

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

**BULLETIN**

N° 6/1974 June



## INTRODUCTION

As promised, here is our first monthly Bulletin. It contains a record of the proceedings of the June plenary session during which fourteen Opinions and two studies were adopted. The debates on the development of the social situation in the Community in 1973 were attended by Mr Patrick HILLERY, Vice-President of the European Commission.

The Chairman paid an official visit to Berlin in June, during which he met the President of the Federal Republic of Germany. Finally, the Section for Regional Development held a meeting in Calabria.

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121st Plenary session  
26 and 27 June 1974

A. CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

As far as the work of the Chairman since the last plenary session is concerned, the first thing to mention is a conversation with the Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, Ambassador LEBSANFT, which took place on 18 June 1974 and dealt with the following points.

The meetings scheduled at regular intervals and improved coordination between the Economic and Social Committee and the Council authorities will contribute to a better organization of the work of the Committee.

On behalf of the Committee I welcome these new procedures, which form part of the measures which the Council adopted on 12 February 1974. But I also expressed the hope that the Council would agree to allow the Rapporteur to personally present especially important opinions to the Council department responsible for the preparation of the work.

Under the new procedure, which is intended to supplement the professional contacts between the respective General Secretariats, the Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee is to be afforded the possibility, inter alia, of drawing the attention of the Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to specific opinions which are considered particularly important by the economic and social groupings represented on the Committee.

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In this connection mention should be made of the Opinion on the place and role of the Economic and Social Committee in the institutional machinery of the Communities, which was adopted on 28 March 1974. This document represents an initial contribution by our Committee to the various work which has been embarked upon at Community and national level with a view to achieving European Union. On the basis of this Opinion we are hoping to be able to take an active part in the second phase of the work, which is to culminate before the end of 1975 in a final report on European Union.

In connection with the expiry of the term of office of the members of the Economic and Social Committee on 22 August 1974, I have acquainted myself with the measures taken by the competent departments of the Council to avoid delays in new appointments.

## B. PREPARATION OF THE OPINIONS

### 1. Multinational undertakings

Rapporteur : Mr MARGOT - Belgium - Various interests

The Committee adopted its Opinion by 61 votes to 28 with 4 abstentions, on the

"Opinion on the Commission Communication to the Council concerning Multinational Undertakings and Community Regulations".

Subject to certain comments the Committee approves the Commission memorandum and the annexed draft resolution. No position is adopted on the analysis, attached to the memorandum, of the problems engendered by the development of multinationals.

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The Committee notes that the Commission does not dispute the economic and social advantages of the growth of multinationals; they can help to improve living conditions throughout the world but there are problems caused by the economic, monetary, legal, social and fiscal disparities between the Member States.

Since there is no international machinery for controlling the behaviour of multinationals, the behaviour of such companies within the Community must be subject to the same Community legal system as European companies.

To rule out discrimination, Community action must not be aimed explicitly and exclusively at multinationals, but at questionable or reprehensible behaviour on the part of any company or individual which involves bypassing regulations or avoiding taxes or which, by abusing a position of economic power, sacrifices the public interest or that of workers or consumers to private interests.

The Committee feels that the measures proposed by the Commission are inadequate to solve the problems which have a world-wide dimension. Therefore matters outside the Community's scope would require the involvement of appropriate international organizations, particularly the OECD and the United Nations. A code of conduct for multinationals should not be rejected out of hand.

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The Committee devotes specific comments to Community measures in connection with : protection of the public interest, maintaining healthy competition, conditions for purchasing undertakings, equality of reception conditions, relations between multinationals and developing countries, the improvement of information, and the protection of workers' rights. As regards the last point, the Committee makes a number of suggestions of a social nature, in connection with security of employment and income, regulation of labour relations, and the role of the trade unions and the employers' organization.

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## 2. Development of the social situation

Rapporteur : Mr DE BRUYN - Belgium - Various interests

The Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted its Opinion with 7 abstentions on the

"Development of the Social Situation in the Community in 1973".

The year 1973 was characterized by slower economic growth coupled with inflation, which has become more marked in 1974. This has led to adjustments in industrial structures and Consumer habits which, in the Committee's view, have caused serious threats to employment and are creating problems which may become particularly acute in certain regions of the Community.

The Committee notes that the Community is going through a crisis, one of the main features of which is an accelerating rate of inflation, caused by rises in the cost of raw materials,

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particularly energy products and supply problems. The crisis is producing major repercussions in the social sphere. Under these circumstances the Committee feels that the order of priorities which was set over a year ago in the framework of the Social Action Programme should be reviewed in the light of the latest economic and social developments.

In its opinion the Committee examines certain specific aspects of employment : the employment of women, the self-employed, migrant workers, the handicapped and temporary work. In this respect it points out that the problems of employment have fundamental structural aspects, as it is a fact that economic expansion, one of the objectives of the Treaty of Rome, has so far been continuous but not free from imbalances. The Committee also considers social security benefits particularly with regard to the need to accelerate the process of harmonization and adaptation to requirements, and the problems of housing.

Furthermore, the Committee asks that an early end be put to the impression that the political will of the government delegations with regard to the action of the new Social Fund is less intense than that shown by member governments at the Paris Summit; the Council will have an opportunity to do this when it deals with the report on the operations of the Fund which the Commission has promised to submit to it before 1 July 1974.

Statement by Dr HILLERY, Vice-President of the Commission

In a short statement to the Committee, Dr HILLERY as Vice-President of the Commission described the Committee's opinion as very substantial and constructive. He then referred to the series of measures adopted by the Council on 1 June 1974.

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- a) - the decision concerning action by the European Social Fund to assist workers moving from one Community country to another and
  - the regulation on further types of aid for workers moving from one Community country to another;
- b) - the decisions on setting up a General Committee on Safety at work, and
  - on extending the terms of reference of the Mines Safety and Health Committee;
- c) - the Communication from the Commission to the Council concerning a Community Action programme for handicapped persons; and
- d) - the Decision on action by the European Social Fund to assist the social and occupational integration of handicapped persons.

Dr HILLERY hoped that a decision on the mass dismissals proposed would be taken in the Autumn.

On the special items raised in the opinion :

- the employment problems, especially those of certain categories of workers,
- Social security and social benefits, including housing, family matters and social services,
- the European Social Fund,

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Dr HILLERY said that the Commission also considers the employment questions as being the keystone of social policy. Urgent community measures in this field are necessary. This is why the Commission will submit, before the end of this year, some proposals for Community activities of great importance.

The first proposal is dealing with women's employment, the objective of which will be to contribute to a situation in which equality between men and women is achieved in the labour market throughout the Community. Immediate priority will be given to the problems of providing facilities to reconcile family responsibilities with job aspiration.

Another very important proposal will be made in the field of migrant workers, for which a comprehensive action programme will be drafted this year. It is clear that all problems connected with the migration of workers, such as working and living conditions, reception, information, education and vocational training as well as housing and others for the migrants and their families must be taken into account.

Up to now the employment and other problems of the self-employed persons have been somewhat neglected by the Commission and the Council. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the new European Social Fund is now accessible also to self-employed persons who risk to lose their job. Moreover, in the field of social security, more and more attention is given to the self-employed.

In the field of social security benefits the Commission has decided to progress in a pragmatic way :

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- first steps have been undertaken to achieve better coordination of the social security policies of the governments of the Member States;
- within the Social Action programme proposals will be made to extend social protection to those persons who, up to now, are not or not fully covered by the existing social security schemes;
- another proposal will deal (before the end of 1975) with the problem of revaluation of social security benefits;
- finally, the European Social Budget, proposed as a priority action, will help to facilitate the discussion on coordination, if not harmonization of national social security policies. The first European Social Budget will be published at the beginning of 1975; it will take into account the modified situations that have arisen after the energy crisis and in connection with the acceleration of price increases.

As to the European Social Fund, the Commission has nearly finished its report on the first year of fully operational activity of the new Fund. So, very soon there will be an opportunity to discuss with the Economic and Social Committee the various questions raised in the Committee's opinion, Dr HILLERY concluded.

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### 3. Renewal of the Yaoundé Convention

Rapporteur : Mr BODART - Belgium - Various interests

The Committee has adopted unanimously its Opinion on

"Questions connected with the negotiations between the Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States".

In its general comments the Section deals in particular with changes which have occurred in relations between industrialized and developing countries and with the need for the Community to reassess both the bases of the Association and the whole pattern of its relations with the developing countries.

As far as the negotiations proper are concerned, the Section asks among other things that the Community should in general ensure that its future commitments are consistent with the policies it intends to pursue in other fields.

In its Opinion the Section also asks that the Community assess its own development model in the light of present and future changes in the pace and nature of its partners' development and the growth of their competitive capacity. Such an approach entails overhauling the economic structures of the Community, and the Section proposes that this should be made easier by the organization in appropriate bodies, of a dialogue and of contacts between representatives of economic and social groups in the Community and in the partner countries.

In its specific comments, the Section examines and comments upon the principal aspects of the negotiations (trade, financial and technical cooperation and institutions) and in particular calls for :

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- the improvement of the quality of the commercial networks at the disposal of the Community's partners so as to favour the access of their products to the Community market;
- the retention, as a basic principle, of the present rule of "change in tariff heading" while, exceptionally, authorizing temporary exemptions in specific cases for products with a low added value which originate in the partner countries;
- the abolition of the consumer taxes levied on tropical products, without waiting for fiscal harmonization within the Community;
- the implementation of a policy of compensation or reconversion for the benefit of any sectors in the EEC which are hit by trade or other measures to aid the Community's partners;
- a special drive to make it easier for certain agricultural products from the partner countries to gain access to Community markets, while at the same time taking into account the need to safeguard the vital interests of Community farmers and of certain regions in the Community;
- the setting-up of machinery to stabilize export earnings, the scope of which should be specified and the automatic application of which should be subject to certain conditions;
- the use of part of the EDF funds to subsidize interest on loans obtained directly by the partners of the Community, and the setting-up of a fund that can be brought into play very rapidly in the event of a disaster;

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- a planning of aid, with regard to the amounts allocated to the partners and the criteria established for the utilization of the future EDF;
- greater participation of the Associated States in the management and administration of aid;
- the setting-up of a training committee made up of representatives of the Community and its Member States, the Associated States and delegates from socio-economic, cultural and other organizations;
- the setting-up of specific instruments for regional cooperation aids and the granting of special aid to the least-favoured States;
- the establishment of economic cooperation to promote the economic independence and development of the Associated States and enable the fruits of economic growth to be distributed more fairly in the world;
- the establishment of bodies to promote contacts and consultations between representatives of economic and social groups from the Associated States and the Community in ways which are still to be determined;
- the improvement of the status of Community technical cooperation assistants and of the position of migrant workers from Associated and Associable States in the Community.

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4. European Regional Development Fund

Rapporteur : Mr VENTÉJOL - France - Workers

The Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted its Additional Opinion. This document is, in a manner of speaking, complementary to the Opinion adopted by the Committee at its 114th plenary session, on the draft decision by the Council on the creation of a Committee for regional policy, the proposal for a Council regulation establishing a regional development fund and the proposed financial regulation to special provisions to be applied to the European Regional Development Fund (O.J. 8 of 31 January 1974).

The present Additional Opinion springs from the increasingly dramatic need for a swift solution to the problems of European underdeveloped regions, which is in contrast with the sluggishness and large delays affecting Council decisions in connection with regional policy.

The Economic and Social Committee expresses its concern at the potential political and social effects of such delays in the Member States which are most directly affected. In order to overcome this, the Committee proposes that a European loan of at least 1000 m units of account be floated for priority use in regional development. This sum should be administered by the European Investment Bank in accordance with procedures laid down by the competent Community authorities.

Furthermore, the Committee proposes that the resources of the other Funds, in particular the GUIDANCE SECTION of the EAGGF, and the European Social Fund, be appropriately increased so that they can continue and extend their activities by paying more attention to the needs of the less-developed regions.

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Lastly, the Committee points out that the proposed loan must only be a complementary stopgap measure, not an alternative or a substitute, designed temporarily to fill the vacuum caused by the non-creation of the Regional Development Fund.

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##### 5. Cost allocations on environmental matters

Rapporteur : Mr VENTEJOL - France - Workers

The Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted its Opinion on the

"Draft recommendation by the Council to the Member States regarding cost allocations and action by public authorities on environmental matters".

The Economic and Social Committee points out that the legal instrument for application of the "polluter-pays" principle at Community level, i.e. the recommendation by the Council to the Member States, will probably not permit action to be taken with the speed which is absolutely essential to this matter.

The Committee feels that the instrument should have been a directive and that the Community should have stated firmly the need to implement a general Community policy on the environment.

As regards the basic issues, the Committee lays stress on preventive measures in the drive against pollution, on informing any polluters, and on educating public opinion and making it aware of the problem.

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With regard to the exceptions to the application of the "polluter-pays" principle, the Committee considers that the aid which is provided for in the Commission document should be of a temporary nature and supervision of its application by public authorities should make it possible to gauge the effectiveness of the fight against pollution in relation to the amount of aid given, in order to avoid distortions in competition at Community level.

The Committee also asks the Commission in connection with the more specific proposals which it is to draw up later to examine whether or not it is necessary, by way of exception, to have recourse to tax measures in the case of essential commodities so as to reduce the burdens on the less well-off consumers.

In conclusion, the Committee believes that the initiation of a European environmental policy, even if it is only covered by partial and therefore inadequate recommendations, must not be jeopardized and that the requirements in respect of the Community's competitive capacity should at the same time be reconciled with the urgent drive against pollution and nuisances. The action taken must be conducive to persuading non-member countries to set up parallel environmental policies, and all the various environmental policies should include the necessary sums in the costs.

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## 6. Nuclear priorities

Rapporteur : Mr SCHLITT - Germany - Various interests

The Economic and Social Committee unanimously approved its opinion on the

"Communication from the Commission to the Council on the implementation of the "Guidelines and priority measures for a Community energy policy" - Promotion of the use of nuclear energy. "

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The Committee welcomes the Commission's plan of action to speed up the development of nuclear energy within the framework of a Community energy policy, and recommends that the proposals be adopted in their entirety by the Council of Ministers.

The Committee considers that prime importance must be given to protection of the public in any steps to speed up and expand existing nuclear programmes. Furthermore, the Committee underlines both the importance of public confidence and the need for more intensive action in providing objective and comprehensible information on nuclear topics. While the Committee feels that this obligation falls on the Member States in the first instance, it considers that the Commission can also contribute substantially on a complementary basis to the improvement of public information, particularly by cooperating with other international organizations which are working in this field.

The Commission, in its programme, should also take steps to ensure better information on the medium- and long-term investment plans of electricity producers, since such information is, in turn, a prerequisite to planning and investment in the nuclear equipment industry.

A further priority dealing with the finance of investment should be added to the Commission's list. Given the size of nuclear capital requirements in relation to the present size of the capital market, the Commission should give special attention to the problems of mobilization of other funds, particularly long-term finance.

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7. Seafishing

Rapporteur : Miss MACKIE - United Kingdom - Employers

The Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously with 16 abstentions on the

"Proposed Council Regulation (EEC) laying down conditions for granting national aid under the common structural policy for sea fishing".

In general, the Committee approves the Commission proposal on conditions for granting national aids in the seafishing sector, while putting forward a number of new ideas.

Firstly, the Committee stresses that, as far as possible, conditions in the Community for financing and utilizing fishing vessels should not depend on regional or national intervention which distorts competition.

As it has pointed out on several occasions in the past, the Committee believes that seafishing should continue to receive aid but it considers that the bulk of this aid should become Community aid as soon as possible.

The Committee is alive to the fact that the current situation as regards the conditions for granting national aids does not enable a sufficiently clear picture to be obtained of the position in the various Member States.

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Consequently, the Committee is anxious that the aids of all kinds currently granted by the Member States be published in full and objective form. To this end, the Committee suggests that the Commission make use of Articles 92 and 94 of the Treaty of Rome, as appropriate.

The Committee shares the Commission's view that rational development of seafishing in the Community could be hindered if the maximum level of aids were left to the sole discretion of the Member States. The Committee feels, however, that the ceiling proposed by the Commission should be increased considerably. The current Commission proposals would be definitely inadequate in view of the high capital cost of purchasing and fitting out new fishing vessels.

The Commission cannot compel the Member States to grant a minimum level of aid, and the Committee therefore considers that total harmonization by way of Community aid should be the long-term objective.

The Committee suggests some amendments to specific points of the draft regulation and goes on to stress that since all Community policy in the seafishing sector is based on producers' organizations, their role and power should be increased, also as regards the conditions for granting national aids.

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8. Lead content of petrol

Rapporteur : Miss ROBERTS - United Kingdom - Various interests

The Committee adopted its opinion by 62 votes to 2 with 8 abstentions on the

"Proposal for a Council directive concerning the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the composition of petrol - Problem of the lead content of petrol".

The Committee approved the proposed directive, which it looked on as an important, realistic step towards reduction of lead pollution in the atmosphere, and by the same token towards protection of the environment. The directive was also justified from the angle of elimination of technical barriers to trade. The Committee pointed to a number of difficulties which would arise for the industries concerned, especially car manufacturers and oil refineries. However, these industries would be technically able to overcome these difficulties.

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9. Mutual recognition of diplomas

Rapporteur : Dr SLOMAN - United Kingdom - Miscellaneous activities

The Economic and Social Committee has adopted unanimously, with only one abstention, its opinion on the

"Draft for a Council resolution on guidelines for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications by virtue of Article 57 of the EEC Treaty".

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Stressing the urgent need for progress in the field of freedom of establishment, and hence also in that of mutual recognition, the Committee deplores the delay in adopting the necessary directives, and welcomes the Commission's present initiative.

It emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the directives on mutual recognition are sufficiently flexible.

It also draws attention to the question of associating practical work with academic training in the context of the mutual recognition of occupational qualifications. The completion of a period of practical work could be an important factor in the case of persons holding qualifications obtained some years previously.

Specifically, it approves the six guidelines, but feels that it is not true to say that there is broad comparability between final qualifications giving access to identical fields of activity in the various Member States, and suggests an amended wording of the first point of the draft resolution. The Committee would also like it made clear that Community solutions should not only not entail a lowering of standards, but that such solutions should result in an improvement in the quality.

The Committee endorses the concept of an advisory committee. Believing that judgements as to standards of training should be made by those pursuing the occupation concerned and by those responsible for training, it suggests that an advisory committee should be composed primarily of practitioners and teachers, but that provision could also be made for including other groups as may be considered appropriate.

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10. Fresh poultrymeat

Rapporteur : Mrs EVANS - United Kingdom - Various interests

The Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously on the

"Proposal for a Council Directive amending the Council Directive of 15 February 1971 on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat".

The Committee approves the proposal for a Directive but notes that the Commission subsequently modified the text it had submitted. The Committee regrets this and trusts that it will be consulted on the final version.

The Committee also agrees that it is necessary to prescribe the abolition of certain national practices with regard to "New York dressed" and "effile" poultry. However, this abolition - which was provided for in 1971 (Council Directive of 15 February 1971) - should, subject to an exception being made for the United Kingdom and Ireland, be carried out much earlier than the present deadline.

Finally the Committee recommends that storage and defreezing instructions be marked in poultry packaging.

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11. Pharmaceutical products

Rapporteur : Mr CHABROL - France - Various Interests

The Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously on the

"Amendment to the proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to analytical, pharmacotoxicological and clinical standards and protocols in respect of the testing of proprietary medicinal products"

"Amendment to the proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to publicity for proprietary medicinal products and to package leaflets"

"Amendment to the proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to matter which may be added to proprietary medicinal products for colouring purposes".

The Committee approves the Commission's proposals for facilitating the adaptation of certain provisions to technical progress. It draws attention to the danger of too broad an interpretation of the concept of technical progress and considers that the Standing Committee for medicinal products will be able to define this concept in the course of its activity.

With regard to the working of this Standing Committee the Economic and Social Committee believes that the scientific nature of the questions it will have to discuss and their effect on the implementation of the process of authorizing proprietary medicinal products and on their manufacture require that appropriate interests be closely consulted.

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12. Pure-bred breeding animals

Rapporteur : Mr WICK - Germany - Employers

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its opinion unanimously on the

"Proposal for a Regulation of the Council on pure-bred breeding animals of the bovine species"

and on the

"Draft for a Council Decision setting up a Standing Committee on Zootechnics".

The Committee approves the Commission proposals. It believes, however, that care must be taken to prevent the proposed harmonization from leading to uniformity in breeding methods and criteria for entry in herd-books. The Committee feels that care must also be taken to prevent discrimination between producers in the various Member States as a result of differences in the application of enforcement measures in individual Member States.

The Committee also calls for provision to be made for consultation with the representatives of the professional organizations on the decisions to be taken by the Standing Committee on Zootechnics.

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13. Soya beans

Rapporteur : Mr EMO - Italy - Employers

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously on the

"Proposed Regulation (EEC) of the Council laying down special measures for soya beans".

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The Committee approves the Commission's wish to improve the Community's protein supply, but wonders whether the proposed incentives are sufficient for the purposes intended. Among other things, the Committee suggests that the Commission make provision for more agricultural research on high-protein crops which are more suited to the European climate.

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14. Carnation leaf-rollers

Rapporteur : Mr CAPRIO - Italy - Employers

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion on

"Proposed Council Directive - concerning the campaign against carnation leaf rollers",

unanimously with four abstentions.

Whilst agreeing with the Commission on the need to provide for systematic measures to control carnation leaf-rollers, the Committee nevertheless feels that the draft directive should be more specific about the measures to be taken. In particular the provisions of the draft directive should be brought into the context of mutual recognition of the validity of phytosanitary certificates which are issued by the competent authorities of the various Member States.

Finally, the Committee considers that the directive should contain provisions relating explicitly to cut flowers imported from non-member countries.

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In addition the Committee adopted two studies:

15. Small and medium-sized undertakings

Rapporteur : Mr KOLBENSCHLAG - Germany - Various Interests

Co-Rapporteur : Mr BOUREL - France - Employers

The Committee adopted its Study on the

"Situation of small and medium-sized undertakings in the Community",

with 5 votes against and 13 abstentions.

The aim of the Study is to draw the attention of the Commission and the Council to the position and special problems of small and medium-sized undertakings. The Study outlines the economic and social functions and the key features of such undertakings (sectors, number of employees, turnover).

The Study also tries to show how small and medium-sized undertakings are affected by national policies and by Community competition law.

In its conclusions the Study proposes a number of Community measures to improve the position of small and medium-sized undertakings.

It suggests that statistical surveys be made in the Community of the development of small and medium-sized business, and that structural analyses be made of the various sectors.

The Study also stresses the need:

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- to provide heads of undertakings with better information and to improve their training;
- to expand the activity of the business cooperation centre;
- to improve the decision-making procedures of the Community's bodies.

Finally the Study calls on the Commission to compile an annual report on the situation of small- and medium-sized undertakings.

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16. Agricultural aspects of the Mediterranean policy

Rapporteur : Mr CAPRIO - Italy - Employers

The Committee adopted its Study on Agricultural aspects of the Mediterranean policy unanimously less two abstentions.

In this document the Committee describes the reasons behind the Community's decision to take a fresh look at existing agreements with the Mediterranean countries from the viewpoint of an overall approach which will harmonize commercial and economic relations with these countries.

The Committee then discusses the repercussions which the EEC offers in respect of agricultural and processed agricultural products could have on Community agriculture, especially in the Mediterranean regions.

In this connection, the Study shows how far incomes in the Mediterranean regions could be hit if the EEC failed to take appropriate steps to offset the adverse effects which would ensue were agreements to be concluded on the lines which are currently being discussed.

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II

CHAIRMAN'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO BERLIN

The Chairman of the European Communities' Economic and Social Committee, Mr A. LAPPAS, paid an official visit to Berlin from 20 to 22 June. During his visit, Mr LAPPAS had talks with the Mayor of Berlin, Mr K. SCHUTZ, the President of the Abgeordnetenhaus (Berlin Parliament), Mr SICKERT, and the Director for Economic Affairs, Mr BRUNNER.

On 22 June Mr LAPPAS met the President of the Federal Republic, Mr Gustav HEINEMANN. Their talks centred on relations between the European Community and Berlin. To demonstrate the links between the Economic and Social Committee and the city of Berlin, the Committee's Bureau held a meeting in the Reichstag building on Thursday, 20 June.

Mr LAPPAS was accompanied by the Committee's two Vice-Chairmen, Mr H. CANONGE and Mr A. MASPRONE, and the Secretary-General, Mr D. DELFINI.

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### III

#### SECTION FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT'S MEETING IN CALABRIA

The immediate floating of a European loan of at least 1000 million units of account (each unit is equivalent to the Smithsonian dollar) for developing the Community's underprivileged regions was demanded by the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities at the meeting of its Regional Development Section held in Crotone, Southern Italy, on 17 and 18 June 1974.

The initiative for holding this meeting in one of the regions in need of development, namely Calabria, came from the Committee's Chairman, Alfons LAPPAS, when at his official visit to Rome last April, he discussed the plan with the Minister for the Southern Italian Development Fund (Cassa per il Mezzogiorno), Mr Giacomo MANCINI who gave it his full support. Its purpose is to focus the eyes of the Community on the problem caused by the fact that despite crying necessity, the Regional Development Fund has not yet been set up. The Committee's proposal underlines the need for swift action but emphasizes that the loan should be only a complementary measure and temporarily fill the present vacuum. Priority should be given to the underdeveloped regions of Italy, Ireland and Great Britain; projects should be drawn up without delay and passed on for execution to the European Investment Bank.

Mr Enzo DALLA CHIESA, Chairman of the Committee's Regional Development Section, declared in his welcoming address that the meeting's venue showed the Committee's interest was above all directed at those regions which required the understanding and the solidarity of the more favoured regions so that all men and women in the Community may genuinely feel they are its citizens.

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IV

MEMBERS' NEWS

APPOINTMENT OF MRS BENNEDSEN

On 26 June 1974 the Council appointed Mrs Dorte BENNEDSEN, Chairman of the Danish Consumer Council and formerly Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs to replace the late Mrs GROES on the Committee.

DECORATION CONFERRED ON MR de PRECIGOUT

Mr de PRECIGOUT, Vice-President of the National Council of French Employers (CNPF) and Chairman of the Section for External Relations of the Economic and Social Committee has been made a commander of the Legion of Honour.

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