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SECURITY AND ARMAMENTS: THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
IN RELATION TO THE WORK OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION

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SECURITY AND ARMAMENTS: THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
IN RELATION TO THE WORK OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION

1. As early as April 1973 the European Parliament passed a resolution which expressed the view "that cooperation in the foreign policy sphere must eventually take into account defence and security policy". Since then the Parliament has pursued its interest in this area by means of several reports, resolutions and debates. The purpose of this paper is to trace the development of the Parliament's activities in this regard. It does not attempt to assess the merits or the effectiveness of the Parliament's activities.
2. The paper will consist of three sections :
 - I. The Parliament's activities in relation to security matters (Page 2)
 - II. The Parliament's activities in relation to armaments matters (Page 13)
 - III. The Diligent Report on the protection of shipping routes (Page 22)

(In order to give a continuous picture of developments, Section I will also touch briefly on the armaments matters which are dealt with extensively in Section II).

3. The paper deals principally with the resolutions adopted by Parliament. It briefly examines Parliament reports where these are substantial and relevant and summarizes some of the most important arguments which arose in the Parliament's debates on armaments and security. When particularly relevant, a number of reports drawn up by the Commission and other sources are dealt with also. The paper does not take into consideration the Parliament's on-going and regular consideration of a wide range of issues which involve the political aspects of security or have security implications (eg. the deliberations of the United Nations and of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the situation in the Middle East etc.).

I. The Parliament's activities in relation to security matters

The Mommersteeg Report

4. On 6 April 1973 the Parliament adopted a resolution on European political cooperation and unification¹⁾ which was based on a report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee by Mr. Mommersteeg²⁾ As mentioned above, this resolution, which deals generally with the question of European political cooperation, expresses the view "that cooperation in the foreign policy sphere must eventually take into account defence and security policy".

Declaration on European Identity

5. On 20 November 1973 the Foreign Ministers of the Nine approved a declaration on the European identity.³⁾ The declaration states that "the Nine, one of whose essential aims is to maintain peace, will never succeed in doing so if they neglect their own security" (paragraph 8). (The paragraph then proceeds to describe in more detail the views in this regard of "those of them who are members of the Atlantic Alliance". These further comments - following an unusual departure from the consensus requirement - could not be considered to have the status of the policy of the Member States meeting in political cooperation). In paragraph 9, one of the objectives of the Nine's role in world affairs is listed as "that the security of each country is more effectively guaranteed".

Commission's Report on European Union, 1975

6. At the request of the Heads of Government, the Commission drew up a report on European Union which it transmitted to the Council on 26 June 1975.⁴⁾ The report contains a chapter on defence in which it argues that the gradual development of a foreign policy for the Union will have an impact in due course in the field of defence. The report also proposes a number of concrete steps which might be envisaged before European Union such as the setting up of a "European Arms Agency".

1) OJ C26 of 30.4.73, pages 25 and 26

2) Document 12/73

3) Bulletin of the European Communities No. 12, 1973, pages 118-122

4) Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 5/75

The Bertrand Report

7. On 7 July 1975 the Parliament adopted a resolution on European Union¹⁾ which was based on a report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee by Mr. Bertrand.²⁾ One of the aims of European Union as envisaged by the resolution is to develop cooperation and security between States in Europe. The resolution also calls for the powers and responsibilities of the Union to be progressively widened to include, amongst other things, security policy.

The Gladwyn Report

8. On 15 December 1975, the Parliament adopted a resolution on the effects of a European foreign policy on defence questions.³⁾ The resolution was based on a report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee by Lord Gladwyn.⁴⁾ The resolution, amongst other things, observes that there has been no progress towards the harmonization of the defence policies of the Nine, draws attention to the need for Members of the Community to strengthen the North Atlantic Alliance by developing their own specifically European effort and expresses the conviction that there is an evident and urgent need "to achieve the most effective form of defence by rationalizing both the production of armaments, and logistics and infrastructure in the Community" and also a need "to demonstrate that Community members are making an appropriate contribution to the common defence". In the operative paragraphs of the resolution, the European Parliament urges those Governments of the Nine which may wish to take part in such a programme :

- "a) to initiate immediately, as part of the existing procedure for harmonizing the foreign policy of Member States, a technical study of the best means of achieving the objectives set out above;

1) OJ C179 of 6.8.75, pages 28-31
2) Document 174/75
3) OJ C7 of 12.1.76
4) Document 429/74 of 13.1.75

- b) to set up an agency ultimately aimed at the joint manufacture of weapons to meet the requirements of the Member States;
 - c) to draw up and adopt as soon as possible a general plan embodying the above proposals."
9. In the course of a lengthy debate on the resolution, the Socialist Group and the Communist Group had indicated their opposition to it. Speaking on behalf of the Socialist Group, Sir Geoffrey de Freitas' principal criticism was that "it involves us in yet another field of activity when we already have more than enough to do". The Communist Group opposed the resolution in part because it did not regard it as appropriate to discuss such matters "in this Parliament today" because the Parliament did not have the necessary powers and because of the political and economic difficulties facing the Community. A number of other members of the Parliament expressed objections to the resolution, Mr. Broeks of the Socialist Group commenting that "defence should be properly dealt with in NATO". Lord Gladwyn's report was strongly supported by representatives of the CD, Liberal and Democratic, and European Conservative Groups. Speaking on behalf of the Commission in the course of the debate, Mr. Scarascia Mugnozza stated: "It is our opinion that no progress can be made in the external policy sector without also considering defence, and that no progress can be made in defence without an armaments agency which takes account of the requirements in this sector".

Report by Mr. Leo Tindemans on European Union

10. The Prime Minister of Belgium, Mr. Leo Tindemans, submitted a report on European Union to his European Council colleagues on 29 December 1975.¹⁾ In his report, Mr. Tindemans argued that "security cannot ... be left outside the scope of the European Union" and that European Union "will not be complete until it has drawn up a common defence policy". In the short-term, he proposed to the Member States :

"- regularly to hold exchanges of views on our specific problems in defence matters ...

1) Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 1/76

- to cooperate in the manufacture of armaments ..."

Commission Proposals on an Action Programme for the European Aeronautical Sector

11. On 6 July 1976, the Parliament adopted a resolution embodying its opinion on proposals from the Commission on an Action Programme for the European Aeronautical Sector.¹⁾ One section of the resolution deals with a military aircraft procurement agency. (This resolution will be dealt with in more detail in Section II of this paper which concerns armaments matters).

The Blumenfeld Report

12. On 19 January 1978, the Parliament adopted a resolution on European political cooperation²⁾ which was based on a report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee by Mr. Blumenfeld.³⁾ The resolution deals with European political cooperation in general terms and does not refer specifically to security. The report itself, however, refers to the section of the Tindemans report dealing with security, and comments that defence and arms procurement questions are matters to which the Foreign Ministers, with their defence colleagues, "should address themselves with a view to widening discussions under political cooperation".

The Klepsch Report

13. On 14 June 1978 the Parliament adopted a resolution on European armaments procurement cooperation⁴⁾ which was based on the report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee by Mr. Klepsch.⁵⁾ (This report is dealt with in Section II of this report concerning armaments matters).

Oral Question with debate on Community armaments procurement programmes

14. On 25 September 1979, the Parliament debated at some length an oral question on Community armaments programmes within the framework

1) OJ C178 of 2.8.76, pages 8-10
2) OJ C36 of 13.2.78, pages 32-3
3) Document 427/77
4) OJ C163 of 10.7.78, pages 23-24
5) Document 83/78

of industrial policy.¹⁾ (This debate also is dealt with in Section II of this report concerning armaments matters).

Lady Elles Report

15. On 9 July 1981, the Parliament adopted a resolution on European Political Cooperation and the role of the European Parliament.²⁾ The resolution was based on the Report drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee by Lady Elles.³⁾ The resolution itself notes "the particular significance attached at the informal meeting of Foreign Ministers of 19 May 1981 in Venlo to the inclusion of European security in matters covered by European political cooperation".⁴⁾ It also invites, wherever appropriate, other ministers and officials, who are affected by the agenda to attend meetings within the EPC framework, in order to ensure that all matters pertaining to international relations and the foreign policies of the Member States may be fully and adequately dealt with, "including those that have a bearing on the security of the Member States of the European Community".

In her report, Lady Elles analyses the degree to which security has already been discussed within European political cooperation, outlines some of the ideas in this regard contained in the Tindemans and Blumenfeld reports and endorses these ideas. Among her proposals is that the Foreign Ministers should consider establishing close and continuous links with the Permanent Representatives to the North Atlantic Council of the nine Member States which take part in the work of the Atlantic Alliance.

1) Debates of the European Parliament, September 1979, Pages 91-112

2) OJ C234 of 14.9.81, pages 67-70

3) Document 1-335/81

4) I have not dealt with the informal meeting of Foreign Ministers referred to because such meetings are informal, confidential and do not produce conclusions.

The London Report on European Political Cooperation

16. In October 1981 the Foreign Ministers of the Ten adopted a report on European Political Cooperation.¹⁾ Amongst the matters dealt with in the report is the consideration of aspects of security within the European Political Cooperation framework. The report states :

"As regards the scope of European Political Cooperation, and having regard to the different situations of the Member States, the Foreign Ministers agree to maintain the flexible and pragmatic approach which has made it possible to discuss in Political Cooperation certain important foreign policy questions bearing on the political aspects of security".

17. It will be seen from the use of the word "maintain" (the underlining is my own) that the London Report did not commit the Ten to discuss aspects of security which they had not previously discussed. The text quoted above is, however, significant because for the first time the Ten formally acknowledged and committed themselves to continue the practice of discussing questions bearing on the political aspects of security. The phrase "political aspects of security" is worth noting.

The Diligent Report on the protection of shipping routes

18. On 14 December 1981 the Parliament adopted a resolution on the surveillance and protection of shipping routes for supplies of energy and strategic materials to the countries of the European Community.²⁾ The resolution was based on the report drawn up by Mr. Diligent on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee³⁾. (This report will be dealt with in more detail in Section III of this paper).

1) PE 75.249 of 20 October 1981
2) OJ C327 of 14.12.81, pages 46-48
3) Document 1-697/80 of 7.1.81

