

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

1982-1983

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February 1983

DOCUMENT 1-1194/82

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee

on ~~the~~ adoption of a flag for the European Community ~~.~~

Rapporteur: Mr K.-U. von HASSEL

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At its sitting of 5 November 1979, the European Parliament referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Ingo FRIEDRICH and others on the adoption of a European flag for the European Community (Doc. 1-454/79), pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure, to the Political Affairs Committee as the committee responsible.

At its meeting of 8 July 1980, the committee decided to draw up a report and appointed Mr von HASSEL rapporteur.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 19 and 20 October 1982, 29 November-1 December 1982 and 19-21 January 1983. At the last meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole by 13 votes to 2 with 2 abstentions.

The following took part in the vote: Mr RUMOR, chairman; Mr HAAGERUP, first vice-chairman; Mr von HASSEL, rapporteur; Lord BETHELL, Mr HABSBERG, Mrs LENZ, Mr LOMAS, Mr MAJONICA (deputizing for Mr KLEPSCH), Mr MOMMERSTEEG (deputizing for Mr PENDERS), Mr NEWTON DUNN, Mr NORMANTON (deputizing for Mr FERGUSON), Lord O'HAGAN, Mr PELIKAN (deputizing for Mr CARIGLIA), Mr PRAG (deputizing for Lady ELLES), Mr SEITLINGER (deputizing for Mr DESCHAMPS), Mr WALTER (deputizing for Mr B. FRIEDRICH) and Mr WAWRZIK (deputizing for Mr SCHALL).

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The Political Affairs Committee hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the adoption of a flag for the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr I. Friedrich and others on the adoption of a European flag for the European Community (Doc. 1-454/79),
  - having regard to the report of the Political Affairs Committee (Doc. 1-1194/82),
- A. recalling that from the time of its foundation in 1949, the first European parliamentary body was fully aware of the need to give Europe a symbol with which the peoples of Europe might identify,
  - B. having regard to Recommendation 88 of 25 October 1955 by which the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe unanimously decided to adopt that emblem,
  - C. whereas the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe endorsed the decision by which the Parliamentary Assembly, in Decision (55) 32 of 9 December 1955 agreed to the adoption of the European flag,
  - D. referring to the convincingly expressed view of the parliamentary Assembly that the other European institutions should also adopt this European symbol in order that complementarity, solidarity and a sense of unity should not be jeopardized by a variety of symbols,
  - E. whereas for 24 years the blue European flag with 12 gold stars has flown beside the national flag at all meetings and twinings of European towns, local authorities or districts in all the countries concerned,

- F. whereas by virtue of the direct elections of 10 July 1979, the European Parliament is the democratically confirmed representative of the peoples of the Member States of the European Community,
- G. resolved to give the European Community a symbol with which the European peoples can identify,
1. Resolves to instruct the chairman of the Political Affairs Committee to contact the chairman of the appropriate committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and inform him of the deliberations of the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament with a view to finding common ground between the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for the implementation of the decision on a symbol for Europe;
  2. Resolves that the European flag consisting of a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue field adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in 1955 should become the flag of Europe;
  3. Resolves that the unofficial flag currently flown by the European Parliament and incorporating its initials be withdrawn;
  4. Instructs the President of the European Parliament to come to an agreement with the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on this matter as soon as possible;
  5. Instructs the President of the European Parliament to ensure that the governments of the Member States of the Community decree that all European establishments fly this flag.
  6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Council of Europe.

## Explanatory Statement

### Historical background

1. In 1953 the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe took up the question of an emblem for Europe and produced various designs. Their efforts culminated in 1955 in the unanimous adoption of Recommendation 88 on the emblem of the Council of Europe. The Committee of Ministers took up this recommendation and in December 1955 adopted Resolution (55) 32 on the emblem of the Council of Europe; the emblem concerned was a circle of twelve gold stars on a blue field.
2. The Committee of Ministers instructed the Secretary General to forward Resolution (55) 32 officially to the other interested European bodies (in particular the OECD, the ECSC and the WEU) and to mention the desire of the Consultative Assembly that if other European institutions wished to adopt emblems they should closely resemble the Council of Europe emblem. From the time of its foundation in 1949, the first European parliamentary body was fully aware of the need to give Europe a symbol with which the European peoples could identify.
3. The Assembly's 1955 report also pointed out that the format chosen, with a circle of twelve stars on a blue field, allowed the European institutions to insert their own symbols within the circle if they so decided.
4. In 1959 and 1960 the Secretary General of the Council of Europe informed the European Parliament and the Commission of the EEC and EURATOM of its emblem and the resolution of the Committee of Ministers on the subject.
5. In 1979 the Committee of Ministers considered the problem of legal protection for the Council of Europe emblem and adopted Recommendation R (79) 18 addressed to the Member governments. Trademark protection under the Paris Convention (World Intellectual Property Organization) has also been obtained.

### Implications for the proposal contained in European Parliament Document 1-454/79

6. The suggested symbol for the European peoples to identify with already exists, in precisely the form and colours proposed, and has done so for

25 years; in 21 democratic European countries it is the common symbol for the process of European unification.

7. In principle, therefore, the question of whom to address any resolution or recommendation to no longer arises, as the member governments and their representatives on the Council of Ministers of the European Communities have already given their views in the Council of Europe documents of 1955 (CM(55)32) and 1979 (R(79)18) on the suggested emblem.
8. Relations between the organs of the Council of Europe and of the European Community are marked by complementarity. This is an important factor not only in their contributions to European unification, but even more so to the enlargement of the European Communities, by which more and more Member States of the Council of Europe are also becoming members of the European Community. This makes it vital to provide the European people with a common symbol. Complementarity, solidarity and a sense of unity must not be jeopardized by separate symbols.

Cooperation between the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe:

9. The quest for a common European flag is a matter for the parliamentary representatives of the European peoples. The reports and resolutions adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe during the 1950s and this latest action by Members of the European Parliament show this to be true.
10. In its Resolution 693 (1979), the Parliamentary Assembly expresses the hope that relations with the directly elected European Parliament would be characterized by cooperation in the service of their common cause, namely the rapprochement of the European peoples and the creation of closer unity between them. The problem of a common symbol for the European peoples provides an excellent opportunity for such cooperation.
11. The Presidents of the two assemblies, Mrs Veil and Mr de Koster, have already met for talks on closer cooperation. Close contacts in the form of practical cooperation at committee level have existed and are being pursued.
12. In the matter of the European flag it would seem desirable that the appropriate committee of the European Parliament make contact with the



Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe at this early stage in its deliberations, in order to obtain first-hand information. The next step would seem to be to draw up a proposal sponsored by those assemblies, and therefore geographically covering the widest possible area.

13. The following course of action could therefore be envisaged:

- a letter from the chairman of the Political Affairs Committee of the EP to the appropriate committee of the Council of Europe, initiating discussions on the subject;
  
- if a decision in principle to bring the question of a European flag forward to the proposal stage is taken, a working party from both assemblies could draw up a joint draft;
  
- joint adoption of the same proposal by the two assemblies would symbolize European unity; in the present case this would be most important for the impact on public opinion in Europe. It would also present the Member governments concerned with a unified parliamentary front.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-454/79)

tabled by Mr Ingo FRIEDRICH, Mr VANDEWIELE, Mr von WOGAU, Mr Konrad SCHÖN, Mr DALSSASS, Mr SEITLINGER, Mr HENCKENS, Mr HUTTON, Mr PFLIMLIN, Mr BOCKLET, Mr COTTRELL, Mr AIGNER, Mr FUCHS, Mr HABSBURG, Mr FORTH, Mr GOPPEL, Mr BEAZLEY and Mrs RABBETHGE

pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure

on the adoption of a European flag for the European Community

The European Parliament,

- whereas, by virtue of its direct election on 10 June 1979, it is the democratically confirmed representative of the peoples of the European Community;
- determined to give the European Community a symbol with which the European peoples can identify;

decides that a European flag, bearing a circle of 12 yellow stars against a blue background, be adopted.