

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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ORAL QUESTION (O-66/76)

with debate pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules
of Procedure

by Lord BETHELL, Mr SPICER, Mr HERBERT, Mr MARTENS,
Mr JAHN, Mr NOE' and Mr PREMOLI

to the Council of the European Communities

Subject : Council implementation of the European
Communities' November 1973 environment
programme

There is now a considerable back-log of directives awaiting decisions from the Council of Environment Ministers. This back-log includes two important directives - on lead in petrol and on the reduction of water pollution caused by wood pulp mills - which were referred to the Council before 30 June 1975, and nine directives and four items for decision sent to the Council between 30 June 1975 and 1 July 1976.

In the European Parliament on 8 April 1976, the deputy President-in-Office of the Council stated that the Council had "set itself the target" for the first

half of 1976, of adopting or examining seven proposals for directives.

In fact, the Council of Environment Ministers did not meet at all in the first half of 1976, and will now only meet for one day in December. This will mean Ministers have to discuss and approve the second environmental action programme and a number of important and controversial directives on one day. In view of this, can the Council explain :

1. Why there was no meeting of the Council of Environment Ministers in the first half of 1976 after M. Berchem's undertaking that the Council had "set itself the target" of adopting certain proposals during this period?
2. Why there is only one meeting of the Ministers this winter, whereas last year there were two?
3. Whether it considers that the Commission's environmental programmes are too ambitious given the inability of the Council to deal expeditiously with directives arising from them?
4. In what ways it considers that the Council could speed up its procedures for approving environmental legislation?