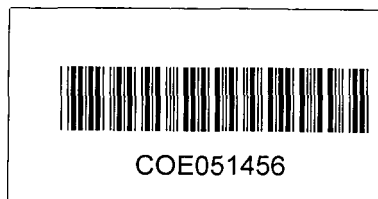


# COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 13th March 1967

SG/GT/Bat (67) PV 6



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Working Party to study the problem of  
Council of Europe buildings

## MINUTES

of the 6th meeting (1)  
held at Strasbourg on 27th February 1967

Mr. BERNARD took the Chair at 9.30 a.m. He announced that Mr. de Grave and Mr. Amatucci had apologised for being unable to attend the meeting and that Mr. Pflimlin, Mayor of Strasbourg, would be talking to the Working Party at 10 a.m.

### I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 5TH MEETING /SG/GT/Bat (67) PV 5/

The Minutes of the 5th meeting were approved.

### II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA /SG/GT/Bat (67) OJ 6/

The Agenda was adopted as given in Appendix II.

(1) For list of participants, see Appendix I.

### III. STATEMENT BY THE MAYOR OF STRASBOURG

Mr. Pflimlin, Mayor of Strasbourg, joined the meeting at 10 a.m. He was welcomed by the Chairman, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr. Pflimlin for taking the trouble to talk to the Working Party about the problem of the Council of Europe's buildings. One of the points in the Working Party's terms of reference was to study "the best use which could be made of such sites as might be offered by the Strasbourg authorities". The Working Party was also empowered to "establish the necessary contacts with the Strasbourg authorities".

After thanking the Working Party for its welcome, Mr. PFLIMLIN briefly summarised the background to the question. The Strasbourg authorities had always been in favour of the European institutions being established at Strasbourg. With the backing of the French Government, they had proposed Strasbourg as the headquarters of the European Communities. As no agreement had been possible at Ministerial level (other member Governments having proposed other cities), the European Parliament had been consulted for which purpose a rather special method of voting had been used. The result of this had been to short-list three cities from all the applicants, namely Brussels, Strasbourg and Milan, the first **two** running very closely together. There had been no follow-up to this consultation. In 1959 the City of Strasbourg had given its proposal - still in regard to all the institutions of the European Communities - a more practical turn by commissioning certain studies from Mr. Bertrand Monnet, Chief Architect of the Historical Monuments Department, Paris (Mr. Pflimlin showed the plans drawn up at the time). Land had been earmarked for this purpose to the west of Strasbourg.

Subsequently, the City had come to visualise another more limited possibility, that of keeping the European Parliament's sessions at Strasbourg. This had seemed realistic, particularly as the member Governments, after two years of negotiations, had decided that Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg should continue as the provisional working places of the Community institutions (whose headquarters it had not yet been possible to decide on). There seemed every likelihood that the present temporary situation would last many years.

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In view of the foregoing, the City of Strasbourg's only wish was that a solution should be found that was in line with the needs and plans of both the Council of Europe and the European Parliament.

The City of Strasbourg had rented to the Council of Europe, for a token sum of one franc, the land on which the present buildings stood. In all probability, if the Council of Europe wanted to expand, the City of Strasbourg would be prepared to rent, on similar terms, the rest of the land, which was at present occupied by a tennis club (in which case the problem of compensation for the tennis club would arise). The decision would, of course, rest with the Town Council, which had not yet been consulted.

In reply to a question, Mr. Pflimlin said that the municipal authorities intended to remove the military fortification. Whether Avenue Schuman was kept or not would depend on town-planning considerations.

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL said that two members of the EEC Commission, Mr. Rey and Mr. Colonna, had recently emphasised to him the unsuitability of the present buildings and the urgent need to solve the problem.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL expressed satisfaction at the speed with which the Working Party had conducted its business. Its proposals went considerably further, of course, than the Secretariat's, which had been influenced by financial considerations. He hoped that the Committee of Ministers would accept the Working Party's view that temporary arrangements were very costly and that, it was more economical in the long run to start building immediately. He appreciated the importance the Working Party had attached to the Council carrying on its normal activities while building was in progress. He was also anxious to emphasise that the Council had most friendly relations with the Strasbourg authorities and had always received support and assistance from them.

He had no doubt that the Working Party would make proposals that were satisfactory and effective in both functional and aesthetic terms. He hoped that the host Government would be the first to back the scheme and that the other Governments would follow suit.

THE CHAIRMAN assured the Secretary General that every effort would be made to present a clear and precise report.

He thanked Mr. Pflimlin, a former President of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, for his statement.

Mr. Pflimlin, accompanied by the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, left the room at 11 a.m.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF THE MEMORANDUM BY Mr. LANGENBACHER ON THE PRACTICE OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN REGARD TO ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS

At the Chairman's request, Mr. LANGENBACHER explained that the World Health Organisation's reasons for holding a competition were as follows:

- (a) Democratic principles;
- (b) Psychological considerations (member countries felt involved, since a joint effort of not only a financial but also an intellectual nature was being made);
- (c) Wider choice of schemes.

It had to be pointed out, however, that a competition meant a further delay of at least a year. The architect for EFTA's building had not been chosen by competition but had been appointed, by arrangement with EFTA, by the Fondation des immeubles pour les organisations internationales.

THE CHAIRMAN thought that the urgency of the Council of Europe's need was such as to preclude a competition. There was the case of OECD, which had asked the French Government to appoint an architect.

Mr. KITSIKIS agreed with the Chairman. The cost of a competition would be considerable, and the problem was of such a nature that it could not be solved through a competition.

Mr. WILBY said that his Ministry's chief architect would be more in favour of a competition. Nevertheless, he himself fully understood the arguments of the Chairman and Mr. Kitsikis and could support their view.

Mr. LANGE inclined towards holding a restricted competition.

THE CHAIRMAN thought it preferable for the Committee of Ministers to be responsible for choosing the architect. He asked the Secretariat to draw up a draft text, for inclusion in the draft report, which the Working Party would consider at its next meeting.

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V. FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN LINES OF A SCHEME TO MEET THE COUNCIL'S NEEDS

THE CHAIRMAN asked Mr. Kitsikis to comment on the three sketches he had made.

Mr. KITSIKIS explained that his sketches took account of the town-planning aspects of the area, the present B and C blocks, and the fact that the buildings had to be connected together. The key feature of the plans was, of course, the Assembly building.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Mr. Kitsikis for his valuable contribution.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 2.45 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN announced that he had had a talk with the Secretary General. The main subject discussed had been the question of finance.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS, SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARIAT

The Working Party considered the preliminary draft report drawn up by the Secretariat. It was specified that this was only a first reading whose main purpose was to enable members to express their views. The text would be revised in the light of the comments made and given a second, more detailed, reading at the Working Party's next meeting.

Apart from amendments to the form of the report, the following comments were made and approved by the Working Party:

(a) THE CHAIRMAN thought that there should be a brief explanation of the two extremes (Monnet plans - extension of the temporary buildings) of which the Working Party had deliberately steered clear by opting for solutions that were mid-way between them. This might be inserted in paragraph 9.

(b) Mr. HUNT recalled that the Working Party's terms of reference required it to suggest "the main lines of a project covering the needs". For this purpose it seemed important to explain in the report the solution which the Working Party advocated.

THE CHAIRMAN was asked to draw up this text.

- (c) Mr. WILBY was asked to revise the wording of the paragraph dealing with the first hypothesis considered by the Working Party.
- (d) THE CHAIRMAN thought the view ought to be expressed that the metal structure on the top floor of C block should be removed.
- (e) Mr. WILBY asked for prominence to be given to the Working Party's main finding, namely, the inadequacy of the space at present available, the only answer to which was to erect another building.
- (f) THE CHAIRMAN thought that more money should be spent on the upkeep of the buildings. The report should also state that there ought to be a permanent washing system for the new buildings, as in all industrial towns.
- (g) THE CHAIRMAN thought that, after the new buildings had been erected, the outside of block B - and perhaps block C - should be given coherent treatment.
- (h) With regard to immediate needs, THE CHAIRMAN was not in favour of the construction of temporary quarters until a decision had been taken on the final solution to the buildings problem.
- (i) Mr. LANGE thought that the total cost should be given as between 60 and 70 million francs and not as a precise figure.

#### VIII. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Mr. DAUSSIN recalled that, at the Working Party's previous meeting, it had been decided in principle to look at the buildings of international organisations in Geneva and to hold the Working Party's final meeting there on 3rd, 4th and 5th April 1967. It was customary, however, for reports to be approved in Strasbourg. He (Mr. Daussin) therefore proposed that the meeting be held in Strasbourg.

Mr. LANGENBACHER thought that the visit to Geneva could be put off. The organisers could be told that it would take place later, when the final programme was being drawn up.

The Working Party endorsed this proposal, and decided to hold its 7th meeting in Strasbourg from 10 a.m. on Monday 3rd April to 6.30 p.m. on Tuesday 4th April 1967.

The meeting rose at 6.30 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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Secrétariat

M. J. TSIMARATOS

Administrateur adjoint au  
Conseil de l'Europe.

A P P E N D I X II

Working Party to study the problem of  
Council of Europe buildings

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AGENDA

of the 6th meeting held on Monday  
27th February 1967 at Strasbourg (Room 501)

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1. Approval of the Minutes of the 5th meeting.  
/SG/GT/Bat (67) PV 57
2. Adoption of the Agenda.  
/SG/GT/Bat (67) OJ 67
3. Statemenent by M. Pierre Pflinlin, Mayor of Strasbourg.
4. Consideration of the note presented by Mr. Langenbacher on the practice of other international organisations in regard to architects' competitions.  
/SG/GT/Bat (67) 107
5. Continuation of the discussion of the main lines of a projet to meet the needs of the Organisation.
6. Consideration of the preliminary draft report to the Committee of Ministers submitted by the Secretariat.
7. Any other business.
8. Date, time and place of next meeting.