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ORAL QUESTION (0-91/79)

with debate pursuant to Article 47 of the Rules of Procedure

by Mr MAFFRE-BAUGE, Mr MARTIN, Mr PRANCHERE,
Mrs DE MARCH, Mrs POIRIER, Mrs LE ROUX, Mr FERNANDEZ
and Mr WURTZ

To the Commission of the European Communities.

Subject: Wine-growing in France and the impact of imports from Italy on the production and marketing of wine in France.

Imports of Italian table wine to France in the marketing year 1978/79 will be of the order of 8.2 million hectolitres, an increase of 2 million hectolitres over the 1977/78 marketing year.

This steadily rising flow of imports poses a permanent threat to wine-growing in France, particularly in the south, as the French market is flooded with imports at prices which defy the logic of normal competition.

As a result:

- A. prices in production areas, have fallen;
- B. supply and demand on the French market are out of balance;
- C. efforts by wine growers to improve quality have received a set-back.

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Given this situation and the harmful social consequences which threaten the already inadequate price support machinery, what steps does the Commission intend to take to

1. regulate and limit imports of Italian wine in terms of both volume and price;
2. fix a profitable minimum guaranteed price below which Italian table wines could not be imported into France (systematic refusal);
3. Step up checks on production and movement of wine to prevent deflection of trade (is the wine exported from Italy always Italian?);
4. harmonize the parities of the green lira and green franc, as the lack of monetary equilibrium leads to a situation where the trade flows between Italy and France always work to the disadvantage of the latter;
5. introduce really effective anti-fraud measures, to stamp out certain cases of 'wine manufacturing';
6. monitor the quality of wines: 30% of imported wines have an alcohol strength of less than 9.5% and do nothing to further the policy of improving quality;
7. stop the planting of vines throughout the Community rather than encourage the grubbing-up of French vineyards (including 25,000 hectares in Languedoc-Roussillon)?

Does the Commission not feel it necessary in these circumstances to halt the enlargement of the Community to include Greece, Spain and Portugal?