

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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ORAL QUESTION (0-77/81)

with debate pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure by Mr ROGALLA, Mr SEEFELD, Mr SEELER, Mr SIEGLERSCHMIDT, Mr SCHINZEL, Mr SCHMID, Mr WALTER, Mrs WIECZOREK-ZEUL and Mrs HOFF
to the Council of the European Communities

Subject : Abolition of personal checks at
internal Community frontiers

Over and above the obligations on the Community

- under the first sentence of the preamble to the EEC Treaty ('to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe')
- under Article 2 of the EEC Treaty ('establishing a common market')
- under Article 3(c) of the EEC Treaty (for 'the abolition, as between Member States, of obstacles to freedom of movement for persons ...')

the Heads of State or Government decided on the creation of a passport union in their Paris communiqué of 9/10 December 1974 (paragraph 10).

'This arrangement provides in particular for the abolition of passport formalities'. 'The proposals are to be submitted to the Governments of the Member States before 31 December 1976 if possible'.

We ask the Council :

1. What conclusions were submitted by the working party set up to consider the proposals contained in paragraph 10 of the Paris communiqué?
2. How does the Council view the remarks made by the President of the Commission, Mr Thorn, to Parliament on 8 July 1981:

'We are greatly shocked to see the continuation, and even the strengthening of frontier formalities and identity controls. How can one expect the citizens of Europe to be delighted or enthusiastic about the prospect of new passports in fine bordeaux livery if, when they travel inside the Community, they have to go through increasingly draconian controls?

A number of Members of this House have already written to me condemning this situation. I have spoken to members of the European Council and I can tell the European Parliament today that the Commission intends to submit to the next European Council proposals which would eliminate such formalities before the end of 1982.

The first step will be for the Governments to undertake to reduce passport formalities at frontiers to the level of those applied to the least-controlled means of transport. And I don't want any muttering about policing efficiency or any other technical problems! We have got to change the mentalities and habits of our civil services. We have to show the political determination to give the citizens of Europe an awareness of their continent, by which I mean an awareness of the existence and the significance of our Community'.

3. How and over what period of time does the Council intend to abolish personal checks on travellers between Member States as decided in 1974?
4. What insights has the Council gained with regard to the abolition of personal checks between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, between Scandinavian countries and local border traffic between Germany and Switzerland?
5. What measures by the Member States does the Council consider might lessen or abolish such checks?
6. When will the Council have reached such a stage in its preparations for approximating the visa requirements of the Member States that draft Community legislation can be submitted to the Community institutions?