions relating to youth;
- protection and promotion of public health;
- protection of the natural and man-made environment; regional planning;
- local authorities ; matters relating to regional and municipal cooperation;
- harmonization of legal systems and national legislations in specific sectors."

The Assembly has included these activities in the text of Resolution 607 (1975) by adding "the study of the problems facing society and parliamentary democracies" as a further subject for Council of Europe activities to serve the interests of man in society.

11. Although, during the discussion with Mr. Tindemans, the subcommittee welcomed his confirmation that the Council of Europe still had an important role to play in the fields of culture, law and human rights, most members of the subcommittee expressed their opposition to limiting the Council of Europe's role to suiting a "European union" which had not yet been born; the organization had not to surrender its responsibilities but on the contrary to reaffirm its own powers. In this context, the statement made on 8 May 1976 before the Assembly by the President of the Commission of EEC seems to be significant. Sir John Rodgers asked Mr. Ortoli whether he did not agree that-while efforts and progress were being made to bring about a common EEC policy in trade, transport, energy etc. It would be sensible for EEC to leave such subjects as the environment, pollution, the equivalence of academic degrees and qualifications etc. to the Council of Europe, which has worked on these subjects for years, or at least use the Council of Europe as the chosen instrument for activities on these subjects? Mr Ortoli replied that he did not wish to be the President of an EEC Commission which only dealt with economic matters. The main problem of the Communities was that they were not attractive enough; they must, therefore, deal with questions which directly affect their citizens. Such an attempt could not be in contradiction with the Council of Europe's activities if the two organisations worked seriously together without a Spirit of competition, but since EEC was seeking a higher degree of integration it could go further than the Council of Europe and it could sometimes go ahead faster.

12. From our point of view, this reply includes fears and hopes at the same time. We find some confirmation for a sort of "Communities imperialism" to extend its authority on subjects which are attractive but not controversial to compensate the setbacks in the slow development in the Communities' proper fields such as economic and monetary union, as well as common industrial and research policies etc.; the budgetary funds of the Communities, which are not comparable with those at the disposal of the Council of Europe for the implementation of its Intergovernmental Work Programme, allow the Commission to undertake much more spectacular initiatives than the Council of Europe ever could. On the other side, the hope for the Council of Europe lies in Mr Ortoli's remark that the two organisations should work seriously together without competition.

C. The pragmatic approach to closer European cooperation

13. Resolution (74) 4 on the future role of the Council of Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers and therefore including the nine Ministers for Foreign Affairs of EEC, clearly indicates the procedure for closer relations between the two organisations and the better coordination of their working programmes. Today we can already welcome some hopeful developments:

on 23 April 1975, Mr Garret FitzGerald addressed the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in his capacity as President of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities and expressed the hope that his successors would follow his example and take advantage of any opportunities to strengthen the

relationship between the two closely interlinked institutions;

- On 6 May 1976, Mr Ortoli, President of the Commission of the European Communities, addressed both the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in order to inform and exchange views on the activities of the two organisations.

We undoubtedly welcome here the first effective implementation of the arrangement concluded in 1959 between the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the Commission of the European Communities. This new spirit of cooperation also finds its expression in the presence of the Secretary General of the Commission of the European Communities at various meetings of the Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe, and in the contacts established between the two organisations through the Council of Europe Office which was set up in Brussels at the beginning of 1975.

14. In our interpretation of Mr Tindemans's report we would like to take account also of the above-mentioned facts. When Mr Tindemans says: "In Europe, we must pay particular attention to those European countries which have a democratic system similar to ours. We should establish relations with them which make it possible to take account of their interests and their points of view when formulating the union's political decisions, and also to obtain their understanding and their support for our actions. The habit of such informal cooperation will, in due course, facilitate the accession of those states wishing to join..."; we hope that this statement, although it relates in his report only to a section dealing with crises in the European region, is not limited and will be applied to all those various fields of common interest for all European citizens. We also hope that enlarged cooperation might also include the accession of the future "union" as such to those Council of Europe agreements and conventions which cover matters over which the "union" has sovereign jurisdiction.

1. The defence and maintenance of human rights

15. Of particular interest for Council of Europe members is, of course, Mr Tindemans's chapter entitled "The protection of rights"—in relation to the chapter on "The Court of Justice". One pillar of the Council of Europe, and perhaps its most original contribution to international cooperation, has been and is the Human Rights Convention and the institutions created to safeguard human rights—the Court and the Commission. When Mr Tindemans proposes in his report to install a system within the "union" to protect the rights of the Europeans, we have to ask immediately to what extent such a system might duplicate the work of the existing human rights institutions in Strasbourg. Mr Tindemans assured the subcommittee that the aim of his proposal was not in any way to set up new bodies with jurisdiction over human rights within the "European union". He was proposing that the "union" as such accede to the European Convention on Human Rights and recognise the right of individual appeal to the European Commission of Human Rights against alleged violations of the convention by the "union". We welcome this statement and hope that, in the meantime, the European Communities will continue the furtherance of the effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

2. European economic cooperation

16. There is another practical form of European cooperation which does not affect the Council of Europe, but its member countries individually. The member countries which do not belong to EEC have all concluded specific arrangements with the Communities in the economic field. Beyond these individual arrangements, there exists at present a common European attempt in the field of monetary policy through the cooperation going on within the "snake". Mr Tindemans states that today the "snake" operates and is controlled partly outside the Communities; in future this must happen within the common institutions of the "union" in accordance with procedures to be agreed upon. We might recall that today the "snake" cooperation is a task for central banks and not the governments of four countries within the Communities (Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg) and two countries outside the Communities (Norway and Sweden) which are associated in the "snake".

3. A united front of democratic Europe in regard to important questions of international politics

17. The creation of a European society which promotes equality and justice is one aim of the European citizen, but we feel that our relations must comprise other parts of the world as well, because some of the most vital problems head of us have necessarily a global character. We strongly feel that the Council of Europe, as the largest democratic body of the continent, has an essential part to play in this respect. We can, therefore, not agree with Mr Tindemans when he told the subcommittee that the Council of Europe, as an "assembly of wise men" or "an extended Commonwealth", had an important, role to play in the fields of culture, law and human rights. The signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on development and international cooperation and the following discussion on a new economic order adjusting North-South relations, are reminders to all European democracies of their common responsibilities as regards political cooperation on a world-wide level.

18. I should like to quote from the speech by Mr Garret FitzGerald, when he reminded us Western Europeans to put away our feelings of division and of incoherence and our conflicts of interest and to try to see ourselves from outside. "While, of course, the countries of the rest of the world have to come to terms with the reality of the European Community as a powerful economic and political force distinct from the rest of Western Europe, at the cultural and social level Community Western Europeans and non-Community Western Europeans do not seem all that different to the inhabitants of other continents. It is well that we should take some account at this phenomenon lest we undervalue Europe's role in the world today through undue consciousness of our own internal weaknesses and divisions, and our own economic uncertainties and social doubts. The simple fact is that Europe is much more highly valued by the rest of the world than it values itself. What from one point of view are divisions and weaknesses sometimes appear to other countries as a reflection of cultural richness, economic diversity and social imagination. Moreover, it is because Europe is not homogeneous, or mono cultural, that it does not appear to peoples in other continents as posing a threat to them economically, socially and strategically.

19. Seen from outside, from a viewpoint of totally different cultures, Europe indeed appears a sufficiently harmonious entity to be seen as an entity, but diverse enough to offer a wide range of mutually beneficial cultural, social and economic links to countries in different continents and in different stages of development. Of course, Europe's past relationship with many of these countries took the form of colonialism. The effects of this colonial heritage on that continent's relationship with the developing countries which have so recently won their independence both the colonial system have, however, been less negative than might have been feared. For many of these countries the fact that Europe peacefully abandoned its colonial role is at least as important today as the fact that it undertook this role in the first instance. By this I mean that Europe is widely seen as moving in a constructive direction in its relationship with these countries. Moreover, because of the withdrawal of the European colonial powers from this role, Europe as a whole is seen as posing much less of a threat to the future independence and development of the world than the superpowers, which had no similar colonial involvement, but which, during the past generation, have, in the process of seeking a balance among themselves, remained an active force in many parts of the world - and have, indeed, in many areas become such an active force only within this recent time-span.

20. Seen in this perspective, Western Europe's role in the modern world is potentially more positive and more significant than we ourselves perhaps realise. This role no longer has any military element - none of our countries any longer maintains a significant military presence, or seeks to play a significant military role, outside our continent. But, partly because of this, Western Europe is sought after as a partner or, at least, is acceptable as a partner, on a scale and to an extent that is not true of any of the other major participants in the world scene..."

21. I wish to associate myself with this definition of Europe's role towards other world nations. European nations individually, as well as Western Europe as a whole, do not play a super-power role. It is, therefore,

of particular importance that Europe develop its role as an acceptable partner by acting as a link between the two main super-powers and the rest of the world. Long-dating and multiple forms of military, political and economic relations between Western European nations and the United States of America, as well as a new attempt at better East-West cooperation in the framework of CSCE, give our nations the opportunity to advocate the cause of those nations which are particularly affected by the development of North-South relations. An independent stand of this nature by Western Europe in its relations with the United States, as well as with the USSR and its allies, would certainly increase Europe's chance of playing an active role in future multilateral negotiations towards a new political and economic structure of North South relations.

22. Coming back to our daily inside view of Europe's political role, I wish to choose a practical example. During the 1974-75 Geneva CSCE negotiations, the European Communities reached a common policy and even acted at the conference through one spokesman at the negotiation table. There had only been informal contacts between Council of Europe member states. During the recent post-Helsinki period, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe agreed on regular exchanges of views on the implementation of the CSCE Final Act, in order to monitor the various developments in view of the forthcoming Belgrade Conference in June 1977. These exercises also took place at Ministers' Deputies' level with the participation of experts from the national ministries; further meetings are foreseen. The direct profits of such meetings between eighteen European states obviously convinced the responsible political authorities. The Council of Europe certainly can provide the ideal forum for other European intergovernmental political coordination in fields of common responsibility towards other parts of the world. As mentioned above, Europe's active stand in the restructuring of North-South relations is only one of the most prominent subjects.

23. The Austrian Federal Chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, drew particular attention to this aspect of European cooperation when he addressed the Assembly on 6 May 1976. The relations of democratic Europe with the developing world and Europe's role in the North-South dialogue represented his main concern. Mr Kreisky proposes the Council of Europe as the coordination body between Western democracies inside and outside Europe in this field. The role of the enlarged Council of Europe forum would not be the elaboration of joint policies, but the essential guarantee of permanent exchanges of views between different partners getting to know each other's attitudes and policies better. Western European countries which are Members of EEC, non-EEC-members which are Members of NATO, and neutrals, as well as their non-European partners, will find common ground which helps to bridge differences that exist between them because of their participation, or non-participation, in particular organisations. They are united through a common responsibility originating in their attachment to the principles of genuine democracy. Such a coordination body could remedy fears of directorate rule, not only in Europe but also in the wider context of cooperation among all industrialised democracies. This initiative, however, can only be realised if it is politically accepted by the EEC member governments. We must, unfortunately, state a certain lack of interest among EEC Members in Council of Europe institutions; this often becomes evident in the poor attendance by Foreign Ministers of member states belonging to the Communities at meetings of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Foreign Ministers of non EEC member states, of course, show increasing disappointment at this fact.

24. European unity as advocated by Mr FitzGerald and Mr Kreisky goes beyond Mr Tindemans's "European union" (which is one important facet of it) and puts European policy in the continental and world-wide context. There is a logical conclusion: if the Council of Europe did not yet exist, it would have to be invented- as Mr Kreisky pointed out.

4. Joint European activities on the parliamentary level

25. Consideration of certain important questions of international politics is one of the main activities of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which also opens its hemicycle to parliamentary delegations coming from Canada, the United States, Japan and other interested OECD member countries. The Assembly holds debates on external relations with the aim of encouraging a common stand, wherever possible, by the whole of free Europe on events of world-wide importance or those which affect the lives of European citizens.

26. A joint discussion of such problems by parliamentarians from almost all democratic European states is foreseen in the annual Joint Meeting between the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Unfortunately, in the past the Joint Meetings have not always been a success. We feel that joint debates on foreign policy topics will probably have more impact and underline the joint responsibility of European parliamentarians vis-à-vis urgent continental and world-wide problems. At a later stage, when the European Parliament is directly elected and officially empowered to discuss foreign policy, it will be all the more important that the two Assemblies establish systematic relations with a wider field of action. Also on the parliamentary level, there should be no competition, but complementary activities.

D. Greater European unity and more democratic participation try the European citizen

37. When we spoke about the European citizen, we were not referring to a standard European citizen, but to our fellow-citizens in our various home countries. These citizens share, of course, some common concerns, and it is up to European politicians to provide a legal, political, economic and social framework which takes care of the approach to common problems but which leaves European citizens their individual and diverse characteristics and, in particular, their political majority. European political leaders have to prevent European democracies from becoming incomprehensible technocracies. We agree with Mr FitzGerald when he says that we have to seek "...a new reflection in political terms of the complex reality of modern society, in which decisions must be taken at many different levels in order to satisfy, on the one hand, the thirst of people for a maximum degree of control over decisions that affect their lives directly, and on the other hand, to recognise the need to take many important decisions on a sub-continental or even a world scale...". European citizens are in fact interested in making their democracies more meaningful and dealing with the urgent problems related to employment, inflation, preservation of resources and safeguarding of the environment, as well as contributing to more equality and justice in the world. European citizens, furthermore, are anxious that the political decision-making power stay as close as possible to those who are directly affected by the decisions. Our peoples have passed the stage in the development of democracy where the majority of voters are willing simply to be content to express their democratic rights every fourth or fifth year through the vote. Therefore, the revival of the European idea and the development of closer unity between European democracies can only be achieved with the consensus of the opinion of the European populations. Any move towards greater European unity must be linked with the strengthening of regional political representation, especially where this reflects a genuine sense of regional or suppressed national identity rather than a product of administrative convenience. If so far the development within the European Communities has been subordinated far too much to the national governments, the debate on future "European union" should be the occasion to put forward new forms of decentralised decision making power.

28. Mr Tindemans's report was addressed, as we know, to heads of state and government and not to the peoples, the "roots" of our society. During 1975 public opinion was, however, largely sensitised by the preparation of Mr Tindemans's report on "European union" and a keen interest in its outcome was natural. It was therefore the duty of the political leaders to give, from the highest political level, an overall conception of the future of Europe as soon as Mr Tindemans's report was made public. Unfortunately European citizens were, on the contrary, confronted with a divergence of reactions and critical comments on a report which aimed at being a "green paper" on future political development for the EEC heads of state and government. How can European populations be expected not to fall back into national egoism and traditional vested interests if they are not provided with tangible proof of the existence of an overall conception, in particular with regard to their most urgent daily problems?

29. It is not through procedural artifices, nor the leaders' attempt to force the hand of the "roots", that European problems will be solved, but only with participation at the level of all vital European forces.

30. Despite the common wish to achieve closer unity, divergent views will remain. But this seems to me natural rather than catastrophic, and I would like to follow Mr FitzGerald's approach in this respect: "...It is right that both within the Community and within the wider Western European ambit we should seek to conciliate differences of approach to international problems and, where we agree together, to work together.

We should not attempt to force the pace but should be willing to recognise that what we are doing in our time is only a small part of a historical process. The extraordinary speeding-up of the tempo of events that has become a feature of the modern world, partly as a result of the growth of technology-telecommunications, air transport etc.-cannot be expected to find an exact equivalent in a similar acceleration of the evolution of opinion in countries of diverse origins and heritages. Our historical conditioning is a produce of deep-rooted forces which are not fully amenable to the speeding-up process, although, indeed, even the pace at which public attitudes change is a good deal faster today than, say, fifty or a hundred years ago..."

31. To this we would add Sir John Rodgers's quotation (during the Assembly's October 1975 debate) of the British Ambassador who, when approached by the King of Naples once and asked to produce a constitution which would guarantee a democratic system under his rule as good as the British one, replied: "That is an impossible task, Sir; you are asking me to build a tree; it can only grow, and grow slowly".

Conclusion

32. Mr Tindemans's report to the heads of state and government of the European Communities about a future "European union" is certainly a remarkable document. With a clear view of what is politically realistic in the second half of the seventies, he sets down a number of concrete fields for closer cooperation. These proposals not only form a new dimension of the European Communities; in fact, many of the fields mentioned in the report are identical with or similar to those formulated in a number of Council of Europe Assembly documents and are already included in the organisation's Intergovernmental Work Programme.

33. In dealing with these various problems, our countries ought always to follow the same line at European level, with the aim of harmonisation and agreement. The European Communities' member countries, after consultation among themselves, which seems only logical, ought regularly to keep the other countries outside the Communities informed and to promote cooperation with them, preferably through the Council of Europe. The work of the two organisations should be coordinated and duplication avoided:

- application of Resolution (74) 4 with regard to the clearly defined sectors of the Council of Europe's intergovernmental activities;

- application of Resolution (74) 4 with regard to closer cooperation between the Council of Europe and the European Communities;

- increased utilisation of the Council of Europe's specialised Ministers' Conferences for enlarged Western European cooperation ;

- accession of the European Communities as such to the conventions and agreements elaborated within the Council of Europe;

- accession of the European Communities as such to the European Convention on Human Rights and recognition of the right of individual petition in the long run the aim should be to institutionalise the highest level of human, political and economic rights existing in any European state, progressively obliging the others to align upwards).

As stated in the report, progress has been made during the last year in improving the working relations between the two organisations.

34. In view of the common European responsibility with regard to urgent political, economic and social problems of our continent, and in relation to other parts of the world, specific cooperation is needed:

- in the economic field between member countries inside and outside the European Communities (i.e. monetary cooperation through the "snake");

— in the political field between all European democracies, as well as in their relations with other democratic partners outside Europe (i.e. implementation of the CSCE agreements, North-South dialogue, safeguarding of democratic institutions etc.). As to the latter, the Council of Europe represents the ideal coordination body.

35. Finally, the greatest importance should be attached to an enlarged cooperation between the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament in order to increase mutual information and consultation at European parliamentary level through Joint Meetings of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly on subjects of all-European concern and of common European responsibility towards other parts of the world.

36. The utilisation of Mr Tindemans's report as a "green paper" to achieve closer unity in democratic Europe under the above-mentioned criteria ought to receive the support of our Assembly.