

European
Parliament

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the sittings

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SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1975 – 1976

Sittings held in Strasbourg

Monday 10 May to Friday 14 May 1976

The week in Strasbourg

The main debate at the European Parliament's May sittings was on corruption – bribery of politicians by multinational and national enterprises. Although Commissioner Albert Borschette's first reaction was to say that such practices come under national laws, he did agree to look at the whole problem of payoffs in the light of Treaty articles 85 and 86, the argument being that bribery is also against Community law because it undermines competition.

Other focal points were, naturally enough, helping the Friuli earthquake victims, the prospects for democracy in Spain, human rights for political prisoners in Chile and the USSR, the situation in Uruguay; and a number of issues nearer home : inshore fishing, the European schools system, equal pay for men and women, the disposal of radioactive waste and exactly how much it does cost to keep a million tons of milk powder in storage. Dissatisfaction on this last point led to a censure motion from the European Conservatives. It will be voted on in June.

POLITICAL ISSUES

Illegal payments by national and multinational enterprises: '20th century freebooters must be held to account

Opening the debate on his oral question, Mr John Prescott (Br, S) branded payments by big business to political organisations as 'an act of political

John Prescott: 'If we do not make these huge cooperations accountable to us, governments and states will be made accountable to them and so destroy democracy'.



corruption'. Such acts, he believed, contravened Articles 85 and 86 of the EEC Treaty (distortion of competition, abuse of a dominant position by undertakings). He proposed a number of specific measures, including the formulation of EC rules for multinationals, an investigation by the Commission's DG4, and an EP equivalent of the US Senate's 'Church committee'.

Mr Albert Borschette, replying for the Commission, said he would act on the evidence he had received if necessary, but in general he felt that where payments by undertakings were illegal, they should be dealt with under national, not EC, law.

This issue – was action a national or Community responsibility? – was the focal point of much of the often heated two-hour debate which followed. Another point, inevitably, was the multinationals themselves: was it only these giants that were involved in paying bribes or, as Mr Harry Notenboom (Du, CD) suggested, were smaller firms not also guilty? And, amidst uproar in the House, Mr Tom Normanton (Br, EC) suggested that the State Trading countries had also

offered incentives to western politicians. In any case, he said, there were always two parties to any deal involving bribery.

Both Mr Norbert Hougardy (Be, L) and Mr Egon Klepsch (Ge, CD) felt that the multinationals should not be condemned out of hand. It would be nonsense, Mr Hougardy said, to claim that all would be a bed of roses if the multis did not exist. Sir Brandon Rhys Williams (Br, EC) argued that they provided employment, investment capital and paid heavy taxes. They did not want to get involved in dirty deals, but often had to.

Speaking for the Socialists, Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (Ge) wanted to know which middle-sized firm had ever been involved in corruption. The guilt lay squarely with the multinationals. He rejected Mr Borschette's insistence on individual nations having to act on their own. If the Community could not act, maybe the EC's competition laws were lacking.

Mr Michael Stewart (Br, S) supported him. Where distortion of competition was involved, the Commission was required to act. The aim of the competition rules was to ensure effective production under the most suitable conditions. Bribery was aimed at ensuring profitable rather than effective production.

Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S), too, thought that national provisions for dealing with the problem were inadequate. Was this a 'grey area', as Mr Borschette claimed, or did it not indeed fall to the Commission to act? Mr Silvio Leonardi (It, CA) felt that it did — one of the reasons for the EC's existence was to give protection to Member States at supranational level. He said that bribery by the multinational oil companies in Italy had delayed the implementation of an adequate nuclear power programme — a charge later denied by Mr Luigi Noè (It, CD).

According to Mr Alexander Fletcher (Br, EC), the multinationals would welcome a code of behaviour — which would lay down not only their own responsibilities, but also those of governments towards the multinationals. Mr Fletcher also pointed out that, in Britain, there had been cases of corruption in local government and the nationalised industries.

Business morality was a point also raised by several speakers. Mr John Osborn (Br, EC) felt that morality did not provide jobs. But Mrs Winifred Ewing (Br, Ind) argued that the provision of jobs was not a justification for immorality.

Mr Tom Ellis (Br, S) thought that too many speakers had been missing the point. It was not a matter of balancing vice against virtue, but of establishing what the

Commission was doing. Mr Pierre Giraud (Fr, S) and Mr Ernest Glinne (Be, S) agreed with him. Lord Castle (Br, S) thought the Commission should undertake an exhaustive enquiry into the whole matter; Mr Gérard Bordu (Fr, CA) wanted to see an EP committee of enquiry.

Replying to the debate, Mr Borschette repeated his belief in a national approach to infringements. Where controls were inadequate, national MPs should try to get them strengthened. He did not want to see the EC Treaties assume a penal character. Nevertheless, the Commission would investigate the present evidence.

Summing up, Mr Prescott felt that the Treaties were being contravened. In any case, this was an international problem, and called for a Community response. His concluding speech was interrupted by an angry intervention from Mr Normanton, whose own speech earlier in the debate had drawn sharp attacks from several Socialist and British Labour MPs.

Helping small and medium-sized firms

'Small firms do not want handouts,' says Mr Tom Normanton, 'they simply want a chance to make a decent living. Unlike bigger firms, which have access to the capital market (and almost unlimited access to capital in the case of the nationalised industries), the small firm has to get its capital out of its net profits. And these are being eroded all the time. This is why we have to put down a motion asking the Commission to take a closer look at these firms and remember the impact EC policies can have on them,' he said.

There are some 27 million men and women employed in some 300,000 small and medium-sized firms in the Community today, and Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté asked the Commission what it was doing to help them. Commissioner Altiero Spinelli's short answer was too little. A special department did look at bills with an eye to their interests. This had been the case with the Sixth directive on a uniform tax base for VAT, the company accounts bill and the proposals for a European limited company. And, in 1973, the Commission had set up a 'bureau de rapprochement' to arrange 'marriages' between firms wanting to link up. The bureau had advised on the tax, legal and administrative aspects in 300 cases. And a new enquiry into this whole subject was being undertaken at the Berlin centre for occupational training. But he seemed to agree that most of the complaints made on behalf of the small firms were justified.



Mr Tom Normanton: 'Small firms don't want handouts. They simply want a chance to make a decent living.'

These complaints, which were voiced by Members on all sides of the House, are a failure to recognise the importance of small firms as job providers: money lent to them would pay off well in this respect. But it was hard for them to raise cash: European Investment Bank loans to them had actually gone down. Commissioner Spinelli agreed the drop had been drastic. He argued that this was due mainly to the international monetary situation.

Other complaints concerned competition rules blocking link-ups for joint purchasing operations which, as Mr Cousté pointed out, would actually increase competition. And tax rules, not to mention forms, to which Mr Tom Normanton in particular took special exception.

The scope of the problem was illustrated by Mr Hermann Schwörer (Ge, CD) who said that in Germany 60 per cent of those employed work in small firms. (Mr Schwörer was surprised the Tindemans report made no reference to it.) The concern felt about it was general, as the speeches by Mr Jan Broeks (Du, S) and Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) showed.

Mr Broeksz felt the Council was to blame, not the Commission, for failing to act to help these firms. The Dutch Government was more active. 'The present administration has done more to help these firms in three years than the previous one did in twenty,' he said. Mr Dalyell was concerned about new firms starting up. What criteria did the Commission use in deciding to help? And should the European Investment Bank be more geared to innovators and not solely concerned with 'safe loans'?

Mr Gérard Bordu (Fr, CA) was concerned about firms closing down: 8,000 bankruptcies in Germany in the first ten months of 1975, 12,000 in France in 1974 and 15,000 in 1975. How could the Community help, he asked, without stepping up consumption?

Mr John Osborn (Br, EC) deplored the growth of larger units at the expense of the smaller ones. It is, he said, in smaller firms that personal relations are the smoothest and there too that most new ideas get off the ground.

Mr Luigi Noè (It, CD) asked if the Bureau de rapprochement could help in promoting links between firms in difficulty. But Mr Spinelli had doubts.

Summing up the debate, Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté (Fr, EPD) stressed that small firms provide four times as many jobs per unit invested than larger ones. He then put down a motion calling on the Commission to pay special attention to the smaller firm. The motion thanked the Commission for what it had done and called for a full enquiry into small firms. It expressed regret at the Council's failure to take decisions on the relevant Commission proposals. The motion was agreed to with some thirty Members voting in favour.

Helsinki Agreement is not enforceable

It seems that the Helsinki Agreement is not an agreement in the sense defined in international law, so it can be neither be enforced nor, technically, can it be violated. Such was Mr Gaston Thorn's reply to Mrs Hanna Walz's complaint that human rights are being violated in the Soviet Union, particularly in the Ukraine, where atheism is imposed, Russianisation is being forced through and there is police control of private and family life.

Several Members such as Lord Gladwyn (Br, L), Lord Bethell (Br, EC) and Mr Hugh Dykes (Br, EC) seemed to ask: 'What did you expect?', although Lord



Mrs Hanna Walz: 'We appeal to EC Foreign Ministers to take advantage of negotiations to press for the human rights of prisoners in the USSR and other East European countries they urgently need our help and we should not keep silent about this injustice to Soviet women'.

Bethell said he had hoped for something. The debate then took on a Left-Right dimension between sceptics on the one hand and those like Mr Michael Stewart (Br, S) and Lord Ardwick (Br, S) on the other, for whom détente is 'that state of relations which enables the conflict of interests (between East and West) to be kept within bounds.'

Mr Gaston Thorn was on their side. He took issue with the idea that Helsinki had been a mistake. There was no question of not going on to Belgrade, if only to draw up a balance sheet of what had been achieved as a result of this first experience.

Russia's deals with the West

Replying to questions from Mr Hans Edgar Jahn (Ge, CD) and Mr Egon Klepsch (Ge, CD), Sir Christopher Soames said that the Commission could supply a list of cooperation agreements concluded by Member States and East European and Asian countries but would be unable to give details of their contents. This for reasons of confidentiality. Mr Jahn is worried that private deals with the East could ultimately undermine a Community which is, under decision of 22 July 1974, committed to working together on a common trade policy.

Sir Christopher added that some 3 per cent — 7 per cent of all trade between the Nine and these countries was affected by cooperation agreements. He did not

comment on Mr Jahn's main worry: that cooperation agreements – which do not come under the EC common trade policy commitment – are being used by the East to avoid a de jure recognition of the Community. Mr Jahn was also very unhappy about Western firms setting up in East Europe and competing with cheap labour with the West.

Equal pay for men and women

Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, which has been applicable in the six original Member States since 1962 and in the three new ones since 1973, provides for equal pay for equal work. On 8 April 1976, the European Court of Justice ruled that this Treaty article was directly applicable to all Member States.

Much of the debate on the Socialist's Group's oral question on equal pay for women revolved around the legal aspects of this Treaty article and of EC directive No. 75/117, which also implements the principles of equal pay.

The debate was launched by Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody (Br, S) who, in an impassioned speech championing women's rights, expressed her profound disappointment at the meagreness of what has been accomplished so far. In fact, she said, 'I do not believe necessarily that men and women are equal – I am coming to believe that women are superior.' Warning the House that the 'monstrous regiment of women' (John Knox) was on the march, she wanted to know what Council and Commission were doing to help women.

Neither Mr Gaston Thorn, President of the Council, nor Dr Patrick Hillery, Vice-President of the Commission, gave Mrs Dunwoody much joy. The Council, said Mr Thorn, had no competence to force Member States to make Court rulings applicable. However, Directive 75/117, which was applicable in Member States, did give women who felt they were discriminated against the right to appeal to their own national judicial systems. The Directive derived its authority from Article 100 of the Treaty.

If Mr Thorn stuck closely to a legal interpretation Dr Hillery seemed to imply that progress was too fast as it was – it was not the here and now, but the long term that was important. He was brought sharply to task for this by Lady Fisher of Rednal (Br, S) later in the debate, who pointed out that women had been campaigning for equal pay for over fifty years. But Dr Hillery did say what the Commission had been doing, and referred to eight reports it had drawn up on



Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody: 'I find it extremely difficult to understand how the Court of Justice can say that Article 119 states that equal pay for equal work is enshrined in the Treaty – those rather tattered tablets from the seven hills of Rome which are externally being called to account by every one in this House for every conceivable reason – but then add a rider, that this cannot be retrospective.'

the implementation of Article 119. It had also compiled dossiers on two Member States for infringements of that Article. They had been corrected.

Mr Kurt Härzschel (Ge, CD) thought more should have been done sooner. Though, formally, equal pay existed, equality in opportunity did not. Mrs Clara Kruchow (Da, L) felt that more research needed to be done into just where the inequalities did lie.

Ireland, whatever its obligations under either Article 119 or Directive 75/117, had made virtually no progress towards equal pay, according to Mr Michael Yeats (Ir, EPD). He also said that the trades unions should everywhere bear part of the blame for inaction – they had countenanced for years inequality in wage rates between the sexes.

Mrs Mariie-Thérèse Goutmann (Fr, CA), by contrast, laid the blame on big business. The 'social Europe' we had been promised just was not materialising, she said.

Although we should be grateful for the Court's ruling, Mr Jan Broeksz (Du, S) felt it was up to the Commission to ensure its proper application. This could be done by invoking Article 169 (observance of Treaty obligations). Women should not have to go to court every time they encountered discrimination – it was the Commission's job to see that the law was enforced. After all, Article 119 had been in force for fourteen years.

Vice-President Hillery attempted to clear up the legal muddle by pointing out that Article 119 referred to equal pay for equal work. But what was equal work? Directive 75/117, on the other hand, talked of work 'to which equal value' was attributed.

Passports but no union, by 1978?

A motion on a uniform EC passport and passport union, due to have been considered by the House this week, was deferred so that the Legal Affairs Committee can give an opinion.

Labour delegation leader Mr Michael Stewart (Br, S), who is tabling the motion for the Political Affairs Committee, now expects it to be debated in June.

He feels that a uniform passport would be useful 'in a minor, but not negligible' way. It would make it easier for third countries which recognised the Community to deal equally with all EC citizens, and would also facilitate free movement between Community countries. Moreover, it would have a not insignificant symbolic value.

'Passport union, on the other hand, is vastly more complex,' Mr Stewart said. Above all, it would involve the introduction of uniform rules on entry to the Community from outside. 'Passport union would be not so much a step towards political union, but a recognition of how far we had moved already.'

Whilst 1978 remained a realistic date for the introduction of a uniform passport, Mr Stewart felt that passport union was still 'a good many years off'.

House unanimous in condemning oppression in Chile

Parliament this morning unanimously agreed to a motion condemning the persistent violation of the basic freedoms and rights of the citizens of Chile. The

Mr Giovanni Boano: 'The number of democracies in that part of the world is growing smaller all the time even though, in its civilisation, tradition and thinking Latin America is so close to Europe.'



motion was an expansion of the earlier motion tabled by the Communist and Allies Group which had been referred back to the Political Affairs Committee.

Referring to the events in Chile as 'a tragedy of a whole nation', Mr Giovanni Boano (It, CD) felt it was the House's duty to do all it could to help the voices of those fighting for freedom in Chile to be heard. Echoing his sentiments, Mr Ole Espersen (Da, S) spoke of his recent visit to Chile. He had been told that the 'democracy' to which the present regime aspired was prepared to countenance 'good politicians' but not 'bad politicians'

Mr Eric Blumenfeld (Ge) for the Christian Democrats, Lord Gladwyn (Br) for the Liberals, Lord Bethell (Br) for the European Conservatives, Mr Silvio Leonardi (It) for the Communists and Mr Alfredo Covelli speaking as an independent Member, all gave their wholehearted support to the motion. Mr George Thomson added the Commission's endorsement.

The motion, adopted by 33 votes to nil, included an amendment tabled by Mr Ernest Glinne (Be, S) which will ensure that it is forwarded to the Latin

Mr Ernest Glinne: 'In Uruguay there are 6,000 political prisoners or one out of every 450 citizens. And one person in fifty is in the police.'



American Parliament and the Organisation of American States as well as to the Chilean authorities. Mr Glinne had earlier withdrawn another amendment which would have asked the OAS to bring pressure to bear on Chile at its meeting in Santiago.

Uruguay's Latin American 'Switzerland' image slipping

Uruguay, which used to be thought of as the Switzerland of Latin America, now has a far uglier image. It is a police state with an abnormally high proportion of political prisoners, many of whom die under torture. This was the burden of Mr Ernest Glinne's (Be, S) message to the House.

Speaking for the Socialists, he was asking the Commission to take the same attitude to Uruguay as it had done to Spain and Greece. Commissioner George Thomson sympathised. He agreed with Mr Glinne in praising Amnesty International for bringing the facts about Uruguay to the public's attention.

But the case of Uruguay was not the same as that of Greece or Spain. The EC was bound by International law and would go on with the agreement signed with Uruguay in August 1974. Mr Thomson reassured Mr Glinne, however, that there would be no new concessions and particularly not on cotton textiles which was a point worrying Mr Giovanni Boano (It, CD).

Lord Bessborough (Br, EC) thought the Commission was right. It was, incidentally, his ancestor, John, Viscount Ponsonby – a very good Whig name, a good Conservative name and, indeed, a good Socialist name – who was the British mediator who, in 1828, was largely responsible for creating the state of Uruguay as a kind of buffer between Brazil and Argentine. He is still remembered as the liberator. Indeed, his portrait still hangs in the office of the Foreign Minister in Montevideo.

Lord Bessborough was very disturbed by more recent reports coming out of Uruguay but, he said, 'we should not allow trade agreements to be jeopardised by situations of this kind.' It is the old dilemma. If the EC were to freeze its relationships with dictatorships, of which unfortunately there is no shortage, there would be few enough countries for us to trade with. So while expressing his group's respect for Amnesty International, he thought they ought to consider the consequences of the policies they were advocating.

European Conservatives table censure motion

Sir Peter Kirk has tabled a censure motion on behalf of the European Conservative Group to express its dissatisfaction with the milk powder surplus, now standing at one million tons and with the Commission's proposals for dealing with it which severely penalise farmers who are in no way responsible for the dairy surpluses.

Spain, particularly since the Arias speech on television

There can be no doubt that there is in the European Parliament a great deal of sympathy for Spain and for the Spanish people. And there are many Members who have a fairly accurate, up-to-the-minute knowledge of what is going on there. The main anxiety today is perhaps not so much that Spain should take on the full mantle and sature of democracy as soon as possible – although this view was certainly expressed on all sides of the House – but that the transition from



Mr Ludwig Fellermaier: 'We in the Political Committee should, as democrats concerned about other democrats, send an invitation to the Spanish opposition to give them an opportunity to make their voice heard in Europe today.'

the present neo-authoritarian régime to a democracy should, as Mr Alfred Bertrand (Be), Christian Democrat leader, put it, be a bloodless one.

Parliament's debate was opened by Mr Maurice Faure (Fr, S) who put down a motion for the Political Affairs Committee calling for the legalisation of all political parties in Spain. This point is generally endorsed and Mr Bertrand for the Christian Democrats and Mr Jean Durieux (Fr) for the Liberals made it plain that they include Communists. 'I prefer a recognised Communist party to one that goes underground and claims to be more than it is' said Mr Durieux. Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (Ge), for the Socialists, endorsed this point too and also the reference to the trade union movement contained in point one of the motion.

Mr Faure's motion called for a general amnesty to all political prisoners and expressed the view that those in exile should be permitted to return freely to their native country. This point too was endorsed by spokesmen for the Socialists, Christian Democrats, Liberals and European Progressive Democrats. The motion further considered that the significance of the general elections

promised in the Spring of 1977 will depend on these two conditions. The motion expressed the support of the peoples of the Community for all those in Spain who are striving for a pluralist, independent and free democracy.

Some sixty Members voted for the motion put down by Mr Maurice Faure (Fr, S) although six Members voted against the first paragraph. The most prominent of them was Lord St. Oswald, perhaps the most eminent hispanophile in the House, who argued that the reference to 'political' as opposed to 'democratic' parties (which the motion said must be recognised) was unacceptable. As to the rest of the motion, it was 'innocently otiose' and ought to be acceptable to the Spanish people, he said.

Among the other speakers, Sir Peter Kirk stressed that Spain is far more volatile than Portugal and he called for the same understanding for Spain as had been shown to her neighbours. He praised Mr Faure's balanced analysis of the situation there with some forces working for progress and others, particularly among the establishment institutions of police, army and bureaucracy, wanting no change at all.

Replying to the debate, Sir Christopher Soames told the House of the latest developments in relations between Spain and the Community. Under the Treaty of Accession, the Community had to harmonise its customs duties in relation to third countries by July 1977. This meant the relatively lower duties of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark would have to be brought to line with the relatively higher ones of the other Six. Spanish trade would be particularly affected so a balance had to be struck. Hence exploratory talks were now in progress with a view to a new arrangement. As to the long-term future and hazarding a guess, Sir Christopher suggested that the accession of Spain might be possible within, say, six years. He agreed with other speakers in looking forward to seeing Spain in the Community.

Motion on Italian earthquake

The House unanimously adopted an emergency motion tabled on behalf of all the political groups expressing its deepest sympathy with the families of the victims of the Italian earthquake, and calling on the Commission to give both emergency and longer-term aid to the affected area.

Commission President François-Xavier Ortoli said the Commission had already mobilised a wide range of resources to provide help, and would continue to do so.



President François-Xavier Ortoli: 'Our immediate reaction to the Friuli earthquake disaster was to propose that 150 million lira be made available to the Italian government at once.....'

It was later learned that Lord Bessborough, Vice-President of the European Parliament, was to go to Friuli on Sunday, 16th May. He was to visit the region on Monday, the 17th.

LEGAL POINTS

Parliament warns Commission to handle phase out of imperial units of measurement gently

Parliament's opening debate this week ran like a Common Market knell for Anglo-Saxon. Indeed, in the interests of metrication, a whole host of terms — household words — are to be phased out of legal existence. Chain, furlong, bushel, horsepower, footcandle, nautical mile and knot are to go by the end of 1977. Yard, cran, stone, hundredweight, British thermal unit and Fahrenheit are to be phased out by the end of 1979. As for foot, fathom, mile, acre, gill, pint, quart and Troy ounces, their fate is to be reviewed before the end of 1979.

There are, of course, perfectly good reasons for this. A 1971 directive agreed between the Six is now to be extended to the Nine. A Paris conference last year

took the international consensus on units of measurement a stage further and — as Commissioner Albert Borschette told the House — there is the sheer cost of operating two systems of measurement simultaneously in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The new units will be metre for length, kilogram for mass, Kelvin for thermodynamic temperature, mole for amount of substance and candela for luminous intensity.

Mr Alessandro Bermani, rapporteur for the Legal Committee, welcomed the Commission's proposed directive. Its treaty base was the right one and although instant harmonisation was usual, he welcomed the gradual phase out which the Commission envisaged in this case.

His motion approving the proposal was agreed to with 20 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

The abstention was Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody who was concerned about the adverse effect that phasing out imperial units could have on UK public opinion. Indeed Mrs Dunwoody was not the only one to have reservations. Mr Tam Dalyell was concerned about the cost. 'It will be considerable' replied Mr Borschette. Mr Tom Ellis sided with Mrs Dunwoody. He thought it was emotive issue. It was not just a question of being sensible 'but of carrying people along with you'.

Commissioner Borschette, who seemed slightly shaken by the outburst of nostalgia at the prospect of cherished words being phased out, was anxious to assure Members that this new proposal would be brought into effect gradually; but he did not back down on the question of deadlines. It now remains to be seen what the Council will make of the Commission's proposal.

ENERGY

Windscale and all that

Parliament held two debates on energy policy this week. The first concerned the reprocessing of irradiated fuels and the second was to do with Ispra and the chances of getting the Community as a Community back into the centre of

Mr Luigi Noè: 'As opposed to the conventional power station where the problems occur "upstream", the problems with a nuclear power station occur "downstream" i.e. in the disposal of the radioactive waste.'



nuclear research. (And a nod being as good as a wink, there were some pretty obvious hints that a decision on Joint European Torus would not come amiss). But, to take the first point first

Among Members with engineering qualifications Mr Luigi Noè (It, CD) is among those who are most respected. Indeed, as a man, he gives the impression of being in a state of perpetual fascination about the way things work. And so it came as a shock when, at the end of his very patient introduction to the problems of reprocessing irradiated fuels, Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) (a classical scholar) should have expressed concern about the accuracy of Mr Noè's report. Did the other Members who applauded so enthusiastically really understand what was involved? He confessed, with his usual engaging frankness, that he personally had not understood a word of it.

What Mr Noè said was that, in contrast to traditional power stations where all the problems were 'upstream', all the problems involved with nuclear power stations were 'downstream'. By this he meant disposing of waste. Only two

plants in the EC (one of which is Windscale) can cope and by the 1980s the EC's capacity must be increased, preferably – for security reasons – as part of a world-wide plan. Fortunately, he said, time is on our side. He spoke of the actual separation of waste into uranium, plutonium, transurania, fission products and various kinds of muds. The waste problem varied with the type of reactor but already much had been learned (e.g. at the Karlsruhe Transuranium Institute) about the use of these products. Some transurania could be used to detect the presence of manganese, for example.

Mr Noè concluded by saying that, so far, all the emphasis had been on building capacity in terms of power stations and none on reprocessing. The time has come to take an overall view.

Mrs Hanna Walz (Ge) for the Christian Democrats, hastened to assure Mr Dalyell that it was perfectly proper for parliamentarians to discuss the matter. 'We do not have to be experts on everything.' Mr Jean-François Pintat (Fr), for the Liberals, took a similar view. But both were full of praise for Mr Luigi Noè for raising a matter of such public concern. Lord Bessborough (Br), for the European Conservatives, agreed. He praised the tremendous effort that had gone into the report. Mr Silvio Leonardi (It), for the Communists, did too. And Mr Tom Ellis (Br), for the Socialists, hastened to assure the House that his group would endorse Mr Noè's motion. To which Mr Dalyell commented his sole concern was that Parliament's opinions should be above reproach on scientific grounds.

There was then some discussion as to whether the vote, when it was taken, represented a vote on the report itself or just on the motion. Mr Michael Yeats, in the Chair, said that votes in committee covered both but those in the House related only to the motion.

The discussion then centred on intermediate storage and long-term storage – say in such safe geological strata as disused salt mines where humidity is at a minimum. There was general agreement as to the merits of the vitrification process.

Replying to the debate Commissioner Altiero Spinelli said the Commission had made proposals on the base of Article 172 but regretted that progress had not been faster. 'We are ahead of the world. We need a concerted effort to stay there' he said. Mr Noè's motion was then put to the vote and agreed to by 27 votes to nil.

Ispra and a Common Research Policy

Parliament's second debate on energy was on Ispra and the chances for making a fresh start there and on the prospects for the common research policy.

The bid for a common research policy goes back some time. The principles were spelled out by the Commission in June 1972 and agreed by Council in January 1974. But no action followed. What was under discussion in Parliament was a further prod to the Council. It was called a 'communication on objectives, priorities and resources for research'. The main thing the Commission wants is more money; the 97m u.a. spent in 1975 should rise to 237m u.a. in 1980. And it wants it spent over the whole area of EC activity. To back up this request for a bigger budget, the Commission offers a set of perfectly credible criteria for research being done by the EC and not by Member States:

- (a) where the cost would be too high for any one country, e.g. Joint European Torus;
- (b) where research is needed to push an EC policy, e.g. standards for materials because these effect the Common Customs Tariff, for example, or research into eradicating swine fever because outbreaks undermine the common market;
- (c) where the market needs to be huge, e.g. in aeronautics or data-processing;
- (d) where the area of operation is by its very nature international, e.g. transport, communications or environment. Air pollution control in the Saar is stricter than Lorraine, for example, so this effects competition. Research into standards would therefore qualify here again.

Among those speaking in the debate, Mr Tom Ellis drew attention to the findings of a survey among research firms in Scotland. Those with a bureaucratic approach had gone bust while those where people were encouraged to think for themselves had prospered. Perhaps there were lessons here for Ispra. Mr Amédée Bouquerel (Fr, EPD), in a maiden speech, welcomed the progress in research. Mrs Clara Kruchow (Da), for the Liberals, said she hoped there would be a decision on Ispra as soon as possible. Mr John Osborn (Br, EC), endorsing the motion, said in reply to the point raised by Mr Ellis as to the EC's role in research that it could be to establish ongoing discussions. He also spoke of the Russians' interest in cooperating with Parliament and its Energy Committee. Mr Leonardi, on the other hand, took a sourer view of the Community's research. How can you hope for coordination in energy policy when you can't get it in economic policy' he asked.

Replying to the debate, Commissioner Guido Brunner said one could look at the EC in two ways: by saying what could be done, given goodwill on all sides or one could look at what is possible now. Even so the EC had started on the up again.

Mr Pierre Krieg (Fr, EPD) then tabled a motion broadly endorsing the Commission's memo on aims, priorities and resources for research. This was agreed to by 9 votes to nil.

AGRICULTURE

Inshore Fishing: Parliament approves Commission proposals

Subject to a few amendments which Mr Petrus Lardinois took on board perfectly willingly, Parliament today agreed to a motion put down by Mr Mark Hughes (Br, S) approving the Commission's inshore fishing proposals. The vote was 33 in favour with Mr John Prescott (Br, S) and Mr Jens Maigaard (Da, CA) abstaining.

As Mr Hughes said, the proposals are part of a series and are intended eventually to add up to a complete policy for the fishing industry. The idea is to spend 118m u.a. over five years as back-up help for fleet modernisation, fish farming, shore facilities and help for those leaving the industry.

The motion and the proposals dealt with, it should be recorded that the debate was really on the whole subject of fishing and the people involved in it – fishing as a way of life, as well as a whole series of other points: fishing as a source of protein, the problems of capacity and catches, the dangers of overfishing, pricing policy, the regional factor, the implications of new limits as a result of what the Law of the Sea Conference may decide. And apart from a speech by Mr Marcel Vandewiele (Be, CD) for the Christian Democrats, it was a debate dominated by Danish and British Members, with Commissioner Lardinois saying virtually nothing new in reply. (He made it clear that the end solution is likely to be a two hundred mile pond in which there will be catch quotas based on present catches and losses from lost third country fishing grounds. The twelve mile limit will stand. But he said all this in January anyway. If anything was new, it was the notion that when Greenland becomes independent, it will have to be involved in the EC fishing policy. But the main point here is that it will mostly affect Iceland and Norway.)

Mr Hughes spoke of the dangers of overfishing in the North-East Atlantic, both inshore and deep-water. Perhaps there would have to be trawler-free zones eventually.

Mr Marcel Vandewiele, for the Christian Democrats, spoke of a 30-40 per cent fall in fishing incomes in a job where 10 to 17 hours were the daily average. 'Fishermen must be able to get a decent income. 100,000 people are involved but 600,000 are dependent on the inshore fishing sector,' he said.

Mr Niels Kofoed (Da), for the Liberals, as good as described the Commission as incompetent to frame a fishing policy. To which Mr Lardinois replied that a directorate-general was being set up. So far he had had to depend on a brilliant few. He thought fishing is at a turning point. So did Mr Kai Nyborg (Da, EPD).

In fact, nearly all speakers alluded to the crisis in the industry: it was one of the assumptions of the debate. Both Mr Nyborg and Mrs Winifred Ewing (Br, Ind) emphasised the importance of fish as a source of protein.

Mr John Prescott (Br, S) challenged the assumption that the EC fish stocks amounted to 4.1 million tons. He had been told it was more likely to be 6,2 million tons or one third more. Mr Lardinois thought this optimistic. Mr Prescott conceded some of this might be fish not normally consumed like blue whiting – but which would perhaps be acceptable in developing countries.

Mr Prescott was one of many speakers who stressed the regional factor. Mr James Spicer (Br, EC) did too. He was incensed by the way Russian and Polish vessels scoop up fish in local waters. They catch five times as much mackerel as the British, seventeen times as much as the Irish and twice as much as the French. The most reliable catch figures available (from the International Commission for the Exploration of the Sea) show the Russians took 63,000 tons, the Poles 9,000, the French 34,000, the United Kingdom 13,000 and the Irish 4,000 (although as Mr Prescott pointed out, the UK gets most of its catch from outside what may become EC waters).

But perhaps the most impassioned speaker was Mrs Ewing. She pointed out that 80 per cent of the inshore fishing is from Scotland and the rich pond off her own country was being exploited now by Member States which had ruined their own ponds and were looking elsewhere.

'There is enough fish in EC waters for all if we administer it properly, she said. But a twelve mile coastal water limit for individual Member States is not

enough.' The last speaker was Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) who noted Mrs Ewing's comment that fish is to Scotland as wine is to France. He would substitute whisky. Mrs Ewing, incidentally, indicated that, if Scotland becomes independent, fishing may be the real rock on which its relations with the EC could founder, and not oil.

Crediting Securities to the EAGGF

Mr Pierre Lagorce (Fr, S) introduced his report on the crediting of securities, deposits and guarantees furnished under the CAP and subsequently forfeited. His motion included a request to the Commission to amend its draft regulations, which included two derogations to the principle that all forfeited securities should be credited to the EAGGF or food aid.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) presenting the opinion of the Committee on Agriculture, also pointed to the illogicality of these derogations.

Replying for the Commission, Mr Petrus Lardinois said that the derogations had been included on the advice of the Commission's Legal Service.

Parliament agreed to the motion unanimously.

Resolution with a sting in its tail

As Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) said, the question of establishing a system of aid for associations of beekeepers is a sticky subject. The Commission's proposal had already been rejected by the Committee on Agriculture by three votes in favour, four against and seven abstentions, and now it seemed likely to meet the same fate on the floor of the House.

There was no dispute about the importance of beekeeping — not only is the production of honey involved, but bees are necessary for pollination as well. But the Committee on Agriculture and its rapporteur, Mr Isidor Früh (Ge, CD) felt that Member States were better placed than the EC to run any aid scheme deemed necessary.

Budgetary principles involving 2.5m u.a. of discretionary expenditure were also involved.

*Sir Brandon Rhys Williams:
‘There are really three roots of entitlement to benefit. There is need, there is a record of contributions, and there is citizenship. To my way of thinking, entitlement based only on need is deeply unsatisfactory.’*



Commissioner Petrus Lardinois agreed to look at the proposal afresh, but a motion put by Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD) to refer the matter back to committee was defeated on a tied vote.

When the motion itself was put to the vote, however, it was rejected by fifteen votes to six, with nine abstentions. So now, since the motion itself sought to reject the Commission's proposal, the question goes back to committee anyway.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

A Community of compassion and concern

In 1975, Sir Brandon Rhys Williams (Br, EC) tabled a motion aimed at bringing EC social security systems into line with one another. The Committee on Social Affairs, Employment and Education was asked to report on this motion.

The motion contained in this report, drawn up by Mr Ernest Glinne (Be, S) approved the Rhys Williams initiative in principle, but was scarcely enthusiastic about it. Despite all Mr Willem Albers (Du, S), who was standing in for Mr Glinne, could do to justify the caution it was advocating, Mrs Winifred Ewing (Br, Ind) struck the right note when she described Sir Brandon's motion as 'more generous, more radical'. Left and Right seem to have got mixed up in this debate,' she said.

Describing his vision of a 'Community of compassion and concern', Sir Brandon did sound radical in the extreme. But both Mr Kurt Härzschel (Ge, CD) and Mr Tom Ellis (Br, S) felt that a long and ambitious journey had to be prepared carefully; there was nothing to be gained by forcing a pace which could never be maintained.

Replying, Commissioner George Thomson praised Sir Brandon's 'Tory socialism', but agreed that caution was advised.

After receiving an assurance from Mr Thomson, Sir Brandon withdrew an amendment he had tabled, and the motion was agreed to by thirty-two votes to nil.

European Schools debate marked by disagreement on admissions policy

'Our first priority is to make sure that children of migrant workers get an education at all,' said Commissioner Guido Brunner, commenting on the debate on the European Schools. He felt that calls to throw the schools wide open to migrant children would make no significant impact on the problem. But he did agree that the European School system was too elitist. 'Karlsruhe is a good example of what can be done,' he said. 'There, 63 per cent of pupils are not children of EC officials.'

Speakers from all sides of the House welcomed the initiative of Mr Karl-Heinz Walkhoff (Ge) and his Socialist Group colleagues in tabling an oral question to the Commission on the European Schools system. This, said Mr Ferruccio Pisoni (It, CD), was a good example of Parliament following up on one of its own motions to find out what, if anything, had been done.

But there, at least on the crucial issue of admitting the children of migrant workers to the European Schools, agreement ended.



Mr Richard Mitchell: 'I hope that eventually the European schools will become a proper Community institution. They would be far better run than they are at present.'

Mr Carlo Meintz (Lu, L) was non-committal, and did not expect that much progress would have been made since Parliament's motion had been adopted (last September). Schools, he said, did not change overnight.

However, his Liberal Group colleague from Denmark, Mrs Clara Kruchow, came down firmly against turning the schools into an experiment in social equality. All children should have equal rights to learn what they needed: but not all children needed the same things.

She was echoing the views expressed by Mrs Kellett-Bowman (Br, EC) who reminded the House that the original purpose of the European Schools was to provide an education which would allow the children of EC officials to be easily re-integrated into their national school systems. 'Anyway,' Mrs Kellett-Bowman said, 'you cannot cram a million migrant children into nine European Schools.' Mrs Kruchow thought that migrant children would be better off in local schools, since their need was integration into the host country.

Most other speakers saw this problem differently. Mrs Tullia Caretoni-Romagnoli (It, CA) thought that the presence of migrant children would benefit all pupils; at present, she said, — and Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody (Br, S) agreed with her — the schools were elitest ghettos, and the children were cut off from the realities of the world. Mr Pisoni, too, felt that the schools should be made more open.

The other main issue was the decision-making process in the European School system. The headmaster, said Mr Richard Mitchell (Br, S), could not even take basic decisions on, say, the curriculum. Parents, teachers and even senior pupils should be given a say in running the schools, according to Mr Cornelis Laban (Du, S). He was putting the Oral Question for Mr Karl-Heinz Walkhoff (Ge, S) who had been detained in Bonn. This the view of Mrs Winifred Ewing (Br, Ind) too, who had heard of difficulties encountered by parents in forming PTAs. Both Mrs Kellett-Bowman and Mrs Kruchow agreed that more participation by parents was needed.

Commissioner Guido Brunner, standing in for Mr Borschette, explained what had been done since adoption of Parliament's motion in September 1975.

EC Education Ministers had met last December and adopted an action programme. Moreover, an ad hoc working party had been set up by the Board of Governors to look into proposals for changes (though committees, Mrs Dunwoody remarked, were the surest way of slowing things down).

Referring to the problem of migrant workers' children, Mr Brunner pointed out that the Brussels school had 7,000 pupils, but that there were an estimated 120,000 migrant children in that city. Nevertheless, the schools were not restricted to EC officials' children — 27 per cent of pupils had nothing to do with the Community institutions.

Teachers, the Commissioner said, should be given fixed four-year tours of duty, and secondment to a European School should not be allowed to prejudice their careers at home. There had been cases of this, Mr Brunner said, in reply to a query from Mr Tam Dalyeel (Br, S).

Concluding, he agreed with Mr Laban that the European Parliament could be more closely involved in fixing the budget for the European Schools — at present, Parliament could only rubber stamp in November what had been decided in May for the next school year.

Mr Michel Cointat: 'All we are hoping is that decisions can be taken before the summer so that Parliament's budgetary policy and budgetary powers can be spelled out in full before our Members come to be elected by direct universal suffrage.'



BUDGET

Bicycles would be better in new building: Cointat and Cheysson broadly agree on how to tackle the 1977 Budget

There was some laughter at the opening of Parliament's debate on how to tackle next year's budget when Mr Michel Cointat (Fr, EPD), the man tipped to succeed François-Xavier Ortoli as one of the French members of the next Commission, arrived rather breathless in the House after hurrying in from another meeting. 'Perhaps it would be better if we could have bicycles to get around on when we go to the new building,' he said.

Summing up the conclusions of the Budgets Committee's ad hoc working party, Mr Cointat said Parliament's aim must be to get its budgetary powers sorted out before direct elections are held in 1978. Meanwhile, he had these comments to make:

- the budget must set out all Community revenue and expenditure, (including loans and credits relating to financial cooperation with the developing countries);
- the budget must set out all foreseeable expenditure for the financial year under consideration (thus making supplementary budgets an exceptional occurrence);
- the budget should continue to be produced yearly while allowing for the financing of multi-annual projects (notably by means of commitment appropriations);
- the budget should be presented as clearly as possible (by means of clear budget entries and nomenclature).

In reply, Commissioner Claude Cheysson agreed about budgetising loans, with some hesitation as to method. He did not want to 'swell' the budget itself and suggested an annex could be used. He conceded the principle that Parliament must be informed about capital operations, especially terms on which loans are raised or made. As for the classification of loans, he did not agree with Mr Pierre Lagorce (Fr, S). He thought Treaty Article 203 principles should apply here too. Mr Cheysson disagreed with Parliament as to powers of discharge being vested in the new EC-ACP Consultative Assembly due to meet in Luxembourg in three weeks' time.

Mr Cheysson agreed on point two. 'We want a budget that really is "prévisionnel",' he said with possibly one or two supplementaries for new or unforeseen spending. The Commission is opposed, as is Parliament, to any systematic use of supplementary budgets.

Mr Cheysson agreed on point three with Mr Michael Shaw (Br, EC). The Commission even went slightly further. As for point four, he thought the nomenclature should be adjusted when the budget is finally adopted. All in all, then, the Commission disagreed with Parliament in only three points of detail, including the way the concept of the last word is to be articulated and the budgetisation of the European Development Fund.

Mr Cheysson welcomed the trialogue of 7 April and hoped that the draft budget for 1977 would already be showing some improvements.

President Georges Spénale expressed Parliament's thanks to the whole Budget Committee for its work in paving the way to tighter control over EC spending through a more coherent budgetary procedure.

Carry-forwards approved

Parliament unanimously approved the Commission's first list of requests to carry forward appropriations from the 1975 to the 1976 financial year.

Moving a motion on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD) emphasised that carry-forwards should not involve sums large enough to seriously disturb the annual budget.

Mr Claude Cheysson, replying for the Commission, agreed that carry-forwards should be limited: this called for an improvement of the Financial Regulations.

The motion was agreed to by fifteen votes to nil.

EAGGF financial report debate: a motion, a demand and an apology

The EAGGF – the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund – is where the money for the CAP comes from, and it represented, in 1974, 73 per cent of total EC expenditure. Mr Isidor Früh (Ge, CD), rapporteur for the Committee on Budgets, deplored this fact, which was due, he said, to the development of other Community policies. However, he felt that the Guarantee Section, under which the bulk of the Fund is disbursed, could not be reduced until arrangements had been made for the Regional and Social Funds to carry a fairer share of EC expenditure. Furthermore, he felt that a separate Food Aid policy – food aid is at present financed by the EAGGF – should be developed which operated independently.

Turning to the Guidance Section, Mr Früh felt the system needed improving. At present, appropriations from it were not being sufficiently used, and this was the fault of the Member States and the Council. He also stressed the importance of closer control and anti-fraud measures.

Mr Albert Liogier (Fr, EPD), draftsman of the Committee on Agriculture's opinion, stressed the importance of the CAP as the Community's only true common policy. This was why it accounted for almost three-quarters of EC spending.

In 1974, aid to the dehydration of fodder, subsidies on sugar imports and, in particular, the costs of reducing the beef and veal surplus, represented additional

expenditure, but this was more than offset by savings in the cereals and milk sectors. Mr Liogier also referred to aid to individual projects. Applications for EAGGF aid take too long to be considered – should such consideration not be decentralised, he wanted to know. He also thought more speed was necessary in the provision of information by national departments – this would help in preventing ‘irregularities’ and fraud.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br), for the European Conservative Group, supported what Mr Früh and Mr Liogier had said. He did find it extraordinary that the House should be discussing in 1976 what had happened in 1974. But he thought the report showed that the EAGGF had brought positive benefits to both consumer and farmer in 1974.

That was entirely the view of Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD). There is a lot of criticism of the CAP, he said, but what would our food situation look like without it?

It was at this point that Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) rose to observe that there was no member of the Council of Ministers present on the Council benches. He demanded that the Council treat Parliament’s proceedings with greater gravity in future – his delegation would certainly make sure that a British minister was always present when the British held the Council presidency next year.

Mr Dalyell was followed by Mr Petrus Lardinois (See ‘Notes for details of these figures’) for the Commission who began by apologising to Lord Bruce of Donington (Br, S) and Lord Walston (Br, S) for having been in error the previous day in the figures on the storage costs for skimmed milk powder. Lord Bruce thanked him. ‘The Commissioner’s admission only adds to the esteem in which the entire House holds him,’ he said.

Mr Lardinois agreed in broad terms with the remarks made by speakers in the debate.

Parliament then adopted the motion for a resolution – including an amendment tabled by Mr Jan de Koning (Du, CD) and tabled by Mr Scott-Hopkins – by thirty-four votes to nil.

N.B. Addressing the European Congress of animal feedstuff manufactures at the week-end, Commissioner Petrus Lardinois said: ‘As soon as you have bought 400,000 tons of milk powder, the programme for its inclusion in animal feedstuffs will end and the scheme will not be renewed’. (Source: Financial Times)

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Lady Fisher focuses attention on urban environment

Lady Fisher of Rednal (Br, S), who is a Member with considerable experience of urban problems, spoke to a question first put down by Socialist colleagues asking the Commission about its approach to urban decay.

Lady Fisher spoke of deprived areas where the opportunities for rehabilitation may be limited. There tends here to be a preponderance of older dwelling which are prescribed as 'giving character', though this is not always the feeling of those who live there. The dominant feeling is one of being neglected and forgotten by society.

Characteristics to these decaying urban areas are an easy breakdown of marriages, serious ill health among women, juvenile crime and vandalism. It is, moreover, mainly migrants and the less privileged who tend to live there. This creates a very volatile situation where prejudice can breed. Lady Fisher therefore asked for special attention for these areas.

In reply, Commissioner George Thomson spoke of the studies into urban renewal that had been undertaken by the Commission's services. These include studies of decentralisation, decongestion, the problems of town centres generally and human studies into helping people to make contact. The real trouble, though, is that the Community's budget is still only equal to half a per cent of the EC's national wealth. And of the 7.5m u.a. it gets, over 5.5m u.a. goes to agriculture. 'The Member States must learn to see such problems as these in a wider context,' he concluded.

Diesel engines for tractors

Pollution is checked by reference to the opacity of exhaust gases. Put it another way it is the light-absorption coefficient of the gases that has to be measured according to a formula given. The Commission is proposing to bring the Nine's laws into line here. But the argument is, again, whether this should be compulsory or optional. Mr Marcel Brégégère (Fr, S) called for 'the system of optional harmonisation to be replaced by standard EC laws in all Member States'. This particular clause in this motion was carried by twelve votes to six. And his motion approving the Commission proposal subject to amendments was carried by fourteen votes to nil.

Mr Richard Mitchell (Br, S) (who is strongly opposed to compulsory harmonisation) and Mr Tam Dalyell both wanted to know what the bill would cost.

Mr Thomson's reply was that the principle of costing Commission proposals deserves consideration even though at present only bills going into the EC budget have a financial appendix.

Who invented marmalade?

Commissioner George Thomson said it was his home town of Dundee. Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) claimed it was his home town. All this over a report that, in the end, was referred back to committee. Because as Mr Marcel Brégégère (Fr, S) pointed out Mr Thomson put forward arguments about the cost of amendments Parliament was asking for that differed from any heard in committee. Mr Jan Broeksz (Du, S) supported him and the vote to refer back was 12-5.

The Mediterranean

Mr Virgile Barel is the deputy for the Alpes Maritimes in the French National Assembly. He has long been concerned about the pollution of the Mediterranean and Petition No. 8/75 is the third he has submitted to the European Parliament. His principal concern is titanium dioxide pollution and the reason for his latest petition is that the Italian Montedison company, despite court orders against it, is continuing to dump some 8000 tons per day of this substance into the Mediterranean.

Mr Lagorce, rapporteur for the Committee on Rules and Petitions, referred to the special problems obtaining in the Med, which was an almost land-locked sea. He was followed by Mr Brugger who pointed out that our prosperity was put at risk by pollution: perhaps we ought to pay the price that protection demanded. However he warned against applying over-stringent conditions, which could force some companies out of business and result in unemployment and other social problems.

Replying to the debate, Mr George Thomson said that the Commission had been represented at the Barcelona Conference on pollution in the Mediterranean and had recommended that the Council should endorse the Convention which had already been signed by twelve of the participating countries.

Parliament agreed to a motion urging the Council to approve a Commission proposal for a directive on waste from the titanium dioxide industry by 9 votes to nil.

TRANSPORT

Concorde

Parliament's oral question on Concorde — asking the Commission to use its best offices in the international field to ensure that the aircraft go quickly into service on the air routes of the world — produced a debate which was concerned more with procedural proprieties than with Concorde itself.

Moving the question, Mr Tom Normanton (Br, EC) felt that the European Parliament and the Commission should give full recognition to the joint technological achievement which had gone into the Concorde project. Some people might challenge the wisdom of having embarked on development of such an aircraft in the first place, but nobody could challenge the level of the technological achievement. Now that the plane had entered service, the EC should use what leverage it had to overcome what at worst amounted to 'sheer, inscrupulous duplicity' in trying to stop it from operating successfully.

Replying for the Commission, Mr George Thomson agreed that Concorde represented a fine technological achievement, but referred nevertheless to the Commission's limited competence to tackle such matter as overflying or landing rights — these were the province of the individual Member States. However, the Commission had let it be known in Washington that a ban on landing rights not exactly improve EC-US relations.

Mr Xavier Hunault (Fr, EPD) felt the question highlighted the increasing trend towards protectionism on the part of the United States.

Then the wrangling began. Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) had nothing against Concorde, but thought it was none of the Commission's business. How had the oral question come to be put, anyway? Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (Ge, S) accused Mr Hunault of forgetting that European security depended on good EC-US relations. Mr William Hamilton (Br, S) said the appearance of the question on the agenda was in order. What he wanted to know was how come various

representatives of Concorde's builders happen to be in the public gallery. Apart from that, he thought the matter was of no concern to either Parliament or the Commission.

Lord Bessborough (Br, EC), Mr Erwin Lange (Ge, S), Sir Peter Kirk (Br, EC) and Mr Fellermaier all rose to discuss the procedural correctness or otherwise of the oral question. They were interrupted by Mr Hunault (who objected to Mr Fellermaier's charges that he or the EPD were attacking the US), Mr Normanton (who insisted that his question was not a plug for the Concorde's manufacturers but for European technological prowess) and by Mr Michael Stewart (Br, S) (who thought that Concorde was a good example of the contribution public as opposed to private enterprise had to play).

The debate was wrapped up by Commissioner Thomson, who re-emphasised that the Commission was only interested in promoting common policies – which might include overflying or landing rights, or a common aeronautical policy.

How much noise should motorbikes make?

The Commission proposes to bring the Nine's laws into line on the permissible sound level and exhaust systems of motorbikes. Depending on CCs, the maximum noise allowed will be 80 db (A) for 50cc, 82 for 125cc, 84 for 350cc and 85 or 86 for 500cc. Mr Kai Nyborg (Da, EPD), rapporteur for the Transport Committee, wanted the 'optional' clause to be subject to a time limit. There are times, he feels, when 'optional harmonisation' can be overdone.

Commissioner George Thomson took the opposite view – in fact, he defended the well-known Gundelach line that optional harmonisation produces better results.

However, Mr Nyborg's motion was agreed to. An amendment by Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Br, EC) to give motorbike makers longer to adjust, was rejected.

Driver's field of vision

This is a complicated proposal for a directive, but what it comes to is that a motor vehicle driver must have a forward field of vision of 180 degree. Mr Kai

Nyborg (Da, EPD) was asking Parliament to approve this proposal, although he did point out that forward vision does not present the same problems as rear vision. A motion to this effect was agreed to.

Waterway carrier's rights

Parliament held a joint debate on two reports, drawn up for the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport, by Mr Willem Albers (Du, S) and Mr Paul De Clercq (Be, L) on Commission proposals governing access to the occupation of inland waterways carrier and for mutual recognition of rules governing the qualifications needed to do so.

Mr Albers introduced both reports. Welcoming the proposals, he expressed doubts regarding the assessment of the financial criteria to be employed in deciding who should have access to this occupation. He also wondered just how likely the Council was to approve these measures at this particular time.

Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Br, EC) said the Conservatives endorsed the motion. But she too had doubts as to the means that would be used to judge peoples' financial status.

Replying, Commissioner Thomson said he thought the proposals did have a chance of being approved by the Council.

Five Members voted in favour of both motions.

EXTERNAL TRADE

Cattle quota

Commissioner George Thomson welcomed Mr Mario Vetrone's (It, CD) report on the quota for cattle imports the EC is to open under GATT. These are pedigree alpine breeds. But the point at issue, as Mr Thomson said, is the need for every one to have the same veterinary rules for cattle imports. Otherwise, it gets in the way of legitimate trading. A motion approving the Commission's proposal was agreed to.

Duty refunds

The Commission wants the same system for the reimbursement of duties paid in error to be used throughout the Nine. Mr Emile Muller (Fr, L) put down a motion approving a Commission proposal to this effect. It was agreed to.

Removing trade barriers

A motion tabled by Mr Karl Mitterdorfer (It, CD), approving Commission proposals for removing barriers to trade, was agreed to by seven votes to nil. The approval was subject to amendments which Mr Thomson, for the Commission, was loth to accept. The present batch of proposals concern (a) precious metals, (b) high nitrogen content amonium nitrate based fertilisers, (c) permissible sound levels for tower cranes, current generators for welding and for power supply, and (d) check-weighing and grading machines.

Check on wine imports to go on

Mr Heinz Frehsee (Ge, S) for the Agricultural Committee, put down a motion asking Parliament to approve a Commission proposal to review existing arrangements to keep a check on wine imports. This is a stop-gap measure pending entry into force of agreements with the Maghreb countries. This went through on the nod.

Duty on wine: offsetting currency fluctuations

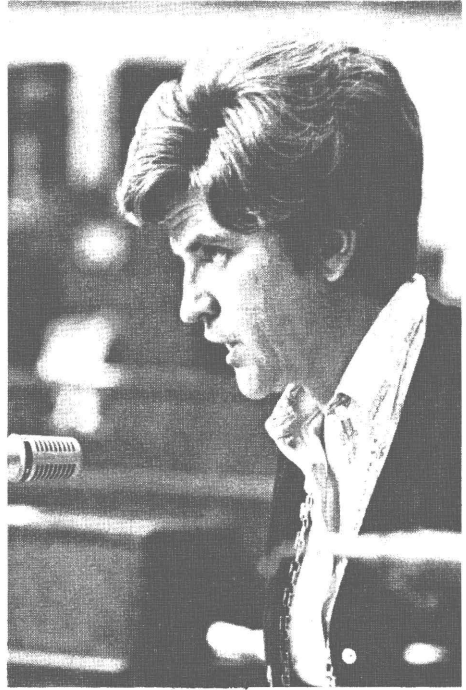
The green pound is now to be used to calculate customs duties on wine because reference prices governing tariff concessions on wine imports from third countries are also worked out at the green rate. Mr Libero Della Briotta (It, S) for the Agricultural Committee, put down a motion asking Parliament to approve a Commission proposal to this effect. This was agreed to on the nod.

DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

Council's indecision a threat to developing countries

Miss Colette Flesch (Lu, L), introducing her oral question to the Council on the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT), lamented the delays in concluding

Miss Colette Flesch: 'Why hasn't the Council taken a decision yet on the association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Community?'



agreements with a group of countries which badly need all the help they can get. Because they were not signatories of the Lomé Convention, they will lose out on benefits such as STABEX until a decision on association is taken.

Mr Gaston Thorn, President of the Council, agreed that the situation was unfortunate. The delay had been caused in part by the insistence of France that its overseas territories should be entitled to funds from the EAGGF. Now the Council was trying to find an overall solution to the OCT question, and Mr Thorn would raise the matter again before the end of the Luxembourg presidency.

Sir Geoffrey de Freitas (Br, S) thought it appalling that developing countries should suffer because of the Council's inability to agree. Mr Pierre Deschamps (Be, CD) supported his remarks. Mr Amédée Bouquerel (Fr, EPD) pointed out that the principle of parallelism between Lomé and the OCT had been breached.

Concluding the debate, Mr Thorn said that there had always been eight out of nine governments in agreement – but they had not always been the same eight.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Council

Mr Gaston Thorn, Luxembourg Prime Minister and President of the Council, replied.

1. Mr Christian de la Malène wanted to know if the Community could still negotiate with a third country even after any one Member State had broken off diplomatic relations with it. Mr Thorn replied that legally it was possible. Politically, circumstances altered cases.
2. and 3. Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer (Du, L) and Mr Alain Terrenoire (Fr, EPD) raised the question of Summer Time. Mr Thorn replied that the Council had looked into this at its last meeting and hoped to overcome the problem. Mr Berkhouwer protested that such an answer was quite meaningless. People on different sides of the Rhine were an hour apart. People were arriving to work in one town, while in another, people were already leaving for lunch. Mr Terrenoire pointed out that in a few weeks, millions of Europeans will be going on holiday. Could not the Council make a fresh effort? Mr Thorn replied that one should not exaggerate. The USA had different time zones and on holiday it did not bother people. Both Mr Berhouwer and Mr Terrenoire protested at this. What about going by air? Mr Thorn replied that the Benelux countries had already decided to introduce their own timescale as of January next year, regardless, and another government said it could not hope to come to any agreement for some time.

Mr John Osborn (Br, EC) suggested it might be better to have time zones, especially bearing in mind the distance between Munich and Shannon and Otranto and John o' Groats. It would be better than times being arranged at the whim of Member States. Mr Thorn agreed. 'It is not our aim to have one time zone. But at least let us not have changes every two weeks.' Mr Pierre Giraud (Fr, S) asked him if unanimity were needed for a decision here. Mr Thorn replied: 'Yes,' because it is not covered by the Treaty.

Mr Michael Yeats (Ir, EPD) suggested that, if the Community were not capable of solving a problem like this, what could it do. Being particularly fond of trains, he is struck by the fact that anyone climbing aboard at Basel will move into a new time zone in France and a second new one in Luxembourg.

Mr Willy Dondelinger: 'Does not the Council think that we need to legislate to ensure that the Community's first general election is not marred by any unfair drawing of constituency boundaries?'



4. In reply to Mr Willi Dondelinger (Lu, S), Mr Thorn said the Council could naturally not countenance any irregularities in the drawing of constituency boundaries for European elections. He pointed out, however, that even the European Parliament had had trouble finding a satisfactory answer to this problem.
5. With his usual fairness, Mr Thorn said in reply to a question from Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté about the EC's stance at UNCTAD IV in Nairobi that he would make copies of his speech there available to Members. He told the House that what is so unpleasant about being Council President is that he always has to defend the kind of common position that results from taking as a basis what the least generous Member State has to offer. He told Lord Reay (Br, EC) that the Council had not had time to consider Dr Kissinger's Nairobi proposal for a world resources bank.
6. Mr Alexander Fletcher (Br, EC) asked if a review of all the advisory committees could be made to see which ones were really necessary. 'It is

important to know who makes decisions in the Community. It seems there is so much advice available the Council is incapable of deciding.' Mr Thorn agreed it would be a good idea.

7. Mr Thorn refused to be drawn about Brazilian President Geisel's visit to various Member States. After all, he is not visiting the Community.
8. Similarly, he declined to comment on a question from Mr Gustave Ansart (Fr, CA) on interference in the political affairs of Member States. He was referring to comments about the possibility of Communists sharing in government in certain Member States.
9. In reply to Mrs Winifred Ewing (Br, Ind), who asked about farm surpluses making their way to East Europe, Mr Thorn said he could not say what would go where. He pointed out that the EC's aid policy was not designed to dispose of surpluses but to help. At times, it had had to buy on the world market to meet its commitments. Mrs Ewing pointed out that thirty million people in the world are dying and she asked about help for those living in countries outside the Lomé Convention. Mr Thorn said the Council would do all it could. But for some Member States it was a financial problem. Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) asked if the Council could review the method of tendering and make more use of the market methods. Mr Thorn said: 'I will see what I can do.' Mr Michel Cointat (Fr, EPD) then said that there was a drought in the Community. 'Are we not going to have a food shortage?' In reply, Mr Thorn said: 'I am not an expert on agriculture or on the weather. I will see if I can give you a better answer next time.'

Questions to the Commission

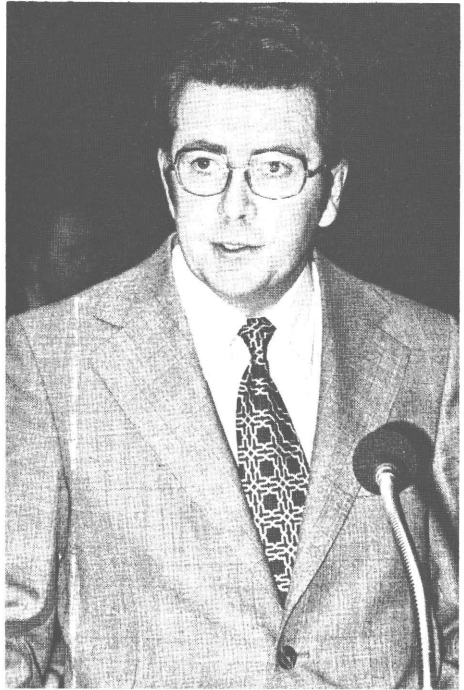
10. The average weekly cost of storing skimmed milk powder was 200,000 u.a., Mr Petrus Lardinois said. Replying to a supplementary question from Sir Geoffrey de Freitas on food aid, he agreed that the provision of 200,000 tons of skimmed milk was not a political luxury, whilst using 400,000 tons in animal fodder was. Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) wanted to know why the one million ton surplus could not be disposed of on the world market. The Commissioner said that a 500,000 ton EC reserve was justifiable, so in fact the real surplus only amounted to 500,000 tons. There were financial problems in providing food aid, he said, which the Council had not resolved. Lord Walston (Br, S) thought that the Community would

save 80 u.a. per annum on storage costs per ton by giving the skimmed milk powder away.

Answering other supplementary questions, Mr Lardinois said that present stocks were worth about US \$1 billion. Nevertheless, the EC could not afford to disrupt world markets by releasing it. He agreed with Mr Cornelis Laban (Du, S) that the ultimate solution was to avoid surpluses in the first place, and the Commission would be putting forward new structural proposals in June.

11. Commissioner George Thomson said that the Inter-services Group in Financial Instruments was designed for internal Commission use in coordinating spending. He agreed with Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Br, EC) that it played a part coordinating Regional and Social Fund activities. Was too little being spent on the Regional Fund, Mr Osborn asked. Mr Thomson agreed that three-quarters of EC spending went on agriculture and the way to increase other spending was to increase the overall budget.
12. Commission President François-Xavier Ortoli said that the seat of Community institutions was fixed by Article 216 of the EC Treaty. He refused to answer a supplementary question by Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) asking whether France was pressuring the Commission into not revealing the full costs involved in the EP's nomad existence. He had no opinion as to the suitability of Luxembourg as a single seat, and he felt it was up to the EP itself to take any initiative in that direction.
13. The question of early retirement was to be discussed at a tripartite conference, Vice-President Patrick Hillery said. It had also been raised by EC Social Ministers and by the European TUC meeting in London. He pointed out, however, that retiring the 60-64 year age group would not provide sufficient vacancies to provide jobs for the young. What about the ETUC proposal for a 35-hour week, Mr Willem Albers (Du, S) wanted to know. Mr Hillery said the matter would be considered. Mr Marcel Lemoine (Fr, CA) felt the question of youth employment should be debated in greater depth at another time. The Commissioner agreed with Mr John Evans (Br, S) that the best solution was economic growth to provide more jobs.
14. President Ortoli defended the right of members of the Commission – in this case, Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, who had referred to the powers of the EP – to express their own views.

Mr Liam Kavanagh: 'What steps does the Commission intend to propose to protect the jobs of workers in the Community fertilizer industry?'



15. The EC Regional Development Fund was fixed until the end of 1977, Mr George Thomson said. In that year, the Commission would make new proposals for the next phase. Answering several supplementary questions, he agreed that the scope of the RDF should be enlarged, and said that local authorities were being increasingly involved as regards application of the Fund. He agreed with Mr Michel Cointat (Fr, EPD) that publicity of the Fund's activities was very welcome.
16. Answering a question from Mr Michael Yeats (Ir, EPD) on subsidies for fishing boats, Mr Lardinois said that it had been agreed to extend permission for subsidies until the end of 1975, but no longer. He had received information that France was still paying them. If this was true, the matter would be raised. He pointed out in response to a question by Mr Ralph Howell (Br, EC) that these subsidies were paid not by the EC but by national governments: the Commission had merely given authorisation.
17. In reply to a question from Mr Liam Kavanagh (Ir, S) Mr Altiero Spinelli said that the possibility of dumping applied only to nitrogeous fertiliser.

Fertilisers from the USA were generally 50 per cent more expensive than EC equivalents. In the case of dumping, the Commissioner said in reply to Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) that the EC rules on competition would have to be invoked. He agreed with Mr Pierre Giraud (Fr, S) that dumping was in breach of the Helsinki Agreement.

18. Vice-President Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza answering a question from Mr John Osborn (Br, EC) on an EC transport policy, said he saw no reason for making any fundamental change to present plans in the transport sector.
19. Mr Scarascia Mugnozza gave an assurance that a proper balance would be respected in the nomination of members of the Administrative Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. He also assured Mr Michael Yeats (Ir, EPD) that there could be no question of three representatives from the same multinational company being nominated.
20. President François-Xavier Ortoli repeated his defence of the rights of Commission Members to express their views within certain limits. Mr Petrus Lardinois had not overstepped these limits. Did he personally share Mr Lardinois's views that the CAP was endangered by the value of the green pound and lira, Mr Cornelis Laban (Du, S) wanted to know. Mr Ortoli replied that the Commission would continue to submit proposals designed to strengthen the policy.

Mr Michel Cointat (Fr, EPD) rose to wonder whether this question had not been impolite – everyone knew that Mr Lardinois was a passionate man. President Spénale intervened to say that, had the question been considered offensive, the Bureau would not have accepted it.

21. Sir Christopher Soames, answering a question by Mr Michael Herbert (It, EPD), agreed that the Commission was not happy with the countervailing duties on Irish beef exports to the US and would take the matter up.

At the end of Question Time, Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S) rose and said that he and his colleagues would consider tabling an oral question with debate on the seat of the European Parliament.

He felt it would be helpful if Mr Ortoli could firmly deny that the Commission was under any pressure from the French Government to

suppress the financial implications of the European Parliament meeting in Strasbourg.

President Ortoli, visibly upset, considered the question a slight on his honour and on that of France, and denied that either he or the Commission ever acted except with total integrity and independence.

NOTES

Direct Elections: Will the European Council agree in July?

The failure of Foreign Ministers to make progress on direct elections in April surprised nobody. But if confidence in the Council's decision-making ability is beginning to wane, there is still some hope that the European Council meeting in July will result in a compromise which may yet leave time to organise the elections for 1978.

'Britain and Italy are quite right in insisting on a figure of 300-400 Members. France will have to back down.' That, at any rate, is the view of Mr Schelto Patijn, prime mover behind the EP's draft convention on direct elections. 'If the issue is shelved again, that may well be the last we see of it.'

What about the 1978 target date? 'If we have agreement in July, 1978 remains a possibility,' Mr Patijn said. Sir Peter Kirk said: 'I have always taken the realistic view that, if we have direct elections by 1980, I will be perfectly happy.' But, Sir Peter added, the Council had said it would act in July, 'so now we will have to wait and see if it does.'

Help for Italian earthquake victims

The European Parliament observed a minute's silence on Monday as a mark of respect for the victims of the earthquake disaster in Italy. President Georges Spénale told the House of the telegram he had sent to the Italian authorities and announced that the Political Groups would be putting down a motion of solidarity on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the Commission has pledged 100,000 units of account for emergency aid.

Death of Mrs Elisabeth Orth

The European Parliament has learned with great regret of the death of Mrs Elisabeth Orth, a German Socialist Member. She was fifty-five years of age.

Prescott proposes Committee on Enquiry on Corruption

Reacting to Tuesday's debate on alleged illegal payments by multinational and national enterprises, Mr John Prescott said that he was concerned that the Commissioner, Mr Borschette, appeared to be shirking his responsibilities to act on corruption. 'It clearly is the Commission's responsibility when such acts lead to a breach of the Treaties.'

Mr Prescott nevertheless welcomed the Commissioner's assurance to give careful study to the evidence of corruption. He added: 'What we need now is an EP Committee of Enquiry with legal investigation powers, similar to the US Senate committees. That would strengthen the EP's role as an international assembly.'

Welsh welcome in Parliament

Welsh Under-Secretary of State, Alec Jones, MP, led a delegation of Welsh local authority representatives visiting the European Parliament on May 11th, 12th and 13th. Accompanied by TV and press representatives, the delegation was invited to Strasbourg by the European Education Research Trust in cooperation with Parliament's London Office and the Commission's Cardiff Office.

In Strasbourg, the minister and councillors were received by President Georges Spénale and Mayor Pflimlin and met Members of Parliament and Commissioner George Thomson to discuss regional and other matters of particular interest to Wales.

Andrei Sakharov concerned about Helsinki

Speaking on the phone from Moscow, Andrei Saharov told Lord Bethell he is very worried about the fate of the Helsinki Agreement, especially as regards the non-reunion of families. He mentioned Yefim Davidovich, who had tried for years to be allowed to leave Russia to rejoin his family in Israel and who had

been refused leave year after year. I regret to say that he died three weeks ago without ever having seen his family again,' said Lord Bethell.

Lord Bethell appeals to all who know of any more cases like this to send the names to Gaston Thorn, Council President, to help the Council in monitoring the Helsinki Agreement. He indicated that the US Congress may be monitoring it too.

Avoid Europe splitting into two camps

Mr Charles-Ferdinand Nothomb, leader of Belgium's Social Christian Party and a very active member of the new European People's Party (Christian Democrat) was in Strasbourg on a two-day visit with 30 other members of the Belgian Senate and House of Representatives. Speaking at a press conference on May 11th he warned that Europe must avoid splitting into two camps whether political ('You can't build a new Europe solely by reference to short-term majorities') or geographical. He also feels Parliament ought to take a very strong line if the European Council should once again fail to take a decision on direct elections.

Commissioner Albert Borschette suffers mild heart attack

Mr Michael Yeats (Ir, EPD), Vice-President of the European Parliament, informed the House on Tuesday afternoon that Commissioner Albert Borschette had been rushed to hospital in Strasbourg after suffering a mild heart attack. His condition was later described serious but not critical. Mr Borschette had been answering questions that morning about the conduct of multinational companies. The European Parliament sent a message wishing Mr Borschette a speedy recovery.

Quarrel over the rainbow

One of the services provided by the European Parliament secretariat – and one of which is quite proud – is what is known as the 'rainbow'. This is the verbatim record of all speeches delivered in the House. It is called the rainbow because the texts are delivered to the editor in sheafs the colour of the language used. And this rainbow is available, whether Parliament meets in Strasbourg or

Luxembourg, on the following morning. But there is a very important but. This is that the speeches included are subject to check, but no revision, by the Members who delivered them.

The sentence in the Rainbow which caused all the controversy this week came in a speech by Mr Normanton (Br, EC) in the debate on allegations of illegal payments by multinational companies. He said: 'Will Mr Prescott, or his honourable friends in the Communist Group, tell the House what bribes or favours were demanded by them from these very self-same oil companies or indeed, from many companies which have no connection with oil?' Mr Normanton intended the word 'them' to refer to the Communists but the Socialists saw the remarks as altogether too unfortunate. Mr Tom Normanton accordingly withdrew his remarks without reservation.

Football arouses passions in the House

'A lot of us here', said Mr Ludwig Fellermaier on May 12th 'want to watch the big match tonight'. He was appealing to the House for speed in wrapping up the day's proceedings. Despite a shocked objection from Sir Peter Kirk — 'We should go ahead and do the work we are here to do' — Parliament decided to defer a couple of reports and finish by eight. Antipathy to the idea of a late sitting came from all sides of the House. Sir Peter Kirk admitted defeat when he said: 'I am not interested in football, so it would not have mattered to me'.

The milk powder figures

Commissioner Petrus Lardinois told the House that the cost this year of storage an estimated one million tons of skimmed milk powder will be some 83.2 million units of account. This comprises a basic outlay of 10.4 m u.a. and 72.8 m u.a. "rentekosten" or interest payments. Mr Lardinois made this statement on Thursday afternoon to correct the erroneous impression he had given the previous day at Question Time. Sir Geoffrey de Freitas had wanted to know the average weekly cost to the EC of storing skimmed milk powder. Mr Lardinois replied: '200,000 rekeneheden per week, voor 1,000,000 ton, ongeacht de kosten van de rente' (i.e. 200,000 u.a. per week not including interest). Clearly 52 weeks x 200,000 u.a. equals 10.4 but the operative word here is "ongeacht": without taking into account interest charges. When Lord Bruce put it to him that interest charges were seven times the cost of storage, Mr Lardinois replied:

'Ik wil daarom herhalen dat voor een miljoen ton de kosten, inclusief interest, op jaarbasis ruim 10 miljoen rekeneenheden bedragen. Een achtste van die zijn de directe opslagkosten en zeven achtsten zijn rente'. ('I should like to repeat that for a million tons, the costs including interest on a yearly basis amount to around 10 m u.a. One eighth represents direct storage costs and seven eighths interest'). In other words, it was in Mr Lardinois' second intervention on this point that he got his figures wrong. However, as Lord Bruce said, the fact that he came before the House to apologise 'only adds to the very high esteem in which he is already held by Parliament'.

The milk powder controversy

In its farm price proposals of January this year the Commission proposed that 600,000 tons of milk powder be disposed of as animal fodder. Over a period of ten months 2 per cent of all feedstuffs was to be skimmed milk powder. Parliament objected this would not work and suggested a deposit scheme as an alternative. Under this scheme, a farmer buying protein foodstuffs has, at the same time, to buy milk powder certificates. He also pays a deposit. Then in due course he has either to take up the milk powder or forfeit his deposit. The Commission has in fact adopted this scheme and first indications are that it is working tolerably well. Of the 400,000 tons which the Council finally agreed to dispose of in this way, certificates have been bought in respect of 100,000 tons.

As to timing, the original idea was that the scheme should run until October 1st but now it is intended to run until the whole of the 400,000 tons are disposed of.

The soya bean controversy

It was appreciated that those buying milk powder for fodder would buy proportionately less in the way of such protein feedstuffs as soya beans. So the Commission proposed to pay a storage premium to offset any fall-off in protein imports that might result. Parliament regarded this as a nonsense: the actual imports of soya, for example, are around 14 million tons so the effect of the measure would be minimal. Parliament therefore rejected the proposal at its April sittings.

Censure motions

Article 144 of the Rome Treaty reads: 'If a motion of censure on the activities of the Commission is tabled before it, the Assembly shall not vote thereon until at least three days after the motion has been tabled and only by open vote. If the motion of censure is carried by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, representing a majority of the members of the Assembly, the members of the Commission shall resign as a body.'

In practice this means half of the 196 Members now in the European Parliament plus one or 99 votes.

Summing up

At its sittings of 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 May 1976, Members put down 4 questions for debate with the Council and 7 questions for debate with the Commission. At Question Time, 9 questions were addressed to the Council and 12 questions were addressed to the Commission. 25 reports were considered and Parliament delivered 25 opinions. The House sat for 55 minutes on Monday, for 8 hours 10 minutes on Tuesday, for 7 hours 45 minutes on Wednesday, for 7 hours on Thursday and for 2 hours 20 minutes on Friday, making a total of 25 hours 30 minutes.

References

Subject	Comm. doc. No.	E.P. Doc. No.	Date of Debate
Illegal payments by national and multinational enterprises '20th century freebooters must be held to account'	—	79/76	11/5
Helping small and medium-sized firms . . .	—	75/76	11/5
Helsinki agreement is not enforceable . . .	—	32/76	12/5
Russia's deals with the West	—	76/76	12/5
Equal pay for men and women	—	81-82/76	12/5
Passports but no Union, by 1978?	—	55/76	—
House unanimous in condemning oppression in Chile	—	56/76	13/5
Uruguay's Latin America 'Switzerland' image slipping	—	77/76	13/5
European Conservatives table censure motion	—	109/76	—
Spain, particularly since the Arias speech on television	—	100/76	12/5
Resolution on Italian Earthquake	—	107/76	12/5
Parliament warns Commission to handle phase-out of imperial units of measurement gently	471/75	563/75	10/5
Windscale and all that	—	69/76	11/5
Ispra and a common research policy	—	71/76	11/5
Inshore fishing: Parliament approves Commission proposals	438/75	66/76	13/5
Crediting securities to the EAGGF	531/75	99/76	13/5
Resolution with a sting in its tail	506/75	64/76	13/5
A Community of compassion and concern .	382/76	89/76	13/5

European schools debate marked by disagreement on admissions policy	—	492/75	11/5
Bicycles would be better in new building: Cointat and Cheysson broadly agree on how to tackle the 1977 budget	—	97/76	13/5
Carry-forwards approved	47/76	98/76	13/5
EAGGF financial report debate: a motion, a demand and an apology	—	70/76	13/5
Lady Fisher focuses attention on urban environment	—	78/76	13/5
Diesel engines	467/75	65/76	14/5
Jams and marmalades	—	74/76	14/5
The Mediterranean	—	63/76	14/5
Concorde	—	108/76	14/5
How much noise should motor cycles make?	478/75	93/76	14/5
Driver's field of vision	485/75	94/76	14/5
Waterway carriers: right to ply	324/75	90/76	14/5
Waterway carriers: recognition of rights . .	324/75	91/76	14/5
Cattle quota	529/75	58/76	14/5
Duty refunds	496/75	54/76	14/5
Removing trade barriers	421/75 486/75 488/75 489/75	73/76	13/5
Check on wine imports to go on	525/75	60/76	10/5
Duty on wine: offsetting currency fluctuations	40/76	61/76	10/5
Question Time	—	102/76	—

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this text to denote nationality and political allegiance: CD Christian Democrat, S Socialist, L Liberal and Allies, EC European Conservatives, EPD European Progressive Democrat, CA Communist and Allies, Ind Non-attached Independent Members, Be Belgian, Br British, Du Dutch, Fr French, Ge German, Ir Irish, It Italian, Lu Luxembourg, EC European Community.

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