

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 22 June 1971

SG/GT/Bât. (71) PV 12



COE078633

MINUTES

OF THE 12TH MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY TO STUDY THE PROBLEM OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE BUILDINGS (1)

held from 10 June 1971 at 3 p.m. to 11 June 1971 at 5 p.m.
at the Council of Europe (Room D.1)

The meeting opened on 10 June 1971 at 3 p.m.

The Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe took the Chair and welcomed members of the Working Party. He informed them that the City of Strasbourg would officially hand over the site to the Council of Europe at a ceremony the following morning, and all members were invited to attend.

After outlining certain anxieties of the Ministers' Deputies with regard to alterations to the plan, he called on the Director General of Administration and Finance, who asked the Working Party to adopt the agenda.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted in the form set out in Appendix II
/SG/GT/Bât. (71) OJ 12/.

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(1) See list of participants in Appendix I.

II. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Daussin told the Working Party that he had received a copy of a letter from Mr. Lange to Mr. de Grave, proposing Mr. de Grave as Chairman of the Working Party. Copies of this letter had been sent to all members.

He asked whether there were any other candidates. As none were forthcoming, Mr. Lange's proposal was put to a vote.

Mr. de Grave was elected Chairman by acclamation.

Before handing over the Chair to the new Chairman, Mr. Daussin congratulated him both on his election and his recent appointment as Director General of Buildings at the Belgian Ministry of Public Works.

The Chairman thanked the Working Party for the confidence it had shown in him and said he would do everything in his power to prove worthy of it.

Mr. Daussin told the Working Party that health reasons had prevented Mr. Lange from coming to Strasbourg.

The Working Party instructed Mr. Daussin to convey to Mr. Lange its regrets and best wishes for a swift recovery.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 11TH MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY, HELD ON 17 MARCH 1971 IN PARIS /SG/GT/Bât. (71) PV 11/

The Chairman asked that his comments on page 3 of the English text be amended as follows:

- (a) last sentence of page 3, second paragraph:
"Heating would certainly be very costly" should instead read: "Air-conditioning would entail high running costs";
- (b) first part of page 3, fourth paragraph:
"He reported further that the Secretariat of the Council of the European Communities had decided against vertical communications" should instead read:
"He reported further that the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities, unlike the Commission of the European Communities, has expressed approval of vertical communications."

Mr. Lange's statement also seemed to have been inaccurately reported, as the Chairman remembered this as advocating vertical communications. The Working Party decided that Mr. Lange's statement should not be altered in his absence and requested the Secretary of the Working Party to draw his attention to this point so that he might change the wording if he felt it necessary.

Following these comments, the minutes were approved.

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IV. STATEMENT BY THE ARCHITECT AND DISCUSSION

SG/GT/Bât. (71) 1, SG/GT/Bât. (71) 2 and
SG/GT/Bât. (71) 3

The Chairman called on Mr. Bernard.

Mr. Bernard thanked the Working Party for its comments during the previous meeting in Paris (17 March 1971) which had enabled him to re-examine his plan and make considerable improvements.

The new plan offered several advantages in particular saving time and reducing building costs. For the most part it was similar to the plan discussed on 17 March 1971, the most important alteration being that the side-to-side cover, which was not essential in the climate of Strasbourg, had been abandoned.

In his opinion, the controversy over vertical and horizontal communications was a false problem. The answer lay in the purpose for which the building was to be used. The plan had several aims as the Council of Europe building was intended to serve a variety of functions and it was therefore difficult to find a suitable form.

The general shape, size and height of the building made it possible to combine both kinds of communications: horizontal for all accommodation connected with sittings in the Assembly Chamber and vertical for all functional traffic.

Considerable flexibility had been achieved in the office block by using a section which made it possible to avoid supports in the middle of the office space and by movable partitions.

At this stage in the discussions, the Chairman pointed out that the current plan differed from that submitted to the Working Party at its meeting in March in three respects:

- the cover had been abandoned,
- the facade was now square,
- the location of the rooms had been changed.

Mr. Wilby regretted that there would be no overall cover as this had provided an original touch but he quite understood the reasons for this decision.

This plan had the virtue of being of human proportions, though he feared that the building would be very congested during Assembly sessions and for that reason preferred vertical communications.

Mr. Peyrot felt that it was most important to dispel the anxieties of the Ministers' Deputies. The Working Party should accordingly make a unanimous statement to the effect that this plan offered obvious advantages.

Mr. Amatucci agreed.

The Chairman expressed his full support for vertical communications which he regarded as causing fewer complications than horizontal ones. This plan was a definite improvement on the one submitted to the Committee of Ministers in that it contained fewer horizontal communications.

Although it was a pity that Mr. Bernard had not continued to study the plans he had submitted to the Working Party in 1967 while Chairman, he supported the present plan which he thought architecturally pleasing, apart from the outside stair and lift tower which jarred on him. Although this was an original idea, it did not seem indispensable.

Finally, he expressed satisfaction that the restaurants were located outside the main building on the old fortifications. The troubles caused by integrating restaurants into an administrative building were well-known.

----- Mr. Daussin mentioned that although it was not the Secretariat's task to comment on the architecture, he found the present plan more aesthetic. As far as functional questions were concerned, the problem of traffic on the access-routes to the building had still to be studied with the municipal authorities. The advantages and disadvantages of vertical and horizontal communications within the building could be discussed ad infinitum but, in his opinion, a pragmatic approach should be adopted. It was important that divisions should not be split up on several levels. Nonetheless, a five-level building could not be regarded solely as a building with vertical communications. Both communications systems were to be found in the plan and it was therefore enough to study how the various parts of the building could be arranged so as to achieve maximum efficiency. He expressed the Secretariat's satisfaction with the plan.

Mr. Bernard thanked members for their comments and agreed that the problem of traffic around the access-routes and inside the building should be studied in greater detail. In a few weeks' time he hoped to be able to put forward more concrete proposals. He then gave a detailed outline of the plan, as contained in the attached report /SG/GT/Bât. (71) 17.

The Chairman asked members for their comments.

Mr. Peyrot wondered whether the conjunction of two lines of traffic (political and public) in the entrance hall might endanger the security of persons of political importance.

Mr. Bernard replied that the hall was very large and that it was therefore possible to separate the two groups.

The Chairman agreed with Mr. Peyrot and advocated a special exit leading directly to the car park for Ministers who wished to avoid the press. Replying to Mr. Bernard, who pointed out that there was a special entrance for the press, he recommended that this should be clearly signposted as journalists would otherwise be likely to use the main entrance. He also asked whether the entrance corridor and internal communications in general had been geared to the number of potential users.

Mr. Bernard agreed that this was an important problem. So far the corridors had been planned in accordance with overall statistics provided by the Secretariat, but traffic would be studied further. A direct exit for ministers to the parking place was feasible.

Mr. Amatucci also advocated that the public should use a different entrance from that used by persons of political importance.

Mr. Wilby felt that though the plan was very functional, many detailed studies were required, particularly because of the amount of accommodation compressed into this square.

The Chairman agreed with Mr. Wilby.

Mr. Daussin said that the interior planning especially the distribution of the offices in the parliamentary area, should be re-examined as the Secretariat was not satisfied. It hoped to see :

- (a) all offices required for sittings concentrated round the Assembly Chamber instead of scattered between the various half-levels as at present ;
- (b) the reserve offices for the Parliament, planned in the event of an extension (and for the moment on the fifth level) divided between the various parts of the parliamentary area in line with requirements to be submitted by the European Parliament.

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Finally he informed the Working Party that the European Parliament authorities preferred horizontal communications.

While the Chairman understood Mr. Daussin's concern, he reiterated that vertical communications were easier and faster and that, in any event, the plan provided for both forms of communication, which was of decided advantage.

Mr. Peyrot agreed, and pointed out that it was difficult to place everything on a horizontal level due to the wide variety of accommodation planned.

Mr. Bernard and Mr. Debever thought it possible to solve this problem, but the matter would have to be examined more thoroughly. Proposals would be submitted at the next meeting.

Mr. Bernard agreed that although the present plan was generally accepted as rational, it had the drawback of being too rigid and he would have liked to present a more flexible solution. He drew the Working Party's attention to the planning and building schedule which must not be held up because of administrative procedures.

The Chairman agreed with Mr. Bernard and suggested that they should move on to the financial estimate (see appendix to the architect's report /SG/GT/Bât. (71) 1/. When examining the table for estimates by type of work, he asked whether air-conditioning was planned for the whole building.

Mr. Ovtchikov replied that only the Assembly Chamber, the Committee of Ministers' room, the committee rooms and a few other large areas were air-conditioned. The offices would not be air-conditioned.

Mr. Peyrot pointed out that it was generally recognised that offices facing south in modern buildings with curtain facades of metal and glass should be air-conditioned or at least cooled in summer. His experience of office block construction had taught him that even if the "maître de l'ouvrage" did not ask for offices to be air-conditioned, the architect's plans must make allowance for the possible installation of air-conditioning without walls having to be pulled down and extensive changes effected involving considerable expenditure.

The Chairman agreed.

Mr. Ovtchikov reassured the Working Party that the plans made it possible to install air-conditioning at a later stage.

The Chairman asked Mr. Ovtchnikov whether the building costs came within the limit laid down in view of the fact that October 1970 prices were used as reference.

Mr. Ovtchnikov thought that this was possible though not easy.

The Chairman mentioned that the prices per square metre were similar to those current in Belgium. It would be useful to indicate items on which savings had been made.

The Working Party agreed and requested Mr. Ovtchnikov to submit a list the following afternoon.

The Chairman wondered whether the estimate had been broken down in this way so that each lot could be tendered for separately. He did not like this solution. The authorities considered that this approach prevented large firms from taking part.

Mr. Ovtchnikov explained that this breakdown by type of work made all types of tender possible.

Mr. Peyrot agreed with the Chairman. The cost of work not included in the estimate should be reassessed as a percentage of the total sum and the Committee of Ministers informed.

The Chairman agreed with this proposal.

Mr. Hunt recalled that the Working Party had considered this problem in 1967 and decided that such work should be kept apart from the estimate and financed from other sources (see CM (67) 76 paragraph 86.).

The Working Party agreed that the items included or not included in the estimate were in line with the decision taken in 1967.

Mr. Peyrot hoped that the firm of consulting engineers would compare the standard of finishing envisaged by the Working Party in 1967 and that planned by the architect in view of the savings necessitated in order to keep within the limit laid down.

The Chairman recommended that member States be requested to participate in the decoration and finishing of the building. Obviously some way of avoiding useless or unserviceable gifts would have to be found.

The Chairman asked members to examine the table for work not included in the financial estimate.

The Working Party noted that this work was estimated at 14,485,000 FF. The furniture estimate seemed too low and would be reconsidered at a later date.

Mr. Daussin thought that the problem should be presented in a different form so that work vital for use of the building and items that could be spread out over a longer period were listed separately. He also proposed that the estimate for telephones be reduced to 100,000 FF as only additional equipment was needed and not a complete installation.

The Working Party agreed and instructed the Secretariat to alter the table (see SG/GT/Bât. (71) 2, appended).

It then took note of the table for items where the architect had made savings (see SG/GT/Bât. (71) 3, appended) which will be discussed at its next meeting.

V. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The Chairman remarked that as the meeting had lasted longer than planned, the Secretariat had been unable to draw up the draft report before the end of the meeting. He suggested that the Secretariat prepare a draft and send it as soon as possible to the members of the Working Party so that they might make any changes they wished and communicate these to the Secretariat.

Agreed.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Working methods

After a lengthy discussion on working methods, it was decided that in future meetings should last two to three days to enable members of the Working Party to have informal talks with the architect and the Secretariat. Further, the Secretariat would send members copies of the building requirements given to the architect so that they could discuss the plan before them with full knowledge of the facts.

(b) Statement by the Chairman at the joint meeting with the Ministers' Deputies, to be held that afternoon

In the light of this discussion, the Chairman considered that the Working Party's views should be communicated to the Deputies that afternoon and their attention drawn to the importance the Working Party attached to being authorised to continue its studies.

He asked members whether they approved the plan submitted by the architect.

The Working Party expressed its unanimous approval.

The Chairman suggested that a statement be drawn up for him to read to the Deputies. The Working Party agreed on the following text:

"In accordance with the instructions given it by the Committee of Ministers in Resolution (70) 53 of 11 December 1970, the Working Party set up under Resolution (66) 21 of the Committee of Ministers has carried out a detailed examination of the preliminary plan so as to enable the architect to finalise it.

The Working Party records its satisfaction with the plan now submitted in the light of further study. The Working Party agrees unanimously that the new plans represent a manifest improvement in terms of:

- (a) more compact lay-out, as a result of which it will be possible to keep the cost (at 1 October 1970 prices) within the limit laid down;
- (b) more speedy, single-phase construction of the building, to be erected on an immediately available site;
- (c) better balance between buildings and green space.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Working Party considers it a matter of urgency to enable the architect to proceed with the elaboration of the final plans. The Working Party, for its part, will continue with its task in close contact with the architect."

VII. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The Working Party decided to hold its next meeting on 26 and 27 July 1971 in Paris.

The meeting rose on Friday 11 June 1971 at 5 p.m.

A N N E X E I
A P P E N D I X I

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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| <u>BELGIQUE</u> <u>BELGIUM</u> | M. A. de GRAVE, <u>Président</u> | Directeur Général des Bâtiments d'Etat Ministère des Travaux Publics Résidence Palace 155, rue de la Loi <u>BRUXELLES 4</u> |
| <u>ITALIE</u> <u>ITALY</u> | M. I.E. AMATUCCI | Ingénieur Viale Cortina d'Ampezzo 135 <u>ROME</u> |
| <u>ROYAUME-UNI</u> <u>UNITED-KINGDOM</u> | Mr. G.T. WILBY | Senior Estate Surveyor Ministry of Public Buildings and Works Directorate of Estate Management Overseas, Whitgift Centre, Wellesley Road, <u>CROYDON, Surrey, CR9 3LY</u> |
| <u>SUISSE</u> <u>SWITZERLAND</u> | M. F. PEYROT | ancien Conseiller d'Etat 11, rue de Beaumont CH 1206 <u>GENEVE</u> |
| <u>Architecte</u> <u>Architect</u> | M. H. BERNARD | Inspecteur Général des Bâtiments Civils et des Palais Nationaux 44, avenue d'Iéna 75 - <u>PARIS 16ème</u> |
| <u>Conseil de l'Europe</u> <u>Council of Europe</u> | M. A. DAUSSIN | Directeur Général chargé de l'Administration et des Finances |
| | Mr. S.C. HUNT | Deputy to the Director General of Administration and Finance |
| | M. R. CLAMER | Chef de la Division des Services Techniques et des Conférences |
| <u>Secrétariat</u> | M. J. TSIMARATOS | Administrateur au Conseil de l'Europe |

Etaient également présents /Also present :

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| M. OVTCHNIKOV | Ingénieur en Chef du Bureau d'Etudes CECOBA |
| M. BERNARDOT | Ingénieur du Bureau d'Etudes CECOBA |
| M. F. DEBEVER | Adjoint de l'Architecte |
| M. P. D'HAUTHUILLE | Collaborateur de l'Architecte |

Strasbourg, 10 June 1971

SG/GT/Bât. (71) OJ 12

A P P E N D I X I I

AGENDA

of the 12th meeting of the Working Party
to study the problem of Council of Europe buildings

held at Strasbourg
from 3 p.m. on 10 June 1971 to
5 p.m. on 11 June 1971

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1. Adoption of the Agenda
/SG/GT/Bât. (71) OJ 12 Prov.7
 2. Election of the Chairman
 3. Approval of the Minutes of the 11th meeting
/SG/GT/Bât. (71) PV 117
 4. Statement by the architect and discussion
/SG/GT/Bât. (71) 17
 5. Adoption of the report
 6. Any other business
 7. Date, time and place of next meeting.