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ORAL QUESTION (0-17/82)

with debate, pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure
by Mr BEUMER
on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education,
Information and Sport
to the Council of the European Communities

Subject: European Foundation

- (a) On 29 March 1982 the Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Community signed the Agreement establishing the European Foundation (the creation of which was originally recommended by Mr TINDEMANS in his report on European Union), thus implementing the agreement of principle adopted by the European Council in December 1977.
- (b) By virtue of its legal status this Foundation is an instrument of inter-governmental cooperation and as such prevents the Community institutions from exercising the powers and responsibilities laid down by the Treaties.

In the light of the provisions of the Agreement and the Final Act, the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport puts the following questions to the Council:

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1. Why was the Foundation not set up by a regulation based on Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, as suggested by the Commission of the European Communities in its 1977 report to the European Council, especially when one considers the advantages of such an arrangement for the financing of the Foundation?
2. Why was the European Parliament not informed or consulted on the provisions governing this Foundation as it had requested in its resolution of 18 April 1978 (Doc. 575-77)?
3. Is it true that in order to finance the Foundation it has been agreed that the Community budget should contribute 4 million ECU, spread out over the first three years as follows:
 - 1 million for the first year, 1.5 million for the second and 1.5 million for the third?
4. As this contribution would have to be charged against non-compulsory expenditure - on which the European Parliament has the final say - is it intended that there should be a 'political agreement' between the competent Community institutions so that a presumption in favour of the renewal of the subsidy for the following years might, at least partially, guarantee the implementation of the programme, as deemed necessary by the Commission in the abovementioned report?
5. Does the Council consider that it should be the responsibility of the Commission of the European Communities to nominate the ten Community members on the Council of the Foundation and that Parliament, whose opinion would be binding on the Commission, should first be consulted thereupon?
6. Does the Council find it satisfactory that the links between the Foundation and the Community institutions are confined to financial control by the Court of Auditors and to the forwarding of the annual general report, for information, to the institutions of the Community? Does it not think it would be useful to provide for closer contact with the European Parliament in the form of, for example, an annual 'colloquy' between its Committee on Culture and the Council of the Foundation, along the lines of the mechanisms governing European political cooperation?
7. As the activities of the Foundation are supposed to complement those of other institutions and bodies, how will the Council be able to ensure that there is no duplication of activities already organized by the Community (exchanges between young people, language learning, etc.) and by the Council of Europe?
8. Does not the Council agree that there is a real danger that the European Foundation may, not only by its indirect activities but in particular by the activities it may carry out directly, ultimately have the effect of curtailing the powers hitherto acquired by the Community or preventing the extension thereof to other areas? PE 78.1