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27 and 28 April 1983

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NOTE TO READER

Appearing at the same time as the English edition are editions in the six other official languages of the Communities: Danish, German, Greek, French, Italian and Dutch. The English edition contains the original texts of the interventions in English and an English translation of those made in other languages. In these cases there are, after the name of the speaker, the following letters, in brackets, to indicate the language spoken: *(DA)* for Danish, *(DE)* for German, *(GR)* for Greek, *(FR)* for French, *(IT)* for Italian and *(NL)* for Dutch.

The original texts of these interventions appear in the edition published in the language spoken.

Resolutions adopted at sittings of 27 and 28 April 1983 appear in the Official Journal of the European Communities C 135 of 24 May 1983.

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SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 27 APRIL 1983

IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

(The sitting opened at 10 a.m.)

1. *Resumption of the session*

President. — I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on 15 April 1983.

2. *Approval of the Minutes*

President. — The Minutes of proceedings of the sitting of Friday, 15 April 1983, have been distributed.

Are there any comments?

I call Mr Pannella.

(Protests)

Mr Pannella (CDI). — *(IT)* Mr President, I heard some groans after what you said, but do not know the reason for them.

Mr President, according to the Italian text the amendments which I tabled to Mrs Cassanmagnago Ceretti's report were rejected.

Mr President, even if the Parliament does usually reject all proposals which do not come from the power groups represented here, I should like everyone to note that Amendments 3 and 4, which I tabled, were passed and not rejected.

I should like at least this to be corrected.

Have I made myself quite clear?

President. — Mr Pannella, I can satisfy you on this point. If there are any errors in the Italian text which are not reproduced in the other language versions, the Italian version will be corrected.

Mr Pannella (CDI). — *(IT)* Thank you, Mr President.

(Parliament approved the Minutes) ¹

3. *Agenda*

President. — At its meeting of 9 March 1983, the enlarged Bureau drew up a draft agenda, which has been distributed.

¹ For items concerning membership of Parliament and membership of committees, see the Minutes of this sitting

At the meeting held this morning, the chairmen of the political groups authorized me to propose to the House that Thursday's sitting begin at 8.30 a.m. and the voting at 10 a.m. Depending on how the voting proceeds, we could then either terminate our proceedings before lunch or, after a lunch-break, resume the voting during the afternoon.

Mr Pannella (CDI). — *(IT)* Mr President, you seem to pretend to think that this special session is important. As a Member of Parliament, I should like in my personal capacity to note that according to the agenda we shall have to complete the voting on about 270 amendments within a few hours of discussion, so that we are in fact prevented from voting by roll-call, as normally happens in important debates.

Mr President, I should like to point out that, on average, there are between 18 and 25 requests for voting by roll-call during discussions of similar importance. If we did that here, we should need between 20 and 25 hours. That is why we cannot use this method of voting.

Mr President, this agenda seems, therefore, at best to be a demagogic ploy, as there has been no attempt to allow for a serious debate on one of the gravest matters concerning life in our Community. This proves that, even with your culture and your politics, you are also the cause of unemployment, and therefore you are in no position at all to tender to it or cure it.

President. — Mr Pannella, I take note of what you have said, but would point out that this part-session is being conducted in complete accordance with the Rules of Procedure and must continue to do so during the whole of these two days.

(Applause)

Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (ED). — Mr President, all of us here would agree that this is an extremely important session. You suggested quite properly we should start at 8.30 a.m. instead of the proposed time on Thursday, but you have also suggested that we should break for lunch and interrupt the voting. May I respectfully suggest that, on this occasion, we do not break for lunch but that we continue right through the lunch hour? Surely, for once, we can give up our lunch.

(Applause)

President. — Mrs Kellett-Bowman, I agree with you. If it is physically possible we shall continue with the vote but it is very difficult to foresee at this moment, with the possibility of roll-calls, how long the voting will last, I would not force you to vote until 12 p.m. if there are too many roll-calls. We shall leave it open and see tomorrow how we can handle the matter.

(Parliament adopted the agenda thus amended)

4. Speaking-time

President. — Pursuant to Rule 65, I propose that speaking-time be allocated as indicated in the draft agenda.

Mr Pannella (CDI). — *(IT)* Mr President, as so often during this term of office I protest at the hatchet job which is performed every day and at every meeting. Mr President, our group has been allocated sixteen minutes during the two days of this so very extraordinary debate for its twelve members to put forward their views: which means less than a minute and a half each; and not even enough time, Mr President, to speak to, let's say, three or four amendments.

Mr President, this organization of speaking time is, in effect, the organization of time so that those who do not agree with you are silent. Well, Mr President, I think that, in a year's time, things will be different: the people you turned out before the last election — the German Green Party and the others — will be here next year, and you will no longer be able to gag us then as you can those few of us who are here at the moment.

President. — Mr Pannella, you repeat what you have just said at every part-session. I point out that the Rules of Procedure are, as always, being observed.

(Applause)

Mr Gendebien (CDI). — *(FR)* Mr President, since it has been declared that this part-session is not a publicity exercise for the big political parties, I request that, exceptionally, our group be allowed 30 minutes speaking time over the two days and not 15 minutes. I ask Parliament to approve this change.

President. — I suppose that Mr Gendebien's request was made on behalf of his group, and Mr Pannella presented his in the same way. This prompts me to put the allocation of speaking-time to the vote.

Mr Pannella (CDI). — *(FR)* The modification proposed by Mr Gendebien should be put to the vote first. The only effect this would have on the proceedings would be to prolong them by two quarters of an hour, Mr President.

President. — Mr Pannella, the two things can be combined. I put Mr Gendebien's amendment to the vote.

Who is against?

Mr Gendebien (CDI). — *(FR)* One votes 'for' an amendment!

President. — Rule 65 states:

The President may, after consulting the chairmen of the political groups, propose to Parliament that speaking-time be allocated for a particular debate. Parliament shall decide on this proposal without debate.

(Parliament adopted the allocation of speaking-time proposed in the draft agenda, thus rejecting Mr Gendebien's request)

5. Employment in the Community

President. — The next item is a joint debate on two reports on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment:

- by Mr Papaefstratiou, on the employment situation in the European Community (Doc. 1-87/83), and
- by Mrs Salisch, on the problem of unemployment among young people (Doc. 1-86/83).

The following oral questions with debate are included:

- by Mr Brok, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group), to the Council (Doc. 1-801/82):

Subject: Youth unemployment

At its April part-session, the European Parliament, following a debate on urgent and topical matters, adopted a resolution on youth unemployment calling for the introduction of a global strategy of long- and medium-term measures to resolve the problem.

On 27 May, the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs, at its 774th meeting, adopted a resolution on Community action to combat unemployment.

1. Does the Council intend to take action on the priority measures called for in the above resolution, and what instruments will it use?
2. Does the Council consider the resolution it adopted to be adequate and the projected measures to be politically feasible in the short term? What specific projects does it have to tackle the present situation of youth unemployment?
3. In the light of the priority which should be given to tackling youth unemployment, how can the Council justify the decision taken by the Council of Education Ministers on 24 May 1982 to reduce to 25 the 30 pilot projects on the transition from school to employment proposed by the Education Committee? How does it explain the fact that financial support for this smaller number of projects is guaranteed only in the short term but not in the long term?
4. Does the Council not consider that it would be useful to establish regular arrangements, on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, for the coordination of the measures taken by the individual Member States and the Community institutions to create new jobs, especially for young people?

President

5. Does the Council not consider that this would also assist the coordination of all the measures taken to combat unemployment and make people more aware of the existence of the Community institutions ?

- by Mr Frischmann and others, on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group, to the Commission (Doc. 1-43/83) :

Subject : Adaptation of working-time

In a resolution of September 1981 on employment and the adaptation of working-time, the European Parliament considered it indispensable (substantive paragraph 21)¹ that the process of adapting working-time, including the working week, should be coordinated so that the scope and time-scale of its implementation are consistent with the objective of maximizing the positive effects on employment.

This being so, does the Commission not think it necessary to include in its projected reform of the European Social Fund the question of reducing working time, particularly the working week, as a means of combating unemployment ?

- by Mrs Cinciari Rodano and Mrs Gaiotti De Biase, on behalf of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, to the Commission (Doc. 1-180/83) :

Subject : Non-compliance with Council Directive 76/207/EEC, of 9 February 1976, on equal treatment for men and women as regards working conditions by the Belgian firm Bekaert-Cockerill

On 24 November 1982, on economic and technical grounds, the Belgian firm Bekaert-Cockerill terminated the employment contracts of 13 women. This redundancy measure only affected women employees who were not head of household.

What is more, the jobs of four of the women employees dismissed were allocated to men transferred from other sections of the undertaking at a salary increased by 40 francs per hour for the same work.

The Committee of Inquiry, which is specifically instructed in its terms of reference to keep a close watch on the implementation of Community directives in the Member States, regards this company's action as a flagrant violation of the directive on equal treatment and of the corresponding Belgian law.²

The Committee of Inquiry would like to know what measures the Commission intends to take in its capacity as guardian of the Treaties to ensure that Community directives are properly and fully applied, even in periods of crisis, and to prevent similar cases from occurring in other Member States.

- by Mrs Cinciari Rodano and Mrs Gaiotti De Biase, on behalf of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, to the Council (Doc. 1-181/83) :

Subject : Non-compliance with Council Directive 76/207/EEC, of 9 February 1976, on equal treatment for men and women as regards working conditions by the Belgian firm Bekaert-Cockerill.

On 24 November 1982, on economic and technical grounds, the Belgian firm Bekaert-Cockerill terminated the employment contracts of 13 women. This redundancy measure only affected women employees who were not head of household.

What is more, the jobs of four of the women employees dismissed were allocated to men transferred from other sections of the undertaking at a salary increased by 40 francs per hour for the same work.

The Committee on Inquiry, which is specifically instructed in its terms of reference to keep a close watch on the application of the directives on equal pay and equal treatment in the Member States, vigorously protests to the Council against the actions of this company which are in breach of the directive on equal treatment and of the corresponding Belgian law¹.

The Committee of Inquiry would like to know what approach the Council intends to make

- to the Belgian Government requesting it to remind the undertaking concerned that it must observe the law, even in periods of crisis ;
- to the governments of the other Member States to prevent similar situations from occurring there.
- by the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, to the Commission (Doc. 1-182/83) :

Subject : Women's unemployment

It is disturbing to find that in times of economic crisis unemployment affects women, and in particular young women, in proportionately much higher terms than men although women now have an established and theoretically guaranteed position in the labour market.

¹ OJ C 260, 12 October 1981, p. 61.

² Title V of the Belgian Law of 4 August 1978 on economic flexibility ('réorientation économique') (*Moniteur belge*, 17 August 1982).

¹ Title V of the Belgian law of 4 August 1978 on economic flexibility ('réorientation économique') (*Moniteur belge*, 17 August 1982).

President

Will the Commission state

1. what steps it has taken or will take under Article 118 of the EEC Treaty to ensure cooperation between the Member States to eliminate the disproportionate burden on women ;
2. what steps the Commission has taken or will take to ensure that the appropriations under the various Community funds, ESF, ERDF and EAGGF, combat this disproportionate level of unemployment ?

Mr Papaefstratiou (PPE), rapporteur. — (GR) Mr President, dear colleagues, as chairman of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, I would like, on the occasion of this special part-session of the European Parliament devoted to employment and unemployment, which is indicative of the great concern felt by the House about this extremely important matter, to speak about the issues that are bound up with these two concepts which have nowadays become profoundly significant in that they directly determine the fortunes of the whole world. You will, of course, permit me to recall that the ancient philosophers of Greece dealt with these crucial issues two and a half thousand years before the founding of the European Parliament, and I would like to mention Hesiod's 'Works and Days' and Aristotle's 'Rhetoric' which make reference to the importance of work and to the problems of unemployment.

We have had the opportunity to touch on the basic issues relating to unemployment many times. Allow me to dwell particularly on the structural character of the present economic crisis, the intensity of which is due, in the greater part, to the energy crisis. In any case, this Parliament has repeatedly sounded the alarm to the Council of Ministers and to the Commission of the Community with resolutions and questions, and when examining the various proposals, regulations and directives put forward by the Commission.

Without implying that Parliament should cease to be worried by the absence of any firm hand of authority with regard to the evolving employment situation, I am obliged to state yet again that the responsibility for ultimate decision-making lies chiefly with the Council of Ministers. We are all aware that the solution to the problem of unemployment does not depend simply and solely on a certain number of precise acts putatively designed to bring about a fall in or even the disappearance of unemployment in the long term. We must all contribute with the utmost vigour, the institutions of the Community and national governments as well, in order for there to be agreement about the basic priorities in the fight against unemployment, and to ensure that these are implemented in a coordinated manner by all the Member States. On this point, precisely, we request the Council of Ministers to get on top of the situation and to show as a matter of urgency the political will that is required.

I now come to the problem of the social consequences of unemployment. With an unemployment rate of over 10 % the countries of the Community are facing a huge problem which, if it is not tackled in the right way and with urgency, threatens in the long term to lead to the progressive erosion of their social structures.

It is particularly worrying that a large percentage of total unemployment is accounted for by young people between 17 and 25 who are victims of the prevailing conditions in the labour market. These conditions are directly bound up with the economic recession and do not favour the movement into jobs of young persons who have just finished secondary education or some form of technical training. As a result many young people find themselves denied job opportunities early on in their lives because, by the very nature of things, they lack work experience and the frequently demanded period of previous service in a particular sphere of work. This gives rise to the very pertinent question: how are young people to cope with a society which places such restriction upon them? Often they begin to question the system and this provides fertile ground for exploitation by extremist political propaganda, or they slide into alcoholism and drug-taking. All of these things constitute a sad escape from their inability to solve the basic problems of making a living and integrating properly into the community. The same applies to other categories of disadvantaged people, such as the handicapped and women, particularly young or intending mothers, who are unable to match up to the conditions prevailing in the harshly competitive labour market. What does the future hold for our societies if this situation continues? How can we achieve reflation, with what brave-hearted material, when such irreparable damage has been done to the underlying structure of our society? I remain a little longer on the social aspect of the matter, because the issue of unemployment has gone beyond the narrow field of economic theory which treated it as a simple consequence of economic fluctuations and, unfortunately, has acquired a self-sustaining force which is largely dominated by the human factor.

It is quite right, therefore, that a significant number of economists and experts should consider the study and examination of the unemployment phenomenon, as a thing in itself, to be an essential investment and perhaps the principal task to which we should address ourselves.

What can be done? To cope with the crisis and combat unemployment there is a need for specific economic, fiscal and social policy measures, because although in some Member States the rate of increase of unemployment has stabilized or even shown a slight decline over the last year — and this is comforting — in other countries, including the country to which I belong, there has been a sharp increase to very worrying levels.

Papaefstratiou

However, we must bear in mind that in the past, in the years before the first energy crisis in 1973, full or almost full employment was achieved and maintained by virtue of high annual growth rates which, in many countries of the Community during the sixties, hovered around the 5% mark. These days, unfortunately, the figure has dropped to between zero and 1% because of the recession in our own economies and in the world economy in general. These figures, which I have mentioned illustratively, show how serious the situation is and the confines within which we are able to move. They mean that, initially at least, the desired reflation of our economies is essential for the maintenance of the living standards we have at present, to prevent them falling any further, that is, as a result of the continuing crisis.

They also mean that a fundamental reduction in the numbers of unemployed is not something that can be achieved miraculously from one year to the next. There are, of course, temporary measures, such as the creation of jobs in the public sector and the contrived removal of a number of people from the labour market through early retirement and other associated techniques. However, it is not explained, at the same time, how these solutions are to be paid for. I am not saying that some of these measures do not make a contribution to the short-term alleviation of the tragedy of unemployment.

It is a mistake, however, for us to try to make out that these measures constitute at the same time a successful and lasting solution to the problem of unemployment and under-employment. On the contrary, there is need for a systematic, long-term initiative with the following immediate basic objectives:

Firstly, the stimulation of investment and research.

Secondly, the speeding up of technological advance and the more efficient application of new technologies.

Thirdly, the maintenance and strengthening of the competitiveness of European industry.

Fourthly, the reduction of dependence on non-Community energy sources.

Such a strategy would be designed to bring about stable and lasting reflation and would be in tune with the new conditions that have been created and now prevail in the world economy, such as the vigorous and competitive emergence of certain Third World countries in traditional industrial sectors, and the enhanced position of the United States and Japan in the new technologies.

From here let me be permitted to address a fervent appeal to the maturity of the social partners, for them to show accord and a spirit of cooperation so that a worsening of the situation can be avoided.

Mr President and colleagues, because of shortage of time I have not analysed the specific points which are of immediate interest to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment. These include the reduction of working time, voluntary part-time working, temporary employment and flexible retirement. Taken together as a group of measures they contribute only in a partial and transient way to the creation of new jobs, no matter how much they alleviate unemployment in the short term.

These reforms are right in their conception, especially under the present conditions. They do not, however, suffice to provide a definitive way out of the crisis through which we are passing. That is why my introduction is structured in a different way, given that my optimism and faith regarding democracy and European cooperation makes me stick to matters which give a clear indication as to what can be achieved through this cooperation. I hope that all persons, chiefly those in work but also the citizens of the Community who are unemployed, will share in this faith and hope about the future and not succumb to demagogic slogans proclaiming the supposed virtues of totalitarian systems, because in those systems the economic crisis is being felt even more sharply and is painfully associated with the deprivation of the supreme good which is freedom. From the platform of this free and democratic Europe I call on her peoples to launch themselves united and with the undivided support of all factions, with faith and optimism but also with strenuous endeavour, into the fight against unemployment in Europe.

(Applause)

Mrs Salisch (S), rapporteur. — *(DE)* Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, the employment situation for young people in Europe has all the makings of a drama — and I mean a drama, not a tragedy, because a classical tragedy would admit of no solution and it is up to us to find a solution. Half of all unemployed women are under 25 years of age, half of all unemployed men are under 25 years of age: these figures demonstrate the scale of youth unemployment in the Member States. I am surprised, Ladies and Gentlemen, that these young people have stayed as patient as they have done over the last few years, and that it has been possible to maintain the peace among our young people in the light of this dramatic situation.

(Applause)

We cannot, in my opinion, conquer youth unemployment in the Community in isolation. Instead we must develop — as a matter of the utmost urgency — an overall European employment policy. The campaign against unemployment must incorporate all the measures needed to overcome youth unemployment. In each of our Member States investment is being advocated without any thought being given to the

Salisch

effect it may have on employment. In the majority of European countries recipes for economic recovery are being proposed which ignore the effects on employment.

(Applause)

The brunt is borne by young people, who already account for 40 % of the unemployed. For this reason we must constantly ask ourselves what steps we can take to create jobs. One step is particularly important in the fight against youth unemployment: a drastic reduction in working time in all 10 Member States for only then will we be able to integrate young people into the job market.

(Applause)

I would also like to warn against a further illusion, namely the belief that vocational training alone can solve our problems. It is easy to say: give young people a training and the problem will solve itself. We have more qualified young people today than we have ever had and they still cannot find jobs; the doors of many companies remain closed to them. The reasons are obvious: companies attempt to solve their workforce problems by consolidating internally and closing their door to those outside. This is why it is so hard for young people to gain access to the European job market.

When I stress that training alone is not enough, this does not mean that we should not make every effort to provide training opportunities throughout Europe. We need above all a vocational training pass so that young people can take advantage of the freedom of movement which is supposed to exist in Europe but which would otherwise be just a farce.

(Applause)

We must also face the problems posed by new technologies. Mr Papaefstratiou has already said that Europe is behind the times in coming to terms with new technologies. Granted we are behind the times, but let us not make the mistake of accepting blindly what Japan and America have to show in terms of utilising new technologies. Let us constantly ask ourselves when using these new technologies: what advantages do they have in terms of employment? Do they bring employment for young people too, and what are we doing to train young people so that they learn not only to cope with these new technologies, but also to control their social effects? The use of these technologies must help to preserve the environment, they must be energy-saving but they must never be used to destroy jobs. This is the main problem confronting us and young people today.

(Applause)

When I say training opportunities alone are not enough, then that means that we need integrated training and employment programmes in Europe. Not just the Community, not just the national states, but

even the smallest local authority in the Community must act. We must realise that everyone has to make an effort to get young people back to work, to give them a guarantee of training and employment. This can be done but only if we can agree among ourselves and I very much hope that the Council, at its summit meeting in Stuttgart, will finally be in a position to take the appropriate decisions, for it is high time that it did.

(Applause)

It is also important that we help young people to set up in business for themselves. Young people show a great deal of initiative when it comes to discovering new markets for goods and services. This must be encouraged. We must help them set up these businesses and organise them in the way they feel is important.

If young people set out to achieve certain objectives in, for example, environmental protection, then this should be encouraged and they should be given help to achieve these objectives because these are equally valid areas of growth which offer young people an opportunity of long-term, secure employment. If we advocate independence for young people, then we must have the courage to give them material aid, in the form of guaranteed earning so that they are not left in a socially precarious position.

I would like to address my next comments to the Commission and the Council of Ministers. I find it intolerable — and I am also speaking on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment — that the Commission was not in a position to submit to Parliament a list of measures to combat youth unemployment. This attitude on the part of the Commission is clear evidence that it apparently attaches no importance to constructive cooperation with the European Parliament and that the Commission is no more than a handmaiden of a Council that has so far failed to take any decisions. It is time that we made this clear to the Commission.

(Applause)

However, the report is, thank heavens, now available in time to provide the Council of Ministers in Stuttgart with a basis for discussion.

If all the measures proposed by the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, which hopefully will also be adopted by Parliament, are to be implemented, then material aid will have to be made available and public funds provided to combat unemployment. I deeply regret, as rapporteur, that my own Committee did not have the courage to approve one of my original proposals, namely that 1 % of the gross national product of each Member State should be used to combat unemployment.

(Applause)