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1979-1980 Session
Report of Proceedings
from 12 to 16 November 1979
Europe House, Strasbourg

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NOTE TO READER

Appearing at the same time as the English edition are editions in the five other official languages of the Communities : Danish, German, 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 : *(DK)* for Danish, *(D)* for German, *(F)* for French, *(I)* for Italian and *(NL)* for Dutch.

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

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IN THE CHAIR : MRS VEIL

President

(The sitting opened at 5.20 p.m.)

President. — The sitting is open.

1. *Resumption of the session*

President. — I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on 7 November 1979.

I call Sir Peter Vanneck on a point of order.

Sir Peter Vanneck. — I do just want to call the attention of the Chair once again to the fact that we are starting this part-session over a quarter of an hour late. *(Applause from various quarters.)* Now I know that Lord Harmar-Nicholls *(Laughter)* would wish me to say that we also have time to prepare. I speak not only on my own behalf, having been interrupted after five minutes' speaking-time and ten seconds before the end of my speech, in the middle of what would undoubtedly have been a compelling peroration, but also on behalf of all those Members who, towards the end of the last part-session, were only allowed a minute and a half to speak; and therefore every minute at the beginning of a part-session is vital.

(Applause from various quarters)

Now I know, Madam President, that you would not have delayed opening this part-session had you not had matters of great urgency to consider. But I would like to suggest that if, five or ten minutes before the due opening-time, these matters arise, perhaps something could be transmitted on the television screens, some announcement could be made so that those of us who, in our own humble opinions, have other things of importance to us to discuss could make arrangements knowing that there would be a delay of 20 minutes or so.

(Applause from various quarters)

2. *Composition of Parliament*

President. — The Danish Folketing has informed me that on 7 November 1979 Mr Ove Fich was nominated as Member of the European Parliament to replace Mr Olesen.

I welcome the new Member and remind the House that, under Rule 3 (3) of the Rules of Procedure, any Member whose credentials have not yet been verified provisionally takes his seat in Parliament and on its committees with the same rights as other Members.

3. *Petitions*

President. — I have received :

- a petition from Mrs Magnin, Mayor of Gaillard, and others, on pornography on the public highway in Gaillard ;
- a petition from Mr Marechal, on combating photo-chemical pollution ;
- a petition from Mrs Dour, on the unfairness of social security rules in the Netherlands ;
- a petition from Mr Feidt and others, on behalf of the SGPOE Union of the European Parliament, on uniform application of the provisions of the Staff Regulations in all the Community institutions and bodies, and
- a petition from Mr Goldberg, on the anti-Semitic version of the Oberammergau plays.

These petitions have been entered under Nos 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20/79 respectively in the register provided for in Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure and referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

4. *Documents Received*

President. — Since the adjournment of the session, I have received :

a) from the committees, the following reports :

- report by Mr Aigner, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on :
 - I. the accounts of the European Parliament and the discharge in respect of the 1977 financial year
 - II. the discharge to be granted to the Commission on the implementation of the budget of the European Communities for the 1977 financial year and the report of the Court of Auditors
 - III. the discharge to be granted to the Commission in respect of the utilization of the appropriations of the fourth European Development Fund in the 1977 financial year
 - IV. the comments accompanying the decisions granting a discharge on the implementation of the budget of the European Communities for the 1977 financial year (Article 85 of the Financial Regulation of 21 December 1977)
 - V. the discharge to be granted to the Commission in respect of the activities of the first, second and third European Development Funds for the 1977 financial year

(Doc. 1-463/79) ;

- report by Mr Pranchère, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the unilateral decision taken by the United Kingdom in the matter of crawfish catches (Doc. 1-464/79) ;
- report by Mr Peters, on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, on the Communication from the Commission on the social aspects of restructuring the steel industry and the draft decision (interim report) (Doc. 1-465/79) ;
- report by Mr Enright, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation

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approving the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Senegal and the European Economic Community concerning fishing off the coast of Senegal and two exchanges of letters referring thereto (Doc. 1-466/79);

- report by Mr Kirk, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation laying down conservation and management measures for certain fish-stocks occurring in the waters off the West Greenland coast applicable in 1979 to vessels flying the flag of Member States of the Community (Doc. 1-467/79);
- report by Mr Caillavet, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation establishing a system of aid for the marketing of aubergines grown in the French Antilles (Doc. 1/468/79);
- report by Mr Pearce, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the proposals from the Commission to the Council for regulations concerning the application of the generalized tariff preferences of the European Community for 1980 (Doc. 1/469/79);
- report by Mr Ligios, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the 'Community fishing' aspects of the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation approving the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Senegal and the European Economic Community concerning fishing off the coast of Senegal and two exchanges of letters referring thereto (Doc. 1/474/79);
- report by Mr Hoffmann, on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a decision initiating a consultation procedure concerning international action in the field of air transport (Doc. 1/475/79);
- report by Miss Quin, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation implementing Articles XVIII and XXIII of the Convention on future multi-lateral cooperation in the north-west Atlantic fisheries as regards the scheme of joint international enforcement (Doc. 1-477/79);
- report by Mr Ferri, on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee, on the intervention by the European Parliament before the Court of Justice of the European Communities in Cases 138/79 and 139/79 (Doc. 1/478/79);

b) the following oral questions :

- oral questions, pursuant to Rule 47A of the Rules of Procedure, for Question Time on 13, 14 and 15 November 1979 (Doc. 1/476/79), by Miss Clwyd, Mr Paisley, Mr Buchou, Miss de Valera, Mr Debré, Sir John Stewart-Clark, Mrs Chouraqui, Mr Seal, Mr Glinne, Mr Seefeld, Mr Key, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, Mr de la Malène, Mr Maffre-Baugé, Mrs Roudy, Mr Provan, Lord Douro, Mr Albers, Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul, Mr Aigner, Lord Bethell, Mr Davern, Mr Michel, Mr Collins, Mr Seligman, Mr Battersby, Mr Purvis, Mr Radoux, Mr Moreland, Mr Deleau, Mr Donnez, Mr Harris, Mr Cecovini, Mr Beazley, Mrs Ewing, Mr

Ansquer, Mr Poncelet, Mr Lalor, Mr Berkhouver, Mr Geurtsen, Mr de Ferranti, Mr Leonardi, Mr Druon, Mrs Cresson, Mr Enright, Mr Calvez, Mr Welsh, Mr Flanagan, Mrs de March, Mr Boyes, Mr Schmid, Miss Brookes, Mr Nyborg, Mr Kavanagh, Mrs Desmond, Mr Hume, Mr Denis, Mr Diana, Mr Clinton, Mr de Pasquale, Mr Bonaccini, Mr Bangemann, Mr Spicer, Mr Davern, Mr Kavanagh, Mr Seligman, Mr Lalor, Mr Ceravolo, Mrs Ewing, Mr Ansquer, Mr Geurtsen, Mr Albers, Mr Druon, Mr Schwartzberg, Mr Purvis, Mr Simpson, Mrs Chouraqui, Mr Scott-Hopkins, Mr Wurtz, Mr Boyes, Mr Price, Mr Damseaux, Mr Normanton, Mrs Ewing, Mr Lalor, Mr Schwartzberg, Mrs Lizin, Mr Baillot, Mr Gremetz and Mr Berkhouver ;

- oral question, with debate, by Mr Pintat, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, to the Commission, on Community support for energy supplies (Doc. 1/497/79);
- oral question, with debate, by Mr Müller-Hermann, Mrs Walz, Mr Herman, Mr d'Ormesson, Mr Fuchs, Mr Sassano, Mr Hoffmann, Mr Sälzer, Mr Rinsch and Mr Croux, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), to the Commission, on adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost (Doc. 1-498/79);
- oral question, with debate, by Mr Müller-Hermann, Mrs Walz, Mr Herman, Mr d'Ormesson, Mr Fuchs, Mr Sassano, Mr Hoffmann, Mr Sälzer, Mr Rinsch and Mr Croux, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), to the Council, on adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost (Doc. 1-499/79).

c) the following motions for resolutions :

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Gallagher, Vice-Chairman, on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research, on the outcome of the meeting of the Council of Energy Ministers of 9 October 1979 (Doc. 1/472/79);
- motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on hunger in the World (Doc. 1/480/79);
- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Coppieters and Mrs Bonino, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on the supply of nuclear technology to countries with dictatorial régimes (Doc. 1/481/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee as the committee responsible, and to the Committee on External Economic Relations for its opinion ;

- a motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mr Coppieters, Mrs Castellina and Mr Blaney, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on the working conditions of Members (Doc. 1/482/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Coppieters, Mrs Bonino and Mr Capanna, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on a nuclear energy moratorium (Doc. 1/483/79),

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which has been referred to the Committee on Energy and Research as the committee responsible, and to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection for its opinion ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mr Blaney and Mr Coppieters, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on the report of Wise men on the future of the Community (Doc. 1/484/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mr Coppieters and Mr Capanna, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on unemployment and energy consumption in the Community (Doc. 1/485/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Energy and Research ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mr Capanna and Mrs Macciocchi, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on conditions in prisons in Community countries (Doc. 1-486/79),

which has been referred to the Legal Affairs Committee ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mrs Castellina and Mr Coppieters, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on European responsibilities in Southern Africa (Doc. 1/487/79/rev.) ;

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee as the committee responsible, and to the Committee on Development and Cooperation for its opinion ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mr Coppieters and Mr Blaney, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on more effective information to Members about the Affairs of Parliament (Doc. 1-488/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Coppieters, Mr Blaney and Mrs Castellina, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure on the place of work of the Parliament (Doc. 1/489/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Blaney, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on aid to the most handicapped regions of the Community (Doc. 1-490/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Blaney, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on a new approach to farm policy (Doc. 1/491/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Blaney, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on housing problems in backward regions of the Community (Doc. 1/492/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs for its opinion ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Oehler, Mr Schieler, Mr Didò, Mrs Vayssade, Mr Albers, Mr Josselin, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, Mr Linkohr, Mr Sarre, Mrs Lizin, Mr Peters, Mr Pelikan, Mr Schinzel, Mr Wagner and Mr Woltjer on behalf of the Socialist Group, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on an economic and social policy for the benefit of frontier workers (Doc. 1-494/79/rev.),

which has been referred to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment as the committee responsible, and to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs for their opinions ;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Schieler, Mr Albers, Mr Seefeld, Mr Muntingh, Mrs Weber, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, Mrs Herklotz, Mrs Salisch, Mrs Maij-Weggen, Mr Wawrzik, Mr Früh, Mr Alber, Mr Mertens, Mr Spautz, Mr Van der Gun, Mr De Goede and Mrs Dekker, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on pollution of the Rhine (Doc. 1-500/79/rev.),

which has been referred to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection ;

d) from the Council :

- the draft rectifying and supplementary budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1979, drawn up by the Council on 29 October 1979 (Doc. 1-470/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Budgets.

5. Urgent Procedure

President. — I have received from the Council a request for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on the Commission proposal for a regulation amending the Staff Regulations of Officials and Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities.

Urgent procedure is justified by the fact that the Council wishes to decide on this proposal in good time before the annual review of salaries, which will be carried out in December.

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I have also received, from the Liberal and Democratic Group and from the Council, a request for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on draft rectifying and supplementary budget No 3 of the European Communities for the 1979 financial year.

Urgent procedure is justified by the fact that, if this draft budget is not adopted by Parliament during the present part-session, the EAGGF intervention agencies in the Member States will have to stop making payments immediately.

Finally, I have received requests for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on the following two motions for resolutions :

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Müller-Hermann, Mr Vergeer, Mr Hoffmann, Mr Travaglini, Mr De Keersmaecker, Mr Pflimlin, Mr Janssen van Raay, Mr O'Donnell and Mr Estgen, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D Group), on summertime (Doc. 1-452/79); and
- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Seal, Mr Lomas, Miss Quin, Mr Enright, Mr Caborn, Mr Boyes, Mrs Buchan, Mr Griffiths, Mr Collins, Mr Muntingh and Mr Megahy, on the UK Government's proposals for immigration controls (Doc. 1-479/79).

The reasons supporting these two requests for urgent debate are contained in the documents themselves.

The vote on all these requests will be taken at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange. — (D) Madam President, I should like to know whether we shall have an opportunity to state our views if you arrange for a vote to be taken tomorrow morning on the urgency of various proposals?

President. — Certainly. In respect of each of these requests, the floor will be given, for three minutes each, to one speaker in favour and one speaker against.

6. Order of business

President. — The next item is the adoption of the order of business.

At its meeting of 30 October 1979, the enlarged Bureau authorized me to draw up a draft agenda for this part-session, which has now been distributed (Doc. PE 60.297/rev.).

The report on convergence and budgetary problems will be drawn up by the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on Agriculture having been asked for their opinions. The committee is expected to adopt it today.

Pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Development and Cooperation has

asked for its motion for a resolution on hunger in the world (Doc. 1-480/79) to be entered on the agenda for this part-session. The committee points out that since the Parliament dealt with this item during its plenary sitting of 25 October 1979, the adoption of this motion for a resolution should not take up too much time.

I call Mr Pannella, who wishes to speak in support of the inclusion of this item.

Mr Pannella. — (I) Madam President, in support of the committee's request, I should like to point out that, after careful consideration of the Rules of Procedure, all our colleagues recognized that the resolution could have been put to the vote at the October part-session, since we indicated on that occasion that we should not be maintaining the amendments as tabled.

The committee decided unanimously not to reopen this debate, but it was also unanimous in its desire to arrive at a useful result; I therefore hope that we shall all agree to enter this item on the agenda. We should then be placing on our agenda the outcome of a major and tiring debate.

President. — Are there any objections?

The inclusion of this item is agreed.

I propose that it be entered as the first item on the agenda for Friday, 16 November.

Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

Mr Klepsch, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), and Mr Bangemann, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, have asked for the inclusion in the agenda, pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure, of two oral questions to the Commission, with debate, by Mr Müller-Hermann and others (Doc. 1-498/79), and by Mr Pintat, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group (Doc. 1-497/79), both on energy supplies, to be considered in joint debate with the motion for a resolution on the outcome of the meeting of the Council of Ministers (Doc. 1-472/79), scheduled to be dealt with on Thursday, 15 November.

I call Mr Bangemann, who wishes to speak in favour of the request.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Madam President, I shall be very brief. The purpose of the proposal is to save time since all these three topics are interrelated. I therefore call upon the House to adopt this proposal.

President. — Are there any objections?

The request is accepted.

I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Madam President, I voted in favour of your proposal just now to enable a debate to be held on Thursday on the basis of oral questions on energy problems, but I would remind you that a group of non-attached Members, to which I belong, already tabled a motion for a resolution on the energy situation at our July part-session. Now that this proposal has suddenly been put to us, I consider it a perfectly reasonable request for that resolution to be included in Thursday's debate and I should like an assurance from you to that effect.

President. — Mr De Goede, the motion concerned was referred at the time to the appropriate committee, which has not yet expressed its views on the subject.

In addition, I have received some 70 proposed amendments to the draft agenda, tabled pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure.

I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Madam President, we have close on seventy proposals here which would change the whole agenda you suggested; we have already made some changes to the agenda, and if we were to adopt these seventy new proposals we should have an entirely different agenda. I therefore consider it both logical and appropriate for the House to decide once and for all at this stage whether the entire agenda is or is not to be amended by these seventy proposals.

I therefore ask you to take a vote in order to determine whether the House agrees to proceed with the agenda as proposed by you. Once the House has indicated its wishes we shall, if your proposal is rejected, have to consider the 68 amendments and draw up a new agenda having regard to those amendments. But if on the contrary the House accepts the agenda which you have proposed it would no longer be necessary to vote on the 68 amendments.

(Scattered applause from the right)

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Madam President, pursuant to Rule 12 of our Rules of Procedure, you have already informed the Assembly that certain amendments have been tabled. Now the Rules are explicit on this point even if some Members do not like them. It would seem that for some time now it is enough for the Rules not to please certain Members for them to cease to be Rules: instead we have a settlement of political scores in which the force of numbers wins the day.

We have some seventy-two proposed amendments. Rule 12 stipulates that on these proposals one speaker can be heard in favour and one against, together with one person to explain why he wishes the agenda to be changed. It is no good just quoting figures: you must announce the amendments before telling us whether there are seventy, thirty or only three. We must then

hear one speaker in favour and one against, in accordance with Rule 12.

Mr Bangemann is proposing that all these amendments should be joined together like a bundle of lictor's rods — I use the term advisedly because there seem to be some people in this House who are rather fond of such rods. Then we are supposed to reject the amendments out of hand before Members have even had a chance — whether or not they like the rods I mentioned before — to consider them. Well, Madam President, there is a Rule 12 and I think it deserves to be respected. There are not seventy-two amendments — there are simply amendments; the number is immaterial. These offensive proposals which are made at each part-session to violate the Rules of Procedure when a minority or a majority express their views, clearly go to show that some people in this House are obstructing the Rules and indulging in filibustering against the rights of our Members.

(Cries of dissent)

President. — I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino — (I) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I have signed and moved many of the amendments of which you have announced not the content but merely the overall number. I think that the only option open to us is to abide by the Rules of Procedure. My reasons for saying this are both political and substantial: there is quite clearly a struggle underway between the authors of the Nord report and those who consider it their democratic right to oppose that report on the basis of the provisions of our Rules. A majority of members of this Parliament will always be able to defeat a minority — even though this may sometimes take time. The least that can be done is to allow the time needed. It may be rather a tiring process, but you have strength of numbers on your side to beat us: what you cannot do is ride roughshod over the Rules of Procedure.

One of the reasons for which I submitted my amendments was to gain an opportunity to explain to all of you what the issues under discussion are, but at this point I must formally request you, Madam President, to comply with Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure. I fail to understand why amendments tabled by Mr Klepsch and Mr Bangemann — perhaps because they are 'bigger' than me — are accepted and their amendments voted on individually while my own amendments — possibly because I pull less weight — have to be voted *en bloc*. Voting *en bloc* on amendments is proposed in the Nord report and this proposal has been supported by Mr Klepsch, but, Madam President, their proposed change in the Rules of Procedure has not yet been adopted. We must work with the Rules as they stand and not with those which some Group Chairman dreams already exist in this Parliament.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — *(D)* Madam President, I would ask for Mr Bangemann's motion to be put to the vote by roll call to make it perfectly clear what the views of this House are. I am assuming that it will by now be clear to all of you that the purpose of Mr Bangemann's proposal is simply to decide whether to adopt an agenda placed before the House at the proposal of the enlarged Bureau or to make radical changes to it.

(Scattered applause)

President. — I call Mr de la Malène.

Mr de Malène. — *(F)* Madam President, I regret to inform you that we do not consider it possible to approve the procedure proposed by Mr Bangemann and Mr Klepsch. We formally disapprove of filibustering and we shall never associate ourselves with it. Consequently, we cannot approve the tabling of an excessive number of amendments or recourse to an abnormal procedure of voting by roll-call. But neither can we endorse an attitude which consists of systematically infringing the Rules of Procedure. You have caused the Assembly to adopt a number of amendments to the draft agenda and now, through a reverse vote, you are trying to prevent a number of other amendments from being put to the vote. That, Madam President, is a grave infringement of the Rules of Procedure. The way in which the vote is taken whether by a show of hands or by roll-call, does not alter the substance of the matter: Madam President, the majority of this House would be demeaning itself and the Assembly would gain nothing. I would ask our non-attached colleagues and the members of the Group for Technical Coordination to measure their acts, but the fact that they are behaving in a reprehensible manner does not justify us in following their example and flatly infringing the Rules of Procedure.

(Applause from some members of the Group of European Progressive Democrats)

President. — I call Mrs Castellina.

Mrs Castellina. — *(I)* Madam President, I wish to appeal to your common sense and to the Rules. It seems to me that there are two ways of directing an Assembly. One is to refer to the substance of the issues, and the other to respect the Rules of Procedure item by item, however wearisome that may be. We must make a clear choice in favour of one or other of these methods. The choice dictated to us by common sense is this: we have repeatedly asked for the possibility of discussing with representatives of all the political groups in this Parliament an equitable solution to the problem of the rights of those who do not belong to the major political groups — that solution cannot under any circumstances be found on the lines of the Nord report which is unfair and discriminatory against the non-attached Members and also against

our own group, which does not have twenty-one Members. At this point in the proceedings we can follow the path of common sense and choose a reasonable compromise. We are ready to withdraw all our amendments if that possibility is held out to us and if a suspension of the sitting is decided or a change in the agenda to allow us to seek a compromise. But if we are not to take the path of common sense, then we must respect meticulously the Rules of Procedure and consider each amendment as it is tabled — that is what the Rules specify. I would warn all the Members present that it would in my view be an extremely serious matter for this directly-elected Parliament to infringe, at the outset of its activities, one of the most elementary democratic rights of any Assembly; if we allow a majority to take a majority vote cancelling the rights set down in the Rules of Procedure, we might just as well abolish our Parliaments, because they would no longer have any purpose. This is a serious matter, and I think it would be well for all of us to give careful thought to it before voting on and adopting the proposal made by Mr Bangemann.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — *(F)* Madam President, I do not think it would be a bad idea to suspend this sitting in order to try to find a compromise. I would like to put forward a suggestion for your meeting should you decide on one. I fully share the view expressed by Mr de la Malène that we cannot under any circumstances violate our Rules of Procedure. I believe I quoted a few relevant examples previously in my own personal capacity. But, Mr de la Malène, I wonder to what extent the proposed amendments have been tabled in accordance with Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure. They would have been if the first paragraph of Rule 12 (2) were to be read in isolation. But there is a third paragraph:

If a procedural motion to amend the agenda is rejected, it shall not be tabled again during the same part-session.

What does this third paragraph mean? It means that in order to amend the agenda, ten Members may table a procedural motion which may relate to one or more amendments. In the case in point we do not have a single procedural motion tabled by ten Members, but sixty amendments. I think that if we are to discuss the matter and take a vote, we should do so on a single procedural motion relating to a certain number of amendments.

President. — I call Mr Coppieters.

Mr Coppieters. — *(NL)* Madam President, I do not think that you can under any circumstances put Mr Bangemann's motion to the vote since it is not on the agenda. Mr Bangemann's motion relates to an amendment to the rules of procedure. You can only put it to the vote if it has been placed on the agenda and

Coppieters

nobody — not even Mr Bangemann — has proposed its inclusion. If you put this item to the vote you will in effect be placing a new item on our agenda and that would be a grave infringement of the rights of this assembly.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, this purports to be a debate on the agenda, but we are dealing now with important matters of principle. First and foremost, we are of course concerned with the Nord report and all the related issues. I would like to remind you of our eventful first week in July when a motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Glinne, Mr Klepsch and Mr Scott-Hopkins finally stipulated that 'within the framework of the present Rules of Procedure, groups of non-attached Members must be granted a number of fundamental parliamentary rights.' That is what we are discussing now. I do not wish to anticipate the debate proper, but I do wish to take the liberty of reporting to you on what happened in the hour before the sitting opened. This in turn explains why we started late.

What is the real issue? The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions has been engaged for several months in preparing proposals designed to ensure respect for the interests of minorities. If you look at the Nord report you will find that three-quarters of the proposals contained in it are an effort to ensure respect for the rights of minorities which — as you will see from the resolution tabled by Mr Glinne and other Members — have not been respected up to now. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions has made the mistake — and I want to stress this point — of not listening to the minorities, in other words to those Members whose interests are at stake. It is only in the last fortnight that the non-attached Members have had an opportunity to react to the proposals contained in the Nord Report. Those proposals only came into our possession a fortnight ago. Last week we had an opportunity to table amendments. Last week, Madam President, I asked you to explain why, for example, the four amendments tabled by me could not be supported by an explanatory statement. There is no provision to that effect in the Rules of Procedure, and I felt this to be yet another obstacle to the exercise of our parliamentary rights.

What has happened is that Mr Bangemann — acting as he said on behalf of the other group chairmen — has held three discussions with us to ascertain what our problems are. After using the first two discussions to listen to our views without indicating the position of the groups on our rights, Mr Bangemann used the third meeting to hold a press conference after one hour without any consultation with us. I imagine he is sorry that he did so because it turned out to be a major fiasco.

What we want is the opportunity of genuine discussions with those Members who have a real say here — the group chairmen. So far we have not had that possibility, Mr Glinne, Mr Klepsch and Mr Scott-Hopkins; Madam President, we have just asked for real consultations to begin.

We shall need a few hours — or maybe even a day or a day and a half — to discuss with you the proposals drawn up by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions over a period of three months. We need real consultations to ascertain what is possible and what is not. Our compromise proposal, the gentleman's agreement, offered to you and rejected by Mr Bangemann and perhaps by other Members too, was this: we are willing to take part in the discussion of the Nord report, provided that the votes are not taken until we have had genuine consultations and agreement has been reached.

If we have had to wait three months for the Nord report, I fail to see any real reason why a vote should have to be taken tomorrow afternoon on matters which have not been fully discussed in the groups or given due consideration in the light of our amendments. We have a right to put our views and to be heard.

President. — We did indeed meet to try and reach a gentleman's agreement, and it was proposed that a meeting be called of all the group chairmen and non-attached Members. This meeting could be held either this evening or tomorrow, but in any case before the voting takes place. But there was no agreement to make the vote conditional upon an agreement reached beforehand. The proposal to hold a meeting was, however, made.

I call Mr Scott-Hopkins.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Madam President, I am a man of great patience, as you and the House will know. But I have listened for the last 400 minutes to a debate which I seem to have heard before. It seems to me that those honourable Members who do not belong to the large groups are claiming that they are being done down, or liable to be done down, and that they are fighting to save their political lives. Nobody in this House, and certainly nobody in my group, wishes to do any such thing at all. We wish to see that they have the rights enjoyed by any Member of Parliament and the proper back-up any Member of Parliament has the right to expect. What we are trying to do now is to see that they get those rights, but at the same time, Madam President, I believe it is right that a minority should not rule the majority of this House.

(Applause from various quarters)

The minority should have the right to express themselves properly, concisely and clearly, in the proper fashion as laid down; but they should not be able to disrupt our proceedings as they are doing now.

Scott-Hopkins

I accept what Mr de la Malène has said — namely, that the procedure suggested by Mr Bangemann differs somewhat from our normal practice. But what was said by Mr Galland modifies that view, and I think it would be acceptable for the House to take it.

I want to see this House get on with the important business before it: discussion and debate of political matters. Therefore I say to the honourable Members sitting at the back: nobody here is trying to take from you the rights you have. Let us by all means have a debate, tonight and tomorrow, and let us vote on it tomorrow evening if you wish. There are constraints on our time: The staff cannot work too long tomorrow night. But within those parameters, let us debate it *ad nauseam* and as fully as you so wish. Let us meet together this evening. I am more than willing to do this, and I am sure my fellow chairmen are prepared to do so too. But for the love of heaven let us get on with the debate now, let us not waste time on delaying, frustrating, filibustering tactics before we even start debating the Nord report. I speak for my group — and I am sure that what I say also goes for the chairmen of the other political groups — when I say that we intend to act in good faith. Let us therefore, Madam President, adopt the suggestion that we should vote on the agenda as it has been put forward. If we adopt it the discussion is closed; if not, then we shall have to deal with the amendments one by one and with the modification proposed by Mr Galland.

Let us now proceed to vote and see whether the House is in favour of starting the important debate. Perhaps we could suspend the sitting briefly to enable the chairmen of the political groups to meet together with Mrs Bonino and Mr Pannella, etc. But let us do so now instead of wasting time trying to filibuster at this stage. We have not even got to the heart of the matter: the Nord report itself and the amendments tabled to it. So I do beg this House and you, Madam President, to get down to the business before us as expeditiously as we can.

(Applause from various quarters in the centre and on the right)

President. — I call Mr Glinne.

Mr Glinne. — (F) Madam President, I wish in turn — in so far as there is still any need to do so — to confirm the accuracy of the observations which you made a moment ago. During the meeting which we held in your office, under your chairmanship and with the participation of all the political group chairmen, it was suggested that the debate in public sitting on the Nord report should not begin until every opportunity had been taken for consultations between the duly represented political groups and the authors of a considerable number of amendments. I stress that this

was a particularly constructive gesture of goodwill. I would also recall that in the past we in the Socialist Group have always put on record our wish, in plenary sitting and elsewhere, for the rights of minorities to be respected in this Parliament.

But now that this Parliament has been in existence for a few months, the overriding priority is to see to it that its business is serious.

(Applause)

We can no longer accept the obstinate will of a few Members to hold up the proceedings of the entire Assembly through their improvisations and obstructionism. Just now we received seventy proposed amendments to the agenda! It is no longer a matter of two, three, six or a dozen amendments. No, the real intention is to replace the agenda for which we have come to Strasbourg by a totally new agenda. Madam President, I add my voice to those who have already asked for consideration to begin immediately of the agenda for which we have come to Strasbourg.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — I merely wish to support Mr Bangemann and ask that his proposal be put to the vote. Could I say I do not agree with Mr de la Malène and those who say that Mr Bangemann's proposal is not in order. Rule 12 merely states that Parliament shall decide on the draft agenda submitted to it by the enlarged Bureau: nowhere in Rule 12 is it stated that we have to vote individually on every single amendment proposed to the agenda. Therefore Mr Bangemann's suggestion is quite in keeping with Rule 12, and I ask that it be put to the vote.

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

President. — I call Mr Capanna.

Mr Capanna. — (I) Madam President, I shall speak very briefly and with great calm. I am not ashamed but rather delighted to say that I agree with Mr Scott-Hopkins. I am surprised that other Members who have the reputation of being far more moderate than I do not take up Mr Scott-Hopkins's proposal; what he said in effect was this: 'I am fed up with wasting time on procedural arguments which do not refer to the substance of the issues.' Madam President, our representatives have been making exactly the same point today.

I see Mr Bangemann smiling. Perhaps he is not aware that for a serious compromise to be reached two extremes must be avoided: firstly, the compromise must have a concrete basis — you cannot base a compromise on thin air. Secondly, you cannot force one party to negotiate with a pistol against his head. That would not be particularly democratic either!

Capanna

Mr Galland's proposal that our proceedings should be briefly suspended to enable a meeting to be held immediately seems opportune to me, provided that the intention is to discuss the substance of the issues and not to waste time. I hope you will take me at my word when I say that I and the other members of the Group for Technical Coordination are tired of being treated in this way.

We therefore accept the proposal made by Mr Scott-Hopkins and Mr Galland if the aim is not to waste time but to find practical ways of attaining our object. Let us briefly suspend the sitting of Parliament and hold a meeting of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, in the presence of the group chairmen and of course in your own presence, Madam President, in order to ascertain whether the majority has the intention of reaching an honourable compromise — not one based on thin air or arrived at with a pistol at our heads.

President. — I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Madam President, I am a Member of this House equally with any other Member of the 410 elected. I am ashamed of the performance of this House since I got here, and I say that not just out of spitefulness towards anybody who may have made any proposals here this evening. We have not been behaving as a Parliament; we have not been behaving as the people who sent us here expect us to behave; and we have been preoccupied, in more than one of the few part-sessions that we have had, by the proposals of those who would wish to remove from the enjoyment of the rights of this House a small group who, because they do not belong to major political parties, are reckoned not to have any rights worth mentioning in this House.

I am delighted to listen to Mr Scott-Hopkins. I believe, from what he has said this evening, that his wish is to ensure that the unattached, the small groupings and the minorities will have rights in this House. What we are asking for is equal rights, and I say to you, Madam President, and to every Member assembled here this evening, that this is the second major operation that has been attempted in order to amputate the rights of those who found within the rules when we came here the rights of those people from the small parties to join together and form the group that we now have, the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members. I appeal to you, Madam President, and to the assembled Members here, to realize that neither I nor any other member of the group that I have been associated with, nor indeed any unattached Member in this row here at the back is here to waste either your time, the time of this Parliament or our own time, which is largely what we have been doing since last

July. And I want to say this evening, while agreeing with what has recently been suggested, that we should adjourn and try and find a compromise, try and clean this thing up and get it back into shape, so that we get down to work.

I want to say that there are far more important things than the change of rules, whether by the Nord Report or any other, and they are being put back when they should be under discussion at this moment. We could do that, Madam, if we had a reasonable approach, one that was not hurried, unlike the proposal that all this group of amendments be voted on as one.

I would say to Mr Scott-Hopkins that I believe him and I would support the suggestion that he has made, and I would support further the suggestion made by Mr Capanna, that we get the group chairmen together now to try and find a solution. I wish to say further that all the amendments that have been tabled were accompanied by covering letters indicating to you, Madam President, that it was not our wish to bring about a situation in which the time of this House was wasted, as you might see it, but rather that, because of the deadline for tabling amendments, we had to put them in at that time in the hope that between then — that is, last Wednesday — and now sanity would prevail, that there would be a meeting where we sort this matter out and that we should not be continuing, as we may continue, to talk endlessly about a matter that could and should be settled in a very short time.

President. — I call Mr d'Ormesson.

Mr d'Ormesson. — (F) Madam President, I have made a great many observations since taking my seat in this Parliament. I do not have the impression that the rights of the minorities are being trampled underfoot since I have heard representatives of the minorities far more often than representatives of the majority.

(Scattered applause)

Madam President, the right of Members to refer to the Rules of Procedure when it encroaches on the right of others not to allow Parliament to be debased. I ask for a vote to be taken on the motion put by Mr Bangemann and Mr Klepsch. We shall then have a clear result which will show whether we intend to get down to serious business or allow ourselves to be distracted by something that is no more than a comedy.

(Scattered applause from the right)

President. — I call Mrs Macciocchi.

Mrs Macciocchi. — (I) I listened to the last speaker with astonishment and pained attention because such harsh and serious words should not be used in a Parliament. Mr d'Ormesson criticizes us for talking too

Macciocchi

much. I personally have only spoken twice in this Assembly, but the real issue is not one of speaking all the time... I repeat that I have only spoken twice and I have the same rights as everyone else. If you do not wish to speak, that is your own affair, but if I wish to speak and have spoken twice, I feel bound also to point out that I have only spoken twice in two months. That seems perfectly reasonable to me. If I wish to speak and you put a gag on me I shall no longer be able to speak. I am speaking because it is my right to do so — a right granted to me by the President, and this Assembly has been specifically created to enable Members to speak and express their own views.

What we are doing is quite obviously a defensive action. Why should we deny the fact? We are seeking to defend our existence as a group and to do so within a Parliament which can quite easily tolerate the existence of a group of ten organized Members. Now the hostility shown towards us and the ardour evinced in rejecting our proposals give me reason to remind you, Madam President and Members, that history is in fact made by minorities; not only in Parliaments, but throughout history, minorities have shown a readiness to fight and escape from their minority role; their struggle lies at the heart of the history of mankind. Why do you laugh at minorities?

The world is made up of majorities and minorities, but I hate those representatives of the majority who try to prevent the minority from speaking — the first principle of democracy is that a true majority will allow the minority to express its views. We condemn all totalitarian régimes, because they prevent people from expressing themselves, and we feel great sorrow for those who have to resort to wallposters to express their views: our culture should at least show that democracy means respect for minorities.

Madam President, every minority has a right to fight: in recent years we have been minorities and we have fought against the big forces; Madam President, you too fought in your youth just as others have to fight throughout their lives. I believe that we have a right and a duty to fight and that you must all respect that right even if you belong to the big political groups, to the strong political groups; I believe that this right must be respected all the more if our speeches irritate you, and if you would prefer to pass on rapidly to other business; your interests are just as much at stake as our own. Even if you are tired of us, I believe that you should still show some evidence of a word that you used a thousand times at your election meetings: the word democracy. a democratic Europe, a Europe based on the principles of democracy. The time has now come for you to show evidence of your democracy. I must apologize but I have already said to our colleagues that we are not seeking to waste their time. This is a real confrontation, perhaps the only one we shall see in this Parliament: a confrontation between a small minority and a major parliamentary force.

I hope that the suspension of the sitting which has been requested by several speakers will now be granted.

President. — I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Madam President, I feel we are in a very difficult position here, because we are discussing matters that most Members of the House do not know anything about. Amendments have been moved that have not been translated or put before the House. I know this would be necessary under one of the other rules, but I understand that it is not necessary under Rule 12.

Rules 12, as I understand it, deals with the items that are to be placed on the agenda of the sittings. I would like to ask Madam President: are these amendments requests to make changes of substance to the agenda, or are they matters of form? As I understand it, this is what we are considering. If the 70 amendments are to take out a full stop, or to remove a comma, or to change a word, or to do something like that, then they have nothing to do with Rule 12, and nothing to do with the agenda. Rule 12 specifically states that we are dealing with the agenda — that is, the items of substance that Parliament will consider over the next 4 days. I do not know whether these amendments attempt to alter the substance or the form of the items which are to come before the House. Could you please advise me, Madam President, whether these amendments do alter the subject matter that will come before the House — in other words, the agenda under Rule 12?

President. — Mr Rogers, these amendments have not been translated into French either: I have them in Italian. Most of them do indeed have the object of modifying the agenda.

I call Mr Nordlohne.

Mr Nordlohne. — (D) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I — like all of you — have been a Member of this Parliament since the day of its election and since the constituent sitting on 17 July. Because of my own experience of seven years' activity in my national Parliament, I began by listening. I listened a great deal, and I must say that I have been very disappointed by the debates that take place at the opening of all our sittings. They do not serve the cause of democracy in our countries. It is my belief that democracy lives on majorities and minorities and we, as good democrats in this House, will have to accept the decisions of the majority whether we like it or not. I therefore wish to repeat very clearly something that I have already said in my group. I believe that minorities must be protected, but I am likewise convinced that majorities in this House require protection. We hear it said all the time that rights are being infringed but I wonder who has considered to what extent our right to exercise our particular mandate is

Nordlohne

being curtailed. Let me tell you quite frankly that I consider it necessary to be present in my constituency in order to exercise my mandate. But I am prevented from being there by hour-long procedural debates in this Chamber; let me therefore make one final appeal to one group in this House. We all want to try to reach agreement, but if you deliberately submit 5 200 amendments as part of your obstructionist tactic and then reduce the number to 70, and if you are unwilling to respect the opinion of a majority of Members of this House, what right do you then have to constantly criticize us on the grounds that we are trampling the rights of minorities underfoot?

One final observation, Madam President. I have had many conversations with staff of this House: who is taking care of the interests of our employees, of the staff and the Members of their families? Parliament is responsible for them too and I consider it intolerable for discussions of this kind to continue through procedural debates lasting for hours on end. I believe we must get down to business and vote on Mr Bange-mann's motion.

(Scattered applause from the right)

President. — I call Mr Motchane.

Mr Motchane. — (F) Madam President, perhaps the seventy amendments which we have been discussing for some time now relate to matters of substance and perhaps they do not. We have no means of knowing, as Mr Rogers pointed out just now. If they do not touch on important matters, I am sorry that Mrs Bonino — who herself expressed regret last week at the fact that this Assembly was becoming bogged down in secondary debates instead of discussing the major issues — and her colleagues should have tabled them. I have the distinct impression of intolerance, of growing intolerance on the part of a majority, or some members of the majority of this House, towards certain minorities. Even if the conduct of this minority may sometimes give cause for expressions of impatience, I think it would be wise to note that the major political groups, through their chairmen, have all now expressed the wish for general consultations. They have been pointing this out for the last twenty minutes or so. I am therefore somewhat surprised that the consequences have not been drawn from their intentions and I would ask you, Madam President to determine whether it is not high time for the Assembly to suspend its preceedings briefly so as to enable us to get down very quickly to the heart of the problem and put an end to all this suspense.

President. — It is important that everyone should have an opportunity to express his views.

I call Mrs Groes.

Mrs Groes. — (DK) Madam President, I would like to point out that I regard the debate on which we are currently engaged as being largely directed towards the outside world. The report presented by Mr Nord provides a complete basis for a decision, and I have difficulty in seeing why we should have to deal with all these amendments. The basic issue is whether to give ten people the right to form a group and we can do that perfectly well on the basis of the Nord report.

I would, however, for the benefit of Parliament and the general public request you, Madam President, to disclose the identity of the persons who support the amendments tabled by Mrs Bonino and Mr Capanna. As far as I am aware, the Rules of Procedure require amendments to be tabled by ten Members, and I feel it is important that the people who claim that they do not wish to disrupt or obstruct the work of Parliament should, at the same time, acknowledge the identity of those tabling these numerous amendments which, in the view of Parliament, are not all necessary in the interests of objective debate. What I am therefore asking you, Madam President, is to state to the House which ten Members support the amendments moved by Mrs Bonino and Mr Capanna.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Madam President, some of you may be surprised to learn that no parliamentary rules of procedure refer to the rights of a minority. It is not a matter of the rights of a minority, because I agree that the rights of the majority are at least equally important. What we are discussing, Madam President, are the rights of the entire Parliament and of all its Members. We are discussing respect for a law which governs all of us, and not respect for the rights of a minority which exist only indirectly. No Parliament has ever set down in writing the rights of a minority or of a majority; juridically that would be nonsense. The only real right is the right of everybody, the right of each Member and of all of us. Madam President, the majority is seeking to impose its Rules of Procedure on us. You may retort, *dura lex, sed lex*. But Madam President, the rules must not apply solely to Mr Piperno or some other individual Member; what is important is that there must be no discrimination between an amendment signed by Mr Bangemann and Mr Klepsch and an amendment signed by a 'little' Member such as Mrs Bonino. We all have the right to be treated on an equal footing without any discrimination. If you had put these amendments to the vote, perhaps we should already have rejected 5, 10 or 15 of them an hour ago. But you have deprived Members of this House of the right to acquaint them-

Pannella

selves with the amendments, which we have been discussing for an hour now without knowing what their substance is.

That is the real problem : we must put an end to this whole question of majorities and minorities. There is a Parliament and there are Members of Parliament, and the least among them — I myself — is saying to you that we do not want to be defended as a minority but that, as Members of this Parliament, we want the Rules of Procedure to be respected. Otherwise there will be no end to it. Madam President, this kind of formless debate is a waste of time. There are the Rules of Procedure and they must be respected; when someone proposes an original and strange interpretation of them, as Mr Galland has done, that is a serious matter. Mr Galland, there are some lawyers who pay tribute to the letter of the law only to distort it immediately afterwards. What do the Rules which you read out say? Why do you not tell your audience what they say? They say that if a procedural motion to amend the rules of procedure is rejected it shall not be tabled again during the same part-session. So, if there are 62 such motions, rejecting one of them does not prevent you from admitting the others. That is perfectly clear. There must be no exaggeration, even in an intelligent reading of the texts. To do so would be quite simply to distort the text which everybody can read — namely, Rule 12 (2).

President. — For the benefit of Mrs Groes, I wish to say that the proposed amendments to the agenda were in fact signed by ten Members.

I call Mr Cottrell.

Mr Cottrell. — Madam President, I am a new Member of this House and I hope no one will take it amiss if I remind it what the rule of democracy, as far as I can see, is. The rule of democracy as we understand it in Europe is that the majority should rule. In this House, the majority does not rule save by the will of the minority when it chooses. When we had the European elections on June 7, much play was made of European unity and of the fact that this House in which we now sit would be its forum. It is a forum. I suspect that those who see us having these interminable wranglings over rules of procedure will suspect that this is a Roman circus in a forum staged by courtesy of Mr Pannella once a month. I do not believe that Mr Pannella or Mrs Bonino come to this place for the same purposes as we do. We are constantly being subjected to political guerilla warfare. Let us put an end to it, now, in this session, or we shall be damned by everybody who watches our activities here for the next five years!

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

President. — All those who had asked to speak on this question have been able to do so freely. I should now like to point out that I no more than anyone else have any intention of violating the Rules of Procedure or allowing them to be violated.

Nevertheless, Rule 8 entrusts me with the task of ensuring that the proceedings of Parliament are properly conducted, and the tabling of 69 amendments, many of which, incidentally overlap one another, to the draft agenda constitutes an obvious attempt to prevent the normal conduct of our proceedings. If each of these amendments were given the time laid down for it in the Rules of Procedure, we should need more than six hours and a half for the sole purpose of adopting the agenda or modifying it! Moreover, I have received, as you are aware, a request from some of the group chairmen and also a request to suspend the proceedings in order to have a discussion, but this discussion has already taken place and has produced no useful results. All the group chairmen or their representatives who were present in my office will know that there was no possibility of reaching agreement despite the numerous proposals made.

In these circumstances and in order to allow the Parliament, without losing too much time, to begin its consideration of those items which it decides to include in the agenda, we shall now, as proposed by most of the group chairmen, vote by roll-call on the adoption of the draft agenda proposed by the enlarged Bureau.

(Applause. Mr Pannella asked for the floor)

Mr Pannella, there are no more points of order. We now proceed to a vote by roll-call.

(Violent protests from Mr Pannella. Tumult)

This will begin with Mr Didò, whose name has been drawn by lot.

Mr Pannella. — *(F)* This is a police state! My compliments to the Socialists and Communists!

President. — The vote may commence. I ask the Secretary-General to call the roll.

(The roll-call was taken)

Does anyone else wish to vote?

The ballot is closed.

Here is the result of the vote:

Number of Members voting :	177
Abstentions :	17
For :	143
Against :	17.

President

These are the names of the Members who voted *in favour*:

Adam, van Aerssen, Aigner, Alber, Albers, von Alemann, Arndt, Bangemann, Barbi, Battersby, Baudis, Beazley, Berkhouwer, Beumer, von Bismarck, Blumenfeld, Bocklet, Boot, Calvez, Catherwood, Cohen, Colleselli, Combe, Cottrell, de Courcy Ling, Curry, de Keersmaeker, Delatte, Delmotte, Diligent, Elles, Enright, Estgen, Fergusson, de Ferranti, Fischbach, Forster, Forth, Bruno Friedrich, Früh, Fuchs, Gabert, Galland, Geurtsen, Ghergo, Glinne, Van der Gun, Haagerup, Habsburg, Hänsch, Hahn, Hamilius, Harris, von Hassel, Helms, Henckens, Herklotz, Herman, Hoff, Hopper, Hord, Hutton, Irmer, Janssen van Raay, Jaquet, Johnson, Jonker, Jürgens, Edward Kellett-Bowman, Klepsch, Klinkenborg, Lange, Langes, Lenz, Ligios, Luster, McCartin, Majonica, Simone Martin, Mertens, Jacques Moreau, Louise Moreau, Moreland, Müller-Hermann, Newton Dunn, Jørgen Brøndlund Nielsen, Tove Nielsen, Nord, Nordlohne, Notenboom, Nothomb, Oehler, d'Ormesson, Patterson, Pearce, Pedini, Penders, Pflimlin, Pintat, Plumb, Pottering, Prag, Price, Prout, Provan, Pruvot, Pürsten, Purvis, Rabbethge, Rey, Rossi, Sablé, Salzer, Schall, Schieler, Schmid, Karl Schön, Konrad Schön, Schwencke, Scott-Hopkins, Scrivener, Seefeld, Seligman, Sherlock, Siegerschmidt, Spautz, Spencer, Stewart-Clark, Sutra, John David Taylor, John Mark Taylor, Turner, Tyrrell, Vandewiele, Van Miert, Vanneck, Veil, Vetter, von der Vring, Walter, Walz, Wawrzik, Wogau.

The following are the names of those who voted *against*:

Bøgh, Bonde, Boserup, Dekker, Gendebien, De Goede, Gredal, Groes, Van den Heuvel, Krouwel-Vlam, Lomas, Motchane, Nyborg, Schwartzenberg, Seal, Skovmand, Woljer.

The following are the names of those Members who *abstained*:

Bonaccini, Castellina, Chambeiron, Charzat, Clwyd, Colla, Cresson, Fanti, Fernandez, Frischmann, Griffiths, Key, Leonardi, Maurice Martin, Piquet, Poirier, Wiczorek-Zeul.

I call Mr de la Malène on a point of order.

Mr de la Malène — (F) Madam President, I wish to explain why my group abstained in this vote, which it considers illegal.

Rule 8 (2) of the Rules of Procedure stipulates that the President opens and adjourns sittings and ensures observance of the Rules. Madam President, it is my painful duty to tell you that you have not ensured observance of the Rules.

We have voted on a number of amendments to, or changes in, the agenda, and when it came to putting other amendments — on which, let me say, I did not approve — to the vote, you applied a procedure which is not provided for in the Rules: that is a serious act in a Parliament. Let me stress that it is a serious act on your part too.

Under those circumstances, we refused to take part in a vote which we saw as an infringement of the Rules of Procedure.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella — (F) Madam President, Rule 8 (1) of the Rules of Procedure stipulates that the President shall direct all the activities of Parliament and of its organs under the conditions laid down in these Rules. Rule 8 (2) stipulates that the President shall ensure observance of these Rules — but you have violated them. Madam President, you are the President of Mr Klepsch and Mr Bangemann; you are not the President of all the Members of this Parliament, because a President who violates the law of this Parliament cannot speak in its name.

(Scattered protests)

President. — Mr Pannella, the Rules of Procedure also state that the President shall ensure that the proceedings of Parliament are properly conducted. He must, therefore, intervene where there is any obstruction.

(Applause)

I call Mr Capanna.

Mr Capanna . — (I) Madam President, I refer to Rules 8, 10 and 41.

Madam President, you are certainly not unaware that Rule 8 gives you the right to organize and direct all the proceedings of this Parliament — as you have indicated — but only within the framework of the Rules of Procedure. It is incontrovertibly clear that you have taken an unprecedented decision contrary to certain explicit provisions of Rule 8. Why is this so serious? It is so serious because you might equally apply the same principle and procedure to any other matter of your choosing. When a number of amendments are tabled to a motion for a resolution, you might say: 'These amendments disturb the proper conduct of the proceedings and I, as President, shall take the vote on the resolution as a whole instead of voting on the amendments first, as the Rules require.' I hope that you will reflect on that fact, Madam President, and also on another point. Mr Pannella asked to speak on a point of order and was for some reason not allowed to do so. I asked to speak before the vote began, to explain my vote. You know that the Rules allow me to speak for three minutes: you deprived me of that right.

Why now am I referring to Rules 41 and 10 as well? Because this complete disregard of the Rule of Procedure — we are now faced with nothing short of a total disregard of their provisions — appears to be a contagious phenomenon. You will be aware of the episode — I wrote to you on the subject today and would greatly welcome your reply — which occurred at the meeting of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure on 15 and 16 October last. We are still on the subject

Capanna

of the Nord report: those were the two decisive meetings of the committee which approved the Nord report. Madam President, at that meeting — as you will see from the minutes — innumerable illegalities were committed, some of them identical to those committed by you today. I wished to prevent the continuation of this illegal procedure and, as you know, staged a protest, which, although rather unusual, was not illegal. Mr Nyborg then had me carried out of the Chamber by applying Rule 10. Now you tell me that Rule 41 — the first paragraph of which stipulates which Rules apply not only to the plenary sittings but also to committee meetings — in no way provides for the application of Rule 10 to the committees. It follows that Mr Nyborg, in his capacity as committee chairman, inadmissibly and repeatedly exceeded his authority. Now you, Madam President, are the President of the whole House and not just of a part of it. You will certainly recognize the gravity of this occurrence. I have waited for almost a month to see whether you would have the courage — indeed the political sensitivity — to take up a position on this prevarication suffered by a Member of the Assembly. Not at all!

In conclusion, I would say that what happened here a short while ago is the darkest page in the history of this Assembly. We are not now defending the rights of four, ten or eleven Members. We are fighting a battle of principle. When many speakers for the majority claim to defend the rights of the minority they are in fact defending the rights of the majority itself. When have we ever contested the rights of the majority? Have we tabled an amendment to the Rules stating that the minimum number of Members required to form a group should be 115 in order to put an end to the big groups in this House such as the Socialist and Christian-Democratic Groups?

President. — Mr Capanna, your three minutes are up.

Mr Capanna. — (I) Madam President, I shall comply with your injunction, because you know that the Rules allow any speaker to accept an interruption and then to reply briefly. Do you grant me that possibility, for which express provision is made in the Rules? I have been interrupted, and I wish to answer briefly before concluding. Do you agree?

President. — You may only answer the interruption.

Mr Capanna. — (I) Thank you, Madam President. My answer to the honourable Member who interrupted me is this: the concept of imbecility or cretinry — like any other concept — is highly subjective. It was also used — some of you will not like but I remind you of the fact with good reason — by the *Schutzstaffeln* to justify their actions.

(Interjections)

President. — I call Mr Bøgh.

Mr Bøgh. — (DK) Madam President, I would like to make a statement on behalf of the four Danish members of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Firstly, we understand that six or seven of these amendments have been tabled by 10 Members, including names of Members outside the group but not those of the four Danish members. Secondly, on application to you during the break I was given permission to see the text of the other 60 or so amendments and it transpires that these amendments were tabled on behalf of the Group with one signature. I would like to state that the four Danish members of the group have not signed these amendments and that, furthermore, at a previous meeting we dissociated ourselves from this form of action. There must therefore be an error somewhere if these 60 amendments have been tabled on the group's behalf. I regret that I was unable to make this statement until now but I was able to do so only after I had spoken with the President and ascertained that the amendments had been tabled in this form.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — I take note of this statement, from which it transpires that at least 60 amendments were not tabled in accordance with the Rules.

I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Madam President, reference has been made to a number of Rules to justify or criticize your action. But I wish to refer to Rule 12 (2), which states that you, as President of Parliament, may yourself propose alterations to the agenda, and I am sure everyone will agree with me when I say that your rôle is a difficult one and that it was particularly difficult in the last hour. But I still think you made the wrong choice. You had the choice between Mr Bange-mann's harsh proposal, which amounted to an infringement of our Rules of Procedure, and your own proposal, based on wisdom and tact, that amounted to debating the Nord report but postponing the vote until later when you, as President, came to the conviction that everything had been done to reach agreement. If you personally had proposed that the vote should not yet be placed on the agenda, I should have found that a wise proposal. I am sorry that you did not do so, since it would have been a good solution, especially as you know from the discussions before five o'clock that everyone on the back benches would have been willing to withdraw their amendments if you had taken that course of action.

President. — Mr De Goede, you know perfectly well that this proposal was indeed made in my office and that you refused to accept it in the presence of all the

President

group chairmen. Everything possible was done to give you an opportunity of withdrawing these amendments, but you did not withdraw them. You stated that you would so only if you could be certain that the vote would take place under certain conditions which you fixed yourself. There was therefore no possibility of reaching an agreement, and I believe that, on the contrary, in my capacity as President I have done everything possible to try and find a solution.

(Applause)

I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — *(F)* Madam President, I have heard no reference in the Assembly to a proposal which I made during the meeting of the group chairmen namely, that we should hold a meeting that was long enough to bring results and postpone the Nord report until tomorrow morning. I made that proposal because I felt it rather ridiculous for the group spokesmen to speak in the afternoon before seeing us at 9 o'clock: what would then have been the point of any agreement, since they would already have made known their official position in the afternoon?

You told me that was impossible...

President. — On the contrary, Mrs Bonino, the proposal was accepted!

Mrs Bonino. — *(F)* No, that isn't true!

President. — The proposal was accepted by all the group chairmen who are here now.

Mrs Bonino. — *(F)* But it isn't true! Mr De Goede, who was there, can bear witness.

President. — Mrs Bonino, your proposal was accepted, but afterwards you indicated your refusal.

Mrs Bonino. — *(F)* That's completely untrue! You suggested that the group chairmen should meet for an hour. I objected that within one hour it was impossible to reach agreement on the amendments. Perhaps there was a misunderstanding, but I made a proposal and you, Madam President, will remember...

President. — Mrs Bonino, I remember perfectly well!

Mrs Bonino. — *(F)* ... having said that you could settle nothing this afternoon and that it was therefore necessary to begin the debate on the Nord report.

President. — Mrs Bonino, I remember quite clearly suggesting that no time-table should be fixed — not even the hour-and-a-half to which you refer —, that we should first of all settle the agenda and then

suspend the proceedings in order to hold a meeting with the group chairmen without deciding when — whether this evening or tomorrow — the Nord report should be taken. And then, having declared that it was useless to continue the discussion, you left a reaction which everyone found remarkable.

Mrs Bonino. — *(F)* That's not true, Madam President. All you had to do was to undertake that the report would not be taken before tomorrow morning. But that you were not prepared to do!

President. — Mrs Bonino, you would not agree to any proposal.

Mrs Bonino. — The whole thing is untrue, and Mr De Goede, who has retained his composure, can bear witness to the facts more calmly than I can.

At all events, I refused to take part in the vote just now because I will not play with cheats!

(Protests)

President. — The order of business is therefore as follows:

This afternoon until 8 p.m.

- Procedure without report
- Statement by the Commission on action taken on the opinions and proposals of the European Parliament
- Nord report on the amendment of certain Rules of Procedure

Tuesday, 13 November 1979

10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

- Decision on urgent procedure
- Nord report on the amendment of certain Rules of Procedure

(continuation of debate)

3 p.m.

- Question Time (questions to the Commission)
- 3.45 p.m. until 8 p.m. (possibly, from 9 p.m. onwards)
- Nord report on the amendment of certain Rules of Procedure (vote)

Wednesday, 14 November 1979

10 a.m. and 3 p.m. until 8 p.m. (possibly, until 9 p.m.)

- Lange report on convergence

3 p.m.

- Question Time (questions to the Council and to the Foreign Ministers)

4.30 p.m.

- Voting-time

Thursday, 15 November 1979

10 a.m. and 3 p.m. until 8 p.m.

- Joint debate on the Gallagher motion for a resolution and two oral questions to the Commission on energy

President

- Peters interim report on restructuring the iron-and-steel industry
- Aigner report on the 1977 budget discharge
- Possibly, Ney report on representation expenses of Members of the Commission
- Pearce report on generalized tariff preferences
- K.H. Hoffmann report on international action in the field of air transport.

3 p.m.

- Question Time (questions to the Commission)

3.45 p.m.

- Voting-time

Friday, 16 November 1979

9 a.m.

- Procedure without report
- Possibly, voting-time
- Possibly, continuation of Thursday's agenda
- Motion for a resolution on hunger in the world
- Ferri report on intervention by Parliament before the Court of Justice
- Joint debate on the Ligios and Enright reports on fisheries
- Kirk report on fisheries
- Quin report on fisheries
- Pranchère report on fisheries
- Caillavet report on aubergines
- Welsh report on certain products from Malta
- End of sitting.
- Voting-time.

7. Speaking-time

President. — Pursuant to Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure, I propose that speaking-time for the Nord report be allocated as follows, although this allocation is only theoretical, since the group chairmen have agreed — and we take note of their undertaking — to concede part of their speaking-time to the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members and to the Non-attached Members :

Rapporteur	15 minutes
Members	300 minutes, broken down as follows :
Socialist Group	47 minutes
Group of the European People's Party (C-D Group)	46 minutes
European Democratic Group	40 minutes
Communist and Allies Group	37 minutes
Liberal and Democratic Group	36 minutes
Group of European Progressive Democrats	33 minutes
Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members	31 minutes
Non-attached Members	30 minutes
Total	5 hours 15 minutes

Further pursuant to Rule 28, I propose that speaking-time for the report on convergence and budgetary problems be allocated as follows :

Council and Commission	60 minutes
Rapporteur	15 minutes
Members	300 minutes, broken down as follows :
Socialist Group	66 minutes
Group of the European People's Party (CD Group)	63 minutes
European Democratic Group	44 minutes
Communist and Allies Group	35 minutes
Liberal and Democratic Group	33 minutes
Group of European Progressive Democrats	25 minutes
Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members	19 minutes
Non-attached Members	15 minutes
Total	6 hours 15 minutes

For all other reports and motions for resolutions on the agenda, I propose that speaking time be limited as follows :

- 10 minutes for the rapporteur and for one speaker on behalf of each group ;
- 5 minutes for other speakers.

Are there any objections ?

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (I) Madam President, I wish to point out that I shall vote against your proposal because the fact that the non-attached Members and the Group for Technical Coordination are to be allowed only a few minutes to defend their position on this particularly serious matter, and the stubbornness with which you continue to propose reference to Rule 28 in the most important debates, clearly demonstrate that these serious infringements of the Rules of Procedure are accompanied by a lack of style which is directly proportional to the infringements committed.

Madam President, a debate on the Rules of Procedure amounts to a debate on the law governing our Parliament. To allow each Member the right to speak for five minutes would have been a duty which we should have expected the President to be the first to recognize. In the face of this operation, which smacks of a grocery rather than of a Parliament, I repeat that I shall be voting against the whole agenda.

President. — In view of what was said this morning by the group chairmen to Mrs Bonino, you may rest assured that the non-attached Members will have plenty of time to speak.

I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Madam President, I just want to correct something that has been said here about the allocation of speaking-time. I do not expect it will be corrected, but I want to put on record what was offered at an enlarged Bureau meeting by Mr Klepsch when this matter was discussed initially, and that was that his group would require about fifteen minutes of the entire time. I wonder if he remembers that, and does he now wish to forego the time that has been allocated to him by the Chair?

President. — Mr Blaney, I have already stated that the group chairmen have themselves already said that they will not be claiming the whole of the speaking-time allocated to them and will be placing a considerable part of their share at the disposal of non-attached Members and of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Are there any further objections to these proposals concerning the limitation of speaking-time?

The proposals are agreed.

8. Time-limit for tabling amendments

President. — The time-limit for tabling amendments to the Nord report expired at 3 p.m. on 7 November 1979.

For all other reports on the agenda and for any items which may be added to it, I propose that the time-limit for tabling amendments be set at 6 p.m. on the day preceding their discussion.

Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

I call Mr De Goede on a point of order.

Mr De Goede — (NL) Madam President, you will remember that last week I expressed my surprise at the fact that there was no provision to accompany amendments with an explanatory statement — you promised to examine the matter and I assume that you will inform us of the result of your study. I expressed my surprise because, when the rapporteur submits a motion, he accompanies it with a full explanatory statement. In the budget debates a justification is attached to practically all the amendments, and I fail to see why amendments submitted by us or by anyone else — I myself have tabled four — should not be accompanied by an explanatory statement. I should therefore like you to inform me which Rule in the Rules of Procedure prohibits me from doing this. The situation now is this: the groups discussed these amendments this afternoon, but on so technical a matter as the revision of our Rules of Procedure an

appropriate explanation must surely be given by the authors of amendments. You have prevented me from doing so. That is the first question to which you owe me an answer.

The second question is this: Rule 29 (1) states that Parliament shall not deliberate on any amendment unless it is moved during the debate. I should therefore like an explicit assurance that, now that I have been prevented from providing a written explanation, I shall be allowed to explain my reasons orally when the amendments are taken.

President. — Mr De Goede, insofar as you are not able to give your explanations in writing, you will be given an opportunity of presenting them orally when the amendments are considered.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) No, Madam, I asked you why I was forbidden to do as I wanted: you must indicate which Rule prevents me from giving a written explanatory statement. That is your duty as President. You must ensure respect of the Rules of Procedure, and there is no provision in them to the effect that an explanatory statement may not be attached to an amendment.

(Applause from the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members)

President. — The Rules of Procedure cannot provide for every possibility. On the other hand, this has never been admitted in practice. Since you raised the problem, I think it will have to be dealt with by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure.

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (I) Madam President, you repeated a moment ago that we could give an oral explanation of our amendments only if we had not previously justified them in writing.

That position is contrary to the Rules. Madam President, allow me to point out that it is not permitted to put to the vote an amendment which has not been moved during the debate.

President. — I merely repeated Mr De Goede's own words.

I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Madam President, on this procedural matter we can adopt exactly the same procedure as we did in the budget debate. We can use the time set aside for the debate...

(Interjection by Mr De Goede: What kind of democrat are you?)

Bangemann

Mr De Goede, I have never in my life tabled amendments on behalf of my group without at least discussing and voting on them first in the group. If there is in this House a group whose chairman submits amendments and if four members of the group then stand up and say that they did not take part either in a discussion or in a vote on them but in fact disagreed with them, as chairman of the group and as a good democrat, I should then withdraw.

Now to this procedural matter: we can proceed exactly as we did during the budget debate by using the time available to everyone in the debate partly in order to explain our amendments. That is what we did in the budget debate. That is entirely in order. I now say — and I hope Mr Galland will agree — that the other groups — I am making this as a proposal because I cannot say it now on behalf of my group — should confine their opinions to a few observations and leave the bulk of the debate to the non-attached Members and the Technical Coordination Group to explain their 5 200 amendments.

(Isolated applause from the right)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — *(D)* Madam President, I shall make 10 minutes of my group's speaking-time available to the non-attached Members.

President. — I call Mr Glinne.

Mr Glinne. — *(F)* Without wishing to outbid the previous speaker, the Socialist Group will allow half an hour of its time to the non-attached Members.

(Laughter)

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(F)* I just wanted to say, Madam, that the chairmen of the other groups are not giving away their own personal time but the time of their colleagues in the majority. Personally I shall not use a minute of the time taken from colleagues in the majority who already have very little opportunity to express their views. This amounts to a bureaucratic administration of the rights of the majority Members and I shall not take advantage of it.

(Exclamations)

President. — I call Mr Gendebien.

Mr Gendebien. — *(F)* Madam President, I consider personally that for such an important debate as that on convergence, the allocation of fifteen minutes to be shared between ten non-attached Members is very

little indeed. I would hope that, unlike the events last week during the budget debate, the President will show greater flexibility. We must recognize the special position of the non-attached Members, who include a number of sub-groups which have very little in common and which must therefore be enabled to express their views. Fifteen minutes for ten non-attached Members in such an important debate is really not enough.

9. Procedure without report

President. — The following Commission proposal has been placed on the agenda for this sitting, for consideration without report pursuant to Rule 27A of the Rules of Procedure:

- Proposal for a regulation from the Commission to the Council amending Regulation (EEC), No 574/72, fixing the procedure for implementing Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71, on the application of social security schemes to employed persons and their families moving within the Community (Doc. 1-258/79).

This proposal has been referred to the Committee on Social Affairs, Employment and Education.

Unless any Member asks leave to speak on this proposal or amendments are tabled to it before the opening of the sitting on Friday, 16 November 1979, I shall declare the proposal to be approved by the European Parliament.

10. Action taken by the Commission on the opinions and proposals of Parliament

President. — The next item is the Commission's statement on the action taken on the opinions and proposals of the European Parliament.¹

I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Madam President, on this particular document I should like to comment on item 4, where the Commission rejects Parliament's proposal. I do so for two reasons: one is that we in our group regard the statement by the Commissioner as fairly deplorable. Indeed, there was, if I can put it politely, a misleading factual statement in which he claimed that the United Kingdom was given a 30 % increase in the number of quotas. In fact, this was not true. He is referring to something that happened, not recently, but after enlargement and is therefore irrelevant to the debate. I would suggest that his staff should have got their facts correct.

¹ See Annex.

Moreland

The second point — perhaps the more fundamental point — is that the Commissioner said he did not approve of this proposal, not because he disliked it but because — and I quote : We believe that we must take account of the relatively restrictive positions of certain Member States.' That is a polite way of saying, I do not want to give it my support because I am absolutely frightened of what one or two member governments might say.' I think that is a wrong approach. It is up to the Council to make the decision, and for the Commission to make the proposal.

Finally, Madam President, the Commission must recognize that although there may be an argument about our powers *vis-à-vis* the Council, since July we have had a democratically elected body here, and it is for the Commission to respect the wishes of Parliament. I hope that, when this issue is brought before the Council, they will make quite clear what the proposals put before us were, particularly the proposals in the very excellent document on this subject drawn up by Mr Albers.

(Applause from various quarters on the right)

President. — I call Mr Gendebien.

Mr Gendebien. — (F) Madam President, I have read the Commission's document carefully. To my mind, it relates essentially to the action taken by it on opinions of Parliament on proposals for directives or regulations. I should like to know the Commission's view on the action which it has taken, or intends to take, on the political resolutions adopted by our Parliament. I find the Commission's document relatively incomplete in this respect, and I think we should be informed of the action taken by the Commission on all the resolutions of our Assembly.

I should like the representative of the Commission to give us a few indications on the resolution which we adopted in September on emergency aid to Nicaragua. If my recollection is correct, we have heard nothing whatever from the Commission at previous part-sessions on the action taken on this particular resolution of Parliament. I should like an explanation, however brief, from the Commission's representative on this point.

President. — The Commissioner is not in the Chamber, but the questions you have raised will be answered during the course of the present part-session.

I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — I appreciate, Madam President, that it is not pleasant for the Commission to sit there listening to us discussing our procedures for several hours. Nevertheless, I think it ought to be borne in mind that when they are making a statement to this

Parliament, at least one of them might have the courtesy to turn up and answer our questions.

Further to Mr Moreland's point on item 4 of their statement, it really is not good enough, when Parliament has voted an amendment, to describe it as an amendment which was suggested by Parliament. That really is not good enough.

It may be that Commissioner Burke cannot be present, but somebody for the Commission should be here to answer our questions, otherwise it is not worth having their statement on the agenda. Could you please see to it, Madam President?

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — Mr Patterson, I am told that the Commissioner is in the building but at the moment is attending a meeting of the Committee on Budgets : obviously, he could not be expected to foresee our slow rate of progress. If Members so wish, he can leave that meeting and come here straight away to answer the various observations that have been made, but I nevertheless think it would be preferable to ask the Commission to give its answers tomorrow or the day after tomorrow.

11. Amendment of certain Rules of Procedure

President.— The next item is the report by Mr Nord, on behalf of the committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, containing urgent proposals for amendments to certain of the European Parliament's Rules of Procedure (Doc. 1-404/79).

Before closing the sitting of 7 November 1979, I informed the House that, in anticipation of the debate on the Nord report on amendments to the Parliaments' Rules of Procedure, 5 101 amendments had been tabled within the proper time-limit.

I also stated that, in agreement with the group chairmen, and pursuant to Rule 29 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, I should make a statement, before the beginning of the debate, on the admissibility of these amendments, in particular of those which, by both their nature and their number, would impede the proper conduct of the proceedings of this Parliament.

Pursuant to Rule 8 (1) of the Rules of Procedure, which authorizes the President to ensure the proper conduct of the Parliament's proceedings, I have deemed it necessary to eliminate from the debate those amendments which, by the authors' own admission, sought not to amend the text put before Parliament but merely to delay considerably the business of Parliament.

I have also felt obliged to declare inadmissible a number of amendments which, contrary to the terms of Rule 29 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, do not relate to the text they seek to alter.

President

However, since these amendments relate to the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, I have felt obliged, while declaring them inadmissible for this debate, to forward them to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions for consideration.

On the other hand, I have found 121 amendments admissible, and these we shall have to consider during this part-session.

I call Mr Nord.

Mr Nord. — *(NL)* Madam President, even before the direct elections in June this year it had become clear that the Rules of Procedure of this Parliament needed to be amended. Some of the changes were purely technical and flowed directly from the Act of 20 September 1976. These adjustments were made in the Yeats report, which was adopted by Parliament in March 1979. The Yeats report was confined to purely technical changes and preferred to leave all modifications to the substance of the rules to the newly elected Parliament.

During the first part-session of the new Parliament in July it already became clear that the new Parliament would need new rules. To begin with, there were political forces that had not been represented in the old Parliament, which in turn meant that far more Members than before did not belong to any of the existing groups. As a result a number of procedural questions already arose in July and were referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions: the principal issues included the minimum number of Members required to form a group, which has already been discussed in the Luster report drawn up by the previous Parliament, the position of the non-attached Members on which a resolution had been tabled by Mr Glinne, Mr Klepsch and Mr Scott-Hopkins, and the term of office of the President, Vice-President, and Quaestors, on which a number of group chairmen had also submitted proposals.

In the discussion of these proposals, to which many others had been added in the meantime, the committee quickly realized two things. Firstly, that a general review of our Rules of Procedure would be necessary. This would, however, naturally require a great deal of time because reference would have to be made to the practical experience of the new Parliament. Secondly, it was recognized that a number of points could not be postponed for long and required a solution in the immediate term. On the basis of the two observations, the committee selected a number of priorities from the great body of proposals and suggestions that had been received and chose a number of key points on which it felt that amendments should already be proposed to the House at this stage.

A very large number of amendments have now been submitted to these proposals, reflecting the varying views that were also expressed in committee.

Mr President, I shall not try to repeat in my oral statement all the points that have already been made in my report. I have tried to reflect as objectively and as faithfully as possible the different views which were expressed in committee. I shall therefore not hold you up by repeating the same points yet again, but I do want to make a few marginal observations on the main issues.

Firstly then, an observation of a general nature. Rules of Procedure are a vital instrument for the exercise of the activities of any Parliament. This is particularly true in the case of the European Parliament. There are now 410 Members from nine, and soon from more, countries with widely varying political affiliations. It is a Parliament that must work under constant high pressure because of the limited number of days on which it sits, the fact that it has no permanent seat and the enormous number of Community matters on which it is required to express its views. Our controlling, participatory and advisory role in the Community cannot be fully implemented unless the Rules governing our own business are adapted to the underlying needs.

I should like to stress two of these needs. Firstly, all the Members of this elected Parliament must be enabled both individually and jointly with like-minded parliamentarians, to discharge their mandate effectively, and secondly the Parliament, as an institution of the Community, must be enabled to work and take decisions. There may be some tension between these two requirements and our committee has sought to do justice to both of them. The debate and the discussion of the amendment will show to what extent the committee has, in the view of the House, succeeded.

I turn now briefly to the main points on which our committee is asking the House to hold a debate at this stage pending further proposals for amendments to the Rules which will be submitted later. Firstly, the term of office of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors. I refer to Rule 7B (new). The previous Parliament held a constituent sitting once a year in March at which the President and Vice-Presidents were elected. By an unwritten convention they were then re-elected for a further year in the following March. The Yeats report brought the old text into line with the Act of 20 September 1976. The wording of Article 6(1) is that the President must be elected once during the five-year term of office when the newly elected Parliament is convened and again whenever a majority of Members of the Parliament decides to elect a new President.

The committee considers this situation unsatisfactory and is of the opinion that the Rules must stipulate the length of the term of office which should be the same for the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors. It held lengthy discussions on the various possibilities, particularly those of one year or two and a half years.

Nord

It finally decided in favour of two and a half years. This, in the committee's view, meets the need for continuity and is also in line with a possible requirement to change the Bureau during the life of the Parliament. It is also proposed that where any of these offices fall vacant in the interim they should be filled in such a way that the successor serves for the remainder of the term of his or her predecessor.

A second point is the position of the non-attached Members. I refer to the new Rule 36A. The resolution by Mr Glinne, Mr Klepsch and Mr Scott-Hopkins already referred to during our procedural debate, expresses the wish for the position of the non-attached to be better regulated and for them to be given a number of facilities which are not provided for under the present Rules. The committee has tried to meet this wish with the new Rule 36A. The committee felt that the non-attached Members should collectively enjoy certain rights as a function of their strength and also be granted certain facilities. They are represented in the enlarged Bureau and therefore play a part in the general organization of activities. In the allocation of speaking time, the principle followed must be that each Member is entitled to the same amount of time. Finally politically homogeneous groupings among the non-attached Members must be enabled, through the facilities offered to them, to express their specific views and exercise their rights.

The committee sought to attain these aims with the new Rule 36A. A great many amendments have also been tabled to this Rule, and I shall return to them in the course of the debate, but already at this stage I wanted to explain what the committee's aims were in submitting the text as it now stands.

The next point is the minimum number of Members required to form a group as stipulated in Rule 36(5). You will remember that in the Luster report passed to the new Parliament by its predecessor, a minimum number of 29 was proposed, reduced to 21 where the Members came from at least two Member States.

The committee has discussed this at length. A majority finally came to the conclusion that a relatively small increase in the minimum number would suffice and that this increase need not be directly related to the number of nationalities. It decided in favour of a figure of 21. A great many amendments have been submitted to this proposal too, and we shall be returning to them in the course of the debate. At this stage I would merely stress our committee's view that there is a link between the minimum number specified to form a group and the provisions governing the position of the non-attached Members. Once the latter issue has been settled to general satisfaction, relatively little weight will need to be given to the other point. A further matter is the quorum required for the various procedures. The committee maintained the minimum of 21 Members for certain

Rules which stipulate a minimum for various procedural purposes. These are motions to amend the draft agenda (Rule 12 (2)), motions for urgent debate (Rule 35 (4)) and the composition of the parliamentary committees (Rule 37(3)). The committee felt that 21 could be treated as a reasonable minimum. A majority of members of the committee did not feel it advisable to set a much lower figure, or no figure at all, because it was feared that this might lead to an excessive number of procedural debates, which may be detrimental to the activities and credibility of this Parliament.

A further point is the order of voting on amendments (Rule 29 (5) new). Experience shows that in some cases a very large number of amendments are tabled. A good example of this is the annual budgetary procedure, but the same phenomenon is also observed in the case of certain legislative proposals on which Parliament is required to deliver its opinion. Careful grouping of amendments, and the choice of the order in which they are put to the vote, can save valuable parliamentary time and give additional political emphasis to the fundamental points of contention. For this purpose an exception must be made from the general rule that the vote is taken on amendments as a function of the extent to which they depart from the text to which they relate, beginning with the amendment which departs furthest. This possibility is opened by the proposed new paragraph 5 of Rule 29. Of course this system, however useful it may be, may entail certain risks, and guarantees must therefore be built in. It is therefore proposed that this exceptional procedure should not be applied where opposition is expressed by a group of at least 21 Members.

A final point concerns electronic voting (Rule 35). Last week, on the basis of the Luster report, the Parliament already adopted the proposed new paragraph 1 of Rule 35. That provision now no longer forms part of my report and I see no need at this stage to give any further explanation of that part of the Rule concerned.

There remains, however, paragraph 7, which further implements the principle set down in paragraph 1. If this is adopted we shall at long last be able to benefit in this Parliament, as has already long been the case in other Parliaments, from the marvels of electronics as an aid to our democratic decision-making. Here again a number of different amendments have been tabled. I wonder, Mr President, whether it might not be preferable to acquire some experience of our new system before laying down detailed rules.

That completes my initial explanation of the proposals made by the committee. I want to conclude with two observations. The first is of a technical nature. Both in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and subsequently during the technical processing of the many amendments, a very great deal of extremely dedicated work has been done under

Nord

extreme pressure by a large number of people. I think that this House owes a vote of thanks to all the services concerned in our Parliament. My second observation relates to our forthcoming debate which is likely to be long and difficult. I would say to those Members who do not agree with our committee's proposals that I respect their views entirely even where I cannot share them, and I hope that they will not, for their part, doubt the good faith of the authors of these proposals. The Rules of Procedure are not intended for a majority, still less for a minority, but for the entire Parliament and for all its Members. If our debates are conducted in that spirit the many hours that we have spent on this matter will perhaps after all have been in the interests of all of us and of the institution which we have the privilege to serve.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR : MR ROGERS

Vice-President

President. — As this sitting is scheduled to end at 8 p.m. I shall call no further speakers this evening.

12. *Agenda for the next sitting*

President. — The next sitting will take place tomorrow, Tuesday, 13 November 1979, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m. (possibly, from 9 p.m. onwards) with the following agenda :

- Decision on the adoption of urgent procedure for a proposed regulation
- Decision on the adoption of urgent procedure for draft rectifying and supplementary budget No 3
- Decision on the adoption of urgent procedure for two motions for resolutions.
- Continuation and conclusion of the debate on the Nord report on the Rules of Procedure

3 p.m.

- Question Time (Questions to the Commission)

3.45 p.m.

- Vote on the motion for a resolution contained in the Nord report.

The sitting is closed.

(The sitting was closed at 8 p.m.)

ANNEX

Action taken by the Commission on opinions delivered by the European Parliament at the October part-Session

1. At its October 1979 part-Session the European Parliament delivered fourteen opinions on Commission proposals in response to Council requests that it be consulted. In eleven cases the Parliament delivered favourable opinions (no-report procedure), as follows :

- (i) proposal for a Council Directive laying down technical provisions for internal navigation vessels (PE 1/380/79) (COM(79) 407 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (ii) proposal for a Council Regulation on the opening, allocation and administration of a Common Customs Tariff quota for fresh or chilled tomatoes falling within CCT subheading EX 07.01 M and originating in the ACP States or the OCT (PE 139/79) (COM(79) 187 final)

This was adopted by the Council on 29 October.

- (iii) proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 76/630/EEC concerning surveys of pig production to be made by Member States (PE 196/79) (COM(79) 251 final)

This was adopted by the Council on 29 October.

- (iv) proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 77/99/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in meat products (PE 1-263/79) (COM(79) 380 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (v) proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 72/461/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat (PE 1-260/79) (COM(79) 383 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (vi) proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 77/93/EEC on protective measures against the introduction into the Member States of organisms harmful to plants or plant products (PE 1-279/79) (COM(79) 452 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (vii) (a) draft proposal for a Council Regulation allocating certain catch quotas for vessels fishing in the regulatory area defined in the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the North-West Atlantic Fisheries (PE 1-402/79) (COM(79) 372 final)

- (b) proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) laying down certain measures for the conservation of fishery resources applicable to vessels flying the flag of a Member State and fishing in international waters in the North-West Atlantic (PE 1-402/79) (COM(79) 367 final)

These proposals are under consideration at the Council.

- (viii) proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the conclusion, between the European Economic Community and the Government of Sweden, of an agreement on certain measures to promote the breeding of salmon in the Baltic Sea (PE 1-403/79) (COM(79) 437 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (ix) draft proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation No 1418/76 on the common organization of the market in rice (PE 1-397/79) (COM(79) 376 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (x) proposal for a Council Regulation on the opening, allocation and administration of Common-Customs Tariff quotas for certain classified wines falling within CCT subheading EX 22.05 C and originating in Tunisia (1979/1980) (PE 1-420/79) (COM(79) 186 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

- (xi) Commission proposal to the Council concerning a regulation on EAGGF aid for emergency reconstruction work in the farming regions of the French Overseas Departments damaged by the hurricanes 'David' and 'Frederick' (PE 1-639/79) (COM(79) 528 final)

This was adopted by the Council on 29 October.

2. At the October part-Session, the European Parliament discussed the following two reports on which favourable opinions were delivered :

(i) Report by Mr Dalsass

on the proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 2358/71 on the common organization of the market in seeds and Regulation (EEC) No 950/68 on the Common Customs Tariff

and

on the proposal for a Council Regulation supplementing the two EEC Regulations fixing, for the marketing years 1980/81 and 1981/82, the amounts of aid to be granted for seeds (PE 1-396/79) (COM(79) 443 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

(ii) Report by Mr Martinet

on the proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the opening, allocation and administration of a tariff quota for wine of fresh grapes and grape must with fermentation arrested by the addition of alcohol, falling within subheading 22.05 of the Common Customs Tariff and originating entirely in Greece (1980) (PE 1-399/79) (COM(79) 412 final)

This is under consideration at the Council.

3. Lastly, as regards Mr Albers' report on Community quotas for the transport of goods by road between Member States (PE 1-381/79) (COM(79) 357 final), Mr Burke has informed Parliament of the Commission's reasons for not accepting the amendment which was suggested by Parliament (see detailed minutes of the sitting of 23 October 1979).

CORRIGENDUM

**to the Report of Proceedings
of
Thursday, 25 October 1979**

Speech by Miss Quin, page 292, left column, line 26 :
For 'this view' read 'his view'.

SITTING OF TUESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 1979

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IN THE CHAIR : MRS VEIL

President

(The sitting opened at 10 a.m.)

President. — The sitting is open.

1. Approval of the minutes

President. — The minutes of proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments ?

I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Madam President, I note from page 14 of the minutes that for all other reports and motions on the agenda, the rapporteur and not

more than one spokesman for each political group are to be allowed ten minutes each. You will probably recall that on previous occasions the speaking time available to all other speakers was also indicated. I should like you to clarify what the speaking time of, for example, the non-attached Members is on matters of this kind.

President. — Mr De Goede, it states that other speakers will each have five minutes.

Are there any further comments ?

The minutes of proceedings are approved.

2. Agenda

President. — The report drawn up by Mr Key on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on the representation allowances and expenses of

President

Members of the Commission, which was entered on the agenda for Thursday, 15 November 1979 as Item No 102, has been withdrawn as this committee has been unable to meet.

3. Urgent procedure

President. — I have received from Mr Pedini, on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, a motion for a resolution with request for urgent debate pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, *on the meeting of the Council of Education Ministers (Doc. 1-473/79/rev.II)*.

The reasons supporting this request are contained in the document.

The vote on this request will take place at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

4. Decision on urgency

President. — The next item is the vote on the requests for urgent debate on several motions for resolutions. We shall begin with the request for urgency submitted by the Council, on the proposal for a regulation from the Commission (Doc. 202/79) amending the *Staff Regulations of Officials of the Communities*.

I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (D) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, on this subject of the Staff Regulations, Parliament decided at its last part-session in October to deal with this item in December because the Legal Affairs Committee would by then have delivered its opinion which Parliament must take into account and because the Committee on Budgets will be in a position to present its report by then. We had proposed an interim solution but Parliament rejected it. Parliament did not want an interim report but a final report to be submitted in December.

This Parliament has already rejected the Council's request for urgent consideration once and it should adhere to its original position, which was confirmed again at the October part-session, and not accept urgent procedure now.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Madam President, I have nothing to add on this particular request for urgent procedure because I too oppose it. But I do now wish to withdraw the request for urgent consideration of a motion by Mr Müller-Hermann and others on summer time.

President. — I call Mr Tugendhat.

Mr Tugendhat, Member of the Commission. — Thank you, Madam President. I would like to point out to the House that on behalf of the Commission, I wrote several weeks ago both to the chairman of the

Committee on Budgets and to the chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee asking whether this matter could not be dealt with in November. We believe that it is a matter of urgency. We believe that the interests of our staff and of the staff of other Institutions will suffer if this matter is not dealt with quickly and that there could well be difficult consequences flowing from that. We did ask the relevant committees of the Parliament some weeks ago whether this matter could not be dealt with in November and I would like to place on record our regret if in fact you feel unable to do so.

President. — I put the request for urgency to the vote. The request is rejected.

* * *

President. — We now come to the request from the Liberal and Democratic Group and the Council for urgent debate on the *Draft rectifying and supplementary budget No 3 for 1979 (Doc. 1-470/79)*.

I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (D) Madam President, there is the same difficulty in this case as with several other requests for urgent procedure.

The Council's draft supplementary budget No 3 was officially received by Parliament on 7 November. Normally consideration of a supplementary budget is governed by the same provisions and stipulations of the Treaty and Financial Regulation as that of the annual budget, in other words we should normally have 45 days for consideration of this supplementary budget. Of course we might very well be willing to shorten the deadline. Nevertheless Parliament, its committees and political groups must be given an opportunity for appropriate examination of this supplementary budget. Now that will not be possible if the supplementary budget is considered this week. That in turn presupposes that we wish to make no amendments, which is by no means certain. If we have amendments to propose the procedure would have to run its course. The draft would be returned to the Council from which it would come back to Parliament and the final decision would then be taken in December. I am therefore opposed to urgent procedure and feel that we would take the time needed for proper consideration of this supplementary budget. I would add that the Council took a whole series of decisions in the summer which came in for strong criticism in the budgetary debate in Parliament. But now we, as the last link in the chain, are expected to make good the loss of time that has occurred since the summer recess by allowing our own rights to be curtailed. It will be perfectly possible at the December part-session to have the budget adopted by Parliament on the first day, after which the Council can be asked

Lange

whether it has any further observations to make ; if necessary the views of the Council can then be considered again by Parliament before taking a final decision on adoption ; in other words the matter can be settled in one way or another in December.

Madam President, having regard to my arguments I propose that urgent procedure be rejected.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party.

Mr Klepsch. — *(D)* I have been instructed by my group to explain that, while we understand and endorse the arguments put forward by Mr Lange — and I shall return to this in a moment — we still feel that a different course of action should be taken and urgent procedure approved.

We consider it irresponsible of the Council, which had exactly the same information on this matter in September as it has now, to consult Parliament at such a late stage, namely on 7 November. We feel bound to voice the strongest criticism of this conduct by the Council which discharges its own duties as a Community institution in a slow and imperfect manner ...

(Applause)

... But if we subscribe to the position put forward with good justification by Mr Lange, the result would be that many members of the European Community might suffer adverse consequences. The culprit would of course be the Council but the Parliament would also be held to be to blame. In the space of a few days we shall have to take a decision in the complex situation outlined by Mr Lange. We hope that in future the Council as a Community institution will set to work with the same sense of responsibility as Parliament. We have spoken with our colleagues in the Committee on Budgets ; of course it is an imposition to expect them to deal with the supplementary budget in the space of only a few days. But we favour urgent procedure because we should not like the persons directly concerned to experience difficulties as a result of postponement of the decision. On behalf of my group I therefore advocate adoption of urgent procedure.

President. — I call Mr Bangemann, to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Bangemann. — *(D)* Madam President, I gladly gave precedence to the Group of the European People's Party even though we are co-authors of this motion for urgent procedure. We are in full agreement on this point. I therefore have nothing to add to Mr Klepsch's criticism of the Council. The Council is in fact itself primarily responsible for this situation. What Mr Lange said was also correct on one point — but he has drawn the wrong conclusions. He rightly said that the Committee on Budgets must have enough time to consider this matter and make its

proposals under the budgetary procedure. But if we do this in December there is a risk that the supplementary budget will not be adopted until January, or alternatively that we shall not have enough time to consider it properly. On the other hand if we accept urgent procedure today, I do not think it unreasonable to expect the Committee on Budgets — the committee which has in recent weeks done more work than any other, for which we owe our thanks to its members and above all to its chairman — to show the same readiness to act quickly in this particular situation as it has evinced in recent weeks. This is perfectly possible and if the supplementary budget is then amended, we shall have time enough to complete the budgetary procedure by December. If on the other hand we reject urgent procedure today we shall be faced with a perfectly impossible situation in December.

There is a further consideration and this was the reason for which my group requested urgent procedure : during the budget debate we often heard from the rapporteur and from the majority which accepted the rapporteur's proposals that these proposals were being made for the benefit of the small and medium-sized undertakings. Now we have a real opportunity to show our support for those small and medium undertakings. The big concerns will manage to do without these support measures far more easily than their smaller counterparts ; for this reason I make a strong appeal for the adoption of urgent procedure in this case.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Madam President, I and my group tend to support the view put forward by the chairman of the Committee on Budgets. I do not follow the argument that we have to vote on the request for urgent debate today in order to make certain that we have the debate in December. That is absolute nonsense. We can, of course, instruct our Committee on Budgets. But they will deal with the matter properly and expeditiously during the coming weeks so that we are ready in December to debate it on the floor of the House. I think it would be quite wrong to hurry this House in this way. Mr Klepsch and Mr Bangemann are justified in criticizing the Council ; it is not right to rush the House in this manner or to deal with this subject in this way. If we adopt urgent procedure we are going to have to deal with the matter very quickly, which is not the correct and proper way of dealing with these important matters. Therefore I support Mr Lange, the chairman of the Committee on Budgets, in opposing the request for urgency.

President. — I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange. — (D) Madam President, I wish to add one observation to the objective arguments put forward by Mr Bangemann; there is no need for further proof of our willingness to help small undertakings; but the help can in any case be given in the shape of cash credits from the Commission or Member States' governments, which will enable the financial gap to be bridged. This cannot be a decisive reason for urgent procedure; all that is necessary is goodwill on the part of the countries concerned and of the Council members. To that extent this is not a further argument *for* but rather an argument *against* urgent procedure.

President. — I put the request for urgent debate to the vote. The request is rejected.

* * *

President. — I note that the request for urgent debate on the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Müller-Hermann and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group), on *Summer Time (Doc. 1-452/79)* has been withdrawn.

This motion for a resolution is referred to the appropriate committee.

* * *

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Seal and others (*Doc. 1-479/79*) on *Immigration controls in the United Kingdom*. I call Mr Seal.

Mr Seal. — Madam President, unlike some of the resolutions which have come before this House, this resolution, we feel, does demand some urgency. The Home Secretary of the British Government has recently announced certain proposals for changing the laws in Britain on immigration control, and he has admitted publicly that he thinks that these proposals constitute a clear case of sexual discrimination. We, as Members of this Assembly, should be very concerned about this matter because this Assembly has stated that it believes in the European Convention on Human Rights. Therefore we must allow this debate to take place so as to make our views clear to the British Government. Moreover, Madam President, if these laws go through the children of some Members of this House will be affected by them.

It is no use deferring the debate by referring the matter to committee. Before the matter can be put to the House, the British House of Commons may already have taken a decision. I understand that the decision will be made sometime before Christmas, so

it is essential that we debate this matter and make our views known at a time when we can influence the British House of Commons, otherwise there will be no point in having a debate. So I would ask this House to support this request for urgent debate on this very important item.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch, to speak a behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group).

Mr Klepsch. — (D) I oppose this request, Madam President. I find it quite incredible. Only recently we discussed criteria for the inclusion of urgent motions on the agenda. Here we have a motion dealing with the statement made by a Minister in one of the Community Member States. If we consider it now we should soon have 400 such motions. Each of us knows of some instance where he could request urgent procedure on the same basis...

(Applause)

... But I have a second reason for my viewpoint. Our agenda for this week is very busy indeed and neither I nor my group can see any reason for urgency.

Let me make a third point too. This matter should be looked into by the committee responsible. A statement which none of us has heard and none of us can verify cannot be the basis for a debate in plenary sitting. We consider it perfectly obvious that the committee responsible should look into the matter first and then report to us on it. I have no doubt that the colleague who has submitted this motion is convinced of the urgency of the matter. But I fail to see how the House as a whole can recognize the urgency. I therefore recommend rejection of the motion.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Welsh to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Welsh. — Madam President, on behalf of the European Democratic Group I ask the House to vote against urgency in respect of this particular resolution. Contrary to what the mover said, some of our colleagues have been in touch with the British Government, which assured them that, in the first place, this matter has not yet reached the stage of a positive government proposal and, secondly, there are absolutely no circumstances under which it is likely to be debated by the British Parliament before Christmas. So the honourable Member is completely wrong in the information he gave the House.

(Interruptions from the left)

Welsh

The second thing, I would ask you to consider, Madam President, is this: as Mr Klepsch said, this is an intractable and difficult problem, it is one that is peculiar to the United Kingdom and it should be considered in a dispassionate way. As you will have heard from the mover, the last thing he and his supporters intend to do is to consider it in a calm and dispassionate way or give it the attention that it deserves. They wish it to be taken, late on Friday, in a great hurry, in a half-empty House so that they can make a particular political point.

I would submit to you, Madam President, that you should look at the names of those who tabled this motion. We notice prominently on it the name of Mr Lomas. Some of my colleagues in the Christian-Democratic Party will remember that, when we debated the repressive regulations in East Germany, Mr Lomas said, somewhat sanctimoniously, that he could not vote in favour of the resolution condemning the East German Government's action because he had not read the documents. Well, in this case, Madam President, there are no documents to read, so Mr Lomas cannot have read them either. So why is he so anxious to forward this proposal to the House when he was not prepared to condemn the GDR Government? That, I think, Madam President, reveals the motions behind this resolution, and I ask the House to reject this abuse of urgent procedure.

(Applause from the right)

President. — I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Madam President, I would certainly accept that this is a problem which concerns a particular Member State but I really do not understand Mr Klepsch's attitude. I have often heard people from his party and from other parties say that the European Parliament, the people of Europe, the directly elected Members, ought to have a say on issues that concern people in general, even when the matter itself is confined to a specific Member State. Now, if in fact there is to be a European attitude on legislation which is particularly discriminatory against sections of society, then perhaps the European Parliament ought to take it up as a moral issue.

In answer to my Conservative friend, I would point out that I am not a signatory of this particular motion for a resolution — I object to his personal attack on a colleague —

(Applause)

which shows that I have no particular axe to grind. The matter has been raised, and I believe that it is important to take a stand on the issue before it is too late.

I appeal to Mr Klepsch and to members of his party to look again at this matter. His suggestion that it be referred to committee would be reasonable in normal

circumstances. But on the other hand, if it does go to committee it will be too late. Let us be consistent. We claim that there should be a European attitude on such issues. Well then, let us adopt such an attitude on an issue which clearly involves discrimination.

Perhaps Mr Welsh does have inside information on what is going to happen in the British House of Commons. Maybe he has, but it is certainly not the information that I have, so I would disagree with him. There is a large body of Christian people sitting here who are concerned about human rights, who are concerned about discrimination and I would appeal to them to support the request. I am not a signatory of the motion, but I am going to support it, and I think the European Parliament ought to support it before it is too late. I support the request for urgent debate, Madam President. It is reasonable and it is not intended to wave political flags at anyone. But if we are to have a European attitude, let us adopt this attitude now. I would appeal to our friends from other countries to support us in this.

President. — I call Mr Glinne.

Mr Glinne. — *(F)* Madam President, pursuant to Rule 35(4) of the Rules of Procedure the Socialist Group requests a vote by roll call on this request for urgent procedure.

President. — The vote will therefore be taken by roll call. This will begin with Mrs Boserup, whose name has been drawn by lot. I ask the Secretary-General to call the roll.

(The roll call was taken.)

Does anyone else wish to vote?

The ballot is closed.

Here is the result of the vote:

— Number of Members voting: 205

— Abstentions: 3

— For: 79

— Against: 123.

The request is accordingly rejected. The motion for a resolution is referred to the appropriate committee.

The following voted *in favour*: Adam, Albers, Baduel, Gloriosio, Balfe, Barbarella, Blaney, Bonaccini, Boyes, Buchan, Buttafuoco, Cardia, Carettoni Romagnoli, Carosino, Castellina, Castle, Ceravolo, Charzat, Clwyd, Cohen, Colla, Collins, Coppieters, Cresson, D'Angelosante, Dekker, de Pasquale, Enright, Ewing, Fanti, Ferrero, Flanagan, Focke, Gabert, Glinne, Gouthier, Gredal, Griffiths, Groes, Hansch, Herklotz, Van den Heuvel, Hoff, Jaquet, Josselin, Key, Krouwel-Vlam, Lange, Lezzi, Linkohr, Lizin, Lomas, Megahy, Van Minnen, Motchane, Muntingh, Oehler, Papapietro, Pelikan, Pisani, Quin, Rogers, Romualdi, Roudy, Salisch, Schwarzenberg, Seal, Seefeld, Seeler, Segre, Squarcialupi, Sutra, Vernimmen, Veronesi, Vetter, von der Vring, Wettig, Wiczorek-Zeul, Woltjer.

President

The following voted *against* Adonnino, Agnelli, Alber, Antoniozzi, Bangemann, Barbagli, Barbi, Battersby, Baudis, Beazley, Berkhouwer, Bocklet, Boot, Brookes, Calvez, Catherwood, Cecovini, Colleselli, Collomb, Combe, Cottrell, de Courcy Ling, Curry, de Keersmaecker, Delatte, Diana, Diligent, Donnez, Douro, Fergusson, Flesch, Forster, Forth, Früh, Galland, Geurtsen, Ghergo, Giavazzi, Gonella, Goppel, Haagerup, Habsburg, Hahn, Harmar-Nicholls, Harris, von Hassel, Helms, Herman, Hoffmann Karl-Heinz, Hopper, Hord, Hutton, Irmer, Jackson Christopher, Johnson, Jonker, Jürgens, Kellett-Bowman Edward, Klepsch, Langes, Lega, Lemmer, Lenz, Ligios, Louwes, Lücker, Luster, McCartin, Majonica, Malangrè, Martin Simone, Mertens, Moreau Louise, Moreland, Müller-Hermann, Narducci, Newton Dunn, Nielsen Jørgen Brøndlund, Nielsen Tove, Nord, Nordlohne, Notenboom, O'Leary, d'Ormesson, Patterson, Pearce, Pedini, Pflimlin, Pintat, Plumb, Pöttering, Poniatowski, Prag, Prout, Provan, Pruvot, Pürsten, Purvis, Rey, Rossi, Ryan, Salzer, Schall, Schleicher, Schön Konrad, Scott-Hopkins, Seitlinger, Sherlock, Simonnet, Simpson, Spautz, Spencer, Stewart-Clark, Taylor John David, Taylor John Mark, Tindemans, Travaglini, Tuckman, Turner, Tyrrell, Vandewiele, Vanneck, Welsh.

The following *abstained* :

Chouraqui, Damette, Michel.

5. Amendments to certain Rules of Procedure

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the report (Doc. 1-404/79) drawn up by Mr Nord on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, amending the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament.

I call Mr Hänsch to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Hänsch. — (*D*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, the amendments to various of our Rules of Procedure have drawn public attention to our proceedings to a far greater extent than the issue itself warranted. I am sure that my feelings this morning are shared by a majority of Members: I feel a mixture of anger and concern at yesterday's curtain-raiser to our debate and decisions today.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must nevertheless take the necessary decisions calmly and without letting ourselves be impressed by campaigns of interference. But we must not let ourselves be guided either by the words or deeds of some Members of this House; Mr Pannella must not be a negative influence on us.

This amendment to the Rules of Procedure is to some extent in the nature of a constitutional change. We are deciding how this directly elected Parliament wishes to work in future and this is one of the very few areas in which we can take genuinely sovereign decisions. Ladies and gentlemen, the amendment to the Rules of Procedure is both necessary and urgent

because Parliament has become larger and certainly also more colourful in its composition — to put it rather mildly. It must be placed in a position to pursue its work and in that connexion we see the report by our colleague, Mr Nord, and the amendments he has proposed, as an appropriate basis for our decisions and we owe him a vote of thanks for his painstaking work.

Priority has been given to the most urgent points on which we think a decision must be taken here and now; a general review of the Rules of Procedure will of course be necessary at a later stage.

In making this amendment to the Rules we must not be concerned solely with the necessary efficiency and discipline in the work of our Parliament. This amendment also raises the question of the way in which we intend to work together in the future and how this Parliament is to deal with the political groups and currents which have arisen in Europe on the margin of the traditional political spectrum. We are not facing one another here as a majority and minority — not as large and small political groups but as freely elected Members who not only have the same rights but must also be given the same facilities for the performance of their work.

When we come to look seriously at this whole matter, let us not be distracted by the mood now prevailing in the House and by the thousands of amendments and other attempts to interfere and filibuster. Let us not tar all the non-attached Members of this House with the same brush and let us be quite clear about one thing: no rules of procedure can be entirely secure against misuse and no rules can prevent individual Members or groups from exploiting them to their own advantage. If we wanted rules to prevent such occurrences we should end up with something like the house regulations of a cadet school and that is certainly not what we want.

There are two particular points which I wish to look at in rather more detail on behalf of the Socialist Group: the working facilities for the majority in this House and the working facilities for the minorities.

Firstly, to ensure that a Parliament on a European scale can function we need, like every other parliament on our continent, political groups. The Nord report sets a figure of 21 members both for the formation of a group and for the quorum needed, without the backing of a group, to table certain motions in this Parliament and initiate certain procedures. 21 members are the equivalent of 5 % of our overall membership. I can see several reasons for this 5 % rule and also other reasons which militate against it. 5 % is not a universally recognized rule in Europe. There are higher and lower quorums in national electoral bills and in the national parliaments.

Hänsch

We are not concerned here with laying down formal rules but with arriving at effective arrangements. If it is the case that a Parliament needs political groups to organize its activities and function effectively, we should not make it hard to form such groups but on the contrary facilitate their formation. The Socialist Group draws a clear distinction between the number of Members needed to form a group and the quorum required to decide on certain procedural matters and initiate certain procedures. There is no need for the two figures to be identical. I would add that it is not the size of a group — 10 or 21 Members — which determines whether certain provisions of the Rules of Procedure are misused; the main factor is the procedural latitude granted by the Rules to individuals or small groups. The Socialist Group will therefore vote in favour of amendment No 3 tabled by Mr De Goede and Mrs Dekker. As I said earlier, we do not wish to tar all the non-attached Members with the same brush. We want to give a chance to those among them who honestly and seriously wish to enhance the workings of this Parliament.

Now for my second observation: the non-attached Members of this House must enjoy facilities for their work which are no less extensive than those accorded to all other Members; but these facilities must not be more extensive than those enjoyed by the normal member of a group who is prepared to submit to the discipline implied by a political group. This holds good in particular for the allocation of speaking time.

The view of the Socialist Group is that the revised Rule 36A as proposed in the Nord report offers the non-attached Members a fair possibility of working and defending their interests here. Let us gain the benefit of experience with this rule and give the Bureau the possibility of working out further arrangements. I have another remark to make on this subject, Madam President; I refer to Rule 36A(4) as proposed in the Nord report. It should be made clear in the English version of this text that the reference here is to the procedure to be followed in determining speaking time. The English translation does not appear to be clear on this point; perhaps the matter could be clarified.

We are of the opinion that one right of our Members which should not be too strictly limited is the right to request urgent procedure for a debate. We shall therefore not be able to vote — at least not as a body — in favour of the proposal contained in the Nord report on Rule 14. All the other Rules to which the Nord report proposes amendments do not concern the political rights of Members but relate to strictly procedural matters, and we believe that in all these cases the quorum of 21 members proposed in the Nord report must be introduced. We shall therefore support the proposals made in the Nord report on Rules 12, 29, 35, 36A and 37.

Now for a third observation: there is one other point on which we are not able to endorse the Nord report. The Socialist Group is of the opinion that the term of office of the President and also of the Vice-Presidents and Quæstors should not be set at two and a half years. The President does not guide the policy of this Parliament but represents it in dealings with third parties. Continuity is therefore not a decisive criterion. It is more important for the largest possible number of groupings and nations to be represented in the Presidency and in the representation of Parliament for external purposes; there should at the very least be a possibility for this. We must not seek to decide everything according to national custom and traditions. The change in the Presidency must be possible at several times during the life of this Parliament. Ladies and gentlemen, I therefore urge you to approve Amendment No 8 by Mr Glinne and Mrs Vayssade which provides for the President to be elected for one year with the possibility of extending the mandate for a further year by acclamation.

The eyes of the public are resting on us to a far greater extent than is usual in a procedural debate. Some observers would like confirmation of their long-standing supposition that this Parliament is not even capable of organizing its own business. They want confirmation of their negative opinion. Let us not give them the opportunity for which they are looking. We must on the contrary walk with dignity the narrow path which separates the necessary efficient and orderly conduct of the business of this House on the one hand from the equally necessary protection of minorities and spirit of liberality on the other; minorities are an essential component of this Parliament as a forum for the political currents and opinions in our community Europe.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr De Goede for a procedural motion.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Madam President, I have just been invited to take part in a discussion at half past twelve under your chairmanship on the problems arising in connection with the Nord report. We indicated our willingness to attend the meeting planned for yesterday evening; the same would have been possible earlier this morning, but what certainly cannot be done is for a discussion of these problems to take place under your chairmanship elsewhere in this building while the plenary sitting continues here. My proposal is therefore as follows: either you set the discussion back until the luncheon recess or you suspend the plenary proceedings at half past twelve. It is impossible to be in two places at the same time. We must be here to take part in the debate and we should like to try to solve the problems under your chairmanship. I therefore urge you not to allow the two meet-

De Goede

ings to proceed simultaneously but to arrange for them to be held at different times. Thank you in advance.

President. — Mr De Goede, I believe a meeting of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions was scheduled for lunchtime; that is why we hoped to be able to meet beforehand so as to have more time. But since you refuse to do so, we shall have less time for the meeting, which will be held at 1 p.m.

I call Mr Luster to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D Group).

Mr Luster. — (*D*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD) I wish to thank the rapporteur for his work and indicate our complete support for his report, apart from one change which we have proposed through our Amendment No 10 which seeks to clarify the Rules relating to the electronic voting system. We particularly favour the two-and-a-half year term of office and maintain that it should not apply merely to the Bureau and Quæstors but also to the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the committees. We are of the opinion that these Rules of Procedure still need many other changes; after all they were drafted originally for a different parliament, even if this new Parliament is juridically a successor of the old Parliament.

However, those changes must be held in abeyance until the overall review of the Rules can be made. Perhaps we could in the meantime arrive at certain understandings — for example to limit the requests for urgent procedure, which are an excessive burden on our agenda. Perhaps we might also — to take up a suggestion made by a colleague in my group — set aside a topical debate on human rights at each part-session since this is a matter of constant concern to us in one shape or form.

Ladies and gentlemen, the rules governing our business are the vessel in which we preserve the — hopefully — precious substance of our policies. We need a vessel which is watertight and we need calm hands when we touch it. Our high purposes must not be marred by procedural defects. I can only confirm the words of the previous speaker when he said that the eyes of the public are resting on us; the public must not be allowed to gain the impression that we are laying ourselves open to accusations of incompetence or ridicule. To complete the great work of European unification, the great work of social justice for everyone in this Europe of ours, to reduce regional disparities and to ensure peace, prosperity and well-being for the 260 million citizens of this Community, we need at long last the possibility of getting down to our serious business. The vote on the Nord report will help us towards that end.

One central question is that of the minimum number of Members required to form a group. Parliament has the latitude to decide independently on this and it is of course perfectly possible to argue what the numerically correct minimum figure is. The inherent limits of the freedom of Members in this Parliament can be measured by objective and tangible criteria and by reference to the requirements of efficiency, prestige and effectiveness. The limitations must be as few as possible and as many as necessary — that principle must be observed to ensure the effective working of our Parliament.

This explains the need for rules of procedure. The freedom to set minimum numbers for the formation of political groups is limited only by the need to avoid arbitrary solutions. This means that our decision must be guided by objective criteria and must not rest on abusive, arbitrary or tendentious political considerations. No such considerations are being applied here. I want at this stage to refute in the strongest terms on behalf of my group the accusation made by some Members that certain sectors of the majority are seeking to curb the rights of the minority. That is perfectly untrue. I have already said that even under the existing arrangements the minority has every right to vote and stand for election. It has equal and free voting rights with everyone else. It has the full right to submit motions to the plenary sittings and in committee, the full right to put written and oral questions for purposes of parliamentary control to the Council, Commission and Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation, it has the same right to speak on procedural matters and matters of substance, its rights are covered by Rule 28 in the case of organized debates, it benefits from the same travel expenses and daily allowances, an identical allowance for office expenses and the same allowance for the employment of assistants; what is more, Rule 36A(new) will grant the non-attached Members further advantages.

Nobody is obliged to join a group. But Members who decide not to join a group must also pay the price of the freedom chosen by them. And they must also realize that their conduct — this is a constant bane to us here in Parliament — is at heart non-parliamentary since with a population of 260 million persons our political landscape must be properly organized. That is why we need parties for elections in the Member States and political groups in our parliaments. We do not belong to political groups simply because we like the idea of groups. On the contrary, they prevent their members from expressing all the views that they might care to express otherwise. Let me say in my own personal capacity that I do not belong to my party because I am enamoured of political parties as such but because my membership is the only way I have of gaining recognition for my views. Members have a perfect right to behave in a non-parliamentary and essentially apolitical manner; but let them not then burden us with their elitist narcissism.

Luster

We believe that the proposed new Rules of Procedure are in fact granting more rights to the non-attached Members than are enjoyed by the members of political groups. A simple calculation will show that to be the case. As the Austrian poet Grillparzer said, those who sing out of tune sing loudest in church.

We have experienced unpleasant events in recent days — as my colleague, Mr Hänsch, implied. The President of this Parliament is a lady even if she occupies the presidential chair. And no-one meeting the President socially would engage in the petty argumentativeness that we have witnessed here in Parliament. Why should this Parliament have less claim to politeness and decency than is the case in a normal social context?

I read in the *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace* this morning — although I did not hear the words myself yesterday — that Mr Pannella spoke of fascist methods that were unworthy of a Parliament and said that his rights were being trampled underfoot; we must protect ourselves and our President against such accusations.

(Applause)

I turn in conclusion to my non-attached colleagues — many of whom have my personal respect, including Mrs Bonino who has put forward very interesting ideas in this Parliament, even though I cannot approve of her methods: let me close by quoting to them something that was said by two of our German poets, Goethe and Schiller. Strangely enough they both used the same words, Goethe in the 'Four Seasons' and Schiller in 'Everyman's duty': 'Strive always to be complete, and if you cannot stand complete in yourself, serve others as a link in a complete chain.'

(Applause)

Mr Patterson. — Madam President, could I begin, like Mr Luster, by congratulating Mr Nord on this report, which I welcome, and by saying that, in general, my group will support it when we come to the vote this evening.

On my two-and-a-half hour bus journey from Frankfurt yesterday, Madam President, I happened to read an article on the current political situation in China. That country, the article said, was facing a classic political question: how does one reconcile the need for order with the need for liberty? Now it occurred to me, Madam President, that this is precisely the problem which is facing this Parliament today. The classical statement of the dilemma can be summed up in two propositions. Order without liberty turns into tyranny — and I think that is a fair summing up of the fears of Mr Pannella, Mrs Bonino and others who have criticized this report. The other proposition is that liberty without order degenerates into licence — and that is the fear of the majority of the Members of

this Parliament. What we have to do in our Rules of Procedure is to create the conditions of ordered liberty, the description of which was the great achievement of the eighteenth century Irish politician and philosopher, Edmund Burke, who happened to sit in the House of Commons; and since Edmund Burke lies at the roots of my party's history, this is a task in which we European Democrats think we have a particular role to play.

Now this balance between order and liberty presents itself in the following form: how can we ensure in this Parliament that every minority — and, to take Mr Pannella's point, every individual Member — has scope for political expression, and at the same time ensure that this, the first elected interational parliament in history — that is the importance of why we are here today — can function effectively, and can be seen to function effectively?

First of all two myths, both of which came out of our somewhat disordered discussion yesterday. First of all, contrary to what Mr Pannella says, we have not hurried these reforms. It seems to me that almost every Monday and Tuesday for the past two months the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions has been meeting in Brussels and holding intensive discussions on these very matters. The second myth is that we have somehow silenced the minorities in that committee. Certainly, we never silenced Mrs Bonino, who was given every opportunity to speak in committee, and we certainly did not silence Mr Capanna. Mr Capanna was even accorded the privilege of speaking while everybody else was speaking, and he very carefully timed this ejection for that reason for the arrival of the press conference outside. Certainly, in committee the minorities have not been silenced, nor have they been silenced outside in other discussions. Indeed, I would say that silence is the last word that I would associate with any of these people.

To turn to the substance of the report: on Rule 7B, why do we come down in favour of two and a half years? The Rules at the moment are silent on the terms of office of the President, Vice-Presidents and the Quaestors. Rule 37 specifically provides for committees to be elected each year in March, but Chapter III makes no provision at all for the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors, so that as the Rules stand at the moment, it is possible to have elections for our Bureau every five years in July after elections — or indeed every month if we so choose.

The silence of the Rules on this matter is therefore something that has to be rectified anyway. So what are the options? First of all we have the proposition from the Socialist Group that they should be held every year, presumably in March, except for the one which is held in July. I may say that this is fraught with difficulties, given the fact that our elections do take place in May, June or July. But in any case, the fact of

Patterson

having some degree of continuity in our Bureau I think outweighs the right of individual Members to elect their Bureau on frequent occasions. I would say that every year is probably erring on the side of laxity.

We have another proposal that it should be every two years which was put by the Socialist Group in committee. This of course would leave you with a one-year term of office for the fifth year, and what the Americans would call a lame duck President would be absolutely on the cards every time. So that the proposal that we should divide our five-year term into two terms of two and a half years, with the election of our President, our Vice-Presidents and our Quaestors after the parliamentary elections and again in mid-term, seems to me eminently sensible, and that is what my group will vote for.

Now we come to the very vexed question of the size of political groups. There are two preliminary questions which perhaps we might ask. First of all, should the number be expressed in round figures, or should it be expressed as a percentage? I noticed that Mr Hänsch talked about percentages. It is unfortunately pointless to speculate now as to what would have happened had our Rules been written in terms of percentages originally. Had we had percentages in our Rules, none of this debate would have been necessary, because automatically the minimum size of a political group would have risen automatically from 10 to 21, had 5 % been spelled out in our Rules. Maybe it is the unwisdom of our predecessors that has produced this situation in the first place. But now that we are saddled with a figure in the Rules rather than a percentage, it seems to me that for the purposes of clarity we shall have to stick to figures and, of course, my particular group supports the Nord proposal of 21.

The second preliminary question is: should we make a distinction between groups in general and groups which have Members from several different countries? In committee we argued about this at great length, and we came down in favour of a single, uniform figure of 21, irrespective of the number of nationalities. Why? Because this Parliament is an elected Parliament and is not like its predecessor. A distinction was then made between 14 and 10 Members. But this Parliament is not based on nationality. This Parliament is based on the whole European electorate and it was therefore felt symbolic that it did not matter how many countries you came from, the minimum size of a political group was going to be the same. That is why I find that the proposal now that we should go back to 21 and 10 breaches this principle fundamentally, and it is why my group, in any case in principle, supports the idea of a single, uniform figure of 21.

However, the size of the political group is not as important as the much more fundamental matter of what we are to do about those who are not in political groups, and even more fundamentally, the rules and

regulations on the ordering of this House. Mr Pannelly yesterday, I noticed, said that no rule speaks for the rights of minorities. This is precisely what Rule 36 A is intended to do. What do minorities and independents need? They must have the facilities to be effective. They must have equal participation in the committees of the House, and they must not be silenced. This is what Rule 36 A gives them: the right to facilities — the right to committee places and the right to speak — and what is more, it gives them better rights to speak than most of us. It makes me extremely annoyed when I hear Mr Pannella and others in the Technical Group say that they have not got enough time to put all their points of view. On any division of time, no individual member of my group can possibly have more than one minute, on some occasions we count our time in terms of seconds. There must be a balance between the rights of the independents to put every single point of view and the rights of the ordinary back-benchers in the major political groups to speak as well. This is a point Mr Pannella, I thought, was making yesterday; he seems to have forgotten it in the rest of his proposals. Rule 36 A gives that right. It may be that Amendment No 6 would be an even greater improvement.

Perhaps at this time I could also take the opportunity to withdraw Amendment No 5 which is tabled in the name of Mr Scott-Hopkins.

I turn now to Rules 12, 14, 35 (4) and 37: these carry the principle of order and liberty into the important areas. On Rule 12, there is an amendment tabled in my name and that of Mr Tyrrell. If we vote for the Socialist amendment in due course, and the minimum size of political groups is ten, then we have to delete in Rule 12 the words 'political groups', simply because otherwise a political group of ten could propose amendments, although in any other case it has to be twenty-one Members. So I hope Mr Nord can accept that amendment.

Rule 29 is an important one which has not so far been discussed. It really is a method of saving time in this House when we have large numbers of amendments tabled. At the moment the President of the Parliament, or whoever is in the Chair, has very little discretion as to the order in which amendments must be taken. They have to be taken with the greatest departure from the original first, so that if you had a proposal which said '2', and amendments were tabled with every figure from '3' to '100', although it was perfectly obvious that the entire House, with the exception of the tabler of the amendments, wanted the figure '2', we would nevertheless have to go through 98 votes before we got to the one which commanded the majority. The amendment to Rule 29 merely provides a mechanism whereby the President of the Parliament can find the majority more quickly than would otherwise be the case.

Patterson

Finally, we come to the question of electronic voting. First of all, I wish to make a protest, Madam President. This electronic apparatus we see in front of us has been, as far as I can see, installed for the good part of a month, and it was, I should have thought, not too much for this House to expect that it would be operational by now, particularly as last week we went through a fairly extensive testing of it. I would request you, Madam President, or at least the Quaestors, to investigate the contract which was signed for the installation of this apparatus, because it seems to me that there may well have been a breach of contract. It seems to me absurd that our Committee on the Rules of Procedure should have gone through endless debates as to how this electronic apparatus could be installed in time for last week, only to find that for purely technical reasons, which I do not understand, it is still not operational.

May I say secondly that I am tempted very much, having had a classical education, by Amendment No 134 tabled in the name of Mrs Bonino. The idea that if we cannot use the electronic apparatus, the latest technological invention, we should go back to the very earliest form of voting using an urn with black balls and white balls, appeals to me, but I suspect I am alone in my group on that point. Could I say that my group will support Amendment No 10 tabled in the name of Mr Luster and Mr Klepsch.

Finally, Madam President, could I conclude by saying: let us hold fast to the principle which I enunciated at the beginning. We are in this Parliament with a grave responsibility; we are the democratic institution of the Community; we are the world's first democratically elected international parliament, and in my opinion we must find this balance between liberty and order, otherwise all our endeavours, and the endeavours of those 250 million people who put us here, will have been in vain.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — *(I)* Madam President, as time is short I shall deal only with the most important subjects, which are the size of the groups and the other minimum numbers required under amendments to the Rules of Procedure proposed in the Nord Report.

On the remaining proposals we shall speak and vote as and when they are reached. However, I must say at once that, in committee, we agreed with the Socialist proposals; in fact we have submitted similar ones concerning the length of the term of office of the President, the Vice-Presidents and the Quaestors. We also think that the term should be one year, renewable for one further year, and we are against the present Nord proposal to amend Rule 7 and make the term of office of these officers two and a half years. In our view, the proposed amendment would certainly not help Parlia-

ment to do its work more efficiently but would tend to create a majority grouping in the House and we are trying to resist this. We do not want a majority which tries to embody in the Rules agreements which its members have made among themselves, in other words, to 'legalize' pacts on the exchange of offices between the various members and groups of the majority by providing for them in the Rules.

I turn now to the subject which I said we regarded as the most important, beginning with the right of Members of the House to form groups which are reasonable in size without being astronomical. Our views on this have already been made clear both in the House and, again, with considerable force and tenacity in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions. Our views could scarcely be other than they are, historically speaking at least, since we, too, were once in the position where the members of the independent group are today. In fact, the treatment meted out to us was much tougher. As we could not be recognized as sons or stepsons, kith or kin of any group in this Parliament, we received no assistance and were left out on our own for two years and without a group for another two years. We had to wait four years before we had a group, so it is only reasonable and fair that we should stick to the views we held then. Apart from the long-standing issues which Mr Patterson mentioned a moment ago, what we are now discussing are vital questions such as safeguards for democracy in the form of the credibility of democratic institutions and their ability to defend themselves against attack, and respect for the verdict of the electors. The minorities are threatened. In Italy, it was a Communist President of the Chamber of Deputies who recognized four members only as constituting a group and, needless to say, they showed no gratitude for it afterwards. Another question at issue is equality between Members. As far as we are concerned, the elected must be as equal as the electors. As we are all aware, the great triumph of democracy is 'one man or one elector, one vote.' Since all votes and all electors are equal, those they elect must be equal too. We are in favour of proportional representation in elections and of those elected having absolutely equal rights.

However, the compromise on the system of election prevented the Treaty from being applied and, as we protested here in January 1974, it contravened it to some extent. This is because Articles 137 and 138 of the Treaty provides for two stages: the first, now over, being that of an indirectly elected Parliament, the other being the stage we are in now, with a directly elected one. The Treaty provides for a uniform electoral system in the second stage but this was not carried out. And this failure to implement the Treaty gave rise to different electoral laws. Some, like those in Italy, the Netherlands and elsewhere, provide for proportional representation; other, like those in France and Germany, provide for a majority and, in one case, the United Kingdom, the system is unsha-

D'Angelosante

medly majoritarian. I should like to point out to Mr Patterson, who gives us lessons in democracy, that the number of votes required to elect a Member in Italy would in his country have elected four or five. The votes required to elect five Italian Members (and this also applies to those in the Independent Group) would have elected eighteen or twenty British Members. At this juncture, it becomes very difficult to refer one ten or twenty-one because and allko327,1fa-vourko330,6applied means one thing for some and 'twenty-one' means something else for others. In the old, indirectly elected Parliament we had an electoral system which was, to all intents and purposes, uniform; now we have electoral systems which are fundamentally different. But, instead of evincing a little well-bred embarrassment, those who benefit from this unashamedly majoritarian electoral law remain true to their traditions and threaten to put a spanner in the works.

It is clear to us that the Rules of Procedure ought to have gone a long way to correct these weaknesses and done something to even up the lop-sided results. But the trend is in the opposite direction: the 5 % threshold has been extended and obstacles have been placed in the way of the full exercise of the equal rights of all Members and groups. And no one has explained why; we are still waiting for a plausible explanation. The only one we had was arithmetical: 10 is to 200 roughly as 21 is to 420. This is a useless argument: it proves nothing and can certainly be refuted. The only thing needed is to remember the two different systems of nomination for office of Members in the old and in the present Parliament.

Unfortunately, the only argument available to those who advocate restrictive amendments is supplied by the very people who most openly attack or say they attack those amendments. We want no truck with obstructive tactics; we deplore them with the same earnestness and determination as we oppose the attempt to deprive a group of fellow Members of their rights. We have never used obstructive tactics ourselves even when we have been the victims of gross injustice and discrimination. We cannot now agree that they should be used by others.

As far as we are concerned, the top priority is to safeguard the Institutions, and those who obstruct our proceedings do the exact opposite. The attempt to bring Parliament to a halt prevents it from 'getting off the ground' as the most important of the Institutions and shows up the anti-democratic forces at work. On the other hand, Mr Pannella's obstructionism has some novel features for those who know Parliamentary history: it is not defensive but offensive, a sort of blackmail which enables the minority to defeat the majority by threatening to bring the Institution to a standstill, and we know a little about this in Italy! Naturally, Mr Pannella claims that the right to go on

talking for days, weeks or months represents democracy at its best and he insists on his proposals being adopted because their adoption is vital for the country, for Europe and for the left. This applies to his sudden discovery that there is hunger in the world. But that claim can be refuted too!

The fact is that Mr Pannella is against Parliamentary democracy and his attitude is essentially right-wing. This was illustrated by the way in which the right wing seized upon the ill-considered and sometimes crazy attempts by this House to amend its Rules of Procedure, very much for the worse, to an extent which (please note) went far beyond what was necessary to protect the Institution from obstructionism.

The Nord Report does not contain all the things we discussed in the Committee on the Rules. The committee voted in favour of urgent debate on some of the amendments proposed, although no vote has yet been taken on their merits. I should like to mention them because they deserve your attention as much as ours. There is a proposal by Mr Galland, of the Liberal Group, which is designed to withdraw from the political groups the right conferred on them by Rule 47 to submit an oral question, though no one knows which group will benefit from this, and so on.

The right wing of the House has, accordingly, taken advantage of Mr Pannella's reckless onslaught not to protect itself against obstructive tactics but to amend the Rules to a greater extent than was called for when they were discussed by the House and change them very much for the worse. This shows to what lengths some forms of maximalism will go.

We must render this vicious device harmless because it is liable to make the first elected Parliament unstable, deprive it of credibility and public confidence and, what is more, make it a laughing-stock. We must find some common ground and I think there are at least three possibilities.

The first point on which agreement might be reached lies in the proposal of the Socialists, who want to amend Rule 36 (5) so as to provide that a group shall consist of not less than 21 Members if they are of the same nationality and of not less than ten if they came from three Member States.

The second alternative is to keep the group of ten as it is now, but to require a minimum membership of 21 for the others, at least the larger ones.

The third possibility is the Miscellaneous Group, which is what we proposed and advocated. The only material, and not merely arithmetical, argument against a group of ten is that there should not be a proliferation of groups. This could be described as a Parliament based on the officials of the groups. If the minimum number of Members required to form a group is set too low, this creates at least the possibility that groups will multiply beyond control. But this idea has only been expressed in the briefest terms.

D'Angelosante

In any event, our proposal for the formation of a Miscellaneous Group rules it out because, once the groups were formed on the basis now laid down in the Rules, that is to say, same political affinities, attitude etc., all Members of the House who did not belong to any of the groups formed would all, without exception, go into the Miscellaneous Group. This is what the Nord Report proposes in Rule 36A, with the big difference, however, that we want this group to have exactly the same rights as the other groups. We do not understand why they have to attend meetings of the Bureau in an advisory capacity. Everyone who has spoken so far has said that we have equality of treatment but how can there be if there is no right to take part in the meetings of the Bureau? Why shouldn't this Group go there? Is the Bureau a holy of holies? What have they got to hide?

Of the three proposals the one for a Miscellaneous Group seems best to me, perhaps because it is in general use in the Italian Parliament. Of course, there is always somebody who doesn't want to belong to any group. If so, then we must come to some agreement because there are two kinds of Parliament. One kind, such as the French, is familiar with the idea of 'unattached' Members who remain so and take the consequences: in other words, the Member concerned is free not to join a group but the Rules of Procedure prescribe the number which can constitute a group and if you are not in one of them, you are out. That is just what they are trying to do here. In another type of Parliament, such as the Italian, every Member belongs to a group and all groups are equal. These the political groups and the Miscellaneous Group. We are used to it and like it. But it requires cooperation from the Members who are unattached. No one ought to be able to say that joining a group threatens his freedom because it is simply not true. Joining a group means the assurance of being able to work on level terms with others and to make one's voice heard in Parliament in any capacity, and so on.

This, I repeat, is the solution we prefer. However, we should look at all three possibilities and, without haste or heat, try to find the right one. We are really trying to obtain two things: true equality between all Members and groups and, at the same time, the exclusion of obstructive tactics. This is the basis on which we must and will find the right answer.

(Applause from the Communist and Allies Group).

President. — I call Mr Galland to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Galland. — *(F)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, allow me at the outset to make one thing perfectly clear: I refer to the philosophy of the Liberal Group and to its resolve to arrive at an equitable statute for the defence of minority interests.

Who was it who spoke out last July to ask for the Luster report to be referred to committee? It was I, as the representative of a number of my liberal colleagues. Who worked out and drafted a statute for the non-attached Members which apparently has the unanimous support of Parliament today in the shape of Rule 36A: it was I, in company with Mr Hans Nord, on behalf of the Liberal Group. And who, during the debate on hunger in the world, realizing full well that there was a problem of speaking time for the non-attached Members, spontaneously offered the remainder of the Liberal Group's speaking time to Mr Capanna? I did, on behalf of the Liberal Group.

Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure stipulates that any Member may table a motion for a resolution on a matter falling within the sphere of activities of the Communities. When a Socialist colleague in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions proposed that the requirements in this Rule should be made more stringent, we felt that there was a need to defend the individual rights of Members and we opposed a discussion of this amendment in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure. The Socialists withdrew their proposal to enable each Member to continue to table motions for resolutions if he so wishes.

But there is another side to the defence of minorities. We must endow this Parliament with an effective instrument to ensure the proper conduct of its work. Ladies and gentlemen, this means that the defence of minority interests cannot under any circumstances be allowed to result in a permanent threat by a few Members to hamper its work.

Still on the subject of the intentions of the Liberal Group, let me say to Mr De Goede that I cannot accept his interpretation of the meetings that we have held under the chairmanship of Mr Bangemann. Mr Bangemann, in a constant spirit of conciliation, Mr Nord and myself came three times to listen to the views of the non-attached Members. We listened to them and in certain cases we agreed with their views. If that is not felt to have been enough, I honestly cannot understand, Mr De Goede, your virulent criticism — your unfounded criticism — of our President.

To conclude my introductory remarks, I want to thank Mr Nord for the real effort made by him to try to lend shape to the discussions in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions. Those who attended the meetings, not least Mr D'Angelosante, know that his task was not easy.

Ladies and gentlemen, I come now to the substance of the Nord report. The first proposal under Rule 7 is that the term of office of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors should be two and a half years. A great deal has been said on this subject, in particular by Mr Patterson. I shall confine myself to stating that the Liberal Group will vote in favour of Rule 7B as

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contained in the Nord report and against the Socialist Group's Amendment No 8. Why? We stated our reasons in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure: we consider that the President of the European Parliament has a real function, just as the Bureau has a real function and can only perform their functions effectively if they are allowed the necessary time.

Rule 12 (2) is to be amended to increase from ten to twenty-one the number of Members needed to request an amendment to the agenda. We shall vote in favour of this proposal and against all the other amendments. We shall not vote in favour of any of the amendments tabled — for one simple reason. If our colleagues failed to recognize the justification for this change after yesterday's debate on the agenda in which we lost over one and a half hours then nothing will make them recognize it.

Rule 14 relates to urgent procedure. Here again we shall accept none of the amendments that have been tabled and we shall vote for Rule 14 as it stands; the same reasons apply here as in the case of Rule 12.

We shall vote in favour of Rule 28 as proposed in the Nord report. There is to this Rule 28 an Amendment No 20 that I have probably not understood properly, tabled by Mr Blaney, Mrs Castellina, Mrs Macciocchi and Mr Coppieters. A new sub-paragraph (d) requests that once the speaking time has been used up, Members of Parliament, regardless of their political affiliations, should be able to speak for a maximum of three minutes. I have made a simple calculation: if each one of us used this option, we should require twenty hours and fifty minutes for each of our debates! That is obviously quite impossible and this amendment, together with a number of others (I shall be returning to them) tabled in the context of Rule 28 to Rules 36 and 36 A, simply show the desire of a number of non-attached Members to benefit from more speaking time than ordinary Members — this because of the diversity of political views among the non-attached.

Mr Patterson rightly pointed out that Rule 29 is of central importance. It is of central importance, ladies and gentlemen, because if we are to have an effective instrument for our work while allowing each one of us to table and speak in support of amendments, those amendments must not constitute filibustering procedures, as Mr de la Malène said yesterday, and must not merely be a delaying tactic. There are a number of amendments of that kind which we shall have to discuss in the context of the Nord report. The proposal that the amendment which departs the least from the original text should be put to the vote first so that, if it is not adopted, all the other amendments will fall, is not a proposal aimed at preventing Members of Parliament from expressing their views. Its purpose is merely to endow this Parliament with an even more effective instrument for its work.

On Rule 35, I want to say to Mr Luster that our group will vote in favour of Amendment No 10 which stipulates the conditions to taking a vote by roll call in a more satisfactory manner than that provided for in the Nord report.

I come now to the vital point: Rules 36 and 36A. As things stand in the debate at present, the Liberal Group will vote in favour of Rules 36 and 36A in their present form. But I have been authorized by my group to take a working assumption which might be allowed for in the Nord report either today or at the December part-session, because we have a juridical problem here. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, that sub-amendments are not authorized and we cannot allow them to become a normal practice.

What then is the problem? Rule 36 has been the subject of number of amendments tabled by Mr De Goede, Mrs Bonino, Mrs Dekker and others, tending to revert to the status quo, i.e. to the previous provision which allowed ten Members to form a political group. We think it wise for Parliament to adopt the new provision. Of course the previous Parliament should really have assumed its responsibilities and things would have been much easier if the Luster report had been adopted by our predecessors. Let no one accuse us of seeking to profit from circumstances to force the provision through. I should like to consider Rules 36 and 36A jointly. We consider that there are only two possible types of group in this Parliament: political groups and non-attached groupings. There can be no intermediate category.

To our mind, the political groups, and this is the hypothesis that I am putting forward on behalf of the Liberal Group are all governed by the conditions set down in the Rules of Procedure, in particular the provisions on speaking time contained in Rule 28 (2) which are not open to discussion. Ladies and gentlemen, what has been happening? During the debate on hunger in the world, the debate on the budget and our debate today, we have witnessed constant, last-minute negotiations between the Bureau of Parliament and the non-attached Members in an effort by the latter to obtain more speaking time than they would have been entitled to under the Rules of Procedure. Are we to continue for five years to have bargaining worthy of carpet dealers about the speaking time to be granted to the non-attached members? That is out of the question. We are therefore proposing, under Rule 36A, a sub-amendment to Amendment No 6 by Mrs Spaak and Mr Gendebien, in paragraph 4. Mrs Spaak and Mr Gendebien had proposed the following wording: 'The non-attached Members shall benefit from the speaking time stipulated in Rule 28(2). This speaking time must take account of the great diversity of political trends within the non-attached group to enable each of those trends

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to be expressed ...' Mr Gendebien has agreed with me that the wording of this text was not precise enough because what he really wanted to say was that Rule 28 (2) shall be applied but that given the diversity of political views among the non-attached Members, a coefficient was needed to increase the speaking time available to them.

In the spirit of my previous remarks, and since we cannot constantly renegotiate our position, while also considering that the wording of the proposed texts submitted to us is not precise enough, we now propose — still working on the Liberal Group's hypothesis — the following subamendment: 'Speaking time of the non-attached Members shall be calculated in accordance with Rule 28 (2). The time obtained in this way shall be doubled to take account of the great diversity of political tendencies among the non-attached in order to enable each of those tendencies to be expressed in so far as this is possible.' We are making a considerable step towards the non-attached in this way by proposing that, to take account of the diversity of views among them, the calculation of their speaking time should be effected in accordance with Rule 28 (2) but doubled as a general rule in future, thus avoiding the need for individual discussions on speaking time before each debate and before each part-session. But, still working on the same hypothesis, we stipulate that this new calculation of speaking time would apply only to the non-attached Members and that all the other groups would still have to adhere to the speaking time laid down at present in Rule 28 (2). The Liberal Group might then be able to accept the amendments to Rule 36 and vote in favour, if an overall agreement could be reached, of Amendment No 3, Amendment No 88 or Amendment No 29 which proposes to revert to the number of 10 for the formation of a political group.

Ladies and gentlemen, let us be perfectly clear about it: there are not three types of group but only two: political groups and a grouping of non-attached Members. I might add that we could accept in its entirety Amendment No 6 tabled by Mrs Spaak and Mr Gendebien indicating certain formal provisions that they would like adopted. Mr D'Angelosante has spoken to us of the 'mixed group.' That is a specifically Italian concept which some of us sometimes find difficult to understand and which cannot be embodied in our Rules because some of the non-attached Members are opposed to it. We have considered the matter with them, as Mr De Goede and Mr Gendebien will be able to confirm. To the extent that a consensus cannot be reached on the 'mixed group' we could agree to the formulation adopted by Mrs Spaak and Mr Gendebien in their Amendment No 6 in which they do not even want the term 'group' or 'grouping' to be used and employ instead the expression 'the non-attached'.

I personally hope that, on the basis of this final effort by the Liberal Group, it will be possible to open negotiations in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure at 1 pm in order to enable the vote to be taken. The Liberal Group will have taken its efforts at conciliation as far as it could possibly have done in an effort to achieve the fullest consensus on the Rules of Procedure. It is our sincere hope that during these final negotiations in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions a genuine, unanimous resolve on the part of the entire Parliament will emerge in order to bring this debate to its conclusion in an atmosphere of dignity and in a spirit of efficiency. If so, the image of Parliament will emerge strengthened from this debate.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr de la Malène to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr de la Malène. — *(F)* Mr President on behalf of my group I want to make a few observations on this procedural debate. I shall be very brief. I shall put my remarks under three main headings. The first relates to the importance that we attach to the Rules of Procedure. In any Assembly, regardless of its nature, the rules of procedure are of especial importance. Good rules guarantee smooth conduct of the proceedings and also safeguard democracy. I think it is wrong to speak in this context of the statute of a minority; there is no majority or minority but simply parliamentarians who all have the same rights. We are not in an Assembly with a majority and a minority. At all events it is wrong to speak of protection of the statute of minorities in an Assembly. We consider that formulation altogether misguided.

The rules of procedure are particularly important in an Assembly such as ours. Why? Because in most of our countries there is a fundamental law — generally written but sometimes based on customary practice — and the rules of procedure stem from the principles enshrined in that fundamental law. Here in the Community we do not have a fundamental law but we have the Treaties which do not deal with the problems of law that lie at the heart of the fundamental laws in our Members States. Consequently, the procedural issues are even more important in the case of our Assembly since we do not have an overriding constitution. This explains the importance that we attach to the problems of the Rules of Procedure in the interests of the workings of our Assembly and of democracy. So much for my introductory remarks.

Secondly, the view of my group is that we have a set of Rules of Procedure; they may not be altogether satisfactory and they may well require amendment and improvement, but they must be applied as they stand. Nobody has the right not to apply them. We have the impression that in the past few weeks certain

de la Malène

liberties have unfortunately been taken with the Rules and we regret that fact. We maintain in the strongest possible terms that abusive interpretations of the Rules must not be taken as a reason for others to infringe them yet again. That is our clear position and we shall stick to it: the Rules must be applied by everyone and, in particular, by the Presidency.

When there are difficulties of interpretation in any Assembly, reference is made to jurisprudence to obtain an interpretation of the Rules of Procedure. When there is no body of law to refer to, the Bureau of the Assembly is convened to decide how to interpret the Rules. If the matter is even more serious, it is referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure. That is the normal procedure. But the Rules are never interpreted in such a way as to allow them to be infringed.

I said yesterday and I shall not insist on this any further: for some time, particularly during the budget debate, we have been witnessing interpretations of the Rules of Procedure of which — to put it mildly — we cannot approve. The essential item in the budget debate was voted by a procedure which I and my group find unacceptable. I refer to the amendment which resulted in an increase in the co-responsibility levy and which was adopted under abnormal conditions. A vote was not then taken on the budget in its entirety, as provided for in the Rules of Procedure. Perhaps this may have posed a difficult problem of interpretation of the Treaty; nevertheless the Rules required this. A vote should have been taken on each section of the budget and then on the entire budget. Reference was made to the Treaty provisions as a pretext for not applying the Rules of Procedure; that is one interpretation but to my mind the Rules were not applied properly. I repeat: the Rules exist and must be applied whether you like them or not. In my opinion the Rules were not observed yesterday evening either. Because some Members make abusive interpretations of the Rules that is no excuse for others to do the same. So much for my second observation.

My third point concerns the substance of the matter and here I shall be relatively brief. I shall look at the principles only and not at points of detail. As to the principles, what are the proposals? It is being proposed that the term of office of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors should be increased to two and a half years. We agree on this point and shall therefore vote in favour of this extension. Then it is being proposed — and this is a more serious matter which has led to most of our difficulties — that a provision should be adopted which would lead to the disappearance of a group that exists at present in this Assembly. No matter what our view may be on this group, we cannot agree to its disappearance — we have never been in agreement to that. We do not agree for reasons of substance and procedure.

For procedural reasons we do not think it opportune for an Assembly which has had in its midst a group of ten Members to decide to cause that group to disappear by changing the number of Members needed to form a group. We are of the opinion that in procedural terms that attitude is lacking in respect for democracy and also lacking in delicacy. We cannot under any circumstances endorse it.

For reasons of substance we consider that it is preferable as far as possible for Members to join together in groups to ensure the smooth functioning of the Assembly. The fewer the number of non-attached Members the better the Assembly will be able to function. We have experienced this in the past and will continue to do so in future. Consequently, for the reasons of substance and procedural reasons that I have outlined, we are altogether hostile to any increase in the number of Members required to form a group if that increase is effected in such a way as to bring about the disappearance of an existing group.

I have spoken of the two essential measures proposed in this amendment to the Rules of Procedure. If it appears, as is being said in some quarters, that it is possible to find a compromise, i.e. a solution which will enable an existing group to continue in existence and protect the workings of Parliament, we shall have no difficulty in supporting that compromise. Mr President, those are the observations that I wanted to make on behalf of my group in this debate. I hope that the prestige of this Parliament will be enhanced by our debate in which I hope too we shall all show sufficient wisdom to arrive at a conclusion in the best interests of everyone.

I repeat that if we have witnessed manoeuvres of which I personally cannot approve, we must nevertheless recognize that they were to some extent justified by the threat which the Committee on the Rules of Procedure posed to the group concerned. We must understand the group's reaction. I disapprove both of the policy and of the methods employed, but we must understand that the proposal from the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions to increase the minimum number of Members required to twenty-one could quite easily be considered by the group concerned as an attack on its interests; that being so its reaction, reprehensible as it may have been, was perfectly understandable.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Gendebien.

Mr Gendebien. — *(F)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mrs Spaak and I belong to no group — not even to the Group for the Technical Co-ordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members. We are and wish to stay non-attached and independent, all other things being equal.

Gendebien

Amendment No 6, which we have tabled, relates to Article 36A. For our part we hope of course that this amendment, like those tabled by Mr De Goede and Mrs Dekker, will be adopted. I am sorry that we no longer have the possibility of sub-amending existing documents because we would have agreed to merge different amendments or group them together. At all events, it seems perfectly reasonable to us — and this is the substance of our proposals — to try to improve the organization of speaking time for the non-attached. We also feel that there are grounds for doing away with the 'grouping' or 'group' qualification for the non-attached in order to avoid any confusion and any impression that the non-attached form some kind of political group. This obviously cannot be the case in view of their extreme variety. So let us — if you approve — simply have non-attached and leave it at that. The wording of our amendment is, I feel, sufficiently full not to call for any further comment. I would add that Mr Galland's sub-amendment seems to me, personally, to form a positive basis for negotiation and I thank him for his proposal.

I would nevertheless like to give my point of view on the problem of substance underlying this debate, namely the rights of Members of Parliament. We have, I agree, seen a kind of thaw towards us by other groups but it is partial and insufficient and it has happened only as the result of the battles that the non-attached and the independents have had to fight. For my part, I would have preferred it to have been more spontaneous. It was, after all, a pity that the offers of negotiation we put to the heads of groups before the opening of the July part-session were turned down. The point we want to make today is that you can clearly do many things with rules of procedure. You can use them for totally contradictory purposes. What really counts is the spirit in which they are used and, on that point, I would like to see a change in the attitude of the big groups. In this respect I can only support what Mr de la Malène has just said. In addition, the non-attached all too often have been regarded and treated as second class Members. In the sharing out of speaking time, in the membership of committees and when reports are allocated, all we get in most cases is the crumbs.

Moreover, and this is a fundamental point, all the non-attached — even those who will remain non-attached whatever happens — refuse to accept the figure of 21 Members required to form a group or to initiate certain procedures. The point is that this 5 % basis clearly has affinities with the electoral systems prevailing in France at the June elections and, in a general way, in Federal Germany. The 5 % philosophy has no democratic justification. It draws its inspiration from or is related to a system of political prohibitions. And I am afraid that it is the sign of a mounting determination to stifle new currents of political opinion in Europe that are generating electoral fears among the official and dominating parties. If

today there are more and more ecologists and regionalists in Europe, it is because of the deficiencies of the old ideologies and because of the inability of the systems now in power in our countries to respond to the problems of contemporary society and to battle effectively with the crisis. Unfortunately, this crisis is simply increasing social and political tensions. You cannot, to my mind, stifle in authoritarian fashion the new groups and parties that reflect or will reflect this new situation. This would be the policy of the ostrich and, on this point, the proposal by Mr Damseaux of the Liberal Group designed to apply the 5 % limit on a general basis for the next European election is unacceptable. And yet our new rules of Procedure would already like to institute the 5 % limit within this Parliament. This has been based on a purely mathematical extrapolation. There were 198 Members in the old Parliament whereas now there are 410. Then, 10 Members were needed to form a group and now the figure must be 21. This is totally arbitrary and could be short-lived. For example, what will happen when, in the near future, we are joined by 24 Members from Greece, perhaps 24 from Portugal and 50 from Spain? Will the limit not have to be raised again then? If so, might not some groups which now have over 21 Members then disappear? At all events there is one likely assumption and that is that the number of the non-attached will increase in the future. My feeling, like that of Mr de la Malène, is that it would be advisable to provide some minimum degree of organization for these non-attached. That being so it would be better to deal with two or three small groups of 10 or 12 non-attached or independent Members instead of a sprinkling of non-attached or 30 or so independent Members. Raising the limit of 21 Members to form a group and to initiate various procedures would be not only a mistake but also, I am afraid, a political error and a stain on the new Parliament. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the people concerned, European public opinion would take a poor view of the establishment of this 5 % limit in our institution. We must always be highly scrupulous in the context of our respect for the rights of minorities because it is also the context of human freedom. In this field it may be possible to tell when rights begin to be nibbled away but there is no knowing where the process will end.

Some Members have over-simplified the choice before us. They want to force us to choose between efficiency and democracy. Why do the two have to be in conflict? Is there really no way to reconcile them? Is it really impossible to combine democracy and efficiency? But if that were really the choice, a Parliament must always opt for democracy at all costs. Now, choosing democracy is recognizing the right to be different. This right to be different must be safeguarded because it is the particular feature of Europe in a world where fewer and fewer nations can claim they have it. Let us not embark in the direction of restricting the right of initiative, let us not spread the

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principle of the delegation of power. The sovereignty and legitimacy of this Parliament belong primarily to the Members and neither the parties nor the Bureau can corner it for themselves. Unfortunately, this Parliament is tending to become a Parliament of groups instead of staying what it should in essence be, namely a Parliament of free and responsible elected Members. On this point, the proposals of the Nord report raising the number of Members necessary to form a group accentuate this unfortunate trend and that is why I, and Mrs Spaak, cannot give them our support.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Adonnino.

Mr Adonnino. — *(I)* Mr President, there is a widespread belief that when people discuss amendments to Rules of Procedure, particularly if they are members of a Parliament, those who support the amendments are bent on getting the upper hand over the other groups, who then turn out to be the minority groups. I think this is a mistaken idea because it tends to emotionalize the debates and concentrate attention on extrinsic considerations instead of the real aim and purpose of Rules of Procedure and the reasons why they are under review and may be amended, which is, of course, to ensure that Parliament works smoothly and efficiently and can get to the root of a problem without delay. Obviously, the aim and purpose of the Rules and the reason why they are under review are subject to qualification — otherwise we should be in trouble — because, if we cannot qualify them, amendment could easily operate to enable the majority to oppress the minority; however, the qualification is simply what is required to ensure respect for the basic rights of minorities, and which it is our duty to achieve. At the same time, we must be clear on what those rights are based. I say this because, in my view, when respect for the rights of minorities is pushed to such a point that a minority can, on its own, bring Parliament to a standstill and thus override the rights of the majority, this is something I cannot accept. Just as, in any Parliament, individual members, groups and minorities each have their rights, so do the majority have the right to pursue the policies adopted, to achieve their objectives, and to possess the means with which to do so.

It is important that this should be said, particularly in view of the effect which this debate may have on Parliament's image outside and on its credibility in the eyes of the public. We want to make clear that we are approaching this question with the sole object of providing Parliament with concise and flexible Rules of Procedure which will enable us to do our work and achieve our aims, without any desire or wish to override anyone's rights, whoever it may be; indeed, our natural inclination is to be anxious and willing to respect the rights of these minorities. As we know, there was considerable discussion as to whether it was better to have a general revision of the Rules or of only those parts which urgently needed it.

This was the subject of lengthy debate in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and we are aware that one of our colleagues has put a motion for a resolution before the House for all the Rules to be referred to the committee.

It must be borne in mind — again for the sake of our image in the outside world — that the Rules at present in force in this Parliament were adopted when there were only 198 members appointed as representatives of the national Parliaments. Since the elections on 10 June the Members of the European Parliament have numbered 410, all elected by universal suffrage. This is too often overlooked, despite its inevitable repercussions on the Rules. It explains why we have to begin, as we are in fact doing, with those amendments which, in our view, must be introduced at once; we should lose all credibility if, as a Parliament of 410 members elected by universal suffrage, we conducted our business on the basis of Rules which were no longer satisfactory because they were drawn up for a smaller number and when the method of election was different. This would be the first stage, in which priority would be given to the amendment of certain Rules; we also agreed that further amendments would be made at a later stage and that we should then have a new set of Rules of Procedure.

Our task today is to consider and vote on the Nord report, together with the accompanying amendments. The Christian-Democratic Group fully supports the Report except, as Mr Luster said this morning, for some details relating to the introduction of the electronic voting system which are the subject of our Amendment No 10. The most controversial provisions are undoubtedly those on the parliamentary groups. The speaker who has just sat down ended with a plea that this should not be a Parliament of groups but of individual members. I think he is quite wrong. We did not go into the election as individual members, but as candidates of a group or party canvassing public support on the basis of a specific manifesto. So the way in which we were elected should be reflected in the way Parliament arranges to do its work, in particular by emphasizing the important role played by the groups of members who sit here in order to further certain policies. I cannot agree that we should be a Parliament of private members or of individuals and not a Parliament of groups. What we have to decide is what groups there should be and, since there are members who cannot by definition form a group, what these members' rights should be and how we can protect them.

There is another point to be borne in mind. The previous Rules of Procedure, which are still in force and are now being amended, prescribed that a group could be formed only on condition that it was composed of a minimum number of people which constituted a mathematical proportion of the total membership of the House, namely, 14 people out of the 198 of those days. No one appears to have challenged this principle; in fact, some people have argued that it worked

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very well and should be retained. Nor has the principle been challenged now that we are 410 instead of 198 and are trying to fix the minimum number for a group in a larger House. If, as I am sure you have done already, you compare the ratio between 14 and 198 and that between the figure 21, which is being suggested, and 410, you will realize that the percentage being proposed is not unsatisfactory. Clearly, therefore, the opposite point of view has not been considered; the question has not been looked at from the standpoint of what is fair but of what is best for certain interested parties, since 14 is a lower figure and makes it possible for groupings of members to constitute smaller parliamentary groups. It is our duty to restore the balance and return to the original principle. I refer, of course, to the proposals under discussion. If, before the vote, solutions can be found which obtain greater support, we will not oppose them.

Fixing the minimum membership of a parliamentary group at a higher figure than hitherto raises the question of how to treat the 'non-attached' who, as Members of Parliament, have rights which must be safeguarded, including the right to speak and to have access to facilities. This was the underlying intention which, I recall, eventually led to the Scott-Hopkins — Klepsch — Glinne motion for a resolution which becomes part of the Rules under a recommendation of the Nord Report. It is now said that the Non-attached Group is entitled to have technical assistance, in other words, an organization, staff and technical resources but, above all, speaking time because the peculiar character of the group and the absence of common aims and policies could cause difficulties for them. This has been catered for by the proposal to divide the speaking time into equal parts and to grant the Non-attached Group the same amount of time as the other political groups. This time can be used for one speech on behalf of the whole group or shared between its speakers.

Those are the grounds on which we commend the motion to the House. It also contains some less important proposals, if I may so describe them. There was a long discussion about the term of office of the President and Vice-Presidents and on the question whether the period decided upon, whether months or years, should also apply to committee chairmen and other officers and to the quaestors. On this point it was agreed that, as the these members were 'functional' rather than 'political' representatives, there was no point in putting a time-limit on their responsibilities. I think that idea is also wrong. I do not see why Parliament cannot lay down rules for itself under which those who are responsible for seeing that certain things are done properly take it in turns to hold office and don't forget the incumbents of these offices will undoubtedly have some political significance for the public. As our own term is one of five years, we want to make it possible for the way in which the offices have been filled to be reviewed every two and a half years, that is, half way through Parliament's term, and,

if need be, replace the incumbents. I do not think that that can be interpreted as an attempt to secure an unfair advantage or to violate sacred principles though, to be frank, I have never managed to discover what those principles are.

The question of the minimum number for the formation of a parliamentary group is, obviously, closely linked with the question of the minimum number for taking certain action, such as submitting an amendment or a request for urgent debate and things of that kind. I think the same principle applies. I think we all accept that, in this type of action, which affects Parliament's work and proceedings, the question is not whether a member should or should not be allowed to voice his opinion but of having a minimum number of members to entitle them to make a statement on a decision which may change the course of debate; in other words I think we accept the principle that this should not necessarily be the right of an individual but should require a minimum number of members. From this it follows that, since a particular number was required when we were 198, the number must be increased now that we are 410.

Thus, the whole series of Rule amendments being moved by Mr Nord as rapporteur are, in my view, amply justified and deserve the approval of the House.

To cover all the more substantial changes in the Report and the motions before us, I must touch on two further points. One is the system of voting. In order to streamline our proceedings (and we ought to express our thanks to those have been given responsibility for seeing to this) we have introduced the electronic voting system. This is not just a question of principle but the practical one of ensuring that, before, long, the electronic system, which is the fastest and most up-to-date in terms of guaranteed accuracy, becomes the normal method of taking the vote in this Parliament. It seemed to us that the Nord motion was rather unsatisfactory in the sense that it mentioned the new system without explaining how it works, so we have tabled a series of proposals in Amendment No 10 to make sure that Parliament gets into the habit as soon as possible of using the electronic system and falls back on the other methods only as a second choice. As we have already been reminded, the electronic system provides for votes to be recorded by name or, exceptionally, by secret ballot. Here again, I ask the House to adopt the proposal which our group is making in Amendment No 10.

The final point is one of great difficulty but I must deal with it. It concerns the order in which the vote is taken when amendments are moved to the main motion. The traditional method, which is the best, provided that it is not misused, is, of course, to vote first on the amendment which 'departs furthest' from the text of the original motion and to vote on the remaining amendments in descending order of variation from the original. The reason for this is that, if one of the earlier amendments is adopted, it will cover the ground of the later amendments which, accord-

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ingly, fall. The intention behind this is to streamline the voting procedure and to ensure that the will of the House is ascertained in such a way that, once it becomes clear what the House wants, all other amendments fall and the final decision can be taken without delay. What we propose, therefore, is that, in the absence of a demand to the contrary by 21 Members, that is, the minimum number of Members required to amend normal procedure, the President may, at his discretion, put the original motion to the vote first or give priority in the vote to an amendment other than the one which departs furthest from the text of the original motion if, in his view, the first-mentioned of these two amendments is likely to receive a majority of votes. If this is done, and the amendment is adopted, all other amendments fall because the vote taken has the effect of a decision of the House. This procedure is worthy of adoption and is fully in accord with the organizational objective of streamlining the voting process and, in consequence, the proceedings of the House. But there is one thing I must emphasize: in order to employ this procedure, the House must be aware of all motions on which it is to be asked to vote — all amendments as well as the original motion — so as to ensure that, whether the motion put to the vote first is the original motion or an amendment other than the one which departs furthest from it, the House fully realizes that, in adopting it, it is deliberately rejecting and, by its vote, throwing out all the others. If, on the other hand, the Members of the House are prepared to accept an amendment that has not been put to the vote, it is their right to defeat the main motion or any amendments other than the one which 'departs furthest' on which they then vote: in so doing, they will indicate to the President the course which the House prefers. Under this procedure, a great deal will, no doubt, depend on the Presidency of Parliament, on instinct, and on a feeling for the mood of the House, unless, of course, a vote is actually taken. However, it is an interesting new method and in a Parliament such as ours, which is international and comprises Parliamentarians of different origin and with a variety of experience and even of cultural, social and economic backgrounds, it is an experiment well worth trying out and I hope it will have the support of the House. Of course, on this point too, it must be possible to obtain a greater measure of consensus on some amendments before the vote, and this we welcome — provided they do not undermine the principles involved.

I have tried to summarize the questions involved.

I have tried to summarize the questions we have to decide since group speeches were restricted by agreement in order to shorten the debate. I therefore confirm Mr Luster's statement this morning that, subject to Amendment No 10 in the name of the Christian-Democratic Group, we fully support the Nord Report and trust that the House will do the same when it comes to the vote.

(Applause).

President. — I call Miss de Valera.

Miss de Valera. — Mr President, my dear colleagues, I rise to speak on this report, which I see as a fundamental matter concerning us all as parliamentarians.

Yesterday in this Chamber, I was saddened to witness a hardening of attitudes and a polarization of views between those who happen to belong to the larger political groupings here and those who are now being referred to as minority groupings. In the course of yesterday's proceedings, tempers rose and the arguments being put on both sides were no longer being considered with open minds. Frankly, Mr President, I was disturbed by this growing dissent and division among my European Parliamentary colleagues. We, as the first directly-elected Members of this Parliament were sent here to do a job of work by our constituents; we have a solemn duty to fulfil our obligations to them and to our respective nations; yet we have been unable to do this effectively. As to date, the debates in this House are centred around procedural points rather than matters of substance.

It is therefore necessary to analyse the reasons for this development. We had some eloquent speeches yesterday afternoon in support of the rights of minorities in a democratic structure, but others levelled criticism at the non-attached Members, accusing them of using delaying tactics, wasting time, filibustering, and being obstructive. This debate between the two sides will continue and gnaw away at our political framework unless we have the courage to face the reality of the situation immediately. We in the larger groups must willingly accept the right of the weaker against the strong. In a true democracy, all opinions must be allowed to exist. Democracy does not mean tyranny of the majority. It is necessary that the stronger forces in this Parliament practice tolerance and understanding towards those who hold minority viewpoints. One of the very reasons for the existence of the European Economic Community is to bring the peoples of Europe together in a common bond; but how will this be achieved if we cannot even find tolerance and patience among ourselves in this Parliament? If we, the Members of this august body, are not seen to accept the right of minorities to have their just say here, then those looking in on us from the outside can have little faith in our objectives. If the Parliament does not concede this, I see little business being conducted in this Parliament, for it is only natural in the circumstances that the non-aligned Members will make use of the Rules of Procedure to delay the order of business at any stage in the proceedings in order to put their particular message across, and the real work of this Parliament will remain untackled. This debate should not be a question of majority *versus* minority but rather the question of equal rights of Parliamentarians, no matter whether one happens to belong to a large or small group in this Parliament.

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In the interests of our constituents, I therefore appeal to you on behalf of my group and on my own behalf to consider this grave matter most carefully and to remember that strong groups have an obligation towards the weaker sections. It is not enough merely to reiterate this statement: I would ask you to demonstrate your faith in democracy by your actions today. You have nothing to fear. Many of those of the Technical Group would hold very different political views and opinions from my own, but the issue of a group's ideology does not arise here today. What we are here to decide upon is a system which will result in the effective working of this Parliament.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Blaney to speak on behalf of the Group for the Technical Coordination of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Blaney. — Mr President, I wish to speak on my own behalf, and on behalf of the Group for Technical Coordination, and to say here, without any question whatsoever, that we of that group have at all times favoured, and indeed identified, the need for change in the Rules in the new elected Parliament. Far from objecting to those changes, we see a great need for them; but we also believe that if this is to be done properly, with a lasting, good effect on the order and expedition of business in this House, then expert people must carefully prepare a draft for the groups and the parties to consider again; and while we would do all this with great urgency, there should be time to do it properly; that has always been and is our position.

That some matters should be considerably more urgent than others I do not disagree, but they are very few. The electronic voting system is one point that I agree with; indeed, my group agreed to it being introduced, but unfortunately the gremlins have intervened and it does not and has not worked. But outside of that, the action that has been taken by major groups in this House ever since we met here last July clearly indicates that in their view there is one matter above all others that is so urgent as to take up the time not only of this Parliament, as unfortunately happened in July but also of the old Parliament, which was a much more regulated body than this one has yet become. Yet on both occasions it is significant that there was not a sufficient number in either the old or the new Parliament to form the quorum that would have enabled the changes to be made in relation to increasing the number that may form a group.

Why this rush? Why this urgency when there is so much else to be done? Why did we not think of trying to find a formula under our procedure for urgent debate, which takes up an hour and a half of every day that we meet; why could it not be dealt with in isolation and save half our time? We have

tabled an amendment of a positive nature in regard to this that should have been considered in our present discussions but for some reason this has been wiped out.

I say to those that seem to think that this Parliament can be dealt with by a purely mathematical equation related to the first Parliament that, with all due respect to them, they are wrong. They are mistaken in thinking that the idea of ten Members forming a group is illogical, and that you should multiply that by two and add one merely because we now have an elected Parliament instead of a deputed parliament, which was a different situation altogether. Even with ten Members for the purposes of a quorum we are saying that in order to try and have more expedition in our business, we have got to sacrifice a little bit of our freedom. We therefore say ten Members will have sufficient sense collectively not to do things that would waste the time of this House. To say that you need 20 because there are 410 elected here does not bear scrutiny at all. I believe that ten is a figure that, if it was regarded as safe in a parliament of 200 is safe in a parliament of 1 000, never mind 410.

One Member talked about the independents getting more under the proposed Rule 36A than other members of groups would be getting under the newly amended rules, if they are amended, and went on to describe independents — those who do not belong to major parties or political groups — as non-parliamentary, apolitical. This again is wrong. We are neither apolitical nor non-parliamentary, nor indeed would Rule 36A give to the unattached more than the groups enjoy.

Are we being told in fact that the groups are sacrificing something by becoming groups? Is it not for their own advantage that they have done so? Is it not a fact that it is only the unattached Members in this House who were not supplemented by money from this Community, to fight even their elections, and that every Member outside of the 26 unattached that were returned here in the 410 was, on average, subsidized by a figure equal to approximately £ 20 000? Yet those unattached Members had to find the money to fight the elections against the more powerful organizations, the money that was provided by Community funds in this political hand-out; money that has not only been given for the election but is being continued each year. Who then made and are continuing to make the sacrifices? Who chose us to come here? In all cases it was the electorate, and the electorate are entitled to be represented here, and we as their representatives are entitled to no more and no less than any member of any party or any group, big or small. We are seeking no more. We are seeking equal rights in so far as equal rights are possible. We acknowledge fully that whether you belong to a majority or a minority, in Parliament it is equality of

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rights that really counts. We are calling for equal rights for the majority, for the minority and for every Member of this House.

But it is the rights of the minority that are in jeopardy, not those of the majority. Therefore the plea we are making here today to all Members of all parties, is that you should realize that the 26 unattached Members elected to this Parliament last June represented approximately 12.5 % of the total elected membership of the European Parliament. But they, and those who stood with them in the various countries, polled over 20 % of the total votes cast in that election. This is a figure that you should ponder when you talk about minorities: 20 % of the electorate is a very sizeable minority, if indeed you can call it a minority at all. And so again I would say, do not be misled into thinking that because we are from different countries, speak different languages, and do not always agree politically, we can be ignored. The members of the big groups do not agree. They are not one big happy political family. Do not let us deceive ourselves; they have their differences, and perhaps the bigger the group the greater the difference, and the bigger the problem.

But that is not to say that, despite the difficulties we encountered from the first day we came to this House last July, despite the pressures we have had to endure and despite the efforts we have had to make, we are going to allow ourselves to be pushed aside. We were elected against great odds, and without the financial resources provided by the Community to those who heretofore belonged to parties that composed the political groups in the old Parliament. The reason why we have come here, and why we have refrained from joining the large political groups, is not because we have nothing better to do back in our own countries. The fact that we do not belong to big parties means that we have more to do individually, back in our own countries, because we do not have other party members to do it in our name. This is a matter that I think should be well and truly considered when you come to make your decision. Again I would say to all and sundry that the number of Members required to form a group is very important, indeed it is absolutely vital to the Group for Technical Coordination.

But the size of the quorum for various procedures is even more important, not just to our small group, but to the parties who form the other groups as well, and it is absolutely vital to the unattached Members in this House, at this or at any future time. Remember, you are not just dealing with what may happen tomorrow or next week; with what is now being proposed, you are, in effect, saying to those of us who do not belong to the big parties or big groups that, not only will we not exist tomorrow, but there will be no possibility of

there being such a group in the four and a half years that remain to this Parliament.

I want, on behalf of our group, to say here, firmly and absolutely that it was not our purpose to have gone to all the bother and trouble and expense that it took to get elected here, only to come and try to upset this Parliament. We have as much interest in it as the biggest group in this House, we want to see it work; we are chafing at the bit because it does not seem to work at the moment, because the Rules need complete, overall revision before it will work. When I hear people saying that more power should be given to the Parliament, I agree — I am all for that. But going by my experience since last July, I would say to this House: learn to use what little power you already have before you start looking for more! We are in chaos, we are in a mess! You can observe that here at any time, in any discussion, irrespective of whether anybody is obstructing or causing trouble. We are not functioning as any rational, sane group of elected people, many of whom have the most outstanding ability in their own countries. We are not operating that way, and I say to you here: do not support the liquidation of the opportunity to allow ten unattached Members to form a group, with the full facilities of a group, and to give equal rights to those who do not even belong to that group, but who are still unattached, and will remain that way by their own choice. This is why we are elected, how we were elected, and this Parliament will shed no lustre on the Institutions of the EEC — I am just finishing, Sir, — unless...

President. — Mr Blaney, to enable the four other speakers from your group to state their views, would you please wind up your remarks, as they will only have a total of 20 minutes?

Mr Blaney. — Sir, I have been saying to you that I was winding up, perhaps you did not understand me any more than I understood you; this is one of our problems here, but thank you for reminding me, Mr President.

I just want to say: do not try to wipe out this group; try in fact to bring about a situation within your grouping — which I do not like but am prepared to work with. I have been in political business for 31 years, in parliament, in local government; I did not come here to waste my time or your time, and I have no intention of doing so in the future. So give us the opportunity. We have been totally preoccupied with the pressure you are applying, the thinking behind which appears to be that, of all the things that need to be done, the most important is to prevent the Technical Group from continuing to exist in the future: do that, and everything will be lovely. It will not; it will be worse than it is now.

President. — I call Mr Bonde.

Mr Bonde. — (DK) The week beginning today could become an historic one. If the attempt to impose the German electoral hurdle of 5 % on the European Parliament succeeds and if the past manages to overshadow the future, the majority's oppression of the democratic rights of minorities will have succeeded. I am thinking not only of the proposal to eliminate the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members. Go ahead and vote for the elimination of our group if you wish to ensure us a cheap martyrdom. The proposal speaks for itself in that the figure chosen as the minimum requirement for forming a group has precisely the effect of eliminating our group, while all other groups are allowed to stay in existence. I understand however, that a compromise is in the offing whereby our group would not be dissolved, and this I can but welcome.

The People's Movement against Membership of the EEC does not wish to prevent a majority in this Assembly from getting its way in this matter. Neither do we wish to delay a decision by tabling thousands of amendments and requesting roll-call votes so that historians can read afterwards in the minutes of proceedings who voted for the electoral hurdle and who took the view that democracy must be judged by its treatment of minorities.

The People's Movement Against Membership of the EEC recognizes that we are in a minority in this Assembly, yet we are the largest group among the Danish members. The 5 % hurdle would weaken the position not only of the People's Movement Against Membership of the EEC but of the entire population of Denmark and Greenland. Denmark and Greenland send 16 members to this 410-strong Assembly and, if the 5 % hurdle is adopted, these 16 Members will not have the right to put forward proposals in this House. This does not affect those of us who feel that policy should be decided in the Danish Parliament but it does affect those Danish Members who travelled from one election meeting to another inducing the Danish people to believe that direct elections to the European Parliament were a democratic step forward. The set-up is now to become so democratic that, even though all 16 Members from Denmark and Greenland were agreed on a proposal, they could not be certain that it would be considered.

If we believed that a democratic struggle would be of any use in this House, we would fight tooth and nail against the attacks on minorities. We do not, however, share such illusions. We are, as you are aware, against the whole idea of a supranational Parliament and we will therefore confine ourselves to voting against undemocratic electoral hurdles and to telling the Danish electorate that the German percentage hurdle is now to be introduced into the European Parliament as well. This will hardly make Parliament more popular

with Danish voters but, between ourselves, we do not mind so much about that.

This is, however, the explanation as to why those of us from the People's Movement Against Membership of the EEC have not joined in the major onslaught mounted by our colleagues in the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members over this issue. They believe in their cause, but we do not.

We will, however, vote for, and ask all other Members also to vote for, one specific proposal. This is amendment No 5 tabled by Mr Scott-Hopkins with the support of most groups. I now understand that this amendment has been withdrawn but would urge that it be maintained. Its purpose is to ensure reasonable working conditions in Parliament for the non attached Members. It does not grant complete equality of treatment with the political groups — for example, the representatives of the non-attached Members will not have voting rights in the enlarged Bureau — but it was the proposal which at least had a prospect of gaining the support of a majority in this House. After the many assurances we have received from the group chairmen, it should be certain of virtually unanimous support. The representatives of the People's Movement will vote for this amendment if we have an opportunity to do so.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr de Goede. — (NL) Mr President, may I first ask a question on a point of order? The sitting is to go on until 1 o'clock. I have just seen Mr Nord the rapporteur running off. I have questions for him and this morning I also asked Mrs Veil whether the further discussion in her Bureau on the same problem could not be postponed to a moment that did not coincide with the plenary debate. Now the Chamber is gradually emptying and there are still a number of questions to be asked, in particular by the non-attached Members. My question to you is whether you do not think it would be reasonable to adjourn now and give the last speakers a chance to speak later, in the presence of the rapporteur and the Chairman of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

I think we have the same right to be heard as the speakers that have already spoken.

President. — Mr de Goede, everything you say will be recorded in the report of proceedings and so brought to the attention of all the Members of the Assembly interested in the matter. I cannot suspend the sitting. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions is about to meet and, obviously, some of our colleagues will have to leave the Chamber. We must continue our business until two o'clock, so as to enable all the speakers, and yourself first and foremost, to have the floor. I shall then suspend the sitting.

Mr Calvez. — (*F*) I would like to tell Mr De Goede that Mr Nord asked me to listen to any speeches made during his absence, the reason for which is that he is at the meeting of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (*NL*) Mr President, as a good democrat I submit to your ruling and I will now give the substance of my comments.

I shall begin by underlining what Mr Nord said as rapporteur, namely that this report does not represent a final phase but is the first step towards a general revision of the Rules of Procedure. And, he added, this was clear before the elections and shortly afterwards. I wish that this last statement had, in fact, been correct. The Luster report was on the agenda just before the elections, the intention being for the old, outgoing Parliament to take a decision at the eleventh hour on a number of essential matters concerning the Rules of Procedure for the new Parliament that yet had to be elected. A monumental blunder. When the results of the elections were out, it became clear that there would not be three non-attached Members of Parliament as before, but 24; and the provisions of the Rules of Procedure laid down, among other things, that the 24 would have to share the same speaking time amongst them as the 3, previously, in the old Parliament. No one can contradict me on that point, and I need only that one example to show how clear it was — and how easily it can be established — that our new start in July could not be on the basis of the old Rules of Procedure.

All right, that phase is over. Yesterday I referred to the motion for a resolution tabled by Messrs Glinne, Klepsch and Scott-Hopkins. In that motion they rightly pointed out that, at this time, we would have to forego certain parliamentary rights. And I cannot understand how, when deciding on speaking time, the enlarged Bureau did not come up with a spontaneous gesture and offer us more speaking time. In every debate — Mr Pannella in the debate on hunger, I myself last week in the budget debate and others in other debates — we have, every time, had to ask for our minimum rights to be respected and to be allowed to speak, however briefly, namely three minutes for every subject where there is a limit on speaking time.

I address my remarks in particular to Mr Galland, who commented that various groups had expressed their readiness to help us out, but we ought also to be aware of the shortcomings that have been apparent up to now.

I shall now come to the point. The Nord report is, as I have said, obviously not the end of the road, because

we are handicapped not only in the allocation of speaking time but also in the distribution of information, not only in group assistance but also in group accommodation. Like naughty children we are always in the back row of the class. For us the order of the list of speakers in an unflinching disappointment because we are always last. This is the umpteenth example. At question time we are never called. We have no representation in the Bureau and now Mr Nord is even proposing that, if representation is granted to us, we should have no vote. Not a single argument is put forward in support of this and I insist that the rapporteur should produce his arguments or else agree that we should be represented in the Bureau with voting rights.

For the moment this whole debate is focused on three main points. The first is the minimum number to form a group. It is clear — though some time will be necessary to reach a consensus — that there can no longer be any question of raising it to 21. That would mean the death of an institutionalized group to which Mrs Bonino and others belong. It is also unreasonable because it would double the size of the group of non-attached Members and this, precisely, would validate the arguments used by various speakers advocating that this should not be done. For the sake of the forming of European groups in this Parliament the latter also needs the stimulus small parties can provide, and for this reason the threshold of 21 is too high.

The second point is the minimum number necessary for initiating certain procedures, such as changes to the agenda. Here we need the kind of limit that will allow minorities to operate and will not prevent us, for example, from tabling a proposal with regard to the agenda, the position of an item on the agenda, the submission of a motion for a resolution and a request for urgent debate.

The third point is the position of the non-attached Members in terms of Mr Nord's proposal in Rule 36A. We agree with the line of thinking but I feel that there are some things wrong with the wording. The word 'group' is used and it is clear that the Italians in the Almirante Group, the anti-Common Marketeers from Denmark, the democrats from the Netherlands and Mr Gendebien and Mrs Spaak do not form a homogeneous group. So you cannot use that word to describe them. For this reason the component parts of the group have to have their own functional independence. For this reason I would urge the House and also the rapporteur to have a look at my amendment to Rule 36 on which the allocation of speaking time is based.

De Goede

I close, Mr President, with a personal word addressed to Mr Bangemann and Mr Galland, who spoke to me this morning. He rightly pointed out that yesterday I reacted emotionally to Mr Bangemann's speech. Mr Galland is right when he says that Mr Bangemann had taken the initiative on behalf of the other group leaders in asking to discuss things with us. Each time, in those two talks, I expressed my appreciation for this but, on Wednesday last week, Mr Bangemann went wrong completely. Without any discussion with us, he held a press conference and made it impossible for us to deal with genuinely concrete matters at that meeting. Not until the Nord report was tabled were we in a position to prepare and hand in amendments. I sent my amendments personally to Mr Bangemann, Mr Nyborg of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and Mr Nord, the rapporteur, and I asked them to discuss matters. Unfortunately, up till yesterday this had not happened, my request was turned down.

Second example. Yesterday we proposed to hold a meeting in the evening to see whether we could reach a solution. We made it clear that we were ready to do so, but Mr Bangemann vetoed our proposal that the vote should not be taken until Wednesday or Thursday; no, it had to be midday today. He wanted nothing to do with it.

Mr President, the third example — yesterday's violation of the Rules of Procedure — was at the proposal of Mr Bangemann and finally he also said that we would have to make our explanatory statements about our amendments in this very limited speaking time, if the Rules of Procedure give us the right to present our amendments separately, because otherwise they cannot be dealt with.

To Mr Bangemann and all our colleagues here I would like to say this. The Rules of Procedure are important, I agree. We are now in the process of deciding how they should be worded and also how they should be applied. But more important than that is the spirit with which we operate in this European Parliament, this political heart of Europe. It must be a spirit in which might does not invariably prevail and respect for the law comes first.

President. — I call Mr Romualdi.

Mr Romualdi. — (*I*) Mr President, I must support Mr De Goede's protest because we are not here just for a decision but to take decisions and somehow get ourselves out of a situation which, despite the optimism of some speakers, is pretty disastrous.

I should like to thank the rapporteur for the work which he and so many others like Bangemann, Scott-Hopkins, Glinne and Galland have done, in particular to try to resolve the vexed question of the non-attached, which was the blot on the escutcheon of the previous Parliament and, though not so obviously,

may still disgrace the present one. During this morning, a number of members have said that we now have absolutely equal rights but this is far from being true, for a multitude of reasons.

Like Mr Luster, I shall quote Goethe and Schiller who said that one should strive to be a whole but that, if one could not, on one's own, one should form part of one. However, I should like this attempt to be really unanimous and would like to say that we are, by and large, in agreement with the provisions of Rule 36A and on the fact that the non-attached must be given special consideration, at least technically, to enable them to perform the duties of their office on an equal footing with everyone else. I also agreed with Mr De Goede when he asked why the group did not have a spokesman with an equal voice with the others in the enlarged Bureau. Why can't it express its opinion and voice its needs in the place where the pattern of our parliamentary life is determined? During the lengthy debate we shall be having on the amendments, we shall endeavour to remove this anomaly and convince the rest of you that every single one of us must have someone representing him in the Bureau and thus enable it to work better and more in keeping with the day-to-day requirements of the House. Like Mr de la Malène, I wonder what the objection is and why a group should be prevented from being formed if it is composed of ten Members from more than one Member State. I am convinced that this would absorb some of the extremism, produce a better balance and enable the unattached — I mean those who genuinely do not want to join forces with anyone else — to have greater freedom of action.

All these are constructive suggestions and I believe we have shown our willingness to resolve the problems involved, despite our disappointment that we are not being asked to take part in the meeting where the decisions are made. People keep on saying that of course we have the same rights and that, under Rule 37, we can serve on the committees, but no one has said that we only got the left-overs, in other words, the committee seats that no one else wanted. This is not a happy state of affairs and, as we shall see later when we debate the amendments, it must be given fresh consideration, together with the question of speaking time.

Mr Bangemann, to whom I once more extend my thanks for his sympathetic attitude, has said on several occasions: 'Our speaking rights are less than yours because, when one speaks on behalf of a group, one has to take account of the wishes of all its members.' It is precisely because our group is composed of people holding different views that we need our time, especially as we are less tied down by party instructions. I should like Mr Adonnino to bear that in mind because he forgets that, under the Italian Constitution, Members of Parliament are chosen by the parties in a prescribed manner but, as the Constitution provides,

Romualdi

when they are not bound by the party whip, they obey their own consciences and are answerable only to themselves and their own consciences for the way in which they fulfil their duties as Members. That position should be safeguarded.

Against this background, I appeal to Parliament to show wisdom and political commonsense. If you show a little flexibility, you will make it easier for the majority to do their work and you will be protecting their rights. In any case, I hope you won't be shocked when I remind you that the underlying purpose of the Rules of Procedure is to protect minorities, since majorities do not need protection. The rights of the minority cannot and ought not to prevent Parliament from getting on with its work or interfere with the right of the majority to pursue its political objectives; at the same time, it should be a priority to provide adequate protection for those minority rights.

President. — I call Mr Capanna.

Mr Capanna. — (I) Mr President, I will speak for five minutes at most, so as not to take up the time of other members of the group. I have studied the proposals in the Nord Report with the greatest interest. I have also done a little research and — you can check the accuracy of this, Mr President — I have discovered that provisions so restrictive of freedom and democracy did not even exist at the time of the Ancient Roman Senate.

This leads me to the conclusions that the things in the Nord Report are about two thousand years out of date — and I am not joking. For this reason and because none of my speeches have touched the hearts or the minds of Mrs Weil, Mr Klepsch, Mr Bange-mann or Mr Nord and, again, because the Rules of Procedure neither permit nor preclude it, I should like to summarize what I have to say in the language which, about two thousands years ago, was used to disseminate the law in Western Europe. I shall speak in Latin and give the interpreters a four-minute break from their labours.

Amplissimi collegae, quid re vera significant regulae constitutionisque emendationes, quas Nord, vir ex amplissimis, proposuit? Huius relationis causae minimum quinque sunt.

Primum: exceptione statim facta ante diem quartum Idas lunias, cum ita numerus minimus constitutus est, ut factiones quae quaternas suffragiorum centesimas superassent — quod in Gallia Germaniaeque factum esse vidimus — nullum legatum electum habere potuerint, nunc altera exceptio, ad eos qui priorem effugerunt amovendos, proponitur: numerus enim minimus legatorum, qui ad factionem constituendam postulatur, id est unus et viginti, idem valet atque quinae centesimae pro universis decem et quadringentis legatis...

President. — Mr Capanna, while I personally am very fond of Latin, which, I agree, is a model universal language, and while I have greatly enjoyed listening to the last few sentences, the Rules of Procedure do not permit you to speak in a language other than one of the official languages of this Assembly. I must ask you now to continue in your national language so that your remarks can be translated.

Mr Capanna. — (I) Mr President, I am touched by the appreciation you have shown of Latin. I beg you, however, not to count this as speaking time because we are dealing with a procedural objection and, as you know, Rule 15 requires the use of one of the official languages only for the publication of documents. There is no provision either way in the case of speeches. However, to meet your wishes I shall conclude in my own tongue, which itself derives from Latin.

Alterum: numerus minimus ad unum et viginti augetur, at non, exempli gratia, ad quinque et viginti ut simul et factio cuius socius sum evertatur, et legatorum Gollistarum factio maneat, qui viginti duo tantum sunt.

Tertium: legatorum autem conventus, nulli i parti adstrictus, quen nuper arte, ne dicam fraude, viri medium quidam tenentes creari iusserunt, nullam decernendi habet potestatem, quippe qui ne conciliis quidem Praefecturae, quibus auctis Publicum Consilium utitur, interesse suffragium ferens possit.

Quartum: nemo profecto est qui non videat nos ita una cum fascistis legatis adesse cogi et commune cum iisdem minimum illud tempus dicendi habere.

Quintum: ex quo consequitur — quod omnibus gravissima videbitur iniuria — ut velut duo legatorum genera constituentur, optimum alterum, alterum deterius, quibus non aequae facultas patet sententiam proponendi.

Satis superque — quod mihi saltem videtur — est, ut horreat quicumque liber nec coactus ius exercent, horreat praecipue quicumque civium intellegat, quid re vera non modo in Europaeorum Publico Consilio, quod nuper omnium suffragio creatum est, sed etiam ex eodem — ut ita dicam — occulte subrepere incipiat. Id maximum: non est quidem Europaeorum Publicum Consilium inutile quidam, quod publicis rebus administrandis addatur, quo, quasi in vas quoddam, bona malaque quoddam, bona malaque confluant eorum, qui novem res publicas regunt. Quin etiam longe aliud, est, multoque maius. Publicum enim Europaeorum Consilium ubi, post Iunii mensis suffragia, haud dubie qui quiddam medium tenent plurimum valent, nihil aliud est — mea sententia — nisi magna quaedam negotiis explendis societas, quam de industria quidam instituerunt, ut si plane componere nequirent, quodam modo saltem conciliarent necessitates contrarias saepe oppositasque eorum qui,

Capanna

in novem illis congregatis civitatibus vel divitiis, vel fabricis, vel mercaturis, imperium exercent.

Ne quem fallat quod de inanibus rebus ii qui in Consilio sunt leviter ac vane loquuntur; nam de gravibus rebus omnia, velut musicae artis magister quidam, regit et componit Germaniae ad Occidentem versae legatus, qui, Gallicis vestibus indutus, Italicis calceamentis — Popolari, quae dicitur, Christianaque parte iuvante — utitur, nec Britannorum tunicas sumere spernit.

Quibus ex rebus nonnulla adhuc obscura in lucem veniunt. Ita enim plane intelligitur, curnam huic Consilio mulier praesit, quae, nisi quattuor isti Italorum fascistae legati suffragium tulissent, ad hanc dignitatem non pervenisset; curnam Collegium rerum naturae viribus perspiciendis adhibendisque creatum statuerit (quae omnia ego, huius Collegii particeps, ipsis vidi oculis) ut magis magisque congregatarum civitatum carbo effoderetur, itaque praecipue Germanis, Britannis, Gallis faveretur, minime autem Italis, quibus hic carbo multo pluris stat quam ut émere possint; curnam Collegium immutato vultu consilium accipiat centum quinquaginta fluxus ex atomis profecti diribitoria in posteros decem annos exstruendi; curnam, praeter verba, ne digitum quidem pòrrigat novas opes, quae etiam atque etiam renovari possint, modo et ratione promovendi causa.

Longius quidem est omnia enumerare. Tamen quod diximus satis superque est, ut demonstretur vera causa, cur factionem nostram petant qui eam delendam esse censeant; nam hoc Publicum Consilium, quippe quod Europenses divitias ad paucos, redactas administrare atque tueri suscepit, graviter profecto fert decem fere legatos esse, qui statutum atque deliberatum habeant una acerrime propugnare ad eos quoque defendendos, qui, vèti sunt Publico Europaeorum Consilio interesse, atque ad utilitatem tuendam Europensium opificum iuvenumque.

Nam, cum hoc Publicum Consilium commodis utilitatis studeat eorum qui divitias sibi congesserunt facere non potest quin ipsum, in primis apud se, civium libertatem coërceat.

His de causis pro populari ratione, quae in hoc Consilio coërcetur atque conculcatur, omnibus viribus conténdimus.

Thank you, Mr President. As you see, I have finished in Italian.

(Applause)

President. — I never knew Latin was so much like Italian. And I am sorry it has not been possible to translate it.

I call Mr Coppieters.

Mr Coppieters.— (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the issue in this debate, contrary to the

impression given by some speeches, has nothing to do with the survival of the group I belong to. It goes far deeper than that. It is, however, remarkable that the changes that at least some of our Members are so keen to push through are not urgent in the slightest. And this is why all these proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure have one thing in common: they show little respect for the diversity of this Parliament. It has always struck me how in their election campaigns all the parties apparently set so much store by the differences in Europe or — to put it in Latin — in *diversitate unitas*. What purpose should the revision of the Rules of Procedure serve? A revision must have the sole object of increasing the opportunities of each individual Member to include specific points on the agenda. It must put minority groups without any exception, in a position to make their voice heard.

Let me draw your attention to the minority groups, because tomorrow their number could be higher than it is today. This attack on the minority groups — for it is nothing less than that — would make it impossible for the ideological, political and soon possibly national minorities to make their voice heard or to take the initiative.

No satisfactory answer has yet been forthcoming on the question of why the existence of our group should have to come to an end. Since it was set up in July — unfortunately Members who expressed themselves in disparaging terms about us are no longer present — our group has been very active both in committee and in the plenary assembly, as the reports on proceedings and the minutes clearly show. We have been constructively involved in the initial stages of this Parliament; we do not merit contempt.

But first the Nord report had to be dealt with and all sorts of important European issues had to take second place. Or is it not perhaps true that we ought to have been occupying ourselves with alternative sources of energy, living conditions in the under-developed areas, the economic situation and unemployment and that we are not doing so because a certain majority is always intent on forcing new changes to the Rules of Procedure on us? This had to be said now; that is the real obstructionism in this Assembly.

I would like to remind Mr Klepsch and Mr Bange-mann, and all the German Members, of the rules that apply in their own country. I am surprised, for example, that they are tabling in this House proposals for changes to the Rules of Procedure when things are better arranged in their own country. If I am correctly informed, the German *Bundestag* numbers 500 members, in other words more than our Assembly, but the number required to form a group is only 10. It therefore surprises me that Mr Klepsch and Mr Bange-mann and their friends want to introduce rules in this House that they have not adopted in the German *Bundestag*.

Coppieters

What is more, after the last elections and the results that the ecologists achieved, the Bremen *Landestag* changed its rules of procedure to allow the *Grünen* to form a group. There is no reason at all, my German colleagues, to propose different rules for this European parliament from those that apply in your own country. And we know that the Italian parliament goes even further because there it is possible to set up a group with four members.

So what we are dealing with is not an innocent change to the Rules of Procedure with the object of making this Parliament function more efficiently. It is a question of introducing the 5 % minimum that is used in some countries to silence the voice of millions of electors. If it were a question of the functioning of this Parliament, would agreement among ten Members be of less worth than agreement among 21? And who can be sure that ten Members would not align themselves differently in certain questions?

Here I am referring to the minimum that is required to take initiatives, to table amendments and to change agendas. Surely no one will try to tell me that agreement cannot be reached among ten Members who may not belong to the same group at all but who may happen to be in agreement on certain urgent and important matters?

Which is why I think that we are now being presented with a shabby performance. The blame for it must not be laid at our door. It arises purely because the majority I just referred to refuses to have the patience to put in two or three months' work on this revision and to arrive at a completely revised document on which this new Parliament can base its proceedings. Sad to relate, the only thing it has so far done in every part-session is to table partial changes that all have the same object: to shut the mouths of the minorities, whatever their composition.

President. — I call Mrs Ewing.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, fellow Members of Parliament, I rise to support, of course, the right of the Technical Group to form itself and to continue to exist.

I would like first of all to say that it is my view that to change the Rules against independent Members must in essence be a wrong thing for this Parliament to do. If it insists on doing it, it will be judged by those outside, by the electors of Europe, as having created an injustice, for that is how it will assuredly seem. Not only will the independent Members feel themselves — rightly, in my opinion — to be victims of an injustice, but the electors of Europe will see that a majority in this House have perpetrated the injustice.

I would like to ask, what is logical about the change from 10 to 21? There seems to be some inherent idea that because the total number of MPs has gone up, this requirement for forming a group must also go up.

Now there is no logic in this. It is almost a translation of the view that there is something wonderful about size. There are people who do think in that way, and if you put that into terms of parties or nations it is very often the big ones that don't behave too well internationally. But there are also those who think in different ways, who think that there isn't anything inherently important about size, and we know of the theory that 'small is beautiful'. I would really caution anyone who argues that this change is logical.

I would also like to support one of the speakers who just made the point about the *Bundestag*. I would suggest the change is not consistent, that the people who are voting for it are not being consistent. We have the example of the *Bundestag*. Can I quote from my own experience, which is rather a special one, in the House of Commons, where I was a party of one, if you call one a party: I was alone among 635, and when I was here for four years I was one of three independents. Now, in the House of Commons, any number of two or more may be recognized as constituting a group. Two people can cause a division in the House of Commons and force everyone therefore, to stand up and be counted on whatever issue. I myself regularly force divisions on the question of nuclear weapons and force the big parties, who are sometimes reluctant to show how they would vote, to cast their vote one way or the other; and the House of Commons did not come to an end because the right existed for two people to do so. As to what we are doing here, apart from crushing something that already exists — which must, as Mr de la Malène said, be wrong in principle — we are going to be seen as attacking the small groups — and, as someone has said, there may be other groupings coming to this House, with enlargement on our immediate horizon. I would like to suggest that if this change is made, those who make it had better be aware of the consequences. Apart from the appearance of injustice, you are going to make those people who are the victims of this injustice look at the Rules to see how they can stake their claim, because they are elected and they will be perfectly entitled to use the Rules as obstructively as they want: indeed, I suggest the electors of Europe will applaud them for doing so.

I think that some of the speeches which have been made by the Members of the big groups have been dictatorial, hectoring and bullying in their tone, which is to be deplored. And I would suggest to you, as someone who has had rather an unusual experience of being a minority in more than one parliament, that the acid test of any parliamentary forum, wherever it exists, is the way it treats independent Members. That will be how we will be judged: by what we do. I would appeal to any members of the bigger groups who have not made up their minds to think over carefully what we are going to do if we alter the Rule and change the requirement from 10 to 21.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (*F*) Mr President, this is debating time but, for 85 % of the Members, it is primarily lunchtime. So the honourable Member's plea has little chance of being heard. Perhaps he ought to appeal to Members' bellies or stomachs rather than their intelligence or feelings.

In any case, I think that in this emptiness or semi-emptiness in which we are partaking of the ritual of our discussions, we are the winners — we and a few speakers in the other groups. We are the winners, Mr President, against the unchristian, illiberal, undemocratic and unparliamentary arrogance of people like Mr Klepsch and Mr Bangemann who are trying to turn this into a bureaucratically run Parliament. It is no more a question, Mr President, of the rights of the minorities. The presidential advisers ought to explain this to Madam President, without mincing their words, even if they have diplomatic rather than parliamentary traditions, it would seem.

It is not a question of minorities, Mrs Ewing. Unfortunately it is simply a matter of law — the law of all Members of Parliament. Mr de la Malène said so yesterday and I said so last night. We are here to defend the rights of each and every one of us, to see that there is a law, the worst there is but at least a law. What more do you want, Mr Pflimlin? You will remember 1958, as you were a tragic witness to those events: as President of the Council in France, you tried somehow to reconcile the constitution of the Fourth Republic with the demands of others. You kept on trying right up to the last moment, I remember. I do not know whether you succeeded, but the problem of law, Mr Pflimlin, is the problem we are raising here. What is the point of discussing a reform if the arrogant majority in this Parliament is ready to violate its own legality? What does it matter whether Luster or Nord are heard, Mr President, if this law is then violated, as it was yesterday and as it was seven times in a single day in the last part-session. It has been misinterpreted and abused.

The only reproach that can be levelled at us is, so to speak, our Rabelaisian appetite for the Rules of Procedure. It is a question of style, or hunger or thirst. No one can deny that we act in the strictest — perhaps too strict — compliance with the law that you — the majority — have imposed on us. However, every time you have other interests, those of the bureaucratic groups, to defend, this law counts for nothing. So I tell Mr Luster and the others with their poetic discourse on the contradictions between freedom and justice and efficiency and order, that we are here to remind everyone that there is no freedom without law. The principle of law, whatever law it is, is better than the law of the jungle, the law of the strongest against the weakest — or at least those thought to be weakest, which is the law of the Bangemann-style Liberals, and their inspiration, in this Parliament, is not German democracy but other German tradi-

tions. And it is no coincidence that the head of the so-called Liberal Group is someone who was not a Liberal a year ago even though he may perhaps have been a member of the Liberal party. Others, Members like Thorn or Faure, are no longer here or are silent. The Italian Liberals, incidentally, are evidently in total disagreement with certain procedures.

And so, Mr President, our paramount political requirement is respect for the law. With your permission, Mr Pflimlin, democrats and christians, this is where we will talk about it. And people like Bersani and the others say nothing because these Rules of Procedure, and Rule 28 in particular, compel the Socialists and Christian Democrats who are here to say nothing before their bureaucratic sovereign. Bureaucrats with no parliamentary or democratic sensitivity, they are graciously handing out the speaking time which Rule 28 takes away from their Members to the opposition as a free gift.

We have already won, Mr President, because it is clear that the clash here is political and that this small minority of the non-attached and the group of independents is the only hope for the rule of law in this Parliament. It only needs just one of us to remain as he or she was, when we were talking about democracy, to safeguard all the hope there is for our democracy and our Parliament. We have no intention of changing, Mr President, and I must tell you personally that, as a non-attached Member, I can reply more pointedly to the Bangemann and Klepsch crowd. I can have the discipline of a group. I would be happy to do without it except for my concern for organization in our work — democratic organization in our work, Mr President. So we have won. Where are they, the 207 Members ready to vote in response to the Galland liberalism? 207 votes to liquidate this group! They do not exist, or if they did they would have to take home with them the disgrace of a sham vote, a vote with no respect even for the style of democracy. Even those from whom the House sometimes learns something because of their history if not their conscience — the British Conservatives — are practically never here during debates. They are elsewhere. I think it should be noted, Mr President, that it is precisely these groups of tramps, these groups with no historic past who remind us, in the tradition of the British parliament, that a law can never have retroactive effect.

At the European elections we told our electors: we have studied the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament and we can be your representatives in a certain way. This is why we are standing. You want a retroactive law. We are a group, they are a group, but the law's retroactive effect — what a fine legal and parliamentary principle — would dissolve them so that we would have to go back to our electors and tell them: we made a mistake, we thought that the law was like this but they changed it. They have gagged us and we are their accomplices because, if we were to protest, that would be bad manners.

Pannella

Mr President, Mr Luster may have criticized me because he felt that my attitude to the important office of President and to the image that a President should project in a Parliament, was ill-mannered and uncouth. I do not accept the criticism, Mr President. I do not accept it because here, last night, someone told us there was a conflict between the notion of public order and the law. This is like those judges under the fascist regime who ruled against written law in the name of order and the necessities of order — and of established disorder. When they tell us that we can find weapons with which to defend ourselves in the Rules of Procedure, do these people realize that, in a law case, the accused cannot be charged if he finds ways and means of defending himself within the legal procedures? It is a tribute to legal procedure and justice. Here it would seem that we are presided over by such judges — at least in their inspiration or origin. But what is this court, what notions of law does it obey? In that case we have won, in principle at least, because those that leave this House having perhaps dissolved our group — but they no longer believe in it — will certainly leave without pride; they are likely to go away defeated as far as their intentions are concerned.

The result that furtive efforts are now being made to achieve is to deny us the right to table amendments to the agenda, to table requests for urgent debate and to request vote by roll call on a major topic. Mr President, the rights of the minority are not just to watch these policies being approved but also to be able to make proposals and be defeated. Here the intention is to take away from us even the right to be defeated. During these five years we will never have the strength to have a motion for a resolution — which would be thrown out — whether it be on ecology, nuclear power or defence. Knowing that your electors agree with us on these issues, you deliberately prevent any clear discussion of them here. To close, Mr President, I would reply to my friend Mr D'Angelosante that I do not need to refer to the maximalists, as he said. It was Jean Jaurès, not Jules Guesde, who told the Millerand and Viviani group that there was nothing worse than certain disillusioned helots who continued to talk extravagantly about their ideals and their past in an attempt to disguise their treachery or ineptitude. So, I repeat, it is Jaurès we are interested in, not the maximalists. We have defended our rights. If anyone has overturned the agendas here it has never been one of the non-attached or a member of the group of independents but rather Messrs Scott-Hopkins, Bangemann and Klepsch who, disregarding the agendas they had proposed in the enlarged Bureau, have regularly flooded us with requests for urgent debate on Malta or whatever, with the result that our agendas have continually been disrupted. We discussed butter for six hours. After we had spoken for two hours about people who are dying because they have no wheat, we were told that we were forcing a debate on Parliament which was none of its business.

Mr President, I have nothing to add because I feel that, not you but this Presidency, this Assembly as a whole,

perhaps understand Latin better than the democratic language of today. I have shown my optimism by speaking in French and I feel I owe this to the hope I nurture that, thanks to our struggle, the ideals of many of us — Socialists, Communists, Liberals and Christian Democrats — may be voiced here instead of smothered, and that we shall all regain the right to speak to express our ideals, instead of sitting in a swamp-like Assembly where the only sound to be heard is the croaking of frog.

I hope, Mr President, that we shall extricate ourselves from this swamp and return to the contest between the different views we represent. This is the Policy that, in all humility, we propose in presenting our proposals on the Rules of Procedure.

Thank you, Mr President, for your tolerance in an atmosphere which is not accustomed to seeing qualities of tolerance or law on the part of the President.

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — Mr President, power in a democracy stems from the people. I was sent here as an independent Member. In Northern Ireland, there were three seats allocated to the whole community and I stood, making it perfectly clear that if I came to this House I would remain as an independent, not because I needed to remain as an independent. Certain parties in this House approached me and asked if I would not consider joining their particular group — but because the people that sent me here were pledged by me and pledged themselves to me that I would remain unfettered and I would join no group in this Parliament. Have these people, as electors to this Parliament, no right to say to their Member how he should engage in his parliamentary activities in this House? Or in order that their Member should have necessary information, should get onto certain committees, should be given an office where he can make telephone calls home, is it the requirement that he must forget about his election pledges, forget about those that elected him and submerge himself into a particular group?

I happen to be a member of the British House of Commons. There are 635 members of that House, and yet any two members are recognized as a party; and in the debates on the floor of that House, the leader of that group, even if it be a group of two, will be called on the subject. I am very glad that in this debate one of my erstwhile colleagues in the British House of Commons, Mrs Ewing, spoke. She made clear to this House what happened in the British House of Commons, that any two members can divide the House. That House is far larger than this House and that rule has been in operation for many years, and yet the British House of Commons carries on its business far more ably and quickly than I have ever seen business carried on in this particular House. It is, of course, utter nonsense to say that if Members had the right to divide the House, to call for a recorded vote or to put down amendments, then in some way they would be obstructing the parlia-

Paisley

mentary process, because in the British House of Commons these rights are safeguarded. I do not know what the British Conservatives or the British Socialists in this House are going to do in this particular debate, but if they were in keeping with their own traditions they would say that certainly small groups should be recognized for what they are if they want to form themselves into groups.

I cannot see, Mr President, why ten Members of this House from some three countries, or fourteen Members from two countries, cannot be permitted to form themselves into a group in order the more ably to represent the people that sent them to this House. I also do not see why those who want to remain unattached cannot also have the facilities of this House. Why should any Member of this House be denied an office in this building, be denied the right to a private telephone, be denied the right to go about his business in order to represent the people who sent him here?

In regard to the committees of this House, Northern Ireland is the only area in this Common Market — and it is a large agricultural area — that has not one Member on the Committee on Agriculture. Why? Because the big battalions settled who would be on that particular committee, and as a result Northern Ireland's voice is not heard on that committee. I have heard in this House that each Member is to have an alternate committee, yet no mention is made to us, as independents, about that particular matter. In regard to the deputations to various countries, these were handed out at the end of the day; the dregs, as it were, of what was left was handed out to the Members who were non-attached.

And then why should not every Member of Parliament get the same information as anyone else? Why is it that we have to go around and try to ascertain what is happening?

And then we have in this House those who desire from time to time to call adjournments, and while we are in our places this House does not meet on time because some of the big battalions have said to the President; let us have a few more minutes over lunch or over a drink! I think that is absolutely scandalous. I, of course, stand here as an anti-Common Marketeer; the people that sent me here do not agree with this market, and I certainly, as a British representative, do not agree that we should pour a thousand million pounds down the drain to belong to this Common Market; but I do say that as long as I am here, if my rights are denied then this Parliament will know that there is a man from Ulster who will fight to the death for the rights that were given him — not by this Parliament, Sir, but by the people who voted for me. The overwhelming majority of the people voted for me: I had so many votes that my opponents were glad to share them out at the end of the day among themselves.

President. — The motion for a resolution, together with the amendments which have been tabled, will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

The debate is closed.

The proceedings will now be suspended until 3 p.m. The House will rise.

(The sitting was suspended at 2 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

THE CHAIR : MR PFLIMLIN

Vice-President

President. — The sitting is resumed.

6. *Urgent procedure*

President. — I have received from Mr Tyrrell, Sir Peter Vanneck, Mr Purvis, Lady Elles, Mr Battersby, Mr Spencer, Mr Forth, Mr J. D. Taylor, Mr Cottrell, Mrs Rabbethge, Mr Penders, Mr Luster, Mr van Aerssen, Mr Habsburg and Mr Fergusson a motion for a resolution with request for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on the infringement of human rights in Poland on the eve of Independence Day Anniversary (Doc. 1-501/79).

The reasons supporting this request for urgent debate are contained in the document itself.

There will be a vote on this request at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

7. *Action taken by the Commission on the opinions and proposals of Parliament*
(continued)

President. — I call the Commission to reply to the questions put to it yesterday, on the communication on action taken on the opinions and proposals of Parliament.

Mr Tugendhat, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, I rise to reply to questions which certain honourable Members raised yesterday concerning the Commission's statement on the action taken on the opinions of the Parliament, though looking round the Chamber I am not at all sure that the gentleman who actually raised the problem yesterday is here today. I was, however, in the Chamber yesterday until 7 o'clock, when the Committee on Budgets began its discussion on budget matters. Business in this House, as you know, is sometimes difficult to predict, but I expected that the matter of 'Action taken' would have been dealt with by then. I indicated this to the President, and I gather that she indicated to the House that I was at the Committee on Budgets meeting and if the House insisted on my coming down, I was available to do so, but that she felt that it was not necessary.

As to the substance of the questions raised by Mr Moreland on the amendments to the draft regulation on the Committee quota for the carriage of goods by road, I must repeat what was said in the debate. It is the Commission's view that it would not be appropriate at this time to go further than we have done in our proposal. Mr Burke explained the reasons for this attitude in the debate. We always consider the views of this House

Tugendhat

but the situation dictates that we take account of certain imperatives. In any case the Council is aware of Parliament's amendments and can indeed take them up.

To Mr Gendebein's request for information on the action taken on the resolution on aid for Nicaragua, I can tell him that the Commission has granted food and emergency aid and I can in fact give him the details. Indirect emergency aid amounted to 500 tonnes of rice, 100 tonnes of oats, 100 tonnes of skimmed-milk powder and this all amounts to some 350 000 EUA. The direct emergency aid amounts to 5 000 tonnes of unprocessed cereals, 500 tonnes of vitamin enriched skimmed-milk powder, red beans, vegetable fats and food-stuffs for children — a total of some 2.9 million EUA.

The Commission also took a decision on October 16 on a supplementary emergency programme covering 5 000 tonnes of cereals to be purchased on the world market to meet the requirements of the people of Nicaragua with the greatest possible speed. As a result of that decision it has been possible to deliver 1 345 tonnes of wheat and 1 140 tonnes of rice, which is, I gather, equivalent to 5 000 tonnes of cereals, to Nicaragua at the end of this October and during the first half of November. That, Mr President, is the reply which I would have given, but as I say I was upstairs at the Committee on Budgets meeting.

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I can only repeat what I said yesterday: that (a) the Commission was wrong; that (b) he seems to be the only person who holds those particular views on the Community quotas; and (c) perhaps most fundamentally, he made his judgment on the Community quota on political grounds, on what he thought would get through the Council. I repeat that I think it is our job and the Council's job to make the political assessment. What we want from him is an objective assessment, that is all, and we hope that that will happen in the future.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — I call Mr Tugendhat.

Mr Tugendhat. — Mr President, I certainly take note of what my honourable friend has said, and I will convey what he has said, not only to the Commissioner responsible but, since we are, of course, a college, to my colleagues as well.

8. Question Time

President. — The next item is the first part of *Question time* (Doc. 1-476/79).

Today we shall take the questions to the Commission ...

I call Question No 1, by Ms Clwyd (H-85/79):

What does the Commission estimate would be the amount of money saved per year if all meetings of all Community institutions were held in Brussels and all staff of all Community institutions were based in that same city?

Mr Tugendhat, Member of the Commission. — The Commission is not in a position to say what the savings might be for other Institutions. As far as the Commission itself is concerned however, the holding of all meetings in Brussels would produce an estimated saving on missions to Luxembourg and Strasbourg of the order of 2m EUA a year. The possible savings resulting from the location of all the Commission services in Brussels are difficult to calculate with any precision, and it is by no means self-evident that an overall saving would result. Possible savings in the cost of office accommodation in other centres and in the cost of telecommunications would have to be set against the increased costs resulting from the need for new premises and the adaptation of existing accommodation.

(Laughter)

Ms Clwyd. — It is amazing, is it not, how adept the Commission is at ducking the issue when it so chooses, while in so many areas of our work it is more than happy to take the initiative. In reply to a similar question to the Council some time ago, I was told that it was not a proper question for the Council to answer. Now the Commission also, Mr President, seems to be avoiding the issue — a vital one as far as the officials and Members of this House are concerned.

Well, Mr Commissioner, the Committee on Budgets has done the job for you. Would the Commission not agree that the cost of operating three centres, the so-called provisional places of work, was 9.8 m u. a. last year, and that renting buildings in three places cost a further 7.3 m u. a. last year, which totals a staggering £ 11.3 million? Is the Commission content ...

President. — Ms Clwyd, instead of making a speech — interesting though the subject undoubtedly is — I must ask you to put a supplementary question.

Ms Clwyd. — Mr President, I realize you have a vested interest in this particular matter, but this is the question: Is the Commission content to turn a blind eye to the continued waste of taxpayers' money, or would it agree that a policy of concentrating in one place requires a political decision by this Parliament alone?

(Applause)

Mr Tugendhat. — The honourable lady is less than fair with me on one point: I answered the question about the cost to the Commission, but in our Community it really is up to each Institution to provide figures on the costs for its own operations.

The second point is that we must, on the one side of the balance, look at the cost of holding meetings in more than one centre — and they are certainly very considerable. But we must also look on the other side of the balance at the cost of taking on more accommodation in Brussels, and it would be the net figure which would give the cost. Certainly there is a cost, I do not deny that, without commenting on her figures, but I think one must take into account both sides of the balance.

President. — I would remind the House that this is Question Time.

Without in any way restricting the right to speak of Members of this Assembly, I would ask all speakers to be as brief as possible.

Mr Harris. — As a former Parliamentarian himself, can the Commissioner possibly say how this totally inefficient and expensive business of having three centres to work in, as a Parliament, can be justified to the taxpayers and to the electorate?

President. — I suggest we listen first to the other questions, to which the Commissioner can then give a comprehensive reply.

Mr Marshall. — May I congratulate the Commissioner upon his original answer, which seemed to mean all things to all men? Can I suggest to the Commissioner that the present arrangements lead to a considerable waste of time, and would he not agree that a single centre would lead to a much greater convenience and efficiency in the working of this Parliament? Would he not agree that at the present time many Members have to spend many, many hours waiting for planes, waiting at airports and generally wasting their time and that the way to make this Parliament more efficient is to have one centre and not to have that centre in Strasbourg?

(Applause from various quarters)

Mr Denis. — (F) In view of the veritable campaigns that are being waged regarding the location of our Assembly, can the Commission give a guarantee that, as far as it is concerned, it will ensure that the agreements reached among the Member States, which are their responsibility, will be adhered to, making Strasbourg the headquarters of the European Assembly and stating that meetings shall take place in that city?

(Laughter)

Mr Schwartzberg. — (F) As a supplementary to Ms Clwyd's question, I would ask the Commission if it can undertake a similar exercise and estimate the savings that would be made if, instead of meeting in Strasbourg and in one other town, our Assembly made Strasbourg its only headquarters, in accordance with the decisions taken by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs in 1958 and 1965?

Mrs Buchan. — I think it would be helpful if the Commissioner could assure the House that when he was talking of moving to Brussels he was not thinking just of Brussels. Would he assure us that the thinking of the Commission is not coming towards the previous two speakers' point of view, and if the Commission is to settle on one place could we perhaps have the social implications and locate Parliament in a place where the jobs which accrued to it could,

perhaps, be more beneficial than in some of the towns that are being talked of at the present time? In other words, we might go to one of the peripheral areas of the Community, like Naples, like Wales, like Glasgow.

(Laughter and applause)

Mr Tugendhat. — Mr President, I realize that this is not a point that is necessarily going to win me friends in all quarters of the House, but it is my duty first of all to remind the House that Article 216 of the EEC Treaty provides that the seat of the Institutions of the Community shall be determined by common accord of the governments of the Member States, and I think that is clear. Now, the Member States are, of course, able to change the accord that they reach, but certainly it is up to my Institution, the Commission, and other Institutions to abide by Article 216. I, of course, realize — because we all have to travel — that there is a good deal of human wear and tear involved in doing so and that the further one has to come and the more disruption there is in the airlines and everything else the greater that wear and tear can be, and I have a great deal of personal sympathy with the people who are subjected to it; but we are obliged to live by the Treaty and it is important, when thinking of costs, to bear in mind not only the money that one would save but also, as I pointed out in my original answer, the extra money that would have to be spent in concentrating the Institutions all in one place. The final point I would make is that this is a system which we are perhaps still learning how to adjust ourselves to, and I am sure the experience which we are gaining will be valuable from now on.

(Laughter)

President. — I call Question No 2 by Mr Paisley (H-127/79):

What steps has the Commission taken to safeguard the textile industry in the Community against polyester imports from the USA?

Mr Davignon, Member of the Commission. — (F) As I had occasion to state at an earlier part-session, the Commission is keenly concerned about the increase in exports of man-made fibres from the United States to the Community because it feels that part of the advantage enjoyed by American exporters is due to the dual pricing of energy in the United States and the fact that American producers have access to raw materials on more favourable terms than European producers.

A mission is now in Washington and with its help we will, this week, have arrived at an accurate computation of this price difference.

This week, too, we shall also have completed the survey we have been carrying out to establish whether any dumping is going on in this area and we shall be

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proposing action to the Council, after first consulting Parliament by 20 November, as we have undertaken to do.

Mr Paisley. — Is the Commissioner aware how hard-hit the textile industry is in Great Britain and Northern Ireland as a result of the import of polyester from the United States? Is he also aware that one factory has closed down in Northern Ireland and that two other factories are about to close down as a result of these imports? Can he inform the House what considerations the Commission has made after the Washington talks and what proposals, firm proposals, they are going to make to the Council of Ministers to take effective action in regard to this matter?

President. — If Mr Davignon agrees, he could give a comprehensive answer covering all the supplementary questions.

I call Mr Fergusson on a point of order.

Mr Fergusson. — I wonder whether this practice of answering all the questions in one is a really good one. It stops any kind of dialogue with the Commission in the first place and it also means that a Commissioner can dodge a question simply by answering the other ones. I find it regrettable.

(Applause)

President. — That is a matter of opinion. I have taken part in a good many parliamentary debates and it is clear that this procedure quite often enables the person who has to reply to cover questions on the same subject. Having said that, I leave it to Mr Davignon's judgement.

Mr Davignon. — *(F)* Mr President, the Commission does not mean to dodge any question. It will reply to each of the questions put in detail, following the method that Parliament itself decides. If several Members put questions to us one after the other I shall take a note of them and reply in detail to all speakers just as I would if I replied after each speaker had spoken.

President. — Mr Davignon, do you wish to reply to Mr Paisley's question?

Mr Davignon. — *(F)* When one is faced with a situation so serious, difficult and distressing, too, from the social standpoint as the loss of employment, it would be wrong to see exports by other countries as the only reason for firms having to close down.

Europe is going through a structural crisis in the man-made fibre industry because of the capital investment made in it prior to the oil crisis and the excess production capacity this has led to. Structural change in the man-made fibre industry applies to the whole of Europe and not just to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

Secondly, I said very clearly in my first reply that the Commission considers that this is a serious situation and is proposing, after conversations in progress in the Council this week, to take appropriate action to prevent this distortion of competition.

Mr Seal. — I am very pleased to hear that the Commissioner is interested in finding out facts. I am rather sorry it has taken him so long to find out these particular facts.

Is the Commissioner aware, in his search for facts, that imports of polyester fibres into the UK have risen this year by 500 % over last year and cost very many jobs in West Yorkshire, and could the Commissioner tell me what plans he has for providing, or helping to provide, alternative jobs for these unfortunate textile workers who are now out of work?

Mr Davignon. — *(F)* There is one fact missing from this question and that is the share of the whole of the United Kingdom market accounted for by imports from the United States, which is under 3 %.

I have already agreed that there is distortion. If the honorable Member thinks that it is easy, in a case conducted under international rules, to establish what, finally, is the cost of the raw material available to the energy industry in a country like the United States where there are 27 different prices for gas, then he must be an optimist.

He also knows that, in its budgetary proposals, the Commission is anxious to show, in the framework of regional action and action under the Social Fund (training and re-training of workers losing their jobs), that the Community offers workers new opportunities whilst at the same time allowing for the necessary redevelopment of industry. And we shall make proposals for the development of European industry to ensure that it does not have to be on the defensive.

Mr Prag. The figures that Mr Davignon has just quoted are global figures. Is he not aware that imports of polyester filament yarn into the United Kingdom have increased from less than 600 tonnes a quarter in 1977 to 2 500 tonnes a quarter — and these are customs figures — at present; that those of polyester textured yarn, which were hardly anything in 1977, are now running at 2 000 tonnes a quarter, and that for polyester filament yarn the proportion which the United States has now taken of the British market is up to 26 %? Will the Commissioner make sure that, when he reports to the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs later this month, he has an effective course of action to propose in these fields where the American encroachment has been massive?

Mr Davignon. — *(F)* It is exactly along these lines that we shall make proposals — that will be in conformity with the international rules by which we are

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bound — to the Council. In this way we shall demonstrate that there is distortion as far as the Community is concerned, either as a whole or in at least one of its regions.

Our action with regard to the United States is twofold. Firstly, with regard to energy policy, it is to prevent American industry having a price advantage, because that is the only long-term solution to put us in a fair situation. Secondly, until that situation comes about, it is to propose specific, concrete action to prevent the deliberate continuance and growth of that distortion.

Mr Hume. — Could I draw the Commissioner's attention to the fact that this problem is absolutely urgent and very serious in some parts of the United Kingdom, in that one-third of the total production of man-made fibre in the United Kingdom is concentrated in Northern Ireland? In that region there are some 7 000 people employed in the man-made fibre industry. Over 1 000 of those jobs have already been lost in the last few months. 6 % of all manufacturing jobs in that region are concentrated in the man-made fibre industry. It is a region which has an overall unemployment figure of 12 %; in some parts of it the unemployment level reaches 25 %. Would the Commissioner not agree that these statistics are extremely serious, so serious as to warrant immediate action by the Commission to protect jobs in such a disadvantaged region? And that the immediate step that could be taken, without delay, is the imposition of a countervailing tariff to offset the advantage that American producers enjoy through the fact that their raw materials are subsidized?

Mr Davignon. — (F) I agree with the honourable Member when he says that the impact of this problem in specific regions warrants rapid supporting action by the Community as a whole.

On the other hand if any Member of this Parliament thinks that it would be good Community policy to introduce a compensatory duty because some country is subsidizing the industry, then he does not realize all the steps that could be taken by the United States against European industries. He ought to think twice before advocating this method.

Mr Griffiths. — I should like to ask the Commissioner a question about an industry which is not yet, but might be, affected by the subsidizing of oil costs in the United States. Has the Commission considered the implications of this subsidization for a wide range of oil-based industries in the Community, especially the chemical industry, which is a strong presence in South Wales employing thousands of people? What proposals, if any, are being considered outside the textile industry to protect Community industries which might be affected by the unfair subsidization of oil in the United States?

Mr Davignon. — (F) I can assure the honourable Member that we have a standing working party with the chemical industry as a whole and with the different Member States to monitor all the implications that the maintenance of this dual pricing system may have in other industries. This is the reason why I said that the very first priority, in the context of our consultations with the United States in the field of energy policy, was to eliminate this dual pricing.

I would simply like to draw Parliament's attention to the fact that by virtue of the results of the Tokyo Round negotiations on the GATT, our exports of chemicals to the United States will grow, as a whole, more rapidly than that country's exports to the Community.

Mr J.D. Taylor. — Would the Commissioner agree that the figure of 3 % which he quoted was most misleading? There has in fact been an increase in US polyester imports from 3 % to 25 % in the United Kingdom this year, and this is the main reason for unemployment in the man-made fibre industry in Northern Ireland, where a thousand people have lost their jobs during the past few months. And will he not agree that the Community has brought itself into discredit back home by the delay in dealing with this problem? It has been with us since the beginning of this year and yet we are told no decision has been reached by the Commission, no decision has been reached by the Council. People are getting tired of being told that no decisions have been reached. Will the Commissioner please get a move on with this problem?

Mr Davignon. — (F) I do not accept the allegation that the figures I have given present a misleading picture of the problem.

The honourable Member knows, I assume, that the Community is a single customs territory and that, for this reason, there is an internal market and a customs union. The action we take with regard to other countries is based on the Community as a whole and the internal market as a whole. In those terms my figures are correct. The figure for the Community as a whole was only 3 % and that for the British market was only 10 % for the second half year.

I would say this to the honourable Member: if we quote figures, then let us get them right. First quarter: 8 % penetration of the British market, second quarter 10 % and third quarter 25 %. The trend dates only from the 1 August of this year. By taking a decision on 20 November we shall not have lost any time.

Mr Marshall. — Is the Commissioner aware that one of the factors causing unemployment in the United

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Kingdom textile industry has been alleged to be the growth of artificial barriers to intra-Community trade, particularly in Italy and France? Has he read the recent article in the *Daily Mail* outlining these barriers? And what steps does he intend to take to see that they are reduced?

Mr Davignon. — (F) All complaints lodged with the Community by a Member State or firm are dealt with extremely quickly. With regard to obstacles and barriers to free circulation, actions were taken by the Community, as the honourable Member knows, during the course of the summer to remove barriers set up in conflict with the provisions of the Treaty.

At this stage and date, there is no special application from the United Kingdom or from British industry. The country has submitted its case and we are making the necessary efforts with a view to taking a decision on the matter.

President. — I call Question No 3 by Mr Buchou (H-140/79):

Has the Commission detected a correlation between the positive compensatory amounts that certain countries refuse to dismantle and the existence in those same countries of agricultural surpluses which are becoming increasingly difficult to dispose of, notably milk powder and butter?

Mr Tugendhat, Member of the Commission. — No convincing proof can be provided that a correlation exists between positive monetary compensation amounts and the development of surpluses. Intervention stocks are indeed accumulating in Germany where there are the highest positive MCAs. Nevertheless, such accumulation occurred in earlier years when monetary compensation amounts did not exist. Accumulation has also occurred and indeed is occurring in countries with negative MCAs.

Mr Buchou. — (F) Although there have been problems with surpluses in the past, their scale was nowhere near as great as it has been recently, a fact of which last week's debate on the budget was eloquent testimony.

My feeling is that we are faced with an attitude that is the opposite of a policy of common prices. This common price policy is one of the keystones of the common agricultural policy. The compensatory amounts act in practice like customs duties, although it has just been said that there are no such duties within the Community. They benefit producers in some countries and penalise others.

Therefore I ask the Commission — though I realize that it will not be able to reply immediately — whether the effects of this situation will be taken into account in working out budgetary contributions? The point is that some countries will have considerable

financial resources, because they have distinctly higher prices for their producers than those of other countries. Can this affect budgetary contributions?

Mr Tugendhat. — I very much agree that what we want is a genuine common market in agricultural products as envisaged in the Treaty. The Commission itself has been and remains against the development of MCAs and we will continue our efforts to bring about a greater degree of price unity within the Community. Obviously such changes cannot be made overnight and equally obviously they have to be done in such a way as not to cause great and unbearable difficulty for the Member States concerned. But I think it is always wrong to attribute one single, simple cause to the underlying difficulties of the common agricultural policy. Some people attribute one thing, some another. MCAs are certainly a bad thing, we would certainly like to see them removed; but I could not accept that they were the only cause of some of the difficulties which face us.

Mr Martin. — (F) Does the Commission intend, in view of the adverse effect of the application of monetary compensatory amounts in certain countries, to abolish this unjust system immediately and completely?

Mr Tugendhat. — I thought I had answered that question in my last answer. As I said, certainly we believe that MCAs are a bad thing. Certainly we would like to see the re-establishment of a full common market in agricultural goods, with the disappearance therefore of both positive and negative MCAs. But as I said, these things have grown up over a long period. Their abolition cannot take place overnight. Their reduction and their disappearance must take account of the difficulties which Member States would face. I hope that that is clear.

Mr Fröh. — (D) Mr Tugendhat, I would first like to thank you for stating, in your first reply, that there is no direct correlation between stocks and compensatory amounts. But I would also like to ask you whether it is not true that any country in the Community can stockpile where it wants to and that, as a rule, countries accumulate intervention stocks where currencies are stronger and where the payment of compensatory amounts takes place more swiftly, so that this is the real reason for the high level of stocks in the Federal Republic of Germany?

There is just one more question I have. If you say that the monetary compensatory amounts should be abolished, would you also confirm that they are the result of the regrettably uncoordinated economic and monetary policy in this Community, and that our objective must be the gradual abolition of monetary amounts wherever it is possible to achieve this aim?

Mr Tugendhat. — I would go some way with Mr Fröh when he says that stockpiles in a particular country can be fed by production from other countries. But I think it must also be accepted that production in a number of Member States of the products particularly in surplus has increased and the German stockpile owes a good deal to the efforts of German cows as well as to other things; I think it is very important to bear that point in mind as well. So far as the reduction of MCAs is concerned, I do not think I need repeat the answers I have given to the two previous gentlemen.

Mr Provan. — In working towards the harmonization of milk prices within the Community, has the Commission considered, if we must have a co-responsibility levy, tying it to the higher milk prices within the Community rather than across the board?

Mr Tugendhat. — I assure the honourable gentleman that there are very few aspects of the co-responsibility levy which we have not at one time or another considered in the Commission.

(Laughter)

Mr Aigner. — *(D)* Mr Tugendhat, would you agree with the opinion of monetary experts that the internal purchasing power of a currency is not identical with the difference in exchange rates? Would you therefore agree with me that, ultimately, the monetary compensatory amounts can be abolished only as a whole and that no new developments must be initiated if monetary policy gradually comes into line with agricultural policy, in other words if the monetary compensatory amounts finally close the gap in the monetary field?

Mr Tugendhat. — I certainly agree that we need to strengthen and enhance our monetary policy. It is, I think, a dangerous doctrine in the Community to say that one convoy cannot move forward until the other convoy is ready; that is why I repeat what I said to the two French Members who raised this point in the first instance: we would like to get rid of the MCAs, but it has to be done on a basis that takes account of the difficulties that would be faced in the Member States concerned.

Mr Howell. — Is the Commission aware that some of the answers that we have heard from the Commissioner regarding this question are totally unacceptable to some of us here, in that they really are not aggressive enough, and is the Commission aware that we look to it for much stronger answers to lead us in the direction of European monetary union, in order to get round this problem of monetary compensatory amounts which gives the lie to the whole concept of a common agricultural policy, and would he not agree that, while monetary compensatory amounts exist,

there is no such thing as a common agricultural policy, and will he, therefore, give us a strong answer on what the Commission now intends to do to bring us towards the concept of European monetary union to get round this whole problem?

Mr Tugendhat. — I thought that what I said, particularly in answer to the first two questions, was as clear and as realistic as it could be. I said — and I repeat in the strongest terms that I can — that the Commission is in favour of a real common market in agricultural products. We are very much in favour of that. Therefore, we are against MCAs, be they positive or negative, and we would wish to see MCAs abolished. But one cannot avoid the fact that the level of MCAs at the moment, and the length of time that they have been with us, are such that their abolition overnight would cause very real difficulties in the Member States concerned — not least the Member State from which the honourable gentleman comes. One must take into account the fact that these things cannot be done overnight, and that one must move towards one's objectives with all deliberate speed, but not fall flat on one's face in trying to get there in an unrealistic hurry.

President. — I call Question No 4 by Miss de Valera (H-144/79):

Does the Commission believe that the Community can provide any form of heating aid for those in receipt of social assistance, particularly in view of the high cost of fuels and shortage of supplies?

Mr Vredeling, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(NL)* In the opinion of the Commission there are insufficient legal grounds at Community level for starting to provide assistance as suggested by the honourable Member in the form of help towards heating costs during the winter for people in receipt of social benefit. This does not, of course, rule out national measures in this area. I personally feel that the weaker members of society should, wherever possible, receive general social benefits enabling them to meet the costs concerned themselves, instead of being granted aid by type of expenditure, for example on food, heating, etc.

Miss Brookes. — I am grateful for that answer, but bearing the answer that has been given in mind, would the Commission consider giving financial aid to those families who, though not in receipt of social security assistance, care for elderly relatives and mentally handicapped children in their own homes, thereby accepting the responsibility for their own families and not asking the state to accept those responsibilities for them?

Mr Vredeling. — *(NL)* This question, it seems to me, is only very indirectly related to the original question. It relates to categories of people who are respon-

Vredeling

sible for others. All I can answer to that is that the social legislation should be designed to allow for the provision of sufficient aid to meet the costs to which the honourable Member has referred.

Ms Clwyd. — In view of the Commissioner's original reply, would he agree that one of the weaker social partners, as he puts it, is the United Kingdom, and that the United Kingdom might be eligible for the assistance he is talking about?

Mr Vredeling. — (NL) When I referred, in my first answer, to the weaker members of society I did not mean the Member States but individuals. Weaker people in our society, people earning lower incomes in the whole of the Community — that was the category I meant. The Member must know that the population of the country she comes from is not wholly and exclusively made up of the weaker members of society.

Lord Harmar-Nicholls. — Mr President, are we not moving out of the correct province of this Parliament by going into this sort of detail on questions of social services and health care?

We know it is very difficult for the separate nations to really discover the worthy cases, and if an assembly such as this, covering such a wide area, attempts to do this, then it really is asking for trouble. I believe it will be wasting money, and I do not think that, at the end of the day, they will succeed in bringing any help to the people who truly need it. It must be done through the national government, who, through their separate departments, know who the worthy cases are.

President. — As they stand at present, the Rules of Procedure do not permit any restriction on the right of Members of this Assembly to put questions.

The first part of Question Time is closed.

I call Mr Boyes on a point of order.

Mr Boyes. — Mr President, I refer to Rule 47B and to Annex II, dealing with Question Time. You asked the Commissioner if he would decide for himself how he dealt with supplementary questions. I have checked the Rules, and the nearest I can find to this is paragraph 8 of Annex II, which states:

if the content of the questions concerned permits it, the President may decide, after consulting the questioners, that the Institution concerned should answer them together.

I do not think you were correct at all in asking the Commissioner if he would like to answer them together. That would negate the idea of Question Time, where a following questioner may want to delve a little deeper and probe the Commission a little more. I understand that Question Time is Parliament's Question Time. Some of us may well think the

Commission has a bit too much power already, without deciding how to run Parliament.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — Mr Boyes, you have made my reply much easier by quoting paragraph 8 of the guidelines yourself, which states that the President may decide that the Institution concerned should answer the questions together. You are quite right that it is up to the President, and not the Institution, to decide. But the President may ask others for their views, and that is what I did. However, let us not waste time on a totally theoretical discussion, since you have in fact got what you wanted.

Mr Boyes. — Mr President, I do not like delaying Parliament, but I read this out in full. You missed out four very critical words: 'The President may decide after consulting the questioners' — not after consulting the Commission. In other words, the President may not decide for himself. That has taken another 30 seconds of the Parliament's time: I think it should be on the record.

President. — The questioners were present, and they were able to express their views. But as I said, this discussion is purely theoretical, since you got what you wanted!

I call Mrs Chouraqui on a point of order.

Mrs Chouraqui. — (F) Mr President, I would respectfully like to point out that so far — and it is certainly not your fault — we have dealt with only four questions in 45 minutes. I have been doing a little arithmetic. There are 61 questions down for this sitting; we shall need 15 hours if we go on at the same rate, and that means nearly 10 sittings.

Do you not think, Mr President, that we should take another look at the Question Time system and in particular at the conditions in which supplementary questions can be permitted? I am making this point although my own question has some chance of being called on Thursday. I am not speaking for myself, therefore, but for the other Members who will not get an answer on Thursday.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — If the President of the sitting may be permitted to express his personal opinion — for after some of the speeches we have heard, I cannot help wondering if some of our colleagues think the President of the sitting should be a mere automaton — may I say that I agree with you entirely; I feel that the Rule dealing with Question Time should be revised by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and should, along with others, be taken

President

back to the drawing-board when we embark on the wholesale revision of the Rules of Procedure. As things stand at the moment, the President of the sitting cannot prevent ten Members from having the floor on a single question, launching a semblance of debate on subjects which have often already been aired at length.

Since the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions has not completed its work, we are unable to hold the vote now, as planned, on the motion for a resolution contained in the Nord report. We shall therefore interrupt the business of the House, which will probably resume at 5.30 p.m.

The sitting is suspended.

(The sitting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 6.05 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : MRS VEIL*President*

President. — The sitting is resumed.

*9. Amendments to certain Rules of Procedure
(continued)*

President. — The House is no doubt surprised at this further change of plan. The first announcement was that the sitting would resume at 5.30 p.m., then at 8 p.m. and now you have reassembled at 6 p.m. The fact is that the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions has been in session all afternoon and its meeting has only just finished. Since amendments cannot be put to the vote until they have been translated into all the official languages, we are compelled to wait for the amendments to the report to be translated; that is why the vote cannot take place immediately. On the other it seems that it is possible to ask the rapporteur, Mr Nord, to submit his supplementary report straight away, which would enable us to hear some Members give their views on the amendments now and thus to expedite the business of the House.

Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

I call Mr Pannella on a point of order.

Mr Pannella. — *(F)* Madam President, thank you for your statement. With your permission I will make a suggestion to Members. Would it not be possible — even if only to have a moment of fundamental unanimity in this Assembly which may perhaps have been a little fatigued, not I would say because we or others have been overdoing things but because of the difficulty of our work — to agree on a small change in the agenda and to use the next thirty or forty-five

minutes after hearing Mr Nord's report, to vote on the motion for a resolution on world hunger, the vote on which was originally planned for Friday? I would remind you that the Committee on Development and Cooperation unanimously agreed the wording proposed and its adoption should not therefore take very much time.

President. — Thank you, Mr Pannella, for your suggestion, which would indeed help us to have save time. We did this afternoon consider the possibility of using the time while the sitting was suspended for other purposes, but it was pointed out that many Members had not been forewarned and could not now be notified. I too am sorry we cannot use the time made available in this way; but this happens to be an important resolution and the Members who are absent are likely to complain if the agenda is changed.

I call Mr Nord.

Mr Nord, rapporteur. — *(F)* Madam President, may I have your permission to present my short oral report in French because immediately after the meeting of our committee I dictated it in Dutch and French and, for the moment, the only paper I have is the French version. I would ask for your indulgence if I express myself in what is, for me, a foreign language.

Following the debate on the port of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, the latter met this afternoon at 1 p.m. to consider the amendments that had been tabled with a view to presenting a supplementary report, rather on the lines of what we always do in the budgetary procedure. There too, the Committee on Budgets meets, considers the amendments and presents its conclusions to the Assembly.

A number of proposals were made at the meeting, their purpose being to reach compromises which would allow tonight's voting to take place in favourable conditions and also enable certain Members to withdraw the amendments they had tabled.

The committee has adopted a number of new proposals set out in the supplementary report that I shall have the honour to present to you this evening. The altered texts, which will be submitted to you for approval, are now being translated, collated and printed and will then be issued. I fully understand that the Assembly cannot take a decision on important texts that it has not even seen, but if the Assembly should so wish, Madam President, I am prepared to read slowly to you what you will later be seeing so that you should already have an idea of the kind of proposal that will be made. Would you like me to do so, Madam President?

President. — It would certainly be helpful to do that now. This would enable everyone to consider the new proposals between now and voting time.

Mr Nord, rapporteur. — (F) In that case, Madam President, I will go over the new proposals made by our committee in the order of the Rules of Procedure, rule by rule. Where I do not refer to a rule, that means that there is no change in our Committee's proposals. I shall only read out those proposals which imply a change in our original proposals.

The first relates to Rule 12 (2). The proposals here are as follows: in line 7, delete the words 'by a political group, or'; in line 8, after the word 'Members', add the following: 'on the understanding that a political group or at least ten Members shall have the right to propose, at each part-session, one alteration to the draft agenda'. That, therefore, is our modified proposal for Rule 12.

Next, for rule 29 (5) (new), paragraph 2, lines 6 and 7, delete the words 'a political group or'.

On Rule 35, we propose a completely new wording in place of our initial proposal. The new wording is identical, with one change, to the wording of amendment No 10 — which you have in your papers — tabled by Messrs Luster, Fischbach and Klepsch on behalf of their group. It reads as follows (I shall indicate the one change made to Amendment No 10 when I come to it).

Rule 35

1. Normally Parliament shall vote by show of hands.
2. If the President decides that the result of the show of hands is doubtful, a fresh vote shall be taken by sitting and standing.
3. If the President decides that the result of this last vote is doubtful, the vote shall be taken by roll call.
4. If so requested by at least twenty-one Members or a political group before the voting has begun, the vote shall be taken by roll call.

I would point out, Madam President, that the only change compared with the wording of Amendment No 10 is in 35 (4), in other words in the addition of the words 'or a political group'. Amendment No 10 was worded, 'If so requested by at least 21 Members'. The wording we now propose reads: '21 Members or a political group'. I will tell you now that some members of the committee asked for a separate vote on these words, that is, they wanted two votes on the proposed text.

5. The roll shall be called in alphabetical order, beginning with the name of a Member drawn by lot. The President shall be the last to be called to vote.

Voting shall be by word of mouth and shall be expressed by 'yes', 'no' or 'I abstain'. In calculating whether a motion has been adopted or rejected, account shall be taken only of votes cast for and against. The President shall establish the result of the count and announce it. Votes shall be recorded in the

minutes of proceedings of the sitting in the alphabetical order of Members' names.

The remainder of this Rule, Madam President, is word for word the same as Amendment No 10 that you all have in front of you and which I therefore feel I do not have to read out. I would simply repeat that, later on when the vote is taken, we shall have to have two separate votes on this wording as requested by certain members of our committee.

Next there is Rule 36 (5). Here we propose a new wording to replace our initial proposal based on paragraph 1 of Amendment No 41 tabled by Mr Capanna, which you know about but which I shall remind you of because it is very short. The wording we now propose to you is as follows:

A minimum number of twenty-one Members shall be required to form a political group if all the Members come from a single Member State. The corresponding number shall be fifteen if the Members come from two Member States and ten if they come from three or more Member States.

That is the new wording we suggest in place of our original proposal.

For Rule 36A, too, our committee has agreed a new wording in place of the earlier proposal. This text is an amalgam mainly based on Amendment No 6 tabled by Mrs Spaak and Mr Gendebien but including a sub-amendment by Mr Galland tabled in committee. I shall read you the wording that we finally propose:

1. Members who do not belong to a political group shall form part of the group of non-attached Members.
2. This group shall delegate two of its Members to attend meetings of the enlarged Bureau, without the right to vote.
3. The group of non-attached Members shall be provided with administrative facilities and have at its disposal a secretariat, the composition and size of which shall be determined by the enlarged Bureau on the proposal from the Secretary-General having regard to the number of non-attached Members.
4. The speaking time of the non-attached Members shall be calculated in accordance with Rule 28 (2). The time thus obtained shall be doubled so as to take account of the great diversity of political views within the group of non-attached Members to enable, as far as possible, each such view to be expressed.

Each member of the group of non-attached Members shall be accorded the same speaking time. If he does not wish to use his speaking time he may assign it to another non-attached Member.

The method by which this speaking time may be allocated shall be determined by the enlarged Bureau.

5. The allocation of seats on the various committees to members of the Group of non-attached Members shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Rule 37.

Nord

That, Madam President, is the full wording now proposed by our committee in place of the earlier proposal. I would add that I have just heard that some Members of the committee are asking for separate votes on this Rule — as for Rule 35 — and in particular a separate vote on 36A (2) where it is proposed that the group of non-attached Members should be able to delegate two of its members to the Bureau. I know some Members of our Assembly will be asking for a separate vote on this point. Others have asked for a separate vote on a few words in another Rule. I take this opportunity to tell you this now.

Finally, after due consideration, our committee is withdrawing its proposal with regard to Rule 37 (3). The Committee would like to give further thought to this in the light of any more general proposals made with regard to the Rules of Procedure.

Those, Madam President — given orally and provisionally — are the new proposals that our committee has decided to put before you. The object, I would repeat, was to bring this debate to a conclusion that would be worthy of our Parliament and would give us, pending more general revision, an instrument that everybody could work with and that would also enable us to function in satisfactory conditions.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — *(I)* Madam President, the new agreement announced by Mr Nord as our rapporteur was the subject of lengthy discussion at this morning's committee meeting and, although we were not in agreement on everything, it does entitle us (at least, I hope it does) to assume that the House and the group chairmen are prepared to work out the best solution together. Although I still disagree on two points, which are the proposed amendments to Rules 14 and 29, I feel I ought to withdraw all the amendments in my name as an acknowledgment of the work we did today.

(Applause)

I trust that the agreement we reached will be adhered to. It will give us a fresh point of departure for our work while all remaining free to vote for or against at the end. I do not consider the amendments to be good but I am hoping that, when we review the Rules as a whole, they can be improved and strengthened in certain respects.

I trust that the members of my group who were co-signatories of the proposed amendments will also withdraw them.

(Applause)

Mr Blaney. — Madam President, it is with some satisfaction that I rise to follow the path of Mrs Bonino in withdrawing from the consideration of the House

Amendments Nos 14, 20, 21, 22 and 29, in the names of myself, Mrs Castellina, Mrs Macciocchi and Mr Coppiteters; and though naturally not fully satisfied with all that has been done, nevertheless I would like to express my appreciation on behalf of all of us, for the work that was done this evening. I never had any doubt that it could be done once we got down to it as a matter of urgency, trying to find a solution to enable us to get on with the business of this House while the revision of the Rules, which badly require thorough revision, will continue. I would ask this, Madam, that we recommend the content of any of the amendments withdrawn, and indeed a great deal of others that never saw the light for one reason or another, for the consideration of the Committee on the Rules and Procedure in its general revision.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Madam President this is just like Christmas Eve so let me appear as the Christmas angel. I do not intend to rake over the ashes. I would just say that I am particularly sorry that, after the hard and difficult conflict of the last four months, I hope that the majority in this Parliament is ready to meet the requirements of the minorities on two essential points. When the vote is taken we shall soon see whether that is indeed the case but the meeting of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions today has produced two promising results. The two points are as follows: firstly, things have not reached the point where, as a result of the earlier proposals, a decision is taken that groups of under 21 Members should not be able to operate. In the agreed text it is expressly stated that groups of 10 people from three Member States will be able to function as a group.

The second major point to the good is that, after difficult negotiations, a number of rights are established for the non-attached. Naturally we have also had to make concessions on our side. I shall be gratified, Madam President, if the vote we are shortly to take shows that the agreement reached this afternoon is ratified by the majority of this Parliament and on that condition I am ready to withdraw my amendments Nos 2, 3 and 4, as well.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(I)* Madam President, I am also willing to withdraw the amendments in my name or to which my signature was added by letter to you last night. I am not doing this because any improvements have been made in the Report but in order to be consistent with our attitude since 6 July. At no time did we hold up the proceedings of the House unless it was to defend ourselves against attack. All the alterations in the agenda and all the urgent debates which overturned the decisions of the Bureau were the work of the majority alone. We do not wish to waste a

Pannella

moment of Parliament's time, even when we are seriously at odds with it, so I withdraw the amendments in my name.

President. — I call Mr Capanna.

Mr Capanna — (I) Madam President, you and the entire Parliament can at this moment see that the Group for Technical Coordination is not a group of 'hard-liners'. For anyone with a pair of eyes this has been clear since July. Mrs Bonino said she was not satisfied with the agreement. I should like to explain why I am not satisfied either.

If, at the end of ten months, Parliament votes as Mr Nord suggested, the survival of our group is assured. This is a solid gain for democracy. However, there still remains what I call a *monstrum* from a legal and democratic standpoint and, in terms of democracy and the Rules of Procedure, what the Romans would unhesitatingly have called a *scelus* or crime. The fact of the matter is that, if our group is saved, this means that the groups will be on two levels: those, with 21 members, who can request an urgent debate whenever they see fit and those who cannot. So the Non-attached Group is being established without any power, not even the power to take part and vote in the Bureau.

These are the reasons why we feel dissatisfied. However, to show you that you are not dealing with 'hard-liners' and despite my objections, I withdraw the several dozen amendments in my name.

President. — I call Mr Luster.

Mr Luster. — (D) Madam President, Calderon wrote a play called 'Life is a Dream.' Another poet said: 'Where everywhere is love, Karl cannot hate alone'. However, what I wanted to do was to thank the rapporteur for bringing us together in so marvellous a fashion — and ask him a question. Is it possible that he has forgotten one not insignificant change in the list that he read out to us? I believe — and here I agree with Mrs Bonino who mentioned this amendment in her short speech — that we also agreed, with regard to Rule 29 (5), that only 21 Members, but not a political group, are entitled to initiate things. I did not hear this in the rapporteur's speech. I may have misheard. Perhaps he can clarify this point. This is the first question, which is not difficult to answer.

The second question concerns Rule 12 (2). Here it is correct that a political group or 10 Members will be able to propose one alteration. I do not know whether, apart from that, 21 Members can make a not unlimited but larger number of proposals. In the latter case I am unsure whether I am not mistaken. In the former case, however, I do not think I am wrong. It would be useful if the rapporteur could clear this up so that later, when we vote, we know on what we are voting.

President. — I call Mr Nord.

Mr Nord, rapporteur. — (NL) Madam President, as far as the first question is concerned, Mr Luster is perfectly right. It is in the report in front of me. I thought I did read it out but perhaps Mr Luster did not hear it; or maybe I did not read it out, in which case I apologize. A third possibility is that I did read it out but that it did not come over clearly in my French.

As far as the second question is concerned, as far as I remember — and I have just checked my notes — our committee decided that, under Rule 12, twenty-one Members were entitled at any time to make as many proposals for alterations to the agenda as they wanted but that a group of at least ten Members could make one such proposal before each part-session. I therefore believe that the proposal as I have read it out agrees with the decision of the committee.

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — Madam President, It now seems there are only two amendments left and one of them is mine. Now in view of what Mr Nord said about having a separate vote on Rule 12 it gives me great pleasure to follow Mrs Bonino and Mr Capanna. I did not have such a wealth of amendments down as she and he did but it still gives me great pleasure in removing the one I have.

President. — The vote will take place at 8 p.m., and I would ask that as many Members as possible are present at that time. On behalf of the House I should like to thank the rapporteur of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, and all those who have taken part in its work, for helping to ensure that we have been able to conduct this debate in the proper manner.

I should also like to thank those who have appreciated the fact that no sound agreement can be reached unless there are concessions on both sides, and who have endeavoured to ensure that we approached this debate, about which we all had our qualms, in the best possible atmosphere. We shall have a further opportunity to be grateful for this tonight, after what I hope will be a rapid vote, whilst enabling everyone to express his views as he would wish.

I call Mr de la Malène.

Mr de la Malène. — (F) Madam President, I would like some information on our timetable. You told us that the sitting would resume at 8 p.m. for the vote and, possibly, a debate because there are still one or two amendments. Is it your intention to go on until the matter is completed?

President. — Yes, Mr de la Malène, but I don't think it should take too long, and we should be finished before 1 a.m.

10. *Urgent procedure*

President. — I have received four motions for resolutions with request for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, tabled by:

- Mr Scott-Hopkins, on behalf of the European Democratic Group (Doc. 1-506/79),
- Mr Blumenfeld, Mr Seitlinger and Mr Penders, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group) (Doc. 1-507/79),
- Mr Schwartzberg, Mr Glinne, Mr B. Friederich, Mr Pisani, Mrs Roudy and Mr Lezzi, on behalf of the Socialist Group (Doc. 1-508/79),

all being on the occupation of the United States Embassy in Teheran by Iranian students; and by

- Mrs Clwyd, Mr Glinne, Mr Caborn, Mr Megahy, Mr Hume, Mr Seefeld, Mr Griffiths, Mr Rogers, Mr Pelikan, Mr van Minnen, Mr Hänsch, Mr Estier, Mrs Groes, Mr Zagari, Mr O'Leary and Mr Abens, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the external services of the BBC (Doc. 1-509/79).

The reasons supporting these requests are contained in the documents concerned.

The vote on these requests will be taken at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

I call Mr Romualdi.

Mr Romualdi — (I) Madam President, I should like to ask what has happened to a question I submitted at the end of the last part-session about the occupation of the Embassy at Teheran. I followed this up with a letter addressed to you personally and drawing Parliament's attention to this very serious episode in international affairs. As I have heard nothing more about it or seen any reference to it in the documents, I should like to know why, because, at the end of the present part-session, I propose to ask you a question by letter and to table a question here to enable Parliament to make a statement on this incredible and grave event.

President. — Mr Romualdi, I have not received your letter, or I should have acknowledged receiving it. I shall make inquiries into what has happened to it, and endeavour to answer it tomorrow — perhaps you can let me have a copy in the meantime.

Mr Romualdi. — (F) Thank you, Madam President.

President. — We shall now suspend the proceedings until 8 p.m.

The House will rise.

(The sitting was suspended at 6.40 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : MRS VEIL

President

President. — The sitting is resumed.

I call Lord Harmar-Nicholls on a point of order.

Lord Harmar-Nicholls. — Madam President, I want to know whether we are to have some explanation of the humbugging of Members of this Assembly this afternoon. We were bidden to return at 4 p.m., then the whisper went round we did not need to come until 5.30 p.m., then there was another whisper that we need not come until 8 p.m. Is there to be no explanation of the way people have been humbugged? I would have thought that we ought to know why we cannot keep to our timetable. It does look as though that this is not a Parliament but a charade, and where it is not a parliamentary charade it is a bear garden where a few people get into corners to share out the honey while everybody else is excluded.

(Interruptions)

I really do believe that after giving the Committee on the Rules of Procedure three months to prepare its report we ought to accept its decisions. But can we not have some explanation as to why we have been humbugged about this afternoon's timetable?

(Cries)

President. — Lord Harmar-Nicholls, I gave that explanation to the House at six o'clock. Please refer to the report of proceedings.

(Applause)

I have received a motion for a resolution tabled by Lord Douro on behalf of the European Democratic Group, with request for urgent debate pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on political kidnapping in Spain (Doc. 1-511/79).

The reasons supporting the request are contained in the document concerned.

The vote on this request will be taken at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

At the request of its authors, the vote on the urgency of the motion for a resolution on the external services of the BBC (Doc. 1-509/79), which was to take place tomorrow morning, is held over as the motion has had to be revised.

11. *Deadline for tabling amendments*

President. — We decided yesterday that amendments to reports and motions for resolutions on the agenda should be tabled, at the latest, by 6 p.m. on the day before they are put to the House. Since the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Lange on behalf

President

of the Committee on Budgets, on convergence, was only adopted this afternoon, I propose that, by way of exception, the deadline for tabling amendments to this motion for a resolution be fixed at noon tomorrow.

Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

12. *Amendments to certain Rules of Procedure of Parliament*
(vote)

President. — The next item is the vote on the motion for a resolution contained in the *Nord report* (Doc. 1-404/79) and the *supplementary Nord report* (Doc. 1-510/79), on *urgent amendments to the Rules of Procedure*.

I would remind the House that, pursuant to Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure, only the vote on the motion for a resolution will require a vote in favour by the majority of the Members of Parliament to be adopted, i.e. 206; the other votes will be by simple majority.

On Rule 7B (new) I have Amendment No 8 tabled by Mr Glinne and Mrs Vayssade on behalf of the Socialist Group:

1. The term of office of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors shall be one year, renewable by acclamation of Parliament.

I put the amendment to the vote.

Amendment No 8 is rejected.

I put Rule 7B to the vote.

Rule 7B is adopted.

I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — (I) Madam President, with reference to what was said this afternoon and what we told the Group chairmen and the Bureau, I give notice that our group, or at least ten Members, will request that the vote be taken by roll call on three things: Rule 12, Rule 14 and Rule 29, with the briefest explanations of vote to say why. I now make a request in advance for a vote by roll call on Rule 12; my colleague, Mr Bonde will give the explanation of vote when you call him.

President. — We shall vote next on Rule 12, on which I have received a request for a roll-call vote. I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (I) Madam President, does the roll-call vote cover the whole of Rule 12 or only part?

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — During the course of Mr Nord's supplementary report I withdrew my amendment No

9 on the understanding we were to have a separate vote on whether the words 'a political group' were to be deleted or not. Can we first of all vote on whether Rule 12 in the Nord original report will stand with the deletion of the words 'a political group or' and then, depending on the result of the vote, have a roll-call vote on the rule as a whole? I was promised that this would take place if I withdrew my amendment.

President. — I call Mr Nord.

Mr Nord, rapporteur. — (NL) Madam President, in the supplementary report that has now, I believe, been distributed to everyone in all the languages, it is proposed that our original proposal for Rule 12 (2) be changed. You can do this in one vote but — and the same thing will happen with the other Rules — if there are Members of this Parliament who want to vote separately on a part of the text and then on the rest it is, in my opinion, difficult to refuse them.

I have just said in my oral explanation that the same request will be made for the other Rules in various quarters. I do not see why that should not be allowed — it should be, to my mind, if it is requested — so that Members can therefore vote in the way requested by Mr Patterson, in other words separately on specific words in the amendment and thereafter by a roll-call vote on the Rule as a whole. I do not think that this can be agreed in one case and not in another. So it will probably be quickest and most convenient to do as Mr Patterson proposes. Then we shall know exactly what we are voting on.

President. — I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — (I) Madam President, all Members now have the translated text and when some of those who were not present this afternoon heard what had happened, they asked me to withdraw the request for a roll-call vote on Rule 12. With some regret, I hasten to do so with an explanation of vote on that Rule.

(Applause)

It was originally decided that 21 should be the number of Members necessary to propose an alteration to the agenda and for the submission of an alteration by a group. Now Mr Patterson is asking for a separate vote and for the words 'political group' to be deleted despite the fact that today's agreement provided for ten Members or a Group to have the right to propose one alteration to the agenda.

In anticipation of our voting against the motion by Mr Patterson and the new one tabled by the rapporteur, we must insist on a group or ten Members being, in any case accorded formal status or the right to propose alterations to the agenda, albeit restricted to one amendment only. It is essential that this should be done or, alternatively, that a group or ten Members should be recognized as having the constitutional status to propose alterations.

Bonino

We believe that a provision requiring 21 Members for the submission of alterations to the agenda constitutes discrimination, in that there are 21 Members in virtually every group of this Parliament except our own. It also discriminates between the groups as a whole in that there would be groups of more than 21 members (those in List A), groups of 10 Member (List B) and the non-attached, who probably do not qualify for List B and are purely and simply List C.

Because this is an issue which is so closely involved with the rights of Members as such and with those of the minorities, I wanted a roll call so that each one of us could decide in favour of giving fresh consideration, without haste or preconceived ideas, to the anomalies that continue to exist and to do this as part of the general revision of the Rules.

In any case, the Members of my group and other Members have asked me to inquire whether ten Members are willing to stand up — and I now do this in the name of my group — to request a roll-call vote. I feel sure this will be agreed.

(Ten Members rise; cries of protest)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — *(D)* Madam President, in my opinion the disturbance in the Chamber is out of place at this time. I have asked to speak in order to make things clearer for the vote. If I understand Mrs Bonino rightly, she is referring to the intended alteration to line 7. Is that right, Emma?

(Laughter)

If that is so, then we must have the roll-call vote requested by Mr Patterson for the first half. The second half of the vote would then really relate to the alteration to line 9 because for this a general agreement has been reached. So may I ask you, Madam President, to be kind enough to tell the House whether the roll call vote that Mrs Bonino has requested ...

(Interruptions)

I am quite willing to do what is necessary. I am just somewhat confused by this separate vote. It can surely only be a question of an objection to the words 'by a political group' in line 7, which is why Mr Patterson proposes a separate vote. But it could also be that Mr Patterson is asking for a separate vote because of the wording in line 8. Those are the two parts. I would ask you, Madam President, to remove any doubt before we vote on the part on which we have a roll-call vote.

Mr Pannella. — *(I)* Madam President, just an explanation of vote. I think we are again in danger of losing the atmosphere of give-and-take and near unanimity we had earlier.

Risum abundat. I hope we can start taking decisions soon. As far as I am concerned, I shall vote against all

the proposals by the rapporteur and others which are calculated to diminish the rights of Members both of this Parliament and of the minority. I shall vote against, as I am entitled to, but I will not waste anybody's time. I trust the majority groups will, in the same spirit, honour the agreement we made three hours ago; otherwise, we shall once again be in a situation of conflict and confusion in which we shall have to make our own position clear. I, too, was in favour of the roll-call vote for the sake of the dissentients in all groups, because in a roll call they can stand up and be counted and show the courage of their convictions. Our very dear Danish friends do not understand this and that is their privilege. As far as we are concerned, the roll call does not matter because everyone knows our attitude but it is important for so many who have expressed disagreement with the groups.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — *(F)* Madam President, the Liberal and Democratic Group will vote for Rule 12 (2) in the wording proposed in Mr Nord's supplementary report which has been issued to us.

On that point we would like to make a first comment and that is that a compromise is always difficult to reach, as we found this afternoon. In the framework of this compromise we were trying to ensure, at the technical level, that there could no longer be any repetition of what we went through yesterday in the way of alterations to the agenda. We were also — and this is the second alteration proposed — trying to enable the minorities to make a proposal or an item on the agenda. This seems reasonable, fair and balanced.

We regret two things, firstly that it should be thought necessary to hold a roll-call vote on these points which are simple, if allowance is made for the balance to which I have just referred, and secondly that some of us, who took part in the negotiations this afternoon, should want to reconsider one of the two points bringing the whole thing into balance.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Madam President, Mrs Dekker and I are supporting the possibility of holding a roll-call vote on the understanding — I stress this point — that we should vote once by roll call on the whole proposed amendment of Rule 12 (2), including Mr Nord's latest proposal.

If Mr Patterson persists in his request for a two-part vote, I believe that it will be sufficient to take the first vote — the part vote — by sitting and standing and then hold a roll-call vote on Rule 12 (2) as a whole.

President. — I call Mrs Vayssade.

Mrs Vayssade. — (F) On behalf of the Socialist Group I wish to say that we shall stay with the balance reached this afternoon and that the deletion of the words 'by a political group or' in the seventh line was in fact associated with the condition that this right of the political groups should be included later on.

We are therefore in favour of the whole text as proposed by the committee. I am a little surprised that it should be Mr Patterson who should propose a roll-call vote because I thought I understood, at the committee meeting, that he agreed to this wording.

President. — I call Mr Luster.

Mr Luster. — (D) Madam President, I would be very grateful for clarification regarding the German wording. I do not know whether the text in the other languages is the same but in the German version it does not tally with the agreement. In the German version it says:

... 'doch haben eine Fraktion oder mindestens zehn Mitglieder das Recht, auf jeder Tagung einen Änderungsvorschlag zur Tagesordnung zu unterbreiten'.

That should or can be read as though they can table a proposal for the alteration of the whole of the agenda. But the intention — and that is what we agreed — was one item on the agenda. To be correct, the German wording should therefore read: ... 'auf jeder Tagung einen Änderungsvorschlag zu einem Punkt der Tagesordnung zu unterbreiten'. For me it would be sufficient if that were minuted and accepted as correct by the rapporteur. On the other hand I would request that the text be corrected in accordance with our agreement.

President. — I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (I) Madam President, like Mr Luster, I think what we now have in writing is very different from what was decided today. If you have a mind to, you can interpret the text in several ways and that is what the House is doing at the moment.

We did not intend this Rule to prevent the political groups from proposing amendments in whole or in part; all we wanted to do was to stop them proposing more than one. I cannot imagine that, if a group proposed an amendment to delete the whole agenda, the House would vote for it.

The Communist Group abides by the outcome of today's committee meeting and will vote in favour of the new version of Rule 12 (2) as proposed by the rapporteur, Mr Nord. I am amazed that Mr Patterson is trying to vary the agreement which we reached and endangering the vote on this version.

President. — I call Mr Simpson on a point of order.

Mr Simpson. — Madam President, we may have another ten votes this evening, some of them by roll-

call. I wonder if you would be prepared to follow the same course as you followed during the budget debate and hear explanations of vote only at the end of the vote. We have already had several; they do tend to take an inordinate length of time and people will be repeating themselves time after time unless they can have one explanation of vote at the end of the evening after all the votes have been completed.

(Applause from various quarters on the right)

President. — Mr Simpson, the agreement that was reached has made it possible to simplify the debate considerably: a large number of amendments have been withdrawn. The time this has saved will enable us to hear the explanations of voting in the normal way.

I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — (I) Madam President, I am rather surprised at Mr Luster's interpretation. If a group of ten Members can propose an alteration, what difference does the type of alteration make? Or to ask for the deletion of one item or two? It is still an amendment. I don't understand why Mr Luster has raised the question. Obviously, a political group or ten Members will table an amendment to the agenda to show what, they as a group, think about one item or about the entire agenda; in either case, it is an alteration and I don't know what Mr Luster is so afraid of.

As far as I am concerned, a group can propose an alteration on one or every item on the agenda and that is no problem, surely.

President. — I call Mr Nord.

Mr Nord, rapporteur. — (NL) I am pleased, on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, to confirm that the interpretation given by Mrs Bonino of our new proposal regarding Rule 12 is correct. That is precisely the way it is and it also answers Mr Luster's question. What is more, we agreed the new Rule 12 unanimously in the committee although that, of course, does not rob anyone in this Assembly of the right to request a separate vote on two parts of it. But it is a fact that Rule 12 in its present form was a part of the general compromise and those that want to honour that compromise ought to accept the new Rule 12 in this form.

(Applause in various quarters)

President. — Before taking the vote, may I make it clear, to avoid any misunderstanding, that there will be three votes: one on the words 'by a political group, or'; a second vote on the amendment comprising the addition of the words 'on the understanding that a political group or at least ten Members shall have the right to propose, at each part-session, one alteration to the draft agenda'; and a third on the Rule as a whole.

President

If I have correctly understood the spirit in which Mr Pannella spoke just now on the request for the roll-call vote, we may vote by sitting and standing on the first two amendments, and by roll-call on the Rule as a whole.

I put to the vote the first paragraph, concerning Rule 12 (2), in Doc. 1-510/79.

This wording is adopted.

I put to the vote the second paragraph concerning that Rule. This wording is adopted.

We shall now vote by roll call on Rule 12 as a whole.

(Cries of protest)

I wish to check that the request for a roll-call vote is still supported by ten Members.

(Eleven Members rose — Uproar)

President. — I call Mr Damseaux.

Mr Damseaux. — *(F)* Madam President, I stood up a moment ago to request a roll-call vote and I want to explain my reasons. Although agreeing in substance with the rapporteur and my own group, Madam President, I feel that when major conflicts arise in this Parliament, Members should not hide themselves in the anonymous herd of 'fors' or 'against' and that the elector has a right to know, by name, how each one of us voted.

(Applause in various quarters)

President. — The roll-call vote will begin with Mr Lezzi, whose name has been drawn by lot.

I ask the Secretary-General to call the roll.

(The roll call was taken)

President. — Does anyone else wish to vote?

The ballot is closed.

Here is the result of the vote.

Number of Members voting : 246.

Abstentions : 15

For : 199

Against : 32

Rule 12 as amended by the two previous votes is adopted.

The following voted *in favour* :

Adam, Adonnino, van Aerssen, Agnelli, Aigner, Alber, Albers, von Alemann, Ansquer, Antoniozzi, Arndt, Baduel Glorioso, Bangemann, Barbagli, Barbarella, Barbi, Berkhouwer, Bersani, Beumer, von Bismarck, Bonaccini, Boot, Boyes, Caborn, Calvez, Cardia, Caretoni Romagnoli, Carossino, Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Cecovini, Cera-
vollo, Chambeiron, Charzat, Clinton, Clwyd, Cohen, Colleselli, Colombo, Combe, Cresson, Dalsass, Damette, Damseaux, d'Angelosante, de Keersmaecker, Delatte, Deleau, Delorozoy, Delors, De March, Denis, De Pasquale, Diana, Dido', Dienesch, Diligent, Druon, Enright, Estgen, Estier, Fanti, Fellermaier, Fernandez,

Ferrero, Filippi, Flesch, Friedrich Bruno, Frischmann, Früh, Gabert, Gaiotti de Biase, Gallagher, Galland, Gatto, Geurtsen, Ghergo, Giavazzi, Giummarra, Glinne, Gonella, Goppel, Griffiths, Van der Gun, Haagerup, Habsburg, Hänsch, von Hassel, Helms, Henckens, Herklotz, Herman, Hoffmann Karl-Heinz, Hume, Irmer, Janssen van Raay, Jaquet, Jonker, Josselin, Jürgens, Klepsch, Lange, Langes, Lemmer, Lenz, Leonardi, Lezzi, Ligios, Lima, Linde, Linkohr, Louwes, Lückner, Macario, McCartin, Maher, Maj-Weggen, Majonica, Malangre, de la Malène, Martin Maurice, Martin Simone, Martinet, Mertens, Michel, Moreau Jacques, Moreau Louise, Müller-Hermann, Narducci, Nielsen Jørgen Brøndlund, Nielsen Tove, Nord, Notenboom, Nothomb, Nyborg, O'Donnell, Oehler, Orlandi, d'Ormesson, Papapietro, Pedini, Pelikan, Penders, Percheron, Peters, Pfennig, Pflimlin, Pininfarina, Pintat, Piquet, Pisani, Pöttering, Poirier, Pruvot, Pürsten, Rabbethge, Rey, Rinsche, Rogers, Roudy, Rumor, Ryan, Sable, Sälzer, Sarre, Sassano, Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg, Schall, Schieler, Schleicher, Schmid, Schön Karl, Schön Konrad, Schwencke, Scrivener, Seefeld, Seitlinger, Simonnet, Spautz, Spinelli, Squarcialupi, Sutra, Tindemans, Tolman, Travaglini, Vandewiele, Van Miert, Vaysade, Vergeer, Verges, Verhaegen, Vernimmen, Veronesi, Verroken, Visentini, Walz, Wawrzik, Weber, Wettig, Zecchino.

The following voted *against* :

Almirante, Blaney, Bøgh, Bonde, Bonino, Boserup, Buttafuoco, Capanna, Castellina, Coppieters, Davern, Dekker, De Valera, Douro, Ewing, De Goede, Groes, Harris, Hord, Howell, Macciocchi, Van Minnen, Modiano, Muntingh, Paisley, Pannella, Patterson, Petronio, Provan, Romualdi, Skovmand, Turner.

The following *abstained* :

Arfè, Bocklet, Ferri, Friedrich Ingo, Fuchs, Hahn, Jackson Christopher, Jackson Robert, Köhler, Luster, Moreland, Newton Dunn, Nordlohne, Seligman, Woltjer.

We now come to Rule 14.

I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Madam President, in this regard I should just like to draw to the attention of Parliament the situation insofar as the Technical Coordination Group is concerned : that is that we are against raising from 10 to 21 the number required for requesting an urgent debate. The reason we do this is that if it is held that we are, all of us, perhaps most of the time responsible people elected here, then surely 10 members requesting at any time that a debate be treated as urgent should be more than sufficient. It is, indeed, in a sense a sacrificing of some of the individual rights of the Members of this or any other parliament to say that because we have moved up from 198 Members to 410 we therefore need to double the number that is required to seek an urgent debate ; it seems to run counter to all reason and logic and, indeed, borders on the insane. Surely ten, as has been laid down and applied here in the past, should be regarded as sufficient on this occasion ? I would say

Blaney

on behalf of the Technical Coordination Group that not only are we against this but, in order to underline the importance that we attach to this particular ruling and that no change should be made in the manner proposed in the Nord report, we shall be asking for a vote by roll-call. Now, do not — just bear with me for a moment — form the opinion that everything here tonight has been predetermined by my group as being subject to a roll-call vote: this and one other, on Rule 29, are all that there will be, and that has already been conveyed to the heads of the groups and to the President, I understand. So don't have any belief that we are merely trying to delay this House: we are not. We believe sincerely that 21 is an unreasonable number to demand for this particular purpose, and it is for that reason and to give Members from all groups who may wish to vote in favour of retaining the rule and retaining 10 as the requisite number the opportunity, as we shall be having the opportunity, in that roll-call vote to register in no uncertain way our views on this particular matter.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (*F*) Madam President, I would like to point out to the Members that we, the 21 Members who are non-attached or belong to the Group for the Technical Co-Ordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members, have so far tabled only two proposals with a request for urgent debate. If there was any abuse of the old Rules of Procedure, Madam President, it was the work of the majority groups, the same groups that drew up a different agenda.

You want to increase the number of Members required to table a request for urgent debate, but that requires only a nine-minute discussion under Rule 14. Would it not be a possible asset for Parliament to allow ten Members, if the case arise, to request an urgent debate? Are not you, Mr Scott-Hopkins, a past master in the daily tabling of requests for urgent debate? Do we overdo it? Perhaps, if you will allow me, the proposal should have been exactly the reverse — to disrupt the agenda less.

I do not understand, Madam President, what this approach is supposed to save. These are imagined fears set out in a proposal that is, forgive me, unintelligent and irrelevant.

My vote will therefore be against.

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — Madam President, this Rule only deals with a request, and surely, in the interests of democracy and in the interests of individuals in this House not associated with any group, this House should be willing to hear the request of 10 Members who are

from different countries and hold different views but who are united as independents to put a request to this Assembly. It is only a request, and I think the original Rule should stand.

President. — I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Madam Chairman, a question through you, because I did not quite understand what Mr Blaney said.

When Mr Blaney recently gave his explanation of vote and referred to Rule 12, he said in fact he was going to vote against this. If this is so, I am completely confused, because in the meeting of the Rules of Procedure Committee that we spent three hours on this afternoon, the Technical Coordination Group, acting through Mrs Bonino, said that they were not going to oppose it and that they were going to withdraw their amendments on this point. Now if this is the case, this is a complete turn-around which has got me very confused; because the Socialist members of the Rules of Procedure Committee would have been asking for the number to be 10 anyhow, but in the event of that group's saying that they did not want to switch to 10, they only wanted to stick at 21, then we let it go by default. If they say one thing this afternoon and one thing tonight, then what on earth are they doing, Madam President? Please can Mr Blaney tell a poor innocent person like myself what he is up to and what he is really going to do? Can I ask the question through you, Madam President?

President. — I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Madam President, I am sorry if Mr Rogers has got the wrong impression. This was not agreed in the manner in which Mr Rogers has understood it to be, and Mrs Bonino who was there as a member of this committee, will undoubtedly clarify that position herself. But might I just repeat, in order to try and clarify the minds, not only of Mr Rogers but of others, that there is a principle involved in Rules 12, 14 and 29 which we wish to impress on the Parliament and, we hope, might even change. We want Members to have the opportunity of changing it, if they feel as we do about any of those that yet remain. Rules 14 and 29 particularly, and I would say to Mr Rogers I am sorry if he seems to have taken it up wrongly. I was present at that meeting, though not participating in it, and I have no doubts, not only of what I recollect but of what I wrote down as to what our stand was.

We are not here, as I said earlier, to have a whole series of roll-call votes and keep you here all night. There is just one other to come after this and that is all.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede — (NL) Madam President, I find Rule 14 and its proposed amendment a clear-cut example of the lack of flexibility on the part of the big groups with regard to the minorities in this Parliament. What are the facts? Under the present Rules of Procedure, ten Members can table a request for a subject to be treated as urgent. As Mr Pannella and others have said, neither the Group for Technical Co-ordination nor the Non-attached have abused this possibility. There have been three or four attempts made to have a problem which we regard as urgent dealt with by urgent debate. Every time the request has been turned down but one or two months later — I am referring to the hunger debate and the energy debate that we will be having this week — another group has tabled the same proposal. That does not matter desperately but the manoeuvring, nevertheless, to raise the number required to 21 is really to my mind, beneath the dignity of a Parliament such as this.

For what are the facts? Even if ten Members table a request for urgent debate you can still turn it down, as you repeatedly do. And why should the limit be raised to 21? I agree with those who have pointed out that it is precisely the big groups that misuse the possibility of putting a number of subjects on the agenda by the urgent debate procedure and so overload it and thus postpone debates on important issues. Those are the people who make wrongful use of this provision. I can see Mr Bangemann laughing but he is wrong to laugh because what is the truth, Madam President? We have had urgent debates agreed on a storm in the Caribbean, a forest fire and its effects in the south of France, a fire in a printing works in Malta and an earthquake on a limited scale in central Italy. All these were requested by the big groups. And when complaints are made here that, through our fault, the agenda is so often weighed down by procedural questions and other proposals then, in my view, that criticism applies first and foremost to the big groups.

In a word, Madam President, I am against this proposed amendment and I invite the other Members to vote against it as well.

President. — I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — (I) Madam President, Mr Rogers seems to be accusing me of changing my mind between this afternoon and this evening. If he is listening, I want to make clear to him, first that we have said since this morning that, even though we reached agreement, it was clear that we would vote against; I am sure this has been clear to all the group chairmen since this morning. Secondly, we are discussing Rule 14, not Rule 12. Thirdly, in Committee Mr Rogers voted against Rule 14, just as I voted against Rule 29 and the Nord Report in its entirety.

We believe that we ought not to prevent this amendment from going through, despite the fact that we continue to dislike an amendment on these lines.

President. — I call Mr Ferri.

Mr Ferri. — (I) Madam President, speaking for myself, I shall abstain from this vote, as I did in the case of Rule 12, because of the importance I attach to the agreement which was reached and because I regard Rule 36 as the crux of the matter. That Rule deals with the right of ten members, drawn from at least three countries, to form a political group. But there is no consistency in a set of Rules which then goes on to prevent such a group of ten members from exercising powers to which, in my view, they are far more entitled than a given number of members of a duly constituted group. That is why I abstained from the previous vote and will abstain in this one and the next ones in which this issue is involved. The reason why I abstain and do not vote against is that I wish to do nothing which detracts from the value of the agreement reached this evening.

President. — I call Mr Romualdi.

Mr Romualdi. — (I) We did not take part today in the work done on the Rule amendments by the rapporteur, Mr Nord. We shall vote against this change because we think it is, as Mr Ferri has just said, absurd to give ten members the right (and we fully agree they should have it) to form a group and then prevent them from making a request for urgent debate. This is a fantastic blunder. Apart from anything else, ten members are a significant number of members of this House and they ought to have the elementary right to consider a particular question to be one of urgency and draw it to the attention of the whole House. It is inconceivable that a group of this description should not have this right or be prevented from bringing up an issue of this kind. We shall vote against to ensure that our work is not interfered with and everyone appreciates the importance of our role.

President. — We shall now take the vote.

The roll call will begin with Mr Tuckman, whose name has been drawn by lot.

I ask the Secretary-General to call the roll.

(The roll call was taken)

Does anyone else wish to vote?

The ballot is closed.

Here is the result of the vote.

Number of Members voting: 274

Abstention: 1

For 233

Against: 48

Rule 14 is adopted.

I put to the vote Rule 28.

Rule 28 is adopted.

President

The following voted in favour :

Adonnino, van Aerssen, Agnelli, Aigner, Alber, Albers, von Alemann, Antoniozzi, Arndt, Bangemann, Barbagli, Barbarella, Barbi, Battersby, Beazley, Berkhouwer, Bersani, Bethell, Beumer, von Bismarck, Blumenfeld, Bocklet, Bonaccini, Boot, Brookes, Calvez, Cardia, Carettoni, Romagnoli, Carossino, Cassanmagnago, Cerretti, Catherwood, Cecovini, Ceravolo, Charzat, Clinton, Colleselli, Colombo, Combe Costanzo, Cottrell, de Courcy Ling, Cresson, Curry, Dalsass, Dalziel, Damseaux, d'Angelosante, Delatte, Delorozoy, Delors, de Pasquale, Diana, Diligent, Douro, Estgen, Estier, Fanti, Faure Maurice, Fergusson, de Ferranti, Ferrero, Filippi, Forster, Forth, Friedrich Bruno, Friedrich Ingo, Früh, Fuchs, Gabert, Gaiotti de Biase, Galland, Gatto, Geurtsen, Ghergo, Giavazzi, Giumarra, Glinne, Gonella, Goppel, van der Gun, Haagerup, Habsburg, Hänsch, Hahn, Harmar-Nicholls, Harris, von Hassel, Helms, Hensckens, Herklotz, Herman, Hoffmann Karl-Heinz, Hooper, Hopper, Hord, Howell, Hutton, Irmer, Jackson Christopher, Jackson Robert, Janssen van Raay, Jaquet, Johnson, Jonker, Josselin, Jürgens, Kellett-Bowman Edward, Klepsch, Klinkenborg, Köhler, Lange, Langes, Lemmer, Lenz, Leonardi, Lezzi, Ligios, Lima, Linde, Linkohr, Lizin, Loderer, Louwes, Lückner, Luster, McCartin, Maher, Maij-Weggen, Majonica, Malangré, Marshall, Martin Simone, Martinet, Mertens, Michel, Moorhouse, Moreau Jacques, Moreau Louise, Moreland, Müller-Hermann, Narducci, Newton-Dunn, Nielsen Jørgen Brøndlund, Nielsen Tove, Nord, Nordlohne, Notenboom, Nothomb, Nyborg, O'Donnell, Oehler, O'Hagan, Orlandi, d'Ormesson, Papapietro, Patterson, Pearce, Pelikan, Penders, Percheron, Pfennig, Pflimlin, Pininfarina, Pintat, Pisani, Plumb, Pottering, Prag, Price, Prout, Provan, Pruvot, Pürsten, Purvis, Rabethge, Rey, Rinsche, Roberts, Roudy, Rumor, Ryan, Sablé, Sälzer, Sarre, Sassano, Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg, Schall, Schieler, Schinzel, Schmitt, Schön Karl, Schön Konrad, Schwencke, Scott-Hopkins, Scrivener, Seefeld, Seitlinger, Simmonds, Simpson, Spautz, Spinelli, Stewart-Clark, Sutra, Taylor John David, Taylor John Mark, Tolman, Travaglini, Tuckman, Turner, Tyrrell, Vandewiele, Vanneck, Vaysade, Vergeer, Verhaegen, Veronesi, Verroken, Walz, Warner, Wawrzik, Welsh, Wettig, von Wogau, Zecchino.

The following voted against :

Almirante, Ansquer, Blaney, Bøgh, Bonde, Bonino, Boyes, Buchou, Buttafuoco, Caborn, Capanna, Castellina, Chambeiron, Clwyd, Cohen, Coppieters, Damette, Dekker, Deleau, de March, Denis, Duon, Enright, Ewing, Fernandez, Frischmann, Gendebien, de Goede, Griffiths, Groes, Hume, Krouwel-Vlam, Macciocchi, Martin Maurice, van Minnen, Muntingh, Paisley, Pannella, Petronio, Piquet, Poirier, Rogers.

The following abstained :

Romualdi, Seligman, Skovmand, Vergès, Woltjer.

We now come to Rule 29.

I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — (1) Madam President, on this amendment we are all deeply divided. We ourselves are against it for a number of reasons. The first is that, if we pass it, it will create a highly anomalous situation, because the Rules would empower the President to

give priority in the vote to one amendment with the result that all other amendments would fall. The second is that Rule 29 already provides that the President shall decide whether an amendment is admissible. Finally, in order to ensure that the proceedings are properly conducted, Rule 8 (which, in my view was wrongly used by the President tonight) vests the President with the power to declare all amendments to have fallen.

If we pass this amendment, we shall have created a 'Presidential Parliament', which is absurd and goes far beyond the powers of discretion possessed by the Chair in any kind of Parliament whatsoever. I cannot imagine how the President would disentangle himself from the maze of Rules consisting of Rule 8, Rule 29 (2), first paragraph, and Rule 29 (5).

The only check on the President's powers provided under the amendment consists — here we go again! — of an objection by 21 members. The previous draft of the Nord Report provided that '21 members or a group' could object to the proposed procedure. The agreement which was proposed to us sought to remove the words 'a group' which, if I may give you some real news, is once more, for the Nth time, our group.

We are in the same boat as the List A groups who have more than 21 members and can object to the procedure. Then there is a political group composed of ten Members which, of course, will not be able to. This discrimination can hardly be justified. Nor is it much of a novelty since, in fact any group can object unless it is in List B, with ten members. In view of the enormous powers already possessed by the Chair under Rule 8 and Rule 29 (2), with the result that only 120 out of 5 000 amendments submitted were declared admissible, it would be wrong to add to them, especially since it already has all the power it needs. It is the height of discrimination not to recognize ten Members of this Parliament — albeit non-attached — as having the same seriousness of purpose and political standing as the big groups. It looks as though seriousness of purpose was the criterion: if you are more than 21 in number, you are quite serious; if you have a little under 21, you can't be! It must also be borne in mind that the Non-attached Group, plus the Technical Group, do not, at the moment, total twenty. So they did their sums well: the Non-attached plus the Technical Coordination Group total twenty but the amendment requires a minimum of twenty-one!

The addition of this new provision would make it impossible to have any sort of argument or political debate in this Parliament, at least, under the Rules of Procedure.

We are therefore opposed to this amendment and request a vote by roll call. In any event, I hope that, when the general Rules revision takes place, all these anomalies and ambiguities will be cleared up, so that

Bonino

we can have a consistent and concise set of Rules as the basic law for the President and us individual Members and not just for the big groups.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(F)* Madam President, if our democracies were fair and frank and if we were judged by our countries and our electors on what we do we could leave you to vote on these proposals without saying a word, secure in the knowledge that it is not from the standpoint of a minority but from that of Parliament that we are in process of doing a bad job.

If I happened to be associated with a majority or an official group I would be worried, Mr Nord, if the amendment proposed by your committee were to be adopted, about tabling at the same time as a text an amendment that is extremely close to my own text, so as to exclude from the debate any uncontrolled amendment and so as to keep the discussion within the possible choices adopted by the authors of the motion for a resolution. This is why, in our parliamentary traditions, the President normally has the difficult and discretionary responsibility of selecting the amendment that departs furthest from the text, the purpose being to have a discussion covering the widest possible range of opinions and contributions to opinions.

Whereas in fact, for a Parliament where it is not necessarily in bad taste to hold a debate on certain occasions, the proposing of this solution will, I believe, result once again in detracting from our discussions and therefore detracting from those who win the day in the debate. A motion for a resolution that has to be compared with the closest amendment to it is one which is measured, so to speak, against itself. It rules out the democratic contribution, democratic dialectic. To me it does not seem a particularly revolutionary amendment. I do not think, Madam President, that Parliament is committing a very grave deed. Unfortunately, the very grave deeds are being committed every evening. This evening is perhaps the only one that none are being committed because this evening, at least, we are voting in accordance with the Rules of Procedure whereas up to now we have very often been voting against them.

It is for that reason that, in all conscience, I shall be voting against this proposal. I believe that it helps no-one and that it will absolutely not help Parliament to have speedier and clearer debates. Our debates may perhaps continue, in the future, to interest the few young Members that are here sometimes, so it appears, as though they were at the theatre, appreciating the speeches of their colleagues for their style and not for what they say.

President. — I call Sir Peter Vanneck.

Sir Peter Vanneck. — Madam President, I am just a humble backbencher here but I would like to try and

change the tone and philosophy of this debate on the various amendments and so I am pleased to follow Mrs Bonino and Mr Pannella. I am fed up with the cant and hypocrisy which purports to sustain a minority which in my opinion is not cooperative and not constructive in the real work of this Parliament.

Why should a minority think it has a charismatic name that itself entitles it to vitiate all our endeavours? I believe that minorities should play a minor role; useful no doubt, but the tail should not wag the dog. Please, Madam President, until our colleagues become House-trained, let us not compromise. Let us in all further votes on these amendments, and looking forward to future revisions, on other future amendments that I am sure that we will need, crush all that can interfere with majority decisions on the conduct of our business.

(Applause from various quarters in the centre and on the right)

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr de Goede. — *(NL)* Madam President, may I say to the previous speaker that naturally the majority decides but, for me, the essence of democracy does not lie solely in the fact that the majority decides but also in the manner with which the majority deals with minorities and their rights and shows respect for minorities. Yes, Mr Tolman, that is the truth and if the previous speaker says that the minority must not terrorise the majority, he is making the mistake of sweeping all the minorities that are here into one and the same heap. It must surely have become clear to you that I do not belong to those that seek to make their point by obstructive tactics and by tabling 5000 amendments, but to those who say to all majorities here: you should stand up for the rights of the minorities. You must not give free exercise to your power and you must honour the rights of others. The policy of law must prevail — not just the policy of power.

I must also say that I find this an odd amendment. It must be one thing or the other. If you have the right — as you argued you had yesterday — to amend Rule 8 in order to counter obstructive methods then you do not need this amendment. Yesterday I disputed that right because Rule 8 says that, in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure, you must direct the activities of Parliament and you have just failed to do that in conformity with the Rules. I therefore hold it against Mr Bangemann and you that, yesterday, you took a vote in conflict with the Rules of Procedure. You violated the Rules. So if you apply Rule 8 rightly, you do not need this amendment and if you feel you do need this amendment then you are implicitly admitting that yesterday a wrong decision was taken. We shall vote against this proposal.

President. — I call Mr Ferri.

Mr Ferri. — (I) Madam President, I shall abstain from this vote as well. I do so not because I am against this definition of the President's powers, which seem to me to be fair and reasonable for the conduct of our proceedings, but because I think that, if the President's decision can be negated by an objection from the floor, there can be no possible question of withholding the power to object from an organized group and allowing it only to at least 21 members. The reasons are clear but the anomaly is too great and I shall abstain.

President. — I call Mr Luster.

Mr Luster. — (D) Madam President, Mrs Bonino has explained to us why she feels she cannot vote for this Rule and its amendment. I have often admired Mrs Bonino, but this time she disappointed me. She has worked out that ten Members from the Group for Technical Co-ordination and ten non-attached Members makes 20, whereas 21 are required. Why is a young woman so rigid and inflexible in her thinking and why has she no faith in her own ability to win over, in a 410-strong Assembly, one or other of us or even several to her right way of thinking — if it is right? That is one of the things I wanted to say. You must have more confidence, Mrs Bonino.

The second is that, in Germany, we have a brand of cigarettes advertised with the slogan, 'It always costs a little more to have a special flavour'. Perhaps you would accept that comment.

(Laughter)

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — Madam President, it is quite clear from Rule 29 that you have the authority to deal with amendments that you do not want this House to discuss. What I fail to understand is, by virtue of what rule are you going to interpret these amendments and decide how they deviate from the original text. That will cause great confusion and will lead to numerous points of order. I do not think that this amendment has been thought out at all. I deeply regret the tenor of the remarks from one of my colleagues from the United Kingdom. I do not think that minorities should be crushed. I think that minorities should be heard. And I think they should be persuaded and listened to and then voted down, and that they should abide by the democratic decision. I find, that when certain people are in a minority they cry for certain liberties, but when they are in the majority they attempt to crush those liberties. I have had the opportunity of being both sides of the house. I was in a house where the majority agreed with me and I was in a house where the majority did not agree with me, and I think that the time has come when this House should say, yes we will consider amendments from at least 10 Members, but if we throw them out, if the

President rules them out of order, they will have to abide by that ruling. The more this House tries to obstruct free debate, the more its rules will be rebelled against, and that is a fact.

President. — We now come to the vote.

The roll call will begin with Mrs Macciocchi, whose name has been drawn by lot.

The vote may commence.

I ask the Secretary-General to call the roll.

(The roll call was taken)

Does anyone else wish to vote?

The ballot is closed.

Here is the result of the vote.

Number of Members voting: 260

Abstentions: 24

For: 206

Against: 30.

Rule 29 is adopted.

The following voted *in favour*:

Adonnino, van Aerssen, Agnelli, Aigner, Alber, Albers, von Alemann, Arndt, Balfour, Bangemann, Barbagli, Barbi, Battersby, Beazley, Berkhouwer, Bersani, Bethell, v. Bismarck, Bocklet, Boot, Boyes, Brookes, Calvez, Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Catherwood, Cecovini, Clinton, Colleselli, Colombo, Combe, Cottrell, de Courcy Ling, Cresson, Curry Dalsass, Dalziel, Damseaux, Delatte, Delorozoy, Delors, Diana, Diligent, Douro, Enright, Estgen, Estier, Faure Maurice, Fellermaier, Fergusson, de Ferranti, Filippi, Flesch, Forster, Forth, Friedrich Bruno, Friedrich Ingo, Früh, Fuchs, Gabert, Geurtsen, Giavazzi, Giummarra, Glinne, Goppel, Griffiths, Van der Gun, Haagerup, Habsburg, Hänsch, Hahn, Harmar-Nicholls Harris, Von Hassel, Helms, Henckens, Herklotz, Herman, Hoffmann Karl-Heinz, Hooper, Hopper, Hord, Howell, Hutton, Irmer, Jackson Christopher, Jackson Robert, Janssen van Raay, Jaquet, Johnson, Jonker, Josselin, Jürgens, Kellett-Bowman Edward, Klepsch, Klinkenborg, Köhler, Lange, Langes, Lemmer Lenz, Ligios, Lima, Linde, Linkohr, Louwes, Lücker, Luster, McCartin, Maher, Maij-Weggen, Majonica, Malangre, Marshall, Martin Simone, Martinet, Mertens, Michel, Moorhouse, Moreau Jacques, Moreau Louise, Moreland, Müller-Hermann, Muntingh, Narducci, Newton Dunn, Nielsen Jørgen Brøndlund, Nielsen Tove, Nord, Nordlohne, Notenboom, Nothomb, Nyborg, Oehler, O'Hagan, Orlandi, d'Ormesson, Patterson, Pearce, Pedini, Pelikan, Penders, Percheron, Peters, Pfennig, Pflimlin, Pininfarina, Pintat, Pisani, Plumb, Pöttering, Prag, Price, Prout, Provan, Pruvot, Pürsten, Purvis, Rabbethge, Rey, Rinsche, Roberts, Rumor, Ryan, Sable, Sälzer, Salisch, Sarre, Sassano, Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg, Schall, Schieler, Schleicher, Schmid, Schön Karl, Schön Konrad, Schwencke, Scott-Hopkins, Scrivener, Seitlinger, Seligman, Simmonds, Simonnet, Simpson, Spautz, Spencer, Stewart-Clark, Sutra, Taylor John David, Taylor John Mark, Tindemans, Tolman, Tuckman, Turner, Tyrrell, Vandewiele, Vayssade, Verhægen, Verroken, Walz, Warner, Wawrzik, Weber, Welsh, von Wogau, Woltjer, Zecchino.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (*I*) Madam President, we feel obliged to vote against this, first of all because, so far as I recollect, a different wording was agreed in today's Rules Committee; second, because it is the very type of device we could never approve of, that is to say, a device which, while purporting to defeat obstructive tactics, has the effect of depriving of a fundamental right every Member and every group in this Parliament, including those who previously had that right. I am unable to understand why, with the minimum for a group being raised to 21, an attempt is being made to prevent the right to request a roll-call vote from being actually exercised and — please note carefully — from being exercised by any group at all. I just don't understand it.

I should like to say more but will merely add that, as this Rule is written, it contains a serious error from your point of view but not from ours. If you stop to consider, you will realize that this wording wipes out everything you have done up to now. But that is your affair, not mine. As far as we are concerned, we shall vote against the revised version of Rule 35, not only because of the wording but because it takes away a fundamental right from every group in Parliament.

President. — Mr D'Angelosante, I have been asked to point out that an error has crept into the German text, if not others.

I call Mr Nord.

Mr Nord, rapporteur. — (*NL*) Madam President, I have not seen the Italian text but I have seen the German version and that does, indeed, contain a mistake. The proposed Rule 35 (4) should read: 'If so requested by at least twenty-one Members or a political group... the vote shall be taken by roll call'. So it cannot be said that the proposed text does not give this right to groups. This has been omitted from the German text and perhaps from the Italian version as well. I would therefore remind you of this and I would also remind you that it was precisely this wording that prompted some members of our committee to ask for a separate vote on Rule 35 (4) in this new form, so that we must now have two votes on this Rule, first on the words 'or a political group' and second for the Rule as a whole.

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — I wish to point out, Madam President, that it was my Group which requested a separate vote, not on the whole of paragraph 4, but merely on the words 'or a political group'. We do not agree that the words 'or a political group' should be in this

amendment. We support the original Amendment No 10, and we therefore request a separate vote on the words, 'or a political group'.

President. — I call Mr Luster.

Mr Luster. — (*D*) I did not want to speak on this last point of controversy, Madam President. I just want to contradict Mr D'Angelosante on the point that it is not necessary now to vote on Rule 35. We have an electronic voting system. It is, at the moment, still out of service but, presumably, it will surprise us all by bursting into action again one of these days. In case it should start working again, therefore, we need to have this paragraph available and for that reason, on behalf of my Group, I recommend we vote on Rule 35.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — (*F*) Mr President, the Liberal Group will vote on Rule 35 in its present full wording, in other words including 'or a political group'. It is on this point that we do not at all agree with the criticisms levelled at us by Mrs Bonino and others. In this we demonstrate that we are ready to see whether all the Members of this Parliament have a sense of responsibility and it is by the way this kind of rule is used that we shall tell.

President. — In accordance with the request that has been made, we shall have a separate vote.

I propose that we vote first on the whole Rule, excluding paragraph 4, and then on paragraph 4 alone.

I call Mr Scott-Hopkins.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Madam President, I think it would be much easier if you took a vote on paragraphs 1 to 3 and then on paragraph 4 with the amendment to it, and then on paragraph five. It would be much easier that way, Madam President.

President. — The only purpose of my proposal was to save time. I put to the vote paragraphs 1 to 3.

Paragraphs 1 to 3 are adopted.

I put to the vote paragraph 4 as proposed in the report.

Paragraph 4 is adopted.

I put to the vote paragraphs 5 to 10.

Paragraphs 5 to 10 are adopted.

I put Rule 36 to the vote.

Rule 36 is adopted.

We now come to Rule 36A.

I call Mrs Vayssade.

Mrs Vayssade. — (*F*) Before the vote is taken, I would like to ask for a split vote on this Rule, in other words leaving out Rule 36A (2) or voting separately on Rule 36 (2), because the Socialist Group does not agree to the number of non-attached Members to be delegated to the Bureau, namely two.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — (*F*) Madam President, the Liberal and Democratic Group will vote for Rule 36A including the provisions set out in Rule 36A (2). I would point out that the Liberal Group will be voting in this way so as to honour the compromise that was reached. We fully understand the reasons for the Socialist Group's attitude and in acting as it does the Liberal and Democratic Group is setting an example of self-discipline. In spite of any individual opinions that we may have, we are honouring the compromise that has been reached.

President. — In accordance with the request made by the Socialist Group, we shall have a separate vote on this Rule. I first put paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5 to the vote.

Paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5 are adopted.

I put paragraph 2 to the vote.

Paragraph 2 is adopted.

The whole of Rule 36A is therefore adopted.

I put to the vote the motion for a resolution as a whole.

The resolution is adopted.

(*Applause*)

I call Mr Capanna, on a point of order.

Mr Capanna. — (*I*) Madam President, on a point of order, the Rules require amendments to the Rules of Procedure to be carried by the votes of not less than 206 members. This has not been verified. With your permission, I formally request verification as to whether at least 206 members voted. I imagine that even those in the majority appreciate the importance of knowing the number of those voting.

President. — The result has been declared. Besides, the result of the last roll-call vote shows that we were well over the quorum.

(*Applause from the centre and the right*)

I call Mr de la Malène.

Mr de la Malène. — (*F*) Madam President, what you have just said is difficult to accept. This is an extremely important matter because it is a question of knowing whether a qualified majority, in other words 206 votes, has been obtained. You cannot base yourself on a previous vote on a different subject to say that there were 206 votes. I myself observed that the groups did not vote in the same way at the end as

they did on the previous amendment. I feel — and I am sorry to say so — that you must take the vote again, probably allowing enough time for Members to come back. But you must take the vote again and count; you cannot do otherwise.

(*Various reactions*)

President. — I call Mrs Bonino.

Mrs Bonino. — (*I*) Madam President, the final vote on this resolution is extremely important. Rule 54 lays down that, for an amendment to be adopted, there must be 206 votes in favour, not 206 voting. I do not wish to doubt your word when you say that there was a majority but, after the result of the other vote in which the votes in favour were exactly 206, I think it would be wise to make sure in order to prevent doubts and objections from being raised during the next few days. I thought myself that, in announcing the vote, you would tell us how we voted in order to verify that there were 206 in favour. I do not want to tell you what to do, Madam President, but I think it would be best to establish exactly what the position is in order to avoid any challenge from wherever it might come. It may mean going on for an extra quarter of an hour but I think we could manage it at this juncture. We had arranged to close the debate at 1 a.m. and it is now 10.45 p.m. and a quarter of an hour more would enable us to clear the thing up.

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Madam President, I find this really rather extraordinary. If honourable Members had wanted to they could have asked for a roll-call vote. They did not. Therefore to challenge a vote now, after it has taken place and after it has been announced by the presidency, is in my view completely and utterly out of order.

(*Applause from the centre and the right*)

If honourable Members do not have sufficient confidence in the Chair they can put down a motion of no confidence in the Chair, but as long as that has not been tabled, Madam President, I suggest that we conclude these matters. You have taken the vote, you have been advised there were over 206 Members voting for; in that case, Madam President, I think it is utterly out of order to go back on the vote, to try and do it again. I think those who have not accepted it should accept the defeat, if that is what happened, and make the best of it in the true democratic way.

(*Applause from the centre and the right*)

President. — I call Mr Colombo.

Mr Colombo. — (*I*) Madam President, Mr Scott-Hopkins has taken the words out of my mouth. I am sure you found that there was a majority of 206 members in favour of the resolution. Your reference

Colombo

to the previous vote merely indicated that Members in the Chamber were voting and that there were votes in favour but there can be no doubt that your ruling was correct. If we started expressing doubts about that sort of thing, Parliament could never do its work. I beg you, therefore, not to take the vote again but to repeat the ruling that the vote was in order.

Applause from the centre and the right)

President. — I call Mr Glinne.

Mr Glinne. — (F) Madam President, I am sorry to have to remind the House of the express provisions of Rule 54(2):

‘Such motions shall be adopted only if they secure the votes of a majority of the Members of Parliament’.

That is very clear. It is also important to prevent any doubts being cast on the vote that has taken place. Personally I think the vote was ‘for’ in the terms of Rule 54(2). If there are any doubts, why not retake the vote now, immediately, and establish that the necessary majority of 206 is in fact here?

(Cries of protest)

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Madam President, Mr de la Malène and Mr Glinne have in essence said what I wanted to say, but permit me to remind you that, a few days ago, I stressed that the quorum could not be guessed at offhand, which is what happened, with the statement that the quorum had not been reached and that the vote would therefore not take place. I pointed out then that it was an odd kind of procedure. In my view, Madam President, we ought to have counted raised hands, which is what is done in all parliaments. I understand and support the elegant speech by Mr Colombo. He suggested a way out but I feel that if we do not want to make this situation even more grotesque, all we have to do is count raised hands and see whether there are 206.

As for Mr Scott-Hopkins, allow me to say that, once again, he shows his very keen sense of humour — talking about political defeat when you have voted through the survival of our group. It is Mr Scott-Hopkins — who did not want to hear about it for four months — to talk about defeat, certainly not us.

President. — I call Lord Harmar-Nicholls.

Lord Harmar-Nicholls. — Madam President, there is a much greater principle at stake than whether there were 206 votes or not. The principle that is now at stake is whether we accept the judgment of our President, who is in a better position than anyone else to form such a judgment. The other principle which is at

stake is whether, once a decision has been announced and is on the record, it can suddenly be erased from the record as a consequence of somebody's whim. It cannot. If there is to be another vote, it can only be upon one issue: does this Parliament accept the judgment of its President? I shall vote very clearly that I do accept the President's judgment, and that is what the Parliament ought to do.

(Applause from the centre and the right)

President. — The result of the vote has been announced, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 54. This being so, the resolution stands adopted.

(Applause from the centre and the right)

I should like to thank not only all those who have taken part in this vote, but also, in particular, the members of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, and especially its rapporteur.

(Applause)

Thanks to their work, the vote on this urgent resolution has taken place without there having to be any winners or losers. The compromise obtained will ensure that the business of this House will run smoothly in future.

Some Members this evening may have felt that the debates were too long; but it was important that those who wanted to speak should be able to do so. I should also like to thank those who have made concessions, by withdrawing a number of amendments and limiting the number of requests for a roll-call vote, in order to enable this debate to take place. Although the amendments to our Rules of Procedure are still not complete, the Rules are already improved; and I am grateful to all those who have helped to bring about that improvement.

(Applause)

13. Urgent procedure

President. — I have received from Mr Pintat, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, Mr Klepsch, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), Lord Douro, on behalf of the European Democratic Group, Mr de la Malène, on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, Mrs Agnelli, Mr Cecovini, Mr Damseaux, Mr Davern, Mr Geurtsen, Mr Lalor and Mr Pininfarina, a motion for a resolution with request for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on political kidnapping in Spain (Doc. 1-513/79).

The reasons supporting this request for urgent debate are contained in the document concerned.

The vote on this request will be taken at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

14. *Agenda for next sitting*

President. — The next sitting will be held tomorrow, 14 November 1979, with the following agenda :

10 a.m. and 3 p.m. until 8 (possibly, 9) p.m. :

— Decision on urgency of various motions for resolutions

— Lange report on convergence

3 p.m. :

— Question Time (questions to the Council and questions to Foreign Ministers)

4.30 p.m. :

— Voting time.

The sitting is closed.

(The sitting was closed at 10.55 p.m.)

SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 1979

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IN THE CHAIR : MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 10 a.m.)

President. — The sitting is open.

1. *Approval of minutes*

President. — The minutes of proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Since there are no objections, the minutes of proceedings are approved.

2. *Documents received*

President. — I have received the following documents :

a) from the Council, requests for opinions on the following proposals from the Commission :

— regulation laying down certain conservation and management measures for common fishery resources off the West Greenland coast applicable in 1979 to vessels flying the flag of Canada and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 1277/79 (Doc. 1-496/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture ;

suspending partially the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duties on certain types of fish (Doc. 1-502/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on External Economic Relations as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Agriculture for its opinion ;

b) the following motions for resolutions tabled pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure :

— by Mr Prag, Mr Simpson, Mr Tyrrell, Mr Seligman and Mr Price, on a single meeting and working place for the European Parliament (Doc. 1-493/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion ;

— by Mr Simpson, Mr Prag, Mr Tyrrell and Sir Peter Vaneck, on the costs of the Parliament's meeting and working in several places (Doc. 1-495/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion ;

— by Mr Flanagan, on turf peat (Doc. 1-503/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Energy and Research ;

— by Mr Nyborg, on the technical and administrative barriers to trade (Doc. 1-504/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs ;

— by Mrs Lizin, Mr Oehler, Mrs Roudy, Mrs Buchan, Mrs Cresson and Mr Ripa di Meana on behalf of the

Socialist Group, on the situation in Western Sahara (Doc. 1-505/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee ;

c) report, drawn up by Mr Lange on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, on the

Communication from the Commission entitled 'Convergence and budgetary questions' (Doc. 1-512/79).

3. *Agenda*

President. — The oral question with debate on Community support for energy supplies (Doc. 1-497/79), tabled by Mr Pintat on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group and placed on the agenda for the sitting of Thursday 15 November, has been held over at the author's request until a later part-session.

Since there are no objections, that is agreed.

4. *Decision on urgency*

President. — The next item is the decision on the urgency of seven motions for resolutions. We begin with the *Pedini motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-473/79): Meeting of the Council of Education Ministers.*

I call Mrs Groes.

Mrs Groes. — (DK) Mr President, I just want to say that the Danish Socialists and I do not regard questions on youth, culture, education, information and sport as a Community matter. I shall therefore vote against the request for urgent procedure, not only for formal but also for practical reasons.

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — As I seem to be the only member of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport here, I wish to support the request for urgent debate on this motion for a resolution. It is quite clear that the cancellation of the Council of Education Ministers, which was due to have taken place this month, had nothing whatsoever to do with the urgency of educational matters. It was entirely a matter of a disagreement between various governments, for which one in particular, the Danish Government, was responsible, as to whether education should or should not be discussed within the terms of the Community. Now as it was the Council of Ministers itself, including a previous Danish Government, which laid down the lines on which Community education policy should follow the action programme, it is quite inconceivable that the present Council of Ministers should fail to take action. As it happens there are specific appropriations, which we voted for

Patterson

last week, in the budget for 1980 for the carrying out of the Commission's education programme. The cancellation of this Council of Education Ministers is therefore an absolute disgrace, and it is a matter of urgency that this Parliament should pronounce on the matter.

President. — I call Mr Schwencke to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Schwencke. — (D) Mr President, I indicated that I wanted to speak as soon as the Member from Denmark had spoken. I support the request, especially as the majority of our group is in favour of urgent procedure.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD).

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Mr President, I want to state that our group feels that the adoption of urgent procedure for this motion for a resolution is an urgent necessity.

President. — I put to the vote the request for urgent procedure.

Urgent procedure is adopted.

I propose that the motion for a resolution be placed on the agenda of the sitting of Friday, 16 November 1979.

Since there are no objections, that is agreed.

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President. — We now consider the *motion for resolution by Mr Tyrrell and others (Doc. 1-501/79): Infringement of human rights in Poland.*

I call Mr Tyrrell.

Mr Tyrrell. — Mr President, Sunday was the anniversary of independence day in Poland. Members will recall that one year earlier, in 1978, there was a march from the cathedral in Warsaw to the tomb of the unknown soldier for the purpose of marking independence day, and that was followed by speeches from people who protested against the infringement of their basic freedoms. On Friday night in Warsaw there was a gathering in the home of Professor Eduard Lapinski. I was there. It was a gathering of people who were seeking basic freedoms, freedoms which we in the West take for granted. Freedom of speech, of communication, of information, of travel. It was not a secret gathering. The flat was bugged — that was known. But this is no political conspiracy, it is a peaceful movement of protest; what they do is open.

Late on Friday night and on Saturday morning a number of those who had been at Professor Lapinski's

house were arrested; in all in those two days, some 40 people were arrested, 25 in Warsaw and 15 elsewhere in Poland. It is not unusual for those who take part in the Polish opposition movement to be arrested; what is unusual is to have 40 arrested all at one time. It was clearly a planned operation, the purpose was clearly to prevent those arrested from taking part in the manifestation that was likely to take place on the independence anniversary on Sunday.

On Saturday I was due to meet the editor of a *samizdat* publication, in which he prints facts and comments which are not allowed to appear in the heavily censored Polish press. He did not arrive to keep the appointment; he had been arrested.

Of those arrested on Friday night and Saturday morning, some thirty were still in detention when I put the motion down on Monday evening and by last night there were still a number, I cannot say precisely how many, in detention. On Sunday afternoon 5 000 Poles marched from the cathedral to the tomb of the unknown warrior. Mr President, those I spoke to spoke with one voice. What they said was, ask your Parliament to speak on our behalf. They know that I am putting down this motion and there will be great disappointment if this House does not debate their plight this week.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Mr President, with the agreement of the Members from my group who put their names to this request for urgent procedure, I want to state the following. We have heard in the interim that most, if not all, of the detainees have been released, which means that the urgent circumstances which justified urgent procedure no longer apply. We believe that the decision to table this motion was right. The mere fact of tabling it had a tremendous public impact, and we now think it would be a better idea if the whole complex matter were referred to the appropriate committee who could then make a relevant proposal. We feel that the best course would be to refer the motion to the committee responsible, in this case the Political Affairs Committee.

President. — I call Mr Glinne.

Mr Glinne. — (F) I second Mr Klepsch's proposal to refer the matter to committee. The fact is that press reports this morning give quite contradictory reports about this matter. Some of them are most encouraging and state that the detainees have been freed. I feel that we have to consider this affair with due calmness, and reference to committee seems to be the simplest solution.

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — I would ask the House to vote in favour of the request. My honourable friend rang up Warsaw last night. Some have been released, but not all. There are still prisoners incarcerated in Poland. That is why we are asking for an urgent debate.

President. — I put to the vote the request for urgent procedure.

The request is rejected. The motion for a resolution is referred to the appropriate committee.

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President. — We shall now consider three motions for resolutions :

- *Scott-Hopkins and Bangemann motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-506/79): Occupation of the United States Embassy in Tehran*
- *Motion for a resolution by Mr Blumenfeld and others (Doc. 1-507/79): Occupation of the United States Embassy in Tehran*
- *Motion for a resolution by Mr Schwartzenberg and others (Doc. 1-508/79): Occupation of the United States Embassy in Tehran.*

Since these three motions for resolutions are on the same subject, I propose that they be dealt with together.

I call Mr Denis.

Mr Denis. — (F) Mr President, I have already had occasion in the past, with my group, to protest against the attitude of a number of Members here who want to turn this Parliament into an international tribunal. This is why I am against urgent procedure.

There really is a holy alliance of all the groups to the right of ours when it comes to events in Iran nowadays. It is very revealing, too, because yesterday the neo-fascist Members asked to be associated with this band.

The French Communists have said it time and time again : they are against the taking of hostages, against all violent forms of torture and repression which violate human rights, and for the respect of diplomatic immunity.

But having said that, the matter in hand today is quite another. Humanitarian concern must not be allowed to hide the underlying reality. What is really held against the people of Iran is the fact that they want to govern their own affairs. The fact is that after the fascist *coup d'état* masterminded by the CIA more

than 100 000 people have been put to death in the last 25 years in Tehran and throughout Iran. That is why the Shah of Iran is a criminal and deserves to stand trial.

Why should there be any surprise at this request from the people of Iran and at their anger over American protection of the Shah ? The right of asylum is legitimate but it has never been extended to cover murderers.

The comprehensive reprisal measures taken against 50 000 Iranian students in the United States do not seem to have generated the same expressions of condemnation among the authors of these motions. In any case, is this the best way to express concern about the fate of the American embassy staff in Tehran ? For our part, we are anxious — today, no less than yesterday — to achieve a fair and humanitarian solution, but in these motions for resolutions we detect nothing likely to offer any worthwhile contribution towards such a solution.

In closing, let me say that if the people of Iran had not thrown out the Shah, these incidents would probably never have occurred. The American embassy in Tehran would have continued to be the real seat of power and...

President. — Mr Denis, are you for or against urgent procedure ?

Mr Denis. — (F) Against, Mr President. I was simply pointing out that this Parliament, at the end of 1978...

President. — You are not being consistent, Mr Denis. You are acting as a tribunal yourself ! Are you for or against urgent procedure ?

Mr Denis. — (F) when thousands were dying in the streets of Tehran, rejected a request for urgent procedure from us. We are therefore against this request, because it is politically motivated !

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, I must insist that you speak on the question of urgency without going to any reasons.

I call Mrs Dienesch.

Mrs Dienesch. — (F) On behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, I should like to say that we are in favour of urgency. We were unable to table a motion for a resolution, as our colleagues did, but we fully agree with them that the subject should be dealt with as a matter of urgency and put to the vote on Friday. We are talking about the lives of hostages, and about international law which has to be respected.

President. — I call Mr Marshall.

Mr Marshall. — Mr President, I am completely incensed by the second last speech. What we are talking about in this motion is not the rights or wrongs of the Shah's regime or the Ayatollah; all we are saying is that one despicable dictatorship has been replaced by another. What is so sickening is that it is now excused in the name of religion. What is at stake is the future of international law, because if embassies cannot be free, then the whole system of international law is put at risk. I should have thought that is a matter of the utmost urgency.

(Applause)

President. — I put to the vote the request for urgent procedure.

Urgent procedure is adopted.

These three motions for resolutions will be placed on Friday's agenda.

I call Mr de la Malène.

Mr de la Malène. — (F) Mr President, in view of the importance and the topical nature of this matter, I think it would be better if it were discussed tomorrow rather than on Friday, with just 15 people in the Chamber. I should like you to alter the decision you have just taken and find a time on the agenda which is more in keeping with the seriousness of the situation.

President. — Mr de la Malène, the Friday sitting is not unimportant. Everyone is supposed to be present. I myself shall be in the Chair, and I ask every Member to be prepared for the important items which are scheduled to appear on next Friday's agenda. However, I shall raise Mr de la Malène's request at tomorrow's meeting of the Bureau. Consideration will be given to it. If the request is turned down by the Bureau, I note the fact that Parliament has agreed to the matter's being discussed on Friday. Does that satisfy you, Mr de la Malène?

I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Very briefly, Mr President, you made a decision that the debate was to be on Friday. You are now saying you are going to propose to the enlarged Bureau that it should perhaps be brought forward. When I asked in the enlarged Bureau that some items put down by Mrs Castle be brought forward to be discussed on Wednesday, the President quite rightly said, and I accepted this: 'Mr Rogers, every day that the Parliament sits is just as important as every other day'. We have therefore had to make arrangements to travel home late on Friday, and those of us who live many hundreds of miles away have to inconvenience ourselves. I think Mr de la Malène's request is wrong, and I think your first ruling was correct and Friday

should be treated as a full day — otherwise we might as well end our proceedings on Thursday. I think you must stick by your ruling and not even refer this to the enlarged Bureau.

President. — The Rules of Procedure state that this is at the discretion of the President, who can decide on such matters. I am exercising this right, and Mr Rogers can bring up my proposal at the meeting of the Bureau tomorrow.

I call Mr Schwartzberg.

Mr Schwartzberg. — (F) Mr President, speaking as author of the motion tabled by the Socialist Group, I too hope that the urgency of this matter will be considered genuine. It would be ridiculous if the matter were not discussed until Friday. It is a matter of life and death, which means that we have to discuss it tomorrow.

May I humbly remind the House of the earlier votes and the earlier moves by our group against the Shah's regime, the bloody regime of terror which constantly violated human rights? We in the Socialist Group feel quite at liberty to condemn now this taking of hostages, but I do hope — because this is a matter of life and death — that the House will discuss the matter in good time, which means tomorrow.

(Applause)

President. — Thank you for your contribution, Mr Schwartzberg. Your comments will be noted.

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President. — We must now consider requests for urgent procedure for the following two motions for resolutions:

— *Douro motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-511/79): Political kidnapping in Spain*

— *Motion for a resolution by Mr Pintat and others (Doc. 1-513/79): Political kidnapping in Spain.*

Since these two motions for resolutions are on the same subject, I propose that they be dealt with together.

I call Mr Pintat to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Pintat. — (F) One of our Spanish colleagues, Mr Javier Rupérez, has been kidnapped for quite unacceptable reasons. It is our duty to help emerging democracy in Spain in this particularly fervid struggle. We have to express our solidarity at a time when Spain is shortly to join us in the Common Market. We are therefore in favour of urgent procedure for these motions.

President. — I call Lord Douro.

Lord Douro. — Mr President, I would like to support the request for urgent debate on this matter. Spain is an applicant country. One hopes very much that this man will not still be in the hands of his kidnappers when we meet in December. It behoves the European Parliament to show its concern about such a serious and despicable political crime in Spain, and I would urge Parliament to accept this is urgent and to vote accordingly.

President. — I call Mr Glinne to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Glinne. — (F) Mr President, we are not among the co-authors of the text, but after being in touch with the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party we want to be fully associated with it.

President. — I put to the vote the request for urgent procedure.

Urgent procedure is adopted.

I propose that these two motions for resolutions be placed on the agenda of the sitting of Friday, 16 November 1979.

Since there are no objections, that is agreed.

5. *Economic convergence*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-512/79), drawn up by Mr Lange on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, on the communication from the Commission entitled 'Convergence and budgetary questions'.

I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentleman, the Committee on Budgets has put before you a motion for a resolution on the Commission document, COM (79) 620 final, entitled 'Convergence and budgetary questions', which constitutes a communication from the Commission to the Council. This matter was referred to the Committee on Budgets because the Commission's document is limited in the main to financial and budgetary questions and the real problem of economic convergence is used, to all intents and purposes, only as a vehicle for these financial and budgetary points. As we concluded in the Committee on Budgets, that this document should really have gone into more detail on the question of economic convergence and all the attendant questions. In that case, the matter could have been referred to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, with only the financial and budgetary aspects being referred to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion. However, the document being what it is, the Committee on Budgets was given the job, although

the side-effects of so doing were not entirely to the liking of certain Members of the House.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wanted to make this point right at the outset to avoid giving the impression that there might be some thoroughly pointless rivalry between committees of this House. The document was referred to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs for its opinion, but the committee has not actually discussed the matter. An opinion was also requested from the Committee on Agriculture but, although this committee did meet to discuss its position this morning, I have as yet no idea of its opinion. If any amendments are tabled before a vote is taken this afternoon, we shall thus take the opportunity of commenting on them or proposing changes then.

Returning to the report of the Committee on Budgets itself we have become involved in the hurried discussion of this Commission document on convergence and budgeting affairs because Parliament explicitly asked to make its contribution to this debate and express its opinion before the European Council meets in Dublin at the end of this month, the Commission having been called on by the European Council in June to put forward proposals for ways of solving the problems which have resulted from the difficult phase we are currently going through.

Ladies and gentlemen, no such solution has been forthcoming from the Commission. Instead, as it says itself in the document, the Commission 'intends to exercise its prerogative to make a proposal', which it will do 'at the moment it judges the best chosen...'

The Committee on Budgets has preferred not to comment on this specific point, but has simply pointed out, in points 1 to 4 of the motion for a resolution, that the various parts of the Community and the Community as a whole must — as we have said over and over again throughout the 1970s — take steps to realize a common economic, monetary and regional policy: in other words, an industrial, structural, agricultural and social policy. Of course, the means to this end would differ according to the stage of development reached by the various Member States.

I could give you more instances of political spheres which are similarly affected. Here again, we come up against a factor which emerged during discussion of the Werner Plan in the early 1970s, namely that if the Community is to develop from a mere customs union to an economic and monetary community much more attention should be given than it was in the 1960s to reducing differences in legislation, which, when all is said and done, greatly affect the relative positions of the Member States' economies, or that a greater effort should be made in this direction.

We termed this process harmonization, which implies above all, if we really want a viable Common Market in more than just the agricultural sector, to make it

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viable in the trade and industry sectors and in relation to the job market as well, and that means that the relevant legislation in the various Member States must be coordinated.

We thus realize that convergence includes everything that serves to achieve the aims of the Treaties, which basically means strengthening the economic and social foundation of the various parts of the Community and of the Community as a whole. In this respect, then, what we are discussing today and what we shall have to discuss more and more in the future goes far beyond problems of a purely financial and budgetary nature.

Of course, our present discussions are largely overshadowed by the problems affecting many parts of the Community as a result of unfavourable developments which can be put down precisely to this lack of an overall policy and of economic convergence.

Looking back over this last decade, it is true that the Council, has over and over again taken consistent and unanimous decisions on the yearly economic and budgetary guidelines proposed by the Commission and supported by Parliament. Unfortunately, no Member State has ever really stuck to these decisions. The point is not only to implement the letter of these decisions, but also — as one or two Member States have tried — to do so in the spirit of the long-term objectives behind the decision and thus make some real progress. Instead of achieving greater economic convergence since the early 1970s what we have in fact witnessed is greater divergence, and it is this divergence in a variety of political spheres, with the attendant economic and socio-economic consequences and the obvious consequences in terms of financial policy that has led to the present thoroughly unsatisfactory state as regards the financial position of some sections of the Community.

Whether or not a particular Member State feels itself cheated or unfairly treated in terms of its financial contribution — and there can be no doubt that this economic imbalance has given rise to a good deal of injustice — as the Committee on Budgets says loud and clear in paragraph 5 of its motion for a resolution, the Community cannot be regarded as an institution in which you get back what you pay in.

That is an utterly wrong attitude to adopt towards the Community, and it would be an entirely false interpretation of the Treaties in which the Community's economic and political aims are enshrined.

In view of the fact that all the Member States — that is, the original six plus Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland, which joined on 1 January 1973 — have accepted the Treaties and in terms of the situation at the time of the three new Members' accession, the development of the Community, including its specific jurisprudence, it must be

assumed that no one is doubting the validity of the very basis of this Community: the Treaties of Rome.

What we need then, not only in the short term but in the medium and long term as well, is a solution based on the Treaties, compatible with the Treaties and therefore realizable within a Community framework. The term 'a fair return', which figures so prominently in this argument, must be rejected just as decisively as its synonym 'a broad balance'. After all, ladies and gentlemen, the individual and collective benefits enjoyed by the various parts of the Community as a result of their membership cannot always be expressed in units of account. There are any number of imponderables which cannot be readily quantified. But, ladies and gentlemen, the above-average economic development of all parts of the Community — however strong or weak they may be at the present time — can to a great extent be put down to the existence of the Community, and this is something we should all bear in mind.

The point now is to examine how we can make this imbalance and what is felt to be an unjust distribution of burdens within the Community somewhat fairer. The advice the Committee on Budgets has for the House is to avoid using the meagre amounts available to the Community from its own resources to make the desired repayments, which would then serve to bolster up the recipient country's national resources. This would mean that we should have to continue to restrict our activities over and above a suitably balanced agricultural policy, the political spheres which this House — not least in its debate on the budget — has judged to be particularly urgent and important, over and above a balanced reform of the common agricultural policy.

What some countries have in mind would mean a reduction of more than one-tenth in the size of the budget which this House approved, with amendments, here last week. Lopping off one-tenth of the Community budget would have a serious affect on our room for manoeuvre and our ability to pursue our desired policies.

This has lead to the idea of doing something which we perhaps all regard as obvious. We have to find a solution, and this means going one step further then describing financial mechanisms available to the Commission and, as it were, drawing the necessary conclusions from a given financial mechanism.

In our opinion, what is needed here is an act of Community solidarity. In other words, the stronger countries should give a helping hand to the weaker countries. This is explicitly stated in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of the motion for a resolution, paragraph 7 being the important one because it sets the basic principle. In a body like the Community, our aim should be to create a system of financial adjustment which effectively commits the stronger countries to

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supporting the weaker ones. This concept of financial adjustment is described to a certain extent in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, but we have left a good deal of leeway so as not to shackle the inventiveness of the Council and the Commission. The important thing is that if, for instance, we were to base our calculations on the *per capita* gross domestic product, we should then be able to work out an average for the whole of the Community and ascertain which countries were above and which below this. The Member States whose *per capita* GDP was higher than the Community average would then have to make an additional payment to the Community to make up the difference in relation to a particular reference value such as the own resources contributed — in other words, and this was the starting point for the example taken by the Committee on Budgets, or the budget as whole the difference between their actual *per capita* GDP and their contributions to own resources.

This additional payment would then be entered in the Community budget and the amount concerned would be made available to the weaker countries in accordance with their above-average contributions to own resources in relation to average *per capita* GDP.

As is normal under a financial adjustment system, these funds could be available to the individual countries for projects designed to improve the economic and social structure and thus raise the country concerned from its below-average status in the course of time.

Of course, as I said before, you can use different references values and different instruments. The only really fundamentally important thing is that this system for the equalization of burdens — or rather, financial adjustment, although the first term is also suitable as a number of people have been referring to burdens — must be organized within the framework of the Community and the Community budget. This will ensure that the whole thing does not evade the eagle eye of Parliament and the Community. There may, of course, also be solutions outside the framework of the Community; after all, this sort of financial adjustment is equally possible outside the Community...

President. — Your speaking time is up.

Mr Lange, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (D) ... Mr President I thought it necessary to go into this point in rather more detail because this idea may be new to a good number of people, although to others it will seem the most natural thing in the world. I am grateful to you for your indulgence and patience, Mr President.

Let me repeat that the important thing is that this whole matter should be organized within a Commu-

nity framework. It should not be allowed to by-pass the Community and thus escape the Community's control. It is, of course — as I was saying a moment ago — feasible that this could take place outside a Community framework. That would, in our opinion, be a very bad solution, and that is why we have made this proposal. It is of vital importance that this principle of financial adjustment should be organized within the framework of the Community and incorporated into the Community budget. That is something the Committee on Budgets recommends most strongly actual figures will then be no problem.

Otherwise, we can only say that we do not think the Commission's communication to be an adequate basis for us to put forward any proposals. However, I have pointed out what was for us the important point. We now call on the Commission to put forward an appropriate proposal along the lines of the financial adjustment I have just described, and to circulate proposals for economic convergence. We have an interest in this matter and we would advise the House to state explicitly that none of these proposals can be put into practice without Parliament's cooperation. In other words, all these proposals must be addressed to us as well as to the Council.

Let me say one final word on the wording of the last paragraph in the motion for a resolution, which instructs the President of the European Parliament to 'forward this resolution to the Commission and Council of the Communities'. Let me repeat what I have said on previous occasions. The term 'Council of the Communities' covers both the ordinary Council of Ministers and the European Council, since the Treaty is silent on the actual composition of the Council. The European Council is therefore just as duty-bound as any 'ordinary' Council of Ministers to be available when appropriate to answer Parliament's questions. What has been said about the conciliation procedure applies just as much to the European Council, which cannot simply hide from the European Parliament and must not be allowed to think that it can be like the Spirit moving over the face of the waters and ordain the whole of creation. We cannot have that.

Our proposed solution takes account of all the economic difficulties, realizes that this financial adjustment cannot in itself solve the existing problems, but that what is needed is convergence of policies, particularly in the agricultural sector. If that much can be achieved, there will indeed be a change in the position over a period of time. The situation in the Community will then be able to develop over the short, medium and long term in such a way that there will be no recurrence of the difficulties which have arisen in the present phase of development under the present financial conditions.

(Applause)

President. — I call Sir Henry Plumb.

Sir Henry Plumb, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. — Mr President, honourable Members, the Committee on Agriculture has examined the communication from the Commission to the Council on the convergence and budgetary questions, and I hope that my report on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture is complementary to the report that Mr Lange, as rapporteur and chairman of the Committee on Budgets, has just delivered.

I must say straight away that there was no unanimous decision from the Committee on Agriculture on the report I wish to present to you. Some members of the Committee on Agriculture felt that we were operating in indecent haste; but if we were to give a report at all, then we had little alternative but to deal with it during the plenary session this week. In fact we only met this morning, so the report as yet has not been circulated to the Members of Parliament. It will, I hope, be distributed to all Members of Parliament by this afternoon.

The document, however, reflects quite naturally the different political preoccupations of each Member State; each country obviously has its own problems and its own interests and it is quite understandable that they should be concerned and request consideration of the wider convergence questions. Unfortunately, as we see it, the document mixes together questions which are quite separate, thus creating some degree of confusion. I present these, Mr President, in four parts: first of all, the *raison d'être* of the paper — the short-term issue concerning the budget, raised by the United Kingdom; secondly, the Italian problem, in particular the need to devote more resources to the Mediterranean region and to Mediterranean agriculture; thirdly, there is obvious reference to the common agricultural policy and the need for some reform; and fourthly, the need to improve the convergence of agricultural policies and national economies. These, I submit, are completely separate questions, and they should be dealt with on their own merits. And attempt to undertake reform of the common agricultural policy on the basis of seeking to remedy short-term problems of national contributions to the budget in particular, is both illogical and dangerous, and the Commission states that in the long-term the problem may solve itself by certain modifications in the pattern of contribution and expenditure.

They claim that the proportion of own resources derived from agricultural levies will decrease with the development of EEC policies, since a greater proportion of the budget will be financed by VAT. They also claim that expenditure on agricultural policies will decrease relatively with the measures to remedy production imbalances, particularly in the dairy and sugar sectors. They admit of course in the paper that these measures may be gradual in their effects. Well, Mr President, one may wonder whether there will

really be any impact at all. The measures to improve the situation in the dairy sector may prove in fact to be fairly expensive to the budget, a matter that obviously we shall expand on as we get involved in this year's price review.

There is also a limit to which Britain's imports from third countries will be diverted to other Community countries. One possible solution, one that has been voiced in this Chamber on a number of occasions since I arrived here, may be to increase expenditure on social and regional policies in countries with weaker economies. But if we look at that, firstly, there is the problem of the ceiling on Community resources and secondly, the increase in expenditure would have to be very substantial for any adjustment in budgetary contributions to take place. The Commission states: calculations show that the assumption that the distribution of these instruments of expenditure remains constant, even if the Community's structural funds were increased by a sum of 5 000m EUA in the preliminary draft budget for 1980, the United Kingdom's net deficit would only be reduced to some 1 200m EUA, i.e. a reduction of 350m EUA. On the other hand, the net surplus of Ireland would be increased by some 330m EUA and that of Italy by 970m EUA. This surely proves that there are objective reasons for introducing special measures, perhaps by analogy with the Mediterranean package, for those regions suffering from serious economic and social problems, for particular regions and for industrial sectors.

In the case of development programmes covering the Regional and the Social Funds and for certain regions and products, the EAGGF would perhaps enable structural policies to counterbalance in part at least the contributions from Member States where they are believed to be excessive. The financial mechanisms are not the concern of the Committee on Agriculture of course but they should be made more flexible to allow for necessary adjustment. Modifications introduced, however, should not change the system of own resources, the functioning of the Community policy-making institutions, nor should they undermine the principles governing the operations of the Community budget. It should also be borne in mind that any measures adopted should be designed to further the other objectives considered in the Commission's paper, in particular the need to advance economic convergence.

I referred, Mr President, as one is bound to do as the chairman of such an important committee, to the comments on the common agricultural policy. Clearly the budgetary questions are essential in considering this policy. However, the most important question is simply not how to trim a little here or a little there, especially when one considers that the agricultural budget is very small in terms of total GNP and the total expenditure of the Member States. The more important question, a question that we must pose to

Plumb

each other time and time again, is to seek to ensure that the monies made available are spent efficiently. This of course involves a continuous examination of each of the sectors to determine whether the instruments introduced are in accordance with the rules laid down in Article 39 of the Treaty. Symbolic cuts in the budget will not introduce the necessary efficiency, and may even result in increased expenditure at a later point. And so suggested reform of the common agricultural policy can perhaps also be seen in terms of seeking to readjust expenditure as between regions on the lines of the Mediterranean package. Furthermore, perhaps certain policy instruments could be introduced in the agricultural sector itself which, whilst operating on a Community-wide, basis, would benefit particularly the areas of development, for example: the structural policies in the fishing sector, encouragement to beef production, dealing with the problems of the hill and upland regions; and of course the possibility of a sheepmeat regime, which I hope will not ultimately prove to be too expensive. The Commission should ensure at the same time that policies are not introduced or developed in such a manner that the problems of financial contributions are exacerbated.

And finally, Mr President, there is reference, in particular, to the Italian problem. Much attention was paid in the paper to the problem of Britain's contribution to the budget. Equally important is the problem that insufficient attention has been given in the past to Mediterranean agriculture. The trade losses to Italy over the years, resulting from lack of proper development of its agriculture and from an inability to develop exports from its products, outstrip considerably many of the budgetary problems that have been raised. The soothing words given in the paper concerning the measures introduced for Mediterranean products, and the awareness of the need to control expenditure on milk and sugar, will do little to convince those most closely concerned that sufficient action has been taken to redress this situation.

So it is clear that in the past agricultural policies, and therefore the whole budget of the Community, have tended to concentrate aid on the richer areas, and undermine the position of the poorer areas of the whole of the Community. The budget has perhaps been a factor against convergence; the proposals put forward by the Commission will do nothing to correct this situation.

The common agricultural policy has done little so far to reduce the disparities in the agricultural development areas and incomes between Member States. Some Member States' incomes can be as low as one-third of the figure in other Member States. Furthermore, the regional disparities in income are even greater than the national disparities, being in the order of magnitude of one to eleven within the Community as a whole and one to four within individual countries.

Moreover, monetary compensatory amounts have increased these disparities, since production is encouraged in countries with the strongest economies and discouraged in the poorer regions.

These therefore, are the fundamental problems, Mr President, facing agricultural policy in the Community. They far outweigh in importance the short-term issues considered in the Commission's paper. My report, Sir, listing these ten points will, I hope, be with Members of Parliament later this day and, therefore, if there are any amendments to that report, there will be the opportunity of tabling them as soon as the full report has been circulated.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Andrews.

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — Mr President, while it would be more customary for the President-in-Office of the Council to speak at the conclusion of a debate of this kind, I am taking the floor following you, Mr Lange, and you, Sir Henry, because of the strict limitations on what I can say to the Parliament, and also as a matter of courtesy to your Institution.

These limitations arise from the fact that it falls to the Dublin European Council to take decisions on the question of economic convergence, and that the Council has not yet had an opportunity to take any position on the suggestions which are before us. Although I shall listen to your debate with, of course, the greatest of respect and the greatest of interest, my contribution to it must of necessity be a very brief one, Mr President. I can do little more than sketch the broad outlines of a picture, the finer and more important details of which remain to be completed. I am sure that you, Mr President, and Members of Parliament will appreciate my position.

The development of Member States' economies, as a means of reducing the differences between the various regions and advancing the development of the less favoured regions is, I think, a basic objective of the European Community. The promotion of economic convergence throughout the Community is, indeed, a necessary aim, but its achievement has not proved easy, and if anything the divergence between Member States has increased rather than diminished.

As long ago as the Bremen European Council it was recognized that as part of the creation of the European Monetary System, it was essential that parallel studies should be undertaken on the problem of convergence. This led to the incorporation in the Resolution adopted by the Brussels European Council last December setting up the EMS of a very important section on measures designed to strengthen the economies of the less prosperous Member States of the EMS. This request is, among other things, a study of the relationship between greater convergence in the economic performance of the Member States and the

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utilization of Community instruments, in particular, the funds which aim at reducing structural imbalances. Reports were made to the Paris and Strasbourg European Councils; the latter Council invited the Commission to submit to the Council a reference paper describing the financial consequences of applying the budgetary system on the situation in each Member State, especially in 1979 and 1980. The study will have to take into account the economic, financial and social effects of each Member State's participation in the Community, and the Community nature of the components contributing to the formation of own resources. The Commission was also asked to submit its study to the Council, so as to enable the Member States to give their opinions and present their requests in concrete form. In the light of the debate and of any guidelines which may emerge from the Council, the Council, the Commission will present proposals sufficiently early to enable decisions to be taken at the next meeting of the European Council.

The Commission Communication of 31 October deals in large part with the immediate budgetary problem, Mr President, and while we would hope that the Dublin European Council will take specific decisions on that problem, there are other and wider aspects of what is more properly covered by the word convergence which will need to be the subject of continuing work after the Dublin European Council. Speaking in a personal capacity, Mr President, I would hope that the European Council will give new impetus to the work on these wider aspects I have just alluded to.

In regard to the specific problem of the United Kingdom's budgetary contribution, you will be aware that the Commission's paper of 31 October contains a range of options which could be considered with a view to contributing to rectification of whatever imbalance may exist. The Council has not yet had an opportunity to consider these options, while the Presidency would have preferred the Commission to have submitted a clear-cut proposal for consideration by the Councils of Finance Ministers and Foreign Ministers, Mr President, which will meet next Monday and Tuesday respectively, with a view to ensuring the best possible preparation of decisions which I hope will be taken by the European Council. In that regard I think I am on safe ground in expressing the belief that any decision arrived at in Dublin is likely to be one which will respect the fundamental principle that neither the legal framework of the Community, nor the Community's existing achievements, should be called into question. In the meantime, and indeed in the absence of a clearcut Commission proposal two weeks before the Dublin European Council, the Council Presidency has sent a team of high-level experts and officials to visit Community capitals for discussion which I hope will help to prepare the decisions to be taken in Dublin.

So you can see how seriously the Presidency takes the whole matter, particularly since the Dublin Council is a mere two weeks away. In the light of the foregoing, I can do no more than summarize the background set out above, and indicate my willingness to listen, very attentively, to the views expressed in the forthcoming debate. The Council has not yet, and could not have taken any position on the subject. As indicated in the conclusion to the Strasbourg Council set out above, the aim has always been that decisions would be taken at the meeting of the European Council in Dublin at the end of the month, on 29 and 30 November to be exact, and it is in this perspective, Mr President, that I will listen with great attention to what is said in the debate before the House.

President. — I call Mr Delors.

Mr Delors, Chairman of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. — (F) I just wanted to explain why no opinion by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs has been put before this House. A week ago, noticing that in the draft agenda the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs was supposed to report on economic convergence in the Community, I asked the President's Office to confirm this. I have not had the courtesy of a reply. This being the case, I have not been able to convene a meeting of my committee. Believe me when I say that I and my colleagues are not touchy people. We are reasonable and we wish to be helpful. In the event of further discussion on economic convergence you may be sure of our support and, consequently, the work of our committee. That being said, however, I am unable, for the moment, to see any sense, the basic idea is economic convergence and its natural consequences, and having then entrusted in consulting the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and then reducing the whole thing to a simple budgetary debate led by the Committee on Budgets. Subsequent events will enlighten me.

President. I call Mr Jenkins.

Mr Jenkins, President of the Commission. — Mr President, like the President-in-Office of the Council, I would like to intervene at an early stage in this debate, but, unlike him, I shall also be ready, though not taking too long, to reply at the end if that is the wish of the House, and I will endeavour to ensure that neither speech is any longer than it need be.

The notion for a resolution before this House raises matters of fundamental importance to the functioning and purposes of the Community. If we cannot achieve better balance in the economic development of the Community, and if we cannot achieve better balance within the Community budget, then the cohesion of the Community will be gravely threatened at a time when the strains, both internal and external, which the next decade will inevitably bring make that cohe-

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sion more than ever necessary. I was glad, therefore, that Mr Lange, in his introductory remarks, placed this debate in a wide context: a whole nexus of issues are here involved.

Sir Henry Plumb, reflecting a meeting of his committee, wished to see matters divided up, more compartmentalized, into four issues having no contact, or little contact, with each other. That, I think, it is difficult to do, although it is important that we do not look so wide, that we should have a sharp focus; and on one issue, in relation to the position of the CAP, as Sir Henry and the House will hear, I shall agree with him — on one issue at least, maybe on some more.

Our main theme today is thus the twin problems of convergence and the budget, and this is of central importance. But I want to say one preliminary word of caution. Important, indeed indispensable, as the solution of these problems is, discussion of them should not be allowed to obscure the equally important issues which concern the future of the Community and the direction of its growth. I have two particularly in mind: first, the ever-more-urgent need for a common energy policy to deal with the range of problems arising from our dangerous dependence on oil imports, likely shortages of supply, and the need for alternative sources of energy of all kinds; and secondly, the development of the European Monetary System, not only as a means of protecting ourselves in a world of continuing monetary instability, but also as a motor for the integration of our economies on the lines laid down in the Treaties. These are essential conditions for our further advance; and when dealing with the problems of the existing Community, we must not take our eyes off the development of the future one.

The problems of convergence and the budget have been with us for a considerable time and became the subject of a specific mandate at the meeting of the European Council in Strasbourg in June. Mr Andrews recalled to you the terms of that mandate, and I will not repeat it, except to say that it also — I think he did not mention this at the end of his quotation — asked us to look at the conditions under which the corrective mechanism decided on in 1975 could play its part in 1980 and the extent to which it fulfilled the objectives from which it sprang. The Commission's reference paper embodying the results of this analysis was sent to the Council and to the Parliament very soon afterwards, within a day or so. That is our desire and our intention in all these matters. You will now have had this paper for two months, and I need not say much about it now. I would simply emphasize that the effect of this paper was, I believe to remove any doubts which then remained about the nature and scale of the problems facing the Community in this field. It could not be pretended, on the basis of that paper, that there was no major problem here.

Next, the European Council invited the Commission to present proposals to take account of the debate

among the Member States and of any guidelines which might emerge from the Council of Ministers, and to do so in time to enable decisions to be taken at the meeting of the European Council in Dublin. We are now at an intermediate stage. The debate has been joined within and between Member Governments, within the Institutions of the Community and, what is most important, now — but only now — in this House today and before European public opinion generally. Before submitting the proposals for which the European Council at Strasbourg asked, the Commission thought it right to try to illuminate the debate by setting out as clearly and succinctly as possible the financial and legal implications of a range of actions which the Community might take. These are, as it were, the building-blocks for a solution. They were set out in the Commission's paper of 31 October, which, like its predecessor, was sent to the Parliament immediately upon its submission to the Council.

In the final stage — the presentation of the proposals themselves — we shall make use of these building-blocks and seek, consistently with the Commission's own political judgment, to take full account of what is said in this debate today. It would not, in our judgment, have been right to make a single proposal earlier; it would have reduced, not helped, the Commission's ability to make a major contribution to a solution, in the general Community interest, of a vital problem. Not the least important of the prerogatives of political judgement which the Commission believes it should endeavour to exercise, and which I believe this House wishes the Commission to exercise, is the right to decide the best time to make a specific proposal. Incidentally, that has had the benefit from our — and I believe also from Parliament's — point of view of enabling us to hear and take into account what has been and will be said today.

Let me now be more detailed. The government of Italy has been particularly concerned about the effect of certain Community policies, in particular the common agricultural policy, on the Italian economy. The British Government has been particularly concerned about its large and increasing deficit in respect of the Community budget. The nub of both problems is one of better balance in that budget. In looking for solutions, we are immediately and necessarily drawn into consideration of the CAP and the character of the budget system, with the limitations which have been placed upon it. But I must stress here — and this is the point I had in mind when I referred to Sir Henry Plumb's intervention earlier — that if there were no British budget problem, if there were no Italian problem of general balance, the problems of cost and surplus in the CAP would have to be dealt with on their own merits, and because of the threat that they pose to the whole future of that policy.

(Applause)

Jenkins

That does not arise from the British problem or the Italian problem or any other problem. It arises from the threat to the policy, and therefore to the Community.

In my statement of 19 July to this House. I drew attention to the major problems we have encountered in the operation of the CAP. Many of you in this House are deeply concerned by the criticisms that have been made of that policy. Constituents — let us not forget this — particularly those in agricultural areas, are anxious about their future. Let me therefore repeat to you: the Commission does not question that the common agricultural policy has been of service to the Community and its citizens, that it represents a major part of Community achievement since the signature of the Treaties, and that neither its basic principles nor its purposes are, or should be, in question. But I must say with equal emphasis that if the cost of the CAP to the Community budget cannot be brought under control, there is a real and imminent danger that the system will collapse under its own weight.

(Applause)

The effect of the accumulation of surpluses and the need to transfer products, or to sell them in world markets at heavy cost, are shown in a quite excessive preponderance of agricultural expenditure within the budget.

Moreover, within the agricultural part of the budget, there is a continuing and serious imbalance between expenditure on rice support and expenditure on structural improvement — too much of the one and not enough of the other. In addition, there has been the tilt in the CAP in favour of products of Northern rather than Mediterranean agriculture. The volume of expenditure has not unnaturally varied greatly between Member States; the low level of such expenditure in Britain is clearly one of the main reasons for the British budgetary deficit. How can it be put right? How can the major Community instrument of the budget be better used? So far as agriculture is concerned, we must in particular break away from the vicious circle of recent years whereby our draft budget for agriculture — in itself already too high, often as a result of decisions taken against the advice of the Commission — has to be succeeded by rectifying letters and supplementary budgets which further push up agricultural expenditure. We welcome the support of this House for our urgent wish to establish ways and means of exercising control over agricultural costs.

(Applause)

This House is aware of the efforts which the Commission has already made to help Mediterranean agriculture, and thus produce a fairer pattern of expenditure. We have likewise tried to give more emphasis to the long-term structural aspects of our system so that each country and region in the Community can make its

fair and economic contribution to the common market. We are grateful for all the help we can get in working towards a genuinely European solution, based on a wider understanding of the common interest, to our many difficulties in this field.

It has, perhaps, become almost a truism to say that expenditure on the other Community instruments should be further increased, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of our total expenditure. In this respect we were heartened that Parliament should have restored the cuts in those areas which the Council made in transmitting the draft budget to Parliament. Here the Italian Government has made the interesting suggestion that expenditure on structural investment policies as a proportion of the budget should be increased over the years according to quantified objectives. An approach on these lines might indeed prove helpful. We certainly agree with the underlying purpose.

I have not so far, Mr President, made much use of the word 'convergence', for to my mind — as I believe I may have told the House on a previous occasion — it may be an obfuscating rather than a clarifying word, because it can mean different things to different people. To some it means little more than the better coordination of economic policies. To others it is a code word for dealing with the problems of the budget, while to others still it means the transfer of resources to produce more consistent standards of living within the Community. But in the two papers which have been transmitted to you, the Commission has sought to interpret 'convergence' in the widest sense. It does involve coordination; it does involve the budget; it does involve a measure of transfer of resources. We are all aware of the inadequacy, to which Mr Lange drew attention, of what has so far been achieved. Sometimes we have seen more divergence than convergence. We shall do better when we get the balance of expenditure right, both within the budget and within the agricultural part of the budget. But that is not something which will happen by a natural unassisted process; it is something which will need the determined efforts of all the Community Institutions, not least this House as well as the Commission. But I must underline to this House that if our efforts sometime seem puny, it is because the financial instruments at our disposal are puny also and the macro-economic effect, however well directed, of a budget which amounts to no more than 0.8 % of the gross domestic product of the Community cannot by themselves bring about convergence in any real sense of the term.

This is not the occasion, in my view for a detailed discussion of the question of the forthcoming exhaustion of our own resources. A year ago, the Commission drew attention to this problem, and we shall be putting forward more precise ideas about it before

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very long. We understand the reluctance of a number of Member States to consider raising new resources, at any rate until they see firm evidence that the existing budget is brought into better balance and agricultural expenditure is under control; but I think we should recognize that it is hard to establish that better balance, and in particular to build up the other activities of the Community, without in the end accepting the need for a bigger budget. But we and the Community as a whole will not deserve a bigger budget unless we together ensure that it promotes convergence and not divergence.

It is against this background that the current British problem over the budget should be seen. Even if there may still be some argument about the margin, about the exact size of the British deficit next year and how it should be calculated, there is, I think, little dispute about its order of magnitude or its importance in political as well as economic terms.

(Cries of 'Hear!, hear!')

Here we face an immediate and, I believe, relatively short-term issue, and we need a quick and short-term solution.

Now Mr Lange, in his striking speech this morning, raised wider and very important long-term issues. What he had in mind was a permanent arrangement which would clearly apply to the Community of twelve, after enlargement, as well as to the existing one of nine. The Commission did not see this resolution in its final form until this morning; it saw it in a draft form a short time before. It will gladly consider it and the request contained therein; but it does not believe, with regard to the wider issues, although of crucial importance and imaginatively suggested, which Mr Lange says go well beyond budgetary questions; that we can hold up a solution of the budgetary problem, or an attempt to get a solution, until all these wider issues are dealt with. But the narrower solution should not be framed in such a way as to prejudice a wider one, and it may, indeed, need to be buttressed by a wider solution in the future.

We have put forward a number of options, described in our paper of 31 October. They include the possibility of making adjustments to the functioning of the financial mechanism or even basing it on new criteria. We also spelt out the implications of other mechanisms, including one which might operate directly on the expenditure side of the budget. I do not think, therefore, that the resolution is in one detailed point wholly correct when it says, in paragraph 10, that the Commission's communication is unsatisfactory because it is based entirely on a mechanism involving refunds of Community resources. It did go a little wider; it did open a wider option than that, but I make no great point about it.

Some of the methods we have suggested raised substantially greater juridical problems than do

others; and in this approach the Commission attaches particular importance, first, to the need to accept the integrity of the system of the Community's own resources and, secondly, to avoiding any measure which could put a Member State in a situation where it had no interest in developing new Community policies. We also think it is important that remedies should be found within the Community budget.

Perhaps most important of all is that any solution or any combination of solutions should be a Community solution making use of procedures and mechanisms which already exist and form part of the Community heritage. By all means, if it is essential, let us create new things when new requirements arise; but I prefer, if we can, to adapt and improve what we already have: we are more likely to get an agreed solution that way and an agreed solution — for that is the only sort that is possible — we must have, and we must have it, if we possibly can, in the very near future. The Community has the means to solve these problems. They will not go away if we do not face up to them: on the contrary, they can poison much else. We need ingenuity, realism and political will. I have no doubt that in the Institutions of the Community, not least in this House, we have all those three qualities.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Ruffolo to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Ruffolo. — *(I)* This debate on the problem of economic convergence is unfortunately taking place at a moment of increased divergence in the economic policies of the Member States and at a time when the very cohesion of the Community is threatened.

Convergence, as Mr Jenkins said a short while ago, has become an ambiguous term. It was introduced into Community parlance at Bremen, when it was acknowledged that the fundamental precondition for the success of the European Monetary System was a reduction in economic disparities between Member States and a convergence of their economic policies.

Subsequently this expression has been used with other meanings of a more general or a more restrictive nature. Nowadays we have come to consider it from the purely adventitious point of view of the financial disadvantages or advantages which certain countries derive from being members of the Community.

The last document produced by the Commission — the one we are discussing now — also contributes to this distortion of meaning. I must add that Mr Jenkins's speech was of a distinctly superior quality to that of the document itself. This document reduces the whole question to British and Italian objections to the imbalances in the contributions made by these two countries to the Community budget.

Ruffolo

We ought therefore to distinguish the question of budget imbalances from the wider question of economic imbalances between the Member States of the Community, but I must say that Mr Jenkins's remarks went far enough in my opinion to clarify this aspect of the question.

The question can be stated briefly as follows. The Commission undertook to submit proposals simultaneously to the European Council and to Parliament. Parliament decided to look at these proposals and at the same time asked the European Council not to take any decisions on these matters before they had been discussed here.

Now the document which the Commission has sent us does not contain any proposals. Surprisingly, the Commission says that it intends to make use of its prerogative to make a proposal at what it considers the best time. For the moment it confines itself with regard to the question of budgetary imbalances to seeking technical solutions, but without stating its opinion on these matters. Then it devotes three and a half pages to the problem of 'wider' convergence, and this, in turn, is reduced to a general and summary examination of two requests drawn up by the Italian Government.

Well now, there are two ways of interpreting this elusive, non-committal behaviour: either the Commission does not intend to make any proposals to the European Council — in which case it is hard to see what the Heads of State and Government will talk about in Dublin at the end of the month — or it intends to make them 'at the best time'. But which is the best time? It looks as if it is when the Parliament itself cannot discuss these questions.

Mr President, the Parliament, in its October resolution, has already condemned the behaviour of the Council and the Commission. I think that the Parliament needs to reiterate in the clearest possible manner the following warning: if the Commission and the Council intend to base their relations with the EP on diplomatic and bureaucratic subterfuges of this sort, they ought to know that they will not be able to escape an open conflict with this Parliament.

In the same way, the Heads of State and Government meeting at the European Council must understand that, sooner or later, they are going to have to put relations between this 'semi-institution' and the Parliament on some kind of formal basis. And we say to that: better sooner than later. The problem of economic convergence, if it is expressed in the appropriate terms, may be a good occasion to do that.

In any case, the European Parliament cannot and must not let itself be crowded out from decisions regarding this fundamental problem.

I now come to the matter in hand and shall deal first of all with the first question, the most urgent and vital

question of budgetary imbalances. The rapporteur has already set out the situation clearly. I shall confine myself to remarking that the Commission has expounded, with an objectivity worthy of Solomon himself, four possible ways of solving this problem: revision of the corrective mechanism in force; weighting the base from which this mechanism is calculated; fixing absolute limits to the gross or net contributions of the various Member States and applying new policies with regard to Community expenditure which may compensate for the present inequalities.

The Commission has not said what its own options are out of these possibilities, nor has it expressed an opinion on the problem of whether or not the new financial burdens arising from the revision of the mechanism will have to be shouldered by the less prosperous countries as well. Nor does it say whether the corrective measures will have to be introduced from 1980 onwards. In other words, we have no terms of reference for our discussion.

Nevertheless I think that the European Parliament must and can take a stand on one or two essential points. First of all, on the fact that the present situation is intolerable for the United Kingdom. As the Commission itself said, if the imbalance between various Member States' contributions is prolonged for too long it will cause the Community to disintegrate. As this imbalance has got worse over the years, speedy action must be taken to reduce it substantially before 1980. As for the choice of methods, general and objective criteria should be adopted rather than occasional and contingent ones. For example, it is preferable that the base of the corrective mechanism should be weighted according to the *per capita* income rather than to the gross national product of the Member States. This would introduce a more equitable element of progressivity, which would also be to the advantage of new Member States.

What is more, the Socialist Group has already indicated its view of the seriousness and the urgency of the problem in the shape of a very clear resolution: no lasting imbalances, but, on the other hand, no excuses for introducing the unacceptable principle of the fair return.

We must, however, note, firstly, that the problem of budgetary imbalances is not the entire story with regard to the imbalances in the participation of the Member States in the Community. These latter imbalances — as has been pointed out several times, though the Commission has preferred not to take account of the fact — cannot be calculated only on the basis of contributions and transfers of resources taking place through the Community budget. We must also assess the effects that the external customs tariff has on the various Member States' balances of payments. If we were to take account of that, the rela-

Ruffolo

tive position of Italy, for example, would turn out to be much more unfavourable.

Secondly, we should note that the problem of the budgetary imbalances must not be confused with the problem of economic imbalances in the Community. Otherwise the just struggle to solve the first problem turns into a tactical struggle designed to avoid the implications of the second. I am very much afraid that the Conservative Government in the United Kingdom is partly motivated by the desire to turn this matter to demagogic ends.

Now at last I come to the real problem of economic convergence.

As I said at the beginning, the problem of convergence of Community economies, in the sense of equalizing the differing levels of prosperity, was raised again in July 1978 at Bremen. In sketching the outlines of the new European Monetary system, the European Council acknowledged that if such a system was to be efficient and lasting it needed to be founded on a convergence of the economies of the Member States. The fact is that economies which show signs of serious and lasting divergence cannot coexist within the same system.

But in order that they may coexist and converge, however, we must know in which direction they are to converge. In other words, we must explicitly raise the problem of growth objectives in the medium and long term in the Member States of the Community. Now it so happens that this problem has never been seriously dealt with so far.

Here we arrive at the underlying cause of the crisis which is about to overtake the European Community: its inability to proceed from what has been called the stage of negative integration (abolition of barriers to capital movements and movements of men and goods), to positive integration (joint adoption of common economic and social targets), from the original Common Market formula (a mix of *laissez-faire* and agricultural protectionism) to a rational policy of planning capable of dealing with the critical problems of unemployment, regional imbalances and energy shortages.

All the evidence suggests that today the formula of negative integration, of *laissez-faire* and of liberal waste and protectionist waste, is leading to the disintegration of the Community. Most importantly of all, economic growth within the 'common market' has not resulted in a reduction, but rather in an increase, in national and regional divergencies.

Between 1970 and 1978, the divergence between rich and poor regions increased from a ratio of 1 to 5 to a ratio of 1 to 6. That the divergences should increase in a unified economic area in which unequal forces are at work should not be a matter for great surprise.

When the rules are the same but the player's stakes are unequal it is quite probable that the poor will become poorer and the rich richer. When, in a unified economic space, wealth is concentrated in only a few zones, it is much more probable that, rather than the capital moving in search of use where there are excess workers, the workers will be obliged to seek employment where there is capital or, if there is not sufficient demand for their work, they will remain unemployed.

Moreover, under the combined influence of internal social contradictions and external inflationary pressures, the magic triangle of the capitalist economic miracle, consisting of growth, employment and stability, has broken: additional doses of growth today bring with them decreasing doses of employment and increasing doses of inflation.

In the end it is the Common Market itself which runs the risk of disintegration. On the one hand there is an increase in the creeping protectionism of State subsidies and on the other hand, there is the *dirigisme* of the large multinational corporations. In such a situation, to refuse a policy of public planning is not an option in favour of free competition but rather in favour of the private planning of the big combines.

The alternative to this Community *impasse* is a process of integration founded on the conscious pursuit of the objective of balanced growth. The first duty of the Community must therefore be that of making these objectives explicit for each country and for the Community as a whole and defining the steps that need to be taken in order to pursue these policies in a coherent fashion, whether they are measures designed to promote the coordination of national economic policies or political measures at the Community level.

Looked at from the first point of view, the introduction of the European Monetary System has imposed obligations with regard to stability, but not obligatory development aims. But integration based exclusively on controls on the foreign exchange markets and controls on the expansion of the money supply obliges weaker countries to adopt deflationary policies which only accentuate their weakness. This means that not only the accompanying measures, set out at the moment the European Monetary System was adopted, but also the official coordination of macro-economic policies in the Member States must be rethought-out and implemented without delay.

In addition, the coordination of national policies involves the serious pursuit of harmonization of fiscal policies, subsidy policies and the elimination of hindrances to competition that result from protectionism or monopolistic abuses. This harmonization must not be harmonization *vis-à-vis* a neutral homogeneity of the Common Market but *vis-à-vis* the various growth objectives in the Member States.

Ruffolo

As for the development of a serious Community policy and a serious Community budget, that in turn implies a far-reaching revision of the agricultural policy, which makes a by no means unimportant contribution to aggravating the divergences, a massive reinforcement of the transfer policies — both regional and social — not only of financial resources but above all of managerial and technological capacities, from the most prosperous to the poorest regions of the Community and the introduction of new common policies in the vital areas of energy, industrial retraining and research.

There is nothing of this to be seen in the feeble little pages of this Commission report, except perhaps the rather self-evident assertion that no new policies can be undertaken without new resources.

Thus, stoked up by, on the one hand those who say that if there are no new resources there is no chance of using them and, on the other, those who retort that there can be no new plans without new resources, the fiscal crisis of the Community continues to worsen. Quite soon we may well see the beginning of a political crisis, which will be a crisis of ideas, political courage and far sightedness.

Without a plan it is quite ludicrous to speak of convergence. Bernanos said that one could run as fast as one liked but in which direction? We could well paraphrase him by saying 'convergence, yes, but in which direction?'

At the moment, the only thing we are converging towards is a crisis of the Community.

During the battle that we have fought over this budget, we in the Socialist Group have already indicated a way of overcoming this paralysis and of resuming the process of integration on a new basis. Our proposal for a planned budget covering several years has been conceived with the intention of providing an aim and terms of reference for the development of common policies and the growth of Community resources.

The inspiration of this proposal is the notion of the Community as something to be created and not as a market; as a political institution answering the needs and aspirations of the peoples that make up the Community, not as a technical organization intended to regulate transactions between economic or bureaucratic bodies. Consequently, if we are to give a concrete meaning to this word 'convergence' — which is so colourless and empty — we shall seek our inspiration rather in a notion which is peculiar to our social tradition, that is to say, the concept of equality, and therefore our inspiration will be the aim of a balanced development of the Community capable of providing equality in the distribution of work and wealth to all the citizens of the Community.

(Applause).

President. — I call Mr Adonnino to speak on behalf of the European People's Party (CD).

Mr Adonnino. — *(I)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I think it appropriate to remind you that this debate takes place at the request of the Parliament, which would otherwise have run the risk of remaining extraneous to the decision-taking process on a very important matter, namely the question of what is known as economic convergence. The ambiguity of this expression has already been emphasized but I believe that we need not linger over this any further because the fact is that every Member who speaks on this topic will make clear during the course of his speech exactly what he understands by the word 'convergence'.

At the meeting of the European Council in Strasbourg in June of this year it was decided that the Council of Ministers would discuss the problem of convergence and the Community budget after a document on this topic had been submitted to it by the Commission. As a result of the submission of this document, which is dated 12 September, this Parliament had the occasion to debate two motions for a resolution, of which one had also been submitted on behalf of the Christian Democratic parliamentary group, requesting further information; hence the new paper, dated 31 October, which the Commission sent to this Parliament, and today's debate which is intended to examine a report on the same problem.

The directly-elected Parliament must, therefore, arrive at an opinion, in anticipation of the Dublin summit, so that during the discussions at the summit those present may be aware of our attitude. I say 'attitude' advisedly and do not use any more exact expression because there is no doubt, as has already been remarked, that we are in no position to go further than that, inasmuch as the document which has been submitted to us by the Commission adumbrates one or two possible solutions, sets out one or two possible alternatives but does not take a definitive stand, which means that we cannot do so either.

The problem of the convergence of the Member States' economies emerged during a debate on the Community budget, but I think it is clear to everyone that this is a problem which in this case can only be said to have occurred at an auspicious moment to the extent that it allows us to quantify one or two attitudes numerically, but that it is much wider in its content and its effects go very much further than the problem of the budget.

The real problem of convergence can only be tackled by means of the much hoped-for coordination of the Member States' economic policies with Community policies, which on their own — and here I am in agreement with Mr Jenkins — are not capable for lack of sufficient resources, of eliminating the national

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structural imbalances within the Community, even if, as is possible, the inconsistencies and hesitations which, let us be frank, are certainly not lacking, could be eliminated. Let us remember that the reduction, and, if possible, the elimination, of structural and regional disparities within the Community is one of the main objectives and one of the main sources of inspiration of the Treaty of Rome. The process of Community integration has the attainment of this objective as one of its goals.

Recently this aim was reasserted as a foundation to the European Monetary System, but this fundamental problem had already been raised at the time of the signing of the Treaties of Rome. Today we must admit quite plainly that not only has this objective not been achieved, but there has not even been significant progress in this field either. The gap between the various European regions is tending to increase rather than diminish and it is also apparent that new investment tends to be concentrated in those areas which already count as the most highly developed. A short while ago someone spoke about this divergence quoting facts and figures that must be a cause for serious concern for us all.

My group is fully aware that convergence is a topic which must be tackled immediately, but it must be set out in the correct terms and the right avenues of approach should be indicated. We need an accurate overall view of the problem, so that a correct diagnosis of the situation may be followed by an indication of the appropriate therapy. My group, therefore, cannot go along with those who have evinced a very restrictive view of the problem, nor with those who tend to reduce it to a question of financial flows, nor with those who have a mere accountants' view of the Community budget, as if it were a question of outgoings balancing incomings, so that we must always be in a situation of approximate balance, nor in consequence, can we agree with those who propose a so called fair return to balance what has been paid in. Of course this matter raises problems which are of importance in the short, medium and long term, but the solutions cannot be sought outside the area covered by the principles which have already been accepted. The Community has arrived, by various stages, at the point where it is equipped with its own resources which constitute one of its main achievements, and we are even on the way to achieving the other indefensible requirement that everything that takes place within the ambit of the Community should be included in the Community budget. One or two decisions taken by this Assembly over the last few days, at the moment of approval of the first reading of the budget, indicated further progress in this direction.

I have set out two principles which cannot be called into question and which must therefore be respected

even in present circumstances. The need for an equal distribution of the financial burden amongst Member States, seen as a means of keeping up the efforts directed at achieving convergence of the Community economies by means of coordinating the policies of the Member States with those of the Community as a whole, should not fly in the face of the fundamental principles which I have already mentioned and should therefore be satisfied within the limits of the Community budget. In the short term the *per capita* GDP could be taken as a reference for any calculations, as was suggested in the Lange report, in order to work out the Community average and thus pinpoint those countries which have higher than average GDPs and those which have lower than average GDPs. This ladies, and gentlemen, would not mean a change of attitude on the part of the Community with regard to the principle of own resources nor would it be a reversion to the contribution system. It would only mean either a possible solution to the problem of equal distribution of the financial burden or the chance to avoid drawing on the Community's present own resources, which have already come close to exhaustion by combining the inevitable wish to increase these own resources with the practical opportunity to do so. In our view any solution to the problem of equal distribution of the financial burden between Member States and the elimination of the contradictions in Community policies are preconditions for the unavoidable increase in the proportion of own resources to be allocated to the expansion of those policies which are short of resources and to the launching of new policies. It seems to us that this is the only way to approach the problem and we believe that a few more words should be said about the fact that an increase in the own resources of the Community will have to be balanced by a shifting of responsibilities towards the Community, in order to prevent this increase having repercussions in the form of increased tax burdens for the European tax-payers, something which we certainly do not desire.

Whilst reiterating, therefore, the principle that the maximum benefit must be obtained from any equal distribution of the financial burden, we believe that the own resources deriving from this must in any case be spent on Community policies, in accordance with whatever guidance may emerge and on the basis of the annual decisions taken during the examination of the Budget. This latter point is of particular importance for us because we believe that attempts to distribute the financial burden, more equally must go hand in hand with an attempt to get the process of convergence moving again. The Community should also be constantly occupied in checking the effects of convergence and assessing the extent to which this aim is being achieved or not, something which it has perhaps not always done. These are the criteria according to which we are inclined to assess the Lange report.

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In this way, ladies and gentlemen, we believe that the problem of convergence may be put into its correct perspective. It is now the Council's turn to express an opinion and it will express it after having taken cognizance of the results of the Dublin summit. This Parliament is waiting to know the result of that summit, just as it is waiting to know the definite and detailed proposals, accompanied by all the necessary assessments on the part of the Commission, concerning all the complex matters that have been discussed. It is obvious that the Parliament, which at the moment confines itself to indicating the general direction in which things should move, will only be able to take a definitive stand when it has available all this information. The Parliament wishes to take part in this kind of decision-taking. I think that only in this way, that is to say, taking into account the complexity of the problem and the various possibilities and, above all, summoning up the will power to deal with the difficulties we face and the courage to solve them by pointing out the right approach to adopt, can this Parliament make a significant contribution to the construction of the true Europe.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Mr President, may I first of all congratulate the rapporteur, Mr Lange, not only on the report which he has steered through his committee, but also on the way he presented it here this morning. It is an extremely useful and wide-ranging report indeed, not only in dealing with the immediate problem, but looking to the future, I hope this House will take very serious note of the way that this report is drawn up. If I may say so, I do sincerely hope that the House will endorse overwhelmingly the report which Mr Lange has presented to us. May I at the same time, say to the President of the Council how grateful I am for the fact that he has taken the trouble and courtesy to come here, although obviously he cannot, as things stand say very much, until after the meeting of the Heads of State in Dublin later this month. I thank him for being here, and I am sure he will faithfully repeat to the Council the views and the feelings of this House.

As Mr Jenkins said in his extremely interesting and thoughtful speech, there are two problems to be solved. There is the short-term problem and there is the longer-term problem. The short-term problem falls into two phases which we are fully aware of. Firstly, it obviously concerns the situation of the United Kingdom, i.e. its contributions to the budget and the receipts which it gets from the Community. The second short-term problem is that of Italy, where there is a structural problem. Italy rightly feels that there is an imbalance as far as her produce and the

Mediterranean sector of the Community are concerned. These are the short-term problems, Mr President, and they have got to be dealt with in the short term. The solutions which have been put forward, the possible solutions from the Commission, are worthy of great thought and I think the President of the Commission is quite right when he says that this is not the moment to put forward a concrete proposal, but merely to show us what the options are.

But to return to the short-term problem, which we all know that of the United Kingdom, it is quite true that in 1980, we shall have to make a contribution to the European Community which is way beyond the means of the United Kingdom to bear. It is certainly far from an equitable solution. I do not need to go into all the details, Mr President, they are well known. They are laid out in the various documents we have before us. They have been very well adumbrated in two documents put before us by the Commission over the past three months. The position is that the United Kingdom will be making a net contribution during 1980 of over £1 100 million, something that obviously, as has been said in the report by Mr Lange, cannot be tolerated. Solutions must therefore be found in the short term. I agree entirely with what has been said by Mr Lange, and by the President of the Commission, that these solutions should be and must be within the budgetary processes of the Institutions. That is obviously the right way of going about things. It is going to be difficult, and I will not conceal from the House that the reason for this situation gives me a great deal of anxiety. The fact that the United Kingdom is in the position of being the third poorest of our nine Member States is something that I am far from proud of, and I cannot help saying to the House that of course internal policies do in point of fact affect the external postures of one's country; and they have been disastrous for eleven out of the last fifteen years as far as the United Kingdom is concerned.

(Applause)

But that is something which we in the United Kingdom have to put right and we shall do so, though that is not for this House to debate.

But the United Kingdom does not wish at all to upset the broad principle of the integrity of own resources; far from it. What we want and what we require in the United Kingdom is a broad balance as far as the receipts and expenditure for the Community are concerned. But let me say this to the House that this is not just a British problem or an Italian one. This is a Community problem. We are all involved in this. Maybe at the moment it is the United Kingdom and Italy who are experiencing problems. In our case it is an imbalance between payments and receipts. As far as Italy is concerned it is the structural problem, and my heart bleeds for them, but tomorrow it may be some other country. It may be your country, Mr Presi-

Scott-Hopkins

dent, it may be the Federal Republic of Germany, it may be France, and of course we have got to find Community solutions. I firmly believe — and here I turn to the more medium term — that it is not in the interests of the Community that there should be a rich golden triangle and poor peripheral countries. This slows the whole Community down.

We do not want, as Mr Tindemans suggested in his report some years ago, a two-pace or two-tier Community. We want one Community going forward. I think that the disparity between the periphery and the centre is of no advantage to anyone. As far as policies are concerned — and this was made very plain by the President of the Commission, and by Mr Lange in his report there must be convergence, and not the divergence which has existed over the years between Member States.

But there is also a disequilibrium between policies as well. Over emphasis on the agricultural policy, the CAP, is too grotesque to need further comment. Even within the CAP the over emphasis as between the Guarantee and the Guidance Sections is too obvious for me to say anything more about it. This must be corrected. But let me also say to the President of the Council while he is here, that this imbalance in policy will never be corrected unless the Council of Ministers has the courage to improve the other policies and increase the resources available to the Regional and Social Funds. This is where the Council must have the courage to promote and expand its policies.

(Applause)

Therefore I say to Mr Lange, there is only one thing that I am doubtful about, and that is paragraph 7. Of course, financial equalization is not the only way to achieve convergence and to arrive at common policies. We must have a new approach by the Council, as well as new policies and new courage to do these things. I want to see us tackle questions such as the unemployment of young people, and unemployment throughout the Community. This cannot be achieved by means of the agricultural policies, though indeed we have tried it in the past. I know that the President of the Commission will accept this view. It is not through agricultural policies that you can put right social problems and unemployment. So let the Council take courage in 1980. Let them deal with the short-term policy, the disequilibrium as far as the United Kingdom is concerned. Let them have courage to deal with the necessity to change and to move forward into new fields. Let us exploit the new technologies. Let us improve social justice. Let us improve also the regional disparities that exist between some of the peripheral States — in Italy, in the applicant countries, perhaps, in the United Kingdom, and elsewhere

— so that these disparities disappear. Because only in this way, by having the courage to develop these new policies, will we get the convergence that this House, the President of the Commission and Mr Lange and his Committee on Budgets wish.

Mr President, I hope that we shall support this important report, which has been put forward so ably. I think that this debate is perhaps one of the most important that this new Parliament has ever held, and I sincerely hope that at the end of the day there will be overwhelming support for this report. Because I believe it is going to show this Parliament the path to a new awareness and a new importance in taking and forming decisions which are going to be of great benefit to all the Member States of the Community.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Fernandez, to speak on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Fernandez. — *(F)* Mr President, I should like first of all to say a few words about the purpose of our debate. In principle it is concerned with the convergence of the economies of the nine Member States of the EEC, but we should have done better to speak of divergence. One of the goals laid down in the Treaty of Rome was the harmonious development of economic activity in the whole of the Community. The truth, however, is that the EEC has been characterized by a continuous expansion of the dominant market position of the largest economic and financial groupings with, as a result, a significant increase in disparities between the Member States. This, indeed, is the reason for the increasing economic strength of the Federal Republic of Germany and for the increasing backwardness of the United Kingdom. The fact is that there can be no harmonious growth serving the needs of the various peoples of Europe if profit is the sole deciding factor. It is in this light that I intend to set out the views of the French Communists with regard to the document which the Commission has submitted to us.

This document deals mainly with the British demands. I should like to say straight away that in our opinion these demands are not justified.

Firstly, if the British contribution to financing the EEC budget is relatively high, I should like to repeat, following the example of my colleagues Mr Chamberlain and Mr Baillot, that the reason for this is the fact that Britain buys a significant proportion of its imports outside the EEC, which result in customs duties and agricultural levies. Secondly, as regards the proportion of the budget which the United Kingdom gets back, I have two remarks to make.

Fernandez

The first concerns common agricultural policy expenditure. Are you aware that on average British farmers receive more from the EAGGF than French farmers? In all honesty I must add that the greatest beneficiaries of the EAGGF are, respectively, German and Dutch farmers. How is this situation possible? On the one hand, because of the compensatory amounts, which unjustly penalize farmers in countries like France in favour of those in hard-currency countries. These compensatory amounts in effect constitute subsidies for importer countries such as the United Kingdom. In addition, the surpluses take up a significant proportion of the appropriations allotted to the common agricultural policy, and this concerns mainly farms of the 'milk factory' type in Northern Europe.

I would add that the United Kingdom obviously does not abide very closely by the rules of the common agricultural policy. For example, there are discriminatory practices, such as excise duties on wine, which considerably restrict imports, and the very real barriers constituted by the marketing arrangements for milk or potatoes. Is there really a common agricultural policy when the British market is often closed to Community produce, while the United Kingdom purchases food outside the EEC? The example of sheepmeat is particularly significant. Although the United Kingdom does not produce enough sheepmeat to supply its own needs it is 200 000 tonnes short — it organizes, to the advantage of one or two large multinational corporations, imports of lamb from New Zealand. In such a situation, granting special subsidies to the United Kingdom would only encourage it to continue in this way and would be equivalent to paying a bonus for goods purchased outside the EEC to the detriment in the main, of the small Community producers.

But the truth is that the situation calls for a more thorough analysis. The frontiers of the Nine are too narrowly restrictive for the multinational companies which dominate the EEC and which created it for their own benefit. Their need to make profits nowadays requires their going further and faster. The attack on the common agricultural policy, supported by the British demands, tallies with the desire to speed up the restructuring of industry and prepare for the enlargement of the Common Market. The aim is above all to transfer the appropriations allocated to the common agricultural policy in order to facilitate industrial reorganization by the big trusts, at the cost of driving tens of thousands of smallholdings and medium-sized farms out of business. But who is going to believe that the serious difficulties which the British people are experiencing today are the responsibility of, for example, French farmers? They result from policies contrary to the interests of the workers that have been pursued by successive governments in that

country, in particular the austerity policies which bear particularly heavily on the workers. The only way of reducing the disparities between the Member States of the EEC is to challenge the hegemony of these large combines. Only on these conditions can cooperation be developed on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and the general interest.

Indeed, we fervently hope to see this Europe of cooperation emerge. This is the only kind of Europe which will make it possible to narrow the disparities between the various Member States. But the today's common policies lead to the opposite result. They strike at the achievements of generations of farmers, they mutilate industry, they reinforce the dominant position of the strong, in particular the Federal Republic of Germany. The same is true of agricultural policy, since the Federal Republic receives 25 % of EAGGF appropriations, though its agriculture does not account for even one-fifth of total agricultural production in the Community.

Mr Jenkins, you have said that the common agricultural policy is the Community's greatest success, if they could hear you, French farmers would give you a somewhat colourful answer. For example, one of the results of this policy has been that their income has fallen for the tenth consecutive year; in addition tens of thousands of them have been condemned to join the dole queues. Today we are discussing measures that may further aggravate this situation. A majority of the members of this House wish to go even further. I should like to stress that in the opinion of my group the fate of the farmers in our country is the national authorities. The European Parliament has not powers to take decisions with regard to the pattern of the common agricultural policy. We said that the election of the European Parliament would be used as a means of increasing integration and attacking the vital forces of our nation. I should like to say, on behalf of the workers and the farmers of my country, that they will not calmly accept the law of the multinationals, even if it does bear the seal of the European Parliament. I shall conclude, Mr President, by emphasizing our solidarity with the workers of Britain, in particular with those who are struggling against anti-social policies, and at the same time I would stress our desire to see cooperation between our two peoples and amongst all the peoples of the other Member States of the Community develop in a spirit of respect for mutual independence. For our part, we shall continue to defend the independence of our country and the interests of the workers of the whole of Europe.

President. — I call Mr de Courcy Ling.

Mr de Courcy Ling. — Mr President, the last speaker has called into question the Treaty of Accession of the last three Member States to join this Community. The arrangements for New Zealand are

De Courcy Ling

covered in the Treaty of Accession. I would ask our colleagues who speak later in this debate to be careful to respect the Treaties — the Treaty of Rome and the Treaties covering the accession of the last three Member States. The rule of law is vital to the Community and vital to this new Parliament.

President. — I taken note of your statement.

I call the rapporteur, Mr Lange, for a brief statement.

Mr Lange, rapporteur, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (D) Ladies and gentlemen, I have asked for the floor because Mr Scott-Hopkins expressed doubts about paragraph 7 of the motion for a resolution. It seems to me that the English text has been incorrectly translated and does not accurately reflect what was in the original text. Let me explain the original text again to prevent any further confusion. Paragraph 7 of the original text states that only a new and lasting system of financial equalization between the Member States can effectively *support* efforts at convergence. That is completely different from the wording of the English text. I would ask those Members who have based their speeches and thinking on the English text to take note of this and use the German text as a basis.

President. — I take note of the rapporteur's statement. I call Mrs Scrivener, to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Scrivener. — (F) The debate which we are holding today is of fundamental importance, since it goes to the very roots of the Community; indeed, Article 2 of the EEC Treaty provides that 'the Community shall have as its task, by establishing a common market and progressively approximating the economic policies of Member States, to promote throughout the Community a harmonious development of economic activities'.

Bearing this in mind, I have a few remarks to make on the European Commission's communication.

This document deals with one aspect of the problem, namely budgetary questions, and somewhat neglects the necessary remedies to deal with the lack of convergence between the economies of the Member States. My colleague, Mr Damseaux, will presently have the opportunity to deal with this aspect in a general fashion, though he will not go into the details, since this will be the subject of a major debate during the coming part-session in December.

This being said, I, for my part, should like to confine myself to budgetary problems, since the debate on convergence has for some time now, centred *de facto* on these questions.

First of all I should like to draw attention to the work carried out by the Chairman of the Committee on Budgets, Mr Lange, who is the rapporteur for this document and has just presented to us the motion for a resolution which we adopted in committee last night.

I shall deal firstly with the notion of a 'fair return', which is the subject of paragraph 5 of this motion. On behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, I should like to say that we are pleased that the Committee on Budgets rejects this notion of fair return, because it is contrary to the spirit of the Treaties and would, in fact, call into question the very principle of own resources or, as this motion in fact emphasizes, would involve non-budgetary financial transfers.

The Community budget's resources derive from taxes and not from financial contributions by Member States. The allocation to this budget of part of the VAT levied in the Member States shows that it is a real budget, in contrast to the ordinary budget of an international organization, which is made up entirely of lump-sum payments by the member countries.

These permanent 'own' resources are used for expenditure intended to finance common policies that have been freely decided upon by the Member States — thereby, of course, implementing the Treaty. This being so, they are not calculated in terms of the receipts which they provide for each Member State. This, of course, does not mean that the Member States should not derive balanced benefits from these policies; but I would add that Member States are not justified in calling into question, for purely budgetary reasons, policies which they have freely helped to draw up.

For this reason I should like to say to our British friends that, though we accept that a temporary imbalance, such as will affect the United Kingdom in 1980, ought to be partially compensated for by other equally temporary measures, we should be endangering the achievements of this Community, and the future development of Europe, if this idea of a fair return were to appear in the Community budget.

What is more, I should like to emphasize that the very idea of a 'fair return' is completely contrary to the notion of convergence, inasmuch as it is aimed not at achieving some common Community objective but exclusively at satisfying national interests, the common policies only being considered from this single point of view. It goes without saying that this is not what we want to do.

To put it plainly, Mr President, the Liberal and Democratic Group considers that we must look for genuine solutions to the problems which some Member States, and particularly the United Kingdom,

Scrivener

are encountering here, but we should prefer this to be part of a wide-ranging, forward-looking process.

Thus, the manner in which paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution is drafted, asking as it does for an immediate solution, as part of the 1980 budget, to the budgetary imbalances experienced by certain Member States, does not appear satisfactory to us if it involves measures which pre-empt the future.

On the other hand, as I said just now, it would be a good thing if the temporary imbalance which the United Kingdom will experience in 1980 were partially compensated for by equally temporary measures.

Now, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I come to the second part of the motion for a resolution by the Committee on Budgets and here I should like once again to thank Mr Lange for the work he has done.

In the system which he envisages, the Member States whose *per capita GDP* is higher than the Community average would make proportionate contributions to financing a supplementary component of budgetary resources.

This system may be a good approach, but it will only be a good approach provided certain conditions, which we consider absolutely imperative, are fulfilled:

- firstly, it should be part of the system of own resources, integrated into the Community budget, otherwise it will threaten Community achievements in this field;
- secondly the total amount deriving from this redistribution mechanism should not be such that we quickly find ourselves faced with a real second source of income, in parallel with own resources;
- finally, and we attach a great deal of importance to this, these monies must be allocated to the various common policies individually, and not globally.

It will, of course — and others have said this before me — be up to the Council to give consideration to these suggestions in the form of proposals from the Commission, and it is up to the Council, in the end, to take the final decision.

Those, Mr President, are the observations I wish to make on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group. In conclusion, let me stress once again the importance of convergence between the economies of the Member States, an objective — we must admit — which has been somewhat lost from view in recent years. As the motion for a resolution by the Committee on Budgets emphasizes, this convergence can only result from the coordination of policies in the economic and monetary fields, and also in the regional social, agricultural and other sectors. In other

words, Mr President, we shall vote for the resolution, with due regard to the qualification which I have got out.

(*Applause*)

President. — I call Mr Lalor to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Lalor. — Mr President, President of the Council, and colleagues, the Community's budget as it stands at present does not play a role capable of facilitating economic convergence. If we look at the net transfer of resources we can see that not merely does the Community budget fail to use this particular scope to the full, but it acts in a positively regressive manner, transferring resources from the less prosperous to the richer Member States.

Before I go on to deal with the question of economic convergence, I should like to say, Mr President, that this whole debate is obviously focused on the question of the contributions of the United Kingdom to the EEC budget. This is perhaps a narrow interpretation of the whole question. Nevertheless I should like to state that I am somewhat sympathetic to the position of the UK, in that its net contribution to the EEC budget in 1973 was £ 102 million, and in 1978, £703 million. We cannot ignore the psychological impact on the British people of what it believes to be the net result in figures of having joined the Community.

However, it is important that we place this whole question in its proper perspective — that is, in the ability of the European Economic Community, to fulfil the overall aims of the Treaty: namely, harmonious balanced development throughout all of the Member States.

My colleagues and I have repeatedly stated in this House and elsewhere that the Member States would be far better employed in promoting the expansion of the Community budget which would allow for the fulfilment of the basic aims of the Treaty and benefit the depressed regions of the Community. This in fact is not happening. To put this debate into perspective, therefore, I think we have to examine how the sum of Community policies and measures has been effective in promoting a reduction in the disparities between the wealthier central areas and the peripheral areas.

Let me take the case that I am most familiar with: Ireland. Despite the substantial net transfers from the Community Ireland's *GDP per capita* as a percentage of the Community average declined from 52 % in 1973 to just over 49 % in 1978. Assuming that the Community *GDP per capita* will increase by about 3 % on average in real terms over the next decade, it is estimated that a growth in GDP in Ireland of over 6 % per annum would be required in order to bring

Laor

our real GDP *per capita* up to 60 % of the Community average by 1990. And to achieve a growth rate of this magnitude would be extremely difficult, particularly in view of the uncertainties with regard to growth, inflation and energy supplies. Growth in GDP requires a significant increase in investment, particularly in manufacturing industry, and in infrastructural development. While these are primarily the responsibility of the national governments and their programmes, progress naturally will not be achieved unless appropriate Community policies are also in operation which will underpin and reinforce national governmental efforts. This has been the essential theme of our efforts in Ireland. We are asking the Community to assist us in the attainment of our own economic targets and policies.

I have to confess that while gains to Ireland as a result of membership are clearly evident in cash terms, these must be offset against the impact of the common commercial policy of the Community which has aggravated the effects of economic recession from 1974 to 1976. In order to continue an increase in investment-promoting policies geared towards employment-creation and a reduction in inflation, the overall Community approach towards economic convergence must be inherent in national programmes. A number of principles must emerge for consideration by both Commission and Council in the achievement of economic convergence. To begin with, it must be recognized that additional policies are needed to complement and improve what has already been achieved. These policies should be consistent with, and of sufficient scope and magnitude to make a real impact on, the reduction of the backwardness of the less-favoured regions, and must be financed by an expanded Community budget.

Secondly, the policies aimed at convergence and balanced economic development should not result in a relative deterioration in the position of an already less prosperous State. This, as we have seen, is happening at the present time. Neither should any proposal create obstacles, directly or indirectly to convergence, either through the deployment of budgetary expenditure, or through non-budgetary policies. There should be an agreed target for achieving economic balance between the regions of the Member States. The Community's structural funds, the EAGGF, the Social Fund, the Regional Fund, should be expanded substantially and redefined.

I am sad to say that this Assembly, in its treatment last week of the budget, largely at the insistence of the Christian-Democrat-Group, has clearly run counter to this. There is a need to develop a wide-ranging industrial policy to complement what has been done under the common agricultural policy. Under the present

present circumstances, industries located in the less prosperous regions do not have sufficient financial clout to compete with the bigger multinational companies. This must stop. This Community must bear in mind now, more than ever, that European integration is essentially about people.

With regard to the budget, I am in favour of the introduction in to the revenue side of a progressivity mechanism whereby the share of total budgetary revenue provided by the less prosperous Member States through their VAT contributions would not exceed their share of Community GNP. That would be a positive EEC action towards economic convergence.

Finally, Mr President, the interests of the less prosperous Member States should be taken into account in the development of non-budgetary policies, particularly in regard to trade agreements with third countries. The whole question of economic convergence and its effective resolution has not been assisted by the attitude of the Commission. While the Dublin summit should go a long way towards the resolution to this problem, both on the general prospective of economic convergence and the particular situation of the UK, the Commission, by failing to put forward concrete proposals has certainly not contributed to the best possible preparation for a solution to this problem. They have a Treaty obligation, and Mr Jenkins and his colleagues would do well to remember that their mandate was given to them to safeguard and uphold the interests of the Treaty of Rome. The lack of Community funds to promote investment in industry and infrastructures has clearly resulted in widening disparities and failure to converge economic policy, and I hope that the Commission will take due note of it.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Coppieters, to speak on behalf of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Coppieters. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in a few days' time, the European Council will be meeting to discuss one of the most controversial matters currently facing the Community: the United Kingdom's share of the Community budget.

Decisions may be taken in Dublin, and these decisions will undoubtedly have consequences as far as the budget is concerned. Today's debate gives this House the opportunity to influence these decisions, although we are meeting here today without any knowledge of the proposals which will be put to the European Council. This only goes to show yet again that the present position of the European Parliament in the Community system is still unsatisfactory.

Coppieters

Whatever level the Council meets at — and this goes even more for the European Council — the fact remains that the Council is not required to report back to this House. However, I believe that our criticism should be directed first and foremost at the Commission, because the important point is the Commission's attitude to this matter. The Commission has failed in its responsibilities as laid down in the Treaty, as well as in its relations with this Parliament.

Firstly, the Commission has failed to submit clear proposals to the Council on concessions to the British Government.

The basic principle of the European decision making process is that the Commission should come up with independent — I repeat: independent — proposals. These proposals must represent a suitable basis for decisions which are in the interests of the Community as a whole. But if we can believe what we read in the press — and there has certainly been no information forthcoming from the Commission — the Commission has been behaving like a subordinate body in submitting alternative proposals. To make matters worse the Commission did not even submit these proposals to Parliament when this debate was in preparation. The Commission has thus deprived us of the means of playing our part in the process, however limited that part may be. As a result, this House will be presented with a *fait accompli* after the Dublin Summit. I should like to add my voice to those who intend to issue a serious warning to the Council on the occasion of the second reading of the budget.

There is a second point of criticism I would like to make, at least as serious as the other one. Yet again, we are forced to rely on press reports, and according to these reports, the Commission is under extreme pressure to draw up proposals in line with the British Government's attitude. It would seem that the majority of the Members of the Commission were against such a move, but the President of the Commission intervened personally to ensure that the proposals would be favourable to the United Kingdom. If these reports are true, it is a very serious matter indeed. The independence of the Commission is one of the basic principles under the Treaty, and fundamental guarantee for the efficient functioning of the European Community, and I sincerely hope that Mr Jenkins will be able to explain to us in person what happened and allay our fears.

These two points are, in my opinion, serious enough to warrant consideration being given to the tabling of a motion of censure against the Commission, even though such action would have little political impact under the present circumstances. The Commission should not forget that, whatever the situation may have been in the past, it has certain responsibilities vis-à-vis this House, and we shall not simply allow

ourselves to be bypassed in matters of this kind. Nor shall we allow the Community system to be undermined by weakness from within or pressure from without.

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Mr President, Members of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, when the going gets tough, it becomes necessary to say what we think loudly and clearly, and sometimes even bluntly. We have now reached such a stage, and so what I have to say to you will be loud, clear and blunt. My motives in doing so are not specifically to embarrass the British Members, but simply to point out that this extremely important problem affects the Community, and not just the United Kingdom.

First of all, Mr President, I should like to point out to our British colleagues — and also the Commission — that we appear now to be embarking on the third round of negotiations on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Community. This is tantamount to striking at the very roots of our Community. After all, if the United Kingdom can do this kind of thing, what is to stop other countries following suit? Let me say quite unequivocally that the United Kingdom knew as early as 1972 that the common agricultural policy, was financed at Community level and that, as a non-agricultural producer, it would be called upon to pay out, rather than receive, money. This was true, incidentally, not only for the United Kingdom, but for other Member States as well. The United Kingdom will remain a net contributor to the Community budget so long as the common agricultural policy remains the only policy of any importance which is financed at Community level.

Although I agree that there must be cuts in the common agricultural policy, this is no reason for abolishing it. Either the principle of Community financing must be abandoned altogether, or we shall have to call for additional national contributions from certain Member States. But that in turn will affect the principle of own resources.

Mr President, I was surprised at Mr Lange's motion for a resolution. In paragraphs 4 and 5 — which, incidentally, I can go along with — he rightly says that 'the slowness of the Community in adapting its own resources, in developing common structural policies in the economic and agricultural sectors and in restoring the balance of its common agricultural policy may well be a serious obstacle to its development and is rendering the attainment of convergence even more difficult; this leeway must be made up in a decisive manner and as a matter of urgency'. 'He goes on to declare inadequate, given its incompatibility with the spirit of the Treaties, any solution based on the concept of a fair return, calling into question the principle of own resources or resorting to non-budgetary financial transfers'.

De Goede

So far, so good: I entirely agree with the rapporteur. But here's the rub. In paragraph 7, Mr Lange goes on to 'consider that only a new and lasting system of financial equalization between the Member States within the Community — based on the concept of *per capita* gross domestic product and organized within the framework of the Community budget — can effectively contribute to the furtherance of the efforts at convergence made through the common policies.'

Mr President, there is only one reply to this, and we must have the courage to come out with it. Incidentally, this same answer was given by a previous Commission under the presidency of Mr Hallstein. It boiled down to this. On the one side of the balance sheet, we have the United Kingdom's net contribution to the Community budget. On the other side, there is a free market for industrial goods, a common commercial policy which works to the advantage of the British steel and textile industries, and many other political advantages which are unquantifiable, but which were reason enough for the United Kingdom to become a member of the Community in the first place. There is therefore no reason — just as there was no reason in 1964 or at any subsequent time — to refer to a specifically British problem. Nor should we try to pretend that this is a problem of economic convergence. The British are in fact holding up economic convergence, and for that reason are unable to take part in the European Monetary System. Incidentally, the United Kingdom is also a recipient country in that it reaps above-average benefits from Community policies on such things as energy — including coal mining — and industry, whereby British industry in particular is given assistance towards modernization. I believe, Mr President, that these facts should not only be stated, but also taken into account in formulating Parliament's attitude here today. I get the impression that the Commission has so far been trying to wash its hands of the whole affair, and I believe that this House should refuse to condone this attitude.

6. Urgent procedure

President. — I have received requests for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on:

- a motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Verges, Mr Chambeiron, Mr Damette, Mr Denis, Mrs De March, Mr Fernandez, Mr Frischmann, Mr Martin, Mr Piquet and Mrs Poirier, on the proposal to reduce the sugar quota of the French overseas departments (Doc. 1-514/79)
- a motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Van Minnen, Mrs Buchan, Mr Griffiths, Mr Enright, Mr Hänsch, Mr Sarre, Mr Oehler, Mrs Groes, Mr Pelikan, Mr Vernimmen, Mr Linde, Mr Boyes, Mr Seefeld, Mr Lezzi, Mr Mutingh, Mr Caborn, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam and Mr Rogers, on South Africa (Doc. 1-515/79).

The reasons supporting the requests for urgent debate are contained in the documents themselves.

I shall consult Parliament on these requests tomorrow morning.

The proceedings will now be suspended until 3 p.m.

The House will rise.

(The sittings was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR ROGERS

Vice-President

President. — The sitting is resumed.

7. Question Time

The next item is the resumption of Question Time. We shall begin with questions to the Council. I would remind all concerned of a very good definition of Question Time one sentence questions and two sentence answers.

Since its author is not present, Question No 62 will receive a written answer.¹

Mr Spicer has asked for his Question No 63, (94/79) to be held over until the December part-session.

Since its author is absent, Question No 64, by Mr Davern, will receive a written answer.¹

I call Mr Enright on a point of order.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, it really is too bad that people put down questions and then have the great discourtesy not to be here or to notify us that they cannot be here.

President. — I take note of your point.

Since its author is absent, Question No 35, by Mr Kavanagh, will receive a written answer.¹

Question No 66, by Mr Seligman (H-199/79) has been withdrawn.

Question No 67, by Mr Lalor (H-202/79):

In view of the increase in population in the Republic of IRELAND by 300 000 citizens, does the Council envisage increasing the number of seats allocated to Ireland in the European Parliament, in the next European Elections?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — I thought this was going to be a silent Question Time, Mr President!

The allocation among the Member States of seats in the European Parliament is laid down in Article 2 in the Act of 20 September 1976. The Council draws the Member's attention to the fact that population is not the only criterion taken into account in working out the allocation of seats.

¹ See Annex.

Mr Lalor. — In the light of the fact that we expect to have a sizeable further increase in the population of Ireland between now and 1984, would it be possible for the President-in-Office to take up with his fellow Members of the Council the possibility of reviewing that earlier decision?

Mr Andrews. — I have special knowledge of the increase in population in my own country.

(Laughter)

I'd like to assure the respected Member that I will certainly take note of what he said, but for the information of Mr Lalor, in the special situation in Ireland, if purely demographic criteria had been used, the number of seats allocated to Ireland would have been fixed at seven or eight instead of the present figure of 15; so in all the circumstances I think we have to be realistic about the problem.

Mr Paisley. — Would the Minister cast his eyes from Dublin to the North of Ireland and realize that Northern Ireland has only three Members under the present rule ...

President. — The question was specifically to do with Ireland. I think that you would accept that Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom.

Mr Paisley. — ... I certainly do, Sir, yes. I am glad that that message has got across to you.

(Loud laughter)

Could I reword the question, and ask the Minister whether he could also look at the other parts of the Community, keeping within the terms of his reply?

Mr Andrews. — I'm always glad to look from Dublin in the direction of Belfast from time to time; but the reality of the situation, in reply to Mr Paisley's supplementary question, is that the decision on the distribution of the 81 United Kingdom seats in this Parliament was taken by the government to which he subscribes, namely the United Kingdom Government.

Mr Blaney. — In view of the last supplementary by Mr Paisley, will the President-in-Office take steps to ensure that all of Ireland is treated as one, when it would be better served than it now is by way of Members being sent here?

(Mixed reactions)

President. — Mr Andrews, in view of my reminder to Mr Paisley I am ruling that supplementary out of order.

(Applause)

Question No 68 by Mr Ceravolo (H-217/79):

Does not the Council feel that its Secretariat's decision of 25 September 1979 granting leave to Council officials solely for national elections and not for partial or local elections restricts their freedom of political expression?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — The rules applied in this matter to the Council secretariat were laid down following an agreement reached in 1970 between the administrations of all the Institutions. A survey carried out following the Member's question showed that since this agreement has not been interpreted in the same way by all the Institutions, the Council administration intends to raise this question again at the meeting of heads of administration in order to restore as far as possible a standard practice amongst the Institutions. The Council, therefore, considers it advisable to reserve its final answer to this question until these new consultations have been concluded.

Mr Ceravolo. — *(I)* I have taken due note of the reply given by the President of the Council, the implication of which is that the text of the existing document is not definitive. I should like, nevertheless to ask the President of the Council if he can give us some indication at this stage regarding the broader interpretation of the right to participate in political elections.

Since these are fundamental political and civil rights it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between political elections and administrative elections. Can the President of the Council therefore assure us now that the legislation in force in the individual Member States, according to which, in some cases including that of Italy, voting is compulsory for both political and administrative elections, will be respected?

Mr Andrews. — I am grateful indeed to the Member for his supplementary, but as I pointed out in reply to the original question, the Council will certainly take into account all aspects of the problem. I think it will also have to consider differences in the national legislations of the nine Member States, in addition to what I said in reply to the primary question.

President. — Question No 69, by Mrs Ewing (H-219/79):

Will the Council make an up-to-date statement on the regulations in connection with the common fisheries policy?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — The Member is aware that the Council is seeking an agreement on the Community rules applying to sea fishing. Pending this overall agreement, the Council has adopted various protective or interim measures designed to conserve stocks and to provide a Community framework for any national measures taken or to be taken.

In 1979, for instance, the Council decided that catches made by Member States' vessels during the interim period would take into account the total admissible catches, submitted by the Commission to

Andrews

the Council, and the proportion of total admissible catches allocated to third countries under the agreements and arrangements concluded with those countries by the Community. The Member States are applying the same technical measures for the conservation and control of fishery resources which they applied on 3 November 1976, along with other measures adopted in accordance with the procedures and criteria of annex 6 to the Council Resolution of 3 November 1976.

Mrs Ewing. — Whilst being aware of the tremendous complexity of creating a common fisheries policy, could I ask whether the President-in-Office is aware, with his fellow Ministers, of the chaos that is being caused in the lives of the fishing communities because of the uncertainty hanging over these industries? How aware is the Council of the confusion which exists as regards the forward restructuring of fleets, the question of EAGGF grants, and decisions as to who is eligible and in what circumstances, from one part of the Member States to another? Does he realize that the fishermen do not know whether to modernize their boats, to build new ones, or to scrap them, while ancillary industries and dependent communities hold their breath? How aware is he of the real seriousness of this problem to these communities?

Mr Andrews. — I am grateful for the attention the Member has paid to her supplementary, because I am very well aware indeed of the chaos she speaks about. In a personal way, the fishing industry is dear to my own heart, and I am very near a fishing area in my own constituency, on the east coast of my country.

I would like to say, as President-in-Office, that it is the present intention of the Irish presidency to convene another meeting of the Council to deal with fisheries early in December. I hope that its conclusions will remove some of the uncertainties which Mrs Ewing has properly mentioned, and certainly which the President-in-Office is very well aware of.

Mr Provan. — I would like to endorse what Mrs Ewing has said about the chaos in restructuring the fleet, especially in my constituency of North-East Scotland, but we also have added problems within the fishing industry in the UK, and I hope the Council are aware of the situation that Icelandic fish is being landed into Community ports at a 3 % tariff, whereas Canadian fish is coming into the Community at a 16 % tariff. This situation is, I think, intolerable, and I think we should do something about it. Can and will the Council do something about it?

Mr Andrews. — The Council of Ministers is aware of the problem, and I refer to my reply to Mrs Ewing's supplementary question, though I do not want to go into it again. The fisheries Council, which met on 29

October, set up an ad hoc group of senior officials to examine new proposals to be brought forward by the Commission on the fisheries stock situation for 1980 and on conservation measures generally. That is part of the general movement. I would like to assure the questioner that I will take note of what he said and bring it to the attention of my colleagues on the Council.

Mr Paisley. — Is the Minister aware that, as a result of his regulations inshore fishermen are having a very rough deal, especially off the County Down coast, and does the Council of Ministers intend to do something about inshore fishermen and their plight?

Mr Andrews. — I would like to assure the respected Member that the Council will examine all aspects of the problem, including the problem of the inshore fishermen off the coast of Down.

President. — Before proceeding I wonder if you would allow me the indulgence of welcoming some Welsh friends in the gallery.

(Applause)

Question No 70, by Mr Ansquer (H-222/79):

How does the Council explain that it has not yet used the appropriations earmarked under the sectoral guidelines for the encouragement of restructuring and industrial conversion projects? Is it aware that the public finds it difficult to understand the Community's being unable to use up appropriations which could be utilized in the general effort to restructure industries in difficulties and thus help to create alternative jobs?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — It has not in fact been possible yet to use the appropriations to which the honourable Member refers. To make this possible, agreement would have to be reached by the Council on the proposal for a regulation designed to determine the conditions under which Community financial support should be given to invest for the restructuring and conversion of certain industries affected by the crisis. However, the discussions initiated on this proposal within the Council have revealed considerable differences of opinion, and it appears in any case unlikely that a solution can be found before the end of the year. The proposal thus remains under examination by the Council, but the Commission has stated that it should examine whether it would still be possible to use the resources available in due course, in accordance with the ad hoc arrangements. The Council will examine any proposals which the Commission submits to it as soon as it receives them.

Mr Ansquer. — (F) The President-in-Office will no doubt agree with me that it is difficult to explain to the public why it should be impossible to use the appropriations approved by our Assembly with a view to restructuring, conversion and creating jobs.

Ansquer

I should therefore like to ask whether these appropriations will in fact be used in 1980, since, if not, there will be no point in this Assembly voting in favour of supplementary appropriations in the budget currently under discussion. In addition, to what purpose would these appropriations be put?

Mr Andrews. — I have the greatest sympathy with the questioner's supplementary question, but all I can do is repeat what I said in the reply to him: that the reality of the situation unfortunately is that major differences continue to exist between the Member States, and until these major differences are resolved then, and only then, can we get into a position which the questioner would wish for, and indeed which the Council and others would wish for also.

Ms Clwyd. — The Council of Ministers is remarkably complacent as far as this particular issue is concerned. The Minister will know that parts of Wales are seriously affected by the problems of the steel industry. Are there appropriations under this particular section which could be used immediately to assist parts of Wales which are in serious difficulty?

Mr Andrews. — The Council is anything but complacent about this matter. The Council has been working very hard to bring about a resolution to the problem, but as I pointed out to the proposer of the original question, the reality of the situation is that these major differences continue to exist. The President-in-Office of the Council cannot go to the leaders of the various delegations and knock the heads together. The realities are what they are, and we have to continue to accept them. Certainly we will take note of what the respected Member said as regards the situation in her own country when the matter reaches resolution.

Mrs De March. — (*F*) Mr President, do you not think that it would be preferable to call a halt to the Community plans to finish off the steel and ship-building industries — which will have the effect of destroying the economic potential of the various Member States — rather than planning further appropriations for financing industrial conversion and restructuring, all of which will merely increase the number of unemployed within the Community and weaken large sectors of industry in our countries?

Mr Andrews. — That appears to be a rhetorical question in that the honourable lady may have given an answer to her own question, but I would like to assure her that the Council is doing everything possible, as I said, to bring about a solution to the problems in the steel and ship industries to which she has referred.

Mrs Baduel Glorioso. — (*I*) Is the Council of Ministers discussing whether or not restructuring and conversion do in fact lead to more jobs? If this is the doubt facing the Council and causing the divisions

between the various countries I share it, since it does not seem to have been convincingly shown that conversion and restructuring create more jobs. Indeed, up to now they have led to a reduction in the number of available jobs.

Mr Andrews. — The answer to the first question is yes; the answer to the second question is yes.

Mr Albers. — (*NL*) Does not the answer to this question indicate that, in view of the absence of Commission proposals, it would be useful if one of the thirteen Commissioners was present in Parliament for the whole of Question Time when the President-in-Office of the Council is answering questions from Parliament?

Mr Andrews. — I can only answer for the Council, and would suggest that the questioner might direct his question to the Commission.

Lord Harmar-Nichols. — Does the Minister share my pleasure that the leading conservative from Manchester is also in the public gallery, and when the Council is thinking of making appropriations, will he bear in mind particularly areas of famous traditional industries, such as Manchester, which, because of the march of time, are now being replaced with others, and see that they get proper priority when the decisions are being made as to spending this money?

(*Loud laughter - Applause*)

Mr Andrews. — The reply to the second question is that the Council deals with the broad issues, and the reply to the first question, on the matter of your pleasure, is that I'll leave it to your good self.

(*Laughter*)

Mr Enright. — How far has the Council considered the whole question of textiles and clothing in this particular study? What plans does it have for the future, and is it aware that, in Leeds and Batley in particular, unemployment is now unacceptably high, because measures such as this sort of restructuring simply have not been taken?

Mr Andrews. — The questioner can rest assured that the Council has taken note of the element to which he has referred, and is working in the direction which he requires.

President. — Question No 71, by Mr Geurtsen (H-228/79):

Does not the Council feel that, now that the Court of Justice's amended Rules of Procedure of 6 October 1979 have come into force, under which several of the Court's Chambers may hold sittings at the same time so that the number of cases to be tried simultaneously is increased, it is also necessary to make a corresponding increase without delay in the number of Advocates-General, lest a dearth of Advocates-General prevent full advantage being taken of the greater facilities available?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — When the Council on 26 July 1979 approved the amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Court of Justice, it noted in a statement that the revised Rules of Procedure of the Court of Justice might, in view of the increase in the number of Chambers, give rise to difficulties as regards the effective performance of their duties by the Advocates-General, and agreed to continue examining the Court's proposal for increasing the number of Advocates-General with a view to arriving at a decision in the near future. Following this statement, several meetings of the competent bodies of the Council have been devoted to the matter, and it is expected that the Council will soon take a definite position on the question.

Mr Geurtsen. — (NL) As I see it, the Court of Justice has been the most important integrating element in the Community in recent years. Will the Council, therefore, not allow national political considerations to influence its decision regarding the increase in the number of Advocates-General, and will it not postpone its decision until agreement has been reached on the enlargement of the Community, but rather be guided by the wish to maintain and, if possible further strengthen the integrating role played by the Court?

Mr Andrews. — I appreciate the supplementary question. The reality of the situation is that there are at present four Advocates-General, of French, British, German and Italian nationality. Any increases, as I understand it, in the near future in their number will be limited to one additional Advocate-General. So I would like to assure the questioner that I will take note of what he has said.

President. — Question No 72, By Mr Albers (H-231/79):

Which five Commission proposals in the field of transport does the Council think should be examined and adopted as a matter of priority?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — The Council is at the moment examining what items may be included in the agenda of its session of 6 December 1979, devoted to transport questions. I think I can safely say that among the items on the agenda there will be various proposals in the field of goods transport by road, questions concerning the limitation of noise emission by aircraft, other air-transport matters, such as the initiation of a consultation procedure on international action in the field of air transport, and the Commission's memorandum on the development of air transport services, on which your Assembly adopted a preliminary resolution on 23 October 1979.

Mr Albers. — (NL) Although I ought to be impressed by the number of subjects to be included in

the agenda for the December session of the Council of Ministers, I am nevertheless disappointed that the list does not contain a decision on the Commission proposal for a regulation on infrastructure. I should therefore like to ask whether or not it is still possible to include this matter on the agenda, particularly as Parliament has, by means of amendments, seen to it that payment appropriations amounting to 15 million will be available for 1980 and commitment appropriations amounting to 50 million for the following years?

Mr Andrews. — I think that four out of five of what the respected questioner asked is not a bad average: an 80 % success-rate might spell happiness in some other circumstances.

In relation to the infrastructural aspect of the question, I would like to say to him that the matter has not come to the attention of the Council yet, but that when it does it will receive all the expedition it requires.

Lord O'Hagan. — Can we take it from what the President-in-Office has said that this Council of Ministers, or another, will soon discuss the urgent need for providing regular, reliable and cheap transport to the city of Strasbourg as long as it is a place where the European Parliament meets? Would the Council not otherwise be acquiescing in the present highly unsatisfactory system, which regularly leads this particular Community Institution to total chaos? What is the Council going to do about it?

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — Mr Andrews, I think it is only necessary for you to answer the first part of the question.

Mr Andrews. — I was going to answer the whole question. I am not afraid of answering questions, I am delighted to help.

(Applause from various quarters)

The answer to the question is 'no'.

(Loud laughter)

Mr Seefeld. — (D) Mr President, do you realize that you would have been greatly applauded today if you had said that in addition to the five Commission proposals, you would do all in your power during the Irish Presidency finally to meet the demand of the European Parliament for an overall Community transport policy? Do you think this will be possible during the Irish Presidency?

Mr Andrews. — The questioner can take it that, in addition to the four items I outlined in the answer given to Mr Albers' question, that there will be probably 12 items altogether, and the prospects are that the very subject-matter raised by the questioner will be included in those 12.

Mr Moorhouse. — Could the President-in-Office elaborate on the first item — namely, transport by road — as in the Committee on Transport we attach great importance to a proposal to look at the transport of radioactive materials? Also very much in the news nowadays is the transport of toxic chemicals: would he care to tell us whether this is a subject that will receive the closest study?

Mr Andrews. — Yes, I can assure the questioner that the matter will receive the very closest study, but I think it is only fair to point out that it may not arise in this Council.

Mr Moreland. — In view of his comment on the Green Paper on infrastructure, would the President-in-Office ask the Commission why it is not on the agenda for the 6 December meeting, because it should have been on the agenda for that meeting? Would he ask the Commission what has happened? Indeed, would he ask the Commission, in his formal capacity, why there is a report in *Europe-Press* which outlines what is in the paper but which does not seem to be in the hands of the Council or, indeed, the Parliament?

Mr Andrews. — I do not want to appear short with the questioner, but I do not believe in increasing the bureaucratic output of the Parliament or of the Council or, indeed, of the Commission; so I respectfully urge the Member to ask the Commission himself — with respect.

Mr Hume. — Would the President-in-Office agree that all the evidence that we have heard in this Parliament to date points to the fact that Britain needs to be recolonized by Europe, and that that process should be expedited by the Council's giving priority to the proposal in the discussion paper for a Channel Tunnel?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

Mr Andrews. — It is a very good question, of course, from Mr Hume, and I am certain that if the matter is put to the Council at some stage or other they will consider it; but I cannot show any light at the end of the tunnel at this stage.

(Loud laughter)

President. — Question No 73, by Mr Druon, (H-233/79):

During a recent visit to Algeria, Commissioner Cheysson contacted members of Polisario and after these talks issued a statement to the press.

Does the Council consider that the Commissioner was acting within the bounds of his competence by contacting this organization in the course of an official visit?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — The Council has no comment to make on Mr Cheysson's meeting with the Polisario representative.

Mr Druon. — *(F)* The decidedly evasive answer given by the President-in-Office of the Council obliges me to put a supplementary question. The Council is no doubt aware that the Polisario organization, which is based in Algeria and possesses equipment which is by no means usual among nomadic peoples, is creating very serious tension between Algeria and Morocco, and that this situation is dangerous for the stability of the Maghreb and North Africa in general.

In view of the fact that an approach such as that made by Mr Cheysson could be interpreted as according to Polisario a degree of recognition which it has not received from any of the nine Member States of the Community, I should like to ask the President-in-Office whether the Council could not request the Members of the Commission to be a little more circumspect in similar cases in future and to refrain from initiatives of this kind.

Mr Andrews. — The Council cannot anticipate what Commissioners may or may not do, and I think it is fair to say that this most able of Commissioners would be able to reply to the question himself. It would obviously be preferable that Mr Cheysson himself answered the kind of questions which you, sir, have raised. This being said, I would, however, point out that in a press statement issued in Rabat on 18 October, the Commissioner you mention, Mr Cheysson, in essence — and I paraphrase what he did in fact say — first, categorically denied that this meeting had resulted in any recognition of the Polisario by the Community — I think that makes an awful lot of sense; second, indicated that this meeting had been in no way official; and, third, stated that it was not for the Commission to make foreign-policy initiatives, which were the responsibility of the Member States.

Mrs Baduel Glorioso. — *(I)* Does not the President of the Council find it a little strange that a Member of Parliament should be making suggestions to a Commissioner. A Commissioner occupies a similar position to that of a Minister and Mr Cheysson knows perfectly well what he is doing since, for one thing it's not uncommon for the members of liberation movements subsequently to become rulers of countries which come to be included in the ACP States?

Does not the Council of Ministers find it a little strange that a Member of Parliament should be offering advice to a Member of the Commission?

Mr Andrews. — I do not think that in the context the Council has been asked to act as schoolmaster, I am convinced that the Members of Parliament, can make up their own minds on the matter.

(Applause)

Mr Habsburg. — (D) Since we are on the subject of Mr Cheysson, who has acted in a similar fashion before in connection with the so-called Patriotic Front and the PLO, what is the policy of the European Community with regard to these so-called liberation movements? Or does each Commissioner decide on his own policy? Do the Commissioners not realize that they have no right whatsoever to act in a personal capacity in political matters of this kind?

(Scattered applause on the right)

Mr Andrews. — While I do not want to appear unnecessarily brief in my reply to the supplementary question put by the Member, I do feel that the question should be directed to the Commission.

Mr Lomas. — Is the Council aware that many Members in this Parliament welcome the fact that the Commissioner met the Polisario Front during his visit to Algeria? And is the Council also aware that many of us, indeed like many governments in the world, recognize the Polisario Front as the legitimate representatives of the Sahrawi people, that we support the efforts to achieve self-determination for the Sahrawi people, as called for by the United Nations, and that we deplore the continued military occupation of the Western Sahara by Moroccan forces?

Mr President, finally, will the Council use all its influence to persuade the Moroccan Government to withdraw from the Western Sahara and allow the people there to determine their own future?

President. — Mr Lomas, you have put two questions. Members are only permitted to put one supplementary question. Mr Andrews, you can choose which question you wish to answer. I would ask Members to refrain from putting more than one question during supplementaries.

Mr Andrews. — I really have no comment to make on either question, Mr President.

(Laughter and applause from the right)

Mrs Poirier. — (F) I think a somewhat more specific reply from the Council is called for. Since one colonial occupation of the Sahara has been followed by another, do not the Ministers think that the best way of contributing to a settlement of this problem in accordance with the very clearly expressed aspirations of the Sahrawi people would be to help promote the recognition of this people's right to self-determination and independence, and consequently the official recognition of the Polisario Front as representatives of the Sahrawi people?

Mr Andrews. — First of all, I do not think that the Council is trying to avoid anything. If you look at the original question you will see that your supplementary question is totally unrelated to the original question.

President. — I accept what you said. Under Rule 47 A supplementary questions must have a direct bearing on the main question, But Mr Druon in putting his question introduced these new matters.

Mr von der Vring. — (D) I should like to as the President of the Council — and this does have a direct bearing on Mr Druon's question — whether or not it is the implicit duty of every institution of the Community to place the right of self-determination higher than the interests of any national governments in any natural resources?

Mr Andrews. — That is a moral judgement, and it is entirely a matter for each individual institution to make up its own mind. However, I respect the point of view expressed by the questioner.

President. — Question No 74, by Mr Schwartzberg (H-235/79):

Does the Council not think that it should call on Member States and the Commission to take steps to harmonize legislation in the Member States in the form most conducive to women's liberties in order to solve the problem created by the growing number of women who travel to Member States with liberal abortion laws to have their pregnancies terminated?

Mr Andrews, President in Office of the Council. — This matter is outside the responsibility of the Council.

Mr Schwartzberg. — (F) The Irish Presidency is just as familiar as I am, if not more so, with the problem caused by certain Member States of the Community in which, since abortion is illegal, thousands of women are obliged to travel to other Member States of the Community to terminate their pregnancies.

The President-in-Office of the Council says that this matter is outside the responsibility of the Council. May I ask whether he remembers reading in the Treaty of Rome a certain Article 100 on the approximation of laws and an Article 117 on the harmonization of social systems, particularly in matters relating to health, and may I ask him consequently whether he wishes the Commission to submit a proposal for a directive with a view to harmonizing the time limits and grounds for abortion and the conditions under which it would be chargeable to the social security systems of the Member States?

Mr Andrews. — The facts of the matter are that legislation on abortion is outside the competence of the Council. Similarly the protection of the rights of the unborn child is a matter for Member States.

I will conclude by saying that it would be difficult to convince me that Article 100 of the Treaty provides for the type of harmonization suggested by the questioner.

President. — I wonder if Members would agree that, in view of Mr Andrews' answer both to the initial question and to Mr Schwartzberg's supplementary question, that this matter is entirely outside the competence of the Council, there is no point in taking any further supplementary question on this matter. I take it that Mr Andrews is not going to add anything to what he said in his original statement.

(Applause from various quarters on the right)

Question No 75, by Mr Purvis (H-237/79):

Would the Council welcome the setting up of a joint working party of representatives of the Energy Council, the Commission and the Energy Committee of the European Parliament in order to develop a concerted strategy in the field of energy and to delineate the political, economic, social and financial implications thereof?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — I am most grateful to you, Mr President, for your decision on the previous question.

The setting up of an inter-institutional joint working party to develop a concerted strategy in the field of energy, as suggested by the Member, would come up against the system provided for in the Treaty, and in particular the second paragraph of Article 4 (1) of the EEC Treaty, which states: 'Each institution shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by this Treaty'. This does not prevent the Parliament's view in this matter, as in others, from being expressed and brought to the Council's attention under the existing procedure.

Mr Purvis. — The impression given by the President-in-Office of the Council is that the Council is resorting legalistic niceties of perhaps doubtful applicability in order to keep the Parliament at bay. Would the Minister not agree that in view of the anxiety apparently common to Council, Commission and Parliament to solve the energy problems of the Community, it is illogical that we cannot in common and in a Community spirit develop an energy strategy for Europe and work out the practical policies that would be entailed? And does he not agree that this is an urgent matter which requires much quicker and more concerted action than the present procedures permit in order to fulfil properly his and our responsibilities to the people of Europe?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

Mr Andrews. — At the invitation of the Committee on Energy and Research the President-in-Office will participate in this meeting of 21 November 1979 in order to hold an exchange of views on the energy situation in the Community, and to inform members of the committee of the Council's intention with regard to energy policy. That is the reply I would give to the second part of the honourable Member's question.

The reference to the doubtful applicability of the provisions of the Treaty of Rome is entirely a different

matter, and I would repeat in particular a line from the second paragraph of Article 4 (1) of the EEC Treaty. I think that the Member would agree with me that the EEC Treaty, whilst legalistic, is not of doubtful applicability. I quote: 'Each institution shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by this Treaty'.

President. — I hope, as far as possible, to achieve some balance of supplementaries in the House. I shall allow questions by Sir Peter Vanneck, Mr Paisley and Mr Turner.

Sir Peter Vanneck. — Since the President-in-Office of the Council must realize that the Treaties were drawn up at the time when there was an ample supply of energy, and that the Community's institutional practices must be adapted to a situation in which energy dominates political problems, and since the European Council is a non-Treaty working party, will the Council review the Community's needs in the energy sector, and possibly set up an inter-institutional working party within, for example, the context of its deliberations on the report of the three wise men?

Mr Andrews. — I thank the Member for his supplementary question, and I would refer him to the second half of the reply I gave to his colleague's supplementary on the last occasion. Perhaps the honourable Member would bring his views to the attention of the representative of his particular group when the matter is being discussed in the Committee on Energy and Research with the President-in-Office on 21 November. I think this would be an appropriate opportunity for doing the very thing that the Member seeks.

Mr Paisley. — Is the Minister aware that what we need is not an exchange of views on energy, but an energy strategy immediately?

Mr Andrews. — Whilst one could agree with the point of view expressed by Mr Paisley, the relevant decision was taken by the Strasbourg Council.

Mr Turner. — Does the President-in-Office agree that it is the duty and the prerogative of each of these institutions to study the matter separately, and that it is also their right therefore to study it jointly so long as they report back separately? And does he agree that it would offend the *amour propre* of the various institutions to stand in the way of a proper study?

Mr Andrews. — I agree. I think it is up to the Commission to make proposals in this field and for the Council to adopt the necessary acts after consultation. However, I note the questioner's supplementary question. I think that the Council will give due attention to the point of view expressed by the Member.

President. — Question No 76, by Mr Simpson (H-239/79):

Vital decisions affecting the Community are taken at meetings of the European Council. Since 1977 the President of the Commission has regularly attended these meetings.

In view of the increased authority of the European Parliament following the first direct elections and bearing in mind that, alone of the three institutions involved in the Community's legislative procedure, the Parliament is not present at European Council meetings, will the Council of Ministers propose to the European Council of Ministers propose to the European Parliament be invited to attend all such meetings? If not, why not?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — The Heads of Government meeting in Paris on 9 and 10 December 1974 decided 'to meet, accompanied by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, three times a year and whenever necessary in the Council of the Communities under the context of political cooperation'. The composition of the Council is determined by Article 2 of the Treaty establishing a single Council and a single Commission. This article stipulates that, I quote 'The Council shall consist of representatives of the Member States. Each Government shall delegate to it one of its members'. In addition to this provision the institutional balance established by the Treaties must also be taken into account, and in view of these facts the attendance by the President of the European Parliament at European Councils would appear to be inappropriate.

Mr Simpson. — That was a rather more depressing answer than I expected. The provisions quoted by the President-in-Office did not prevent the European Council from inviting Mr Roy Jenkins as President of the Commission to attend their deliberations. I would like to know what prevents them inviting the President of the European Parliament from attending these conferences, and what proposals will the President-in-Office make to the Council and the European Council to end the present status of the Parliament as a second class citizen in Community decision-making processes.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

Mr Andrews. — As you know Parliament has its own functions to fulfil, and they are different from those of other institutions. I am sorry I depressed the Member. If he believed that this was the answer he was going to get to the question he put down, I wonder why he put it down at all.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Whilst realizing that this particularly interesting institutional question goes beyond the limits of Question Time, I should nevertheless like to ask the President-in-Office of the Council whether he shares the view frequently put forward by both Mr Jenkins and myself, that our aim

must not be the attendance of the President of our Parliament at the meetings of the European Council, but a development of the institutional organization of the Community and the establishment of some form of consultation between the European Council and the European Parliament.

Mr Andrews. — Members will be aware that a procedure already exists whereby the President-in-Office reports to Parliament following meetings of the European Council, and this procedure of course will continue and develop as you suggest.

President. — We shall now move on to the next question, which will be the last question to the Council today.

I call Mr Hord on a point of order.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, I asked for the floor to put a supplementary question before Mr Berkhouwer. In the circumstances, I feel that you should call me, since there seems to have been some misunderstanding. Your colleague on your right did in fact inscribe my name before Mr Berkhouwer asked to speak.

President. — I am sorry. It is not a matter of inscribing names but of catching the President's eye. I apologise — maybe you will have an opportunity of speaking again.

Question No 77, by Mrs Chouraqui (H-245/79):

The United Nations General Assembly will shortly be holding a debate on the proposals from the Third World for a general revival of the North-South dialogue.

Bearing in mind that the dialogue was originated by the Community, does the Council not feel that there is a danger of the General Assembly turning into a Court of Appeal for matters which are not settled in other fora (such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, DAC) and thereby failing in its task? What position does the Commission intend to adopt to ensure that, on this occasion, the discussions lead to specific measures?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Council. — The United Nations General Assembly is, as pointed out by the Member, dealing at its current session with the proposal from the Group of 77 concerning global negotiations on international cooperation for development. Ever since the proposals were presented the Community has declared its readiness to consider in a constructive spirit any proposal which aims at promoting a more effective and fruitful dialogue. To achieve concrete results the Community has stressed (1) that the discussions should be concentrated on certain problem areas where there are special difficulties and where real progress can and should be made on the basis of a selective agenda, taking into account the viewpoints of all groups of countries; (2) that other specialized organizations of the international system have, and must retain, the responsibility

Andrews

ties, and their duplication should be avoided. These aspirations of the Community should meet the preoccupations of the Member. The proposals of the Community should meet the preoccupations of the Member. The proposal of the Group of 77 is still under consideration in the United Nations General Assembly, and no conclusion has so far been reached.

Mrs Chouraqui. — (*F*) I should like to thank the President for his reply. He read it a little too fast for my liking but I think I understood it nevertheless and I am a little disappointed at the fact that in speaking of the role of the Community, the President only mentioned aspirations, whereas the Community had hitherto taken the initiative, which is not the same thing. Does the Council intend to let the Community play a passive role, the role of an observer, whereas it should in fact be the driving force in the North-South dialogue? Does this also imply, moreover, that there are no projects or proposals regarding the commodities fund, increasing aid to the developing countries and, more generally, the drawing-up a new charter of human rights in the developing countries, the first of which is the right to eat? The Community should play an active role in this field too and not leave it to as ineffectual an organization as the UNO is at present.

Mr Andrews. — I apologise, to the lady Member for reading too fast.

With regard to the supplementary question, I would remind the lady Member, that the recent signature of the second Lomé Convention should be an indication of the extent to which the Community has been active rather than passive in its attitude towards development policies, and its actions in the United Nations framework — I think the respected lady Member would agree with me — speak for themselves. There has therefore been quite a lot of action on the Community's part in relation to the matters you have raised. Certainly its role has been anything but passive. In fact I had the honour and privilege of being in Lomé myself a short while ago and one could see the activity there. It was anything but passive.

President. — We shall now consider the questions addressed to the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation.

Question No 83 (H-210/79), by Mr Normanton will be held over until December.

Question No 84, by Mrs Ewing (H-220/79):

In view of the failure of the recent 80-nation conference aimed at banning weapons such as napalm, booby traps and fragmentation bombs, will the Foreign Ministers,

meeting in Political Cooperation, take an initiative to further the condemnation of such weapons?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — I understand that the Member is referring to the meeting in Geneva last September of the first session of the United Nations Conference on prohibitions and restrictions of use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have excessive indiscriminate effects. When it adjourned on 28 September 1979 the conference recommended in its report addressed to the United Nations General Assembly that another session should be convened in Geneva from 15 September 1980, for a period of up to four weeks.

The 34th session of the General Assembly which is currently being held in New York has to examine this report and will take a decision on a further session of the conference. It would be premature therefore to speak of the conference as a failure.

While the Nine as such have not adopted common positions on all issues before the conference, the conference has been the subject of a general exchange of views among the Nine within the framework of European political cooperation. The Nine will bear in mind the suggestion made by the Member.

Mrs Ewing. — Would the President-in-Office bear in mind that it seemed to be the view of this Parliament in a recent debate that they wished a closer cooperation of the Nine, and since these weapons are universally regarded as very terrible and have caused in our time the death and maiming of one million children, can he tell me anything concrete that he feels he can do to make sure that the Nine take a common position in good time in preparation for the next sitting of this excellent conference?

Mr Andrews. — I can assure the Member that I share her concern to curb the use of these weapons, which are instruments of the sophisticated savagery of mankind. However, while the issues before the conference are not the subject of substantial coordination among the Nine, the Nine are active individually. I would like to assure the Member that I shall bear in mind the views expressed by her.

President. — Question No 85, by Mr Lalor (H-225/79):

Subject: United approach by EEC Member States towards South Africa sporting relations

Do the Foreign Ministers believe that the EEC Member States should adopt a common approach in their relations towards South African sporting teams who wish to participate at international level in any of the Community countries?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — In condemning apartheid in South Africa the Nine have been conscious that, in principle, apartheid is applied in sport as in other areas of South African life. The Nine have firmly upheld the Olympic principle that no discrimination in sport be permitted on the grounds of race, religion or political affiliation. The Nine deplore the fact that the apartheid system of its very nature has brought political considerations into sport by the application of racially discriminatory laws in the field of sporting activities in society generally. They are also aware of the significance that the government of South Africa attaches to international sporting contracts. The governments of the Nine have discouraged sporting contacts with South Africa involving a breach of the Olympic principle of non-discrimination. They have taken appropriate action to this end individually, having due regard to the fact that sporting associations and bodies in the Nine are privately organized. It is of course for the individual governments concerned to decide whether a particular sporting contact would involve a breach of the Olympic principle. As Members will be aware many sporting contacts that previously existed with South Africa have been brought to an end, and some changes have been made in the organization of certain sports in South Africa. The Nine will continue to work jointly in the most effective manner for an end to all discrimination in sport and the universal application of the Olympic principle in the context of their commitment to influence South Africa to bring about the ending of apartheid.

Mr Lalor. — Could the President-in-Office indicate which Member States are opposed to all sporting contacts with South Africa, and which are prepared to intervene to prevent such contacts?

Mr Andrews. — The Nine are united in their condemnation of apartheid in sport and in their full commitment to the Olympic principle. As I said in my reply, it is for the individual governments concerned to decide whether a particular sporting contact would involve a breach of the Olympic principle and for that individual government to take appropriate action.

Ms Clwyd. — Does the Minister believe that sanctions should be taken against those Member States who do infringe the Olympic principle?

Mr Andrews. — I would like to assure the questioner personally that I have a great deal of sympathy with the point of view she has expressed, but it is not the policy of the Nine to take the action she has indicated.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, may I say first of all that I put down an identically worded question for the

October part-session, and it was referred by the enlarged Bureau for a written answer. Perhaps discrimination exists not just in South Africa.

My question to the President-in-Office is: will he look at this matter in terms of consistency with our economic policy? In other words, if we are going to keep out their rugby players, should we not also be keeping out their coal?

Mr Andrews. — It is very difficult to argue with the Member on his supplementary question, but as you know we have a code of conduct in relation to South Africa, and this code of conduct is applied — and very stringently, I understand.

President. — Mr Moreland, I have asked the secretariat to take your point up so that we can see what in fact did happen to your question.

Mr Boyes. — I think we all in this Assembly support all those struggling against the evils of apartheid, and would welcome any initiative from the Foreign Ministers.

Is it not hypocritical for Member governments simply to condemn apartheid? Should they not do all in their power to discourage those sports associations that invite teams from South Africa from doing so, and, in particular, should Member States not cut off grants to any sports association that entertain any teams from that country?

(Applause from certain quarters on the left)

Mr Andrews. — I understand that the Nine do in fact discourage their sporting associations from participating with South Africa, because the system is simply evil and does not conform to the laws of anybody's god.

(Applause from certain quarters on the left)

The answer to the second part of the question is that the Nine are committed to examining ways by which their collective weight may be used to influence the Government of South Africa to end the apartheid system. In the context of this commitment the Nine will continue to work for an end to all discrimination in sport.

Mr Marshall. — Would the President-in-Office not agree that the reception given to the multiracial rugby team from South Africa which recently toured Britain shows that a vast majority of people in that country want sporting contacts with the Nine? Would he not agree that it is somewhat paradoxical to talk of the Olympic principle when the next Olympic Games are going to be held in the country governed by the most repressive government known to mankind?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

Marshall

And would he not agree that a policy of international isolation will do nothing to cure the problems of South Africa.

President. — Mr Marshall, I am ruling this supplementary out of order.

(Protests from the right)

The next question, No 86, by Mr Schwartzberg is more appropriate to your supplementary, and I will ask you to place it when that question is taken.

Mr Martin. — *(F)* Do not the Foreign Ministers feel that they should make it quite clear that they do not approve apartheid, by opposing any European tours by South African teams?

President. — This question has already been answered.

Mr Prag. — Is the President-in-Office not aware that important inroads have been made of late into apartheid in sport in South Africa, that the President of the South African Football Council, Mr Thabe, is black — and he was here this week — and does he not believe that the way to encourage further progress is not to continue to isolate and to refuse all contact with South African teams?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

Mr Andrews. — The South African rugby team that came to Britain was a phoney team produced by a phoney system.

(Applause from certain quarters on the left)

How can you tell any sportsman that a team made up simply of 7 blacks, 7 coloureds and 7 whites is truly representative?

To return to my original reply: some changes have been made to the organization of certain sports in South Africa, but areas of South African society, including sport, continue to be organized on racial lines. The Nine will continue to uphold the Olympic principle as effectively and as far as they possibly can.

(Applause from certain quarters on the left)

President. — Question No 86, by Mr Schwartzberg (H-234/79):

In view of the fact the Olympic Games are to be held in Moscow in 1980, have the Ministers approached the Soviet authorities on behalf of the Community to seek the freedom of prisoners of conscience, of which Amnesty International estimates there are five thousand, and if not, do they intend to do so?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — The forthcoming Olympic Games in Moscow have not been discussed in the framework of European political cooperation; consequently, the Member will appreciate that the Presidency is not in a position to give an answer.

President. — In view of what Mr Andrews has said, I do not think there is any point in allowing supplementaries to this.

(Protests)

I call Mr Scott-Hopkins on a point or order.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Mr President, of course you could not possibly anticipate what the President-in-Office was going to say — of course not. I understand that, but nevertheless you did cut my honourable friend off and refused to allow his supplementary, and, indeed, you disagreed with it yourself — which I may say, in my own private view, you had no right to do. I do suggest that you now call him and allow him to put his question.

(Mixed reactions)

President. — Mr Scott-Hopkins, I do not think that, in speaking from the Chair, I have been politically biased in any sense. I have heard statements that I agree or disagree with in a personal capacity, but I have allowed a fair balance from all sides of the House. The only reason that Mr Marshall was ruled out of order was that his supplementary was more appropriate to this question than the last question. Mr Andrews has said that the Council of Ministers has no opinion. I shall therefore allow only supplementaries by Mr Schwartzberg, who was the original proposer, and by Mr Marshall, whom I ruled out of order last time.

Mr Schwartzberg. — *(F)* If there was a summary reply championship, I think Mr Andrews would win by a very clear margin. My question was not cryptic. I did not ask only whether the Ministers had dealt with this problem within the context of political cooperation, but, if not, whether they were intending to in the future. The future is a concept with which Mr Andrews is certainly familiar — it doubtless belongs to him — and I should therefore be grateful for a reply from him concerning the future.

Mr Andrews. — As President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers, I am not in a position to give an answer to the question.

Mr Marshall. — Would the President-in-Office not accept that the vast majority, not only in this House but of the Nine, believe that the Council of Ministers ought to have an opinion on this matter? And would he not also accept that the vast majority of the people of Europe regard it as quite paradoxical that the Olympic Games should be held in Moscow, which is a centre of political and religious repression?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

Mr Andrews. — The sporting aspect of this matter has not been discussed, and that is the dilemma that I am in. But we can consider it under another heading,

Andrews

namely the human rights heading. The Nine will continue to express their concern about human rights in general, and they will consider making specific representation to other governments in particular cases if it appears that it would be useful to do so. I should like to emphasize to the Member that the Soviet authorities are fully aware of the Nine's views on human rights issues, which have been conveyed to them on many occasions, both privately and publicly. I say that in relation not to the present supplementary, but to the supplementary brought up on the previous question.

President. — I call Lord Bethell on a point of order.

Lord Bethell. — Mr President, my point of order is under Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure. Can I draw your attention, Sir, to the fact that your ruling apropos of the President-in-Office's answer is a most unusual one, and one quite unprecedented in the four and a half years that I have been in this Parliament?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

There have many times in the past been answers from the President-in-Office indicating that this or that matter has not been discussed in the context of political cooperation. It has nevertheless in the past, Sir, been open to Members to invite the Ministers to discuss the matter in political cooperation, and to indicate exactly why this should be done, to argue that the question is so important that it ought to be discussed. Could I ask you, Sir, in the light of Rule 47 and of the precedents of this Parliament, to admit at least a few supplementary questions on the lines I have suggested?

President. — Lord Bethell, I think that if Members are going to appeal to Rule 47A, they also ought to read Annex II, which states that questions shall be admissible, among other restrictions, only if they do not contain assertions or opinions do not relate to strictly personal matters, and are interrogatory in form. Some questions that I have allowed to go through did express opinion. The answer given to the main question was sufficiently comprehensive to cover the situation as it is. Mr Andrews in his answer gave a quite unambiguous reply, and I am not now going to allow any more supplementaries. If the precedent has been set before that the Rules are to be broken, please do not blame me if I now attempt to stick by the Rules. There are other people who have put down questions.

I call Mr Van Minnen on a point of order.

Mr Van Minnen. — My point of order has nothing to do with a supplementary question, or even with a supplementary answer. The President-in-Office of the Council forgot half his answer, because the original question was not only: 'Have the Ministers approached the Soviet authorities', but also: 'Do they intend to do so?' That was the question, and the Presi-

dent-in-Office did not answer that part of the question.

President. — Mr Schwartzberg put exactly the same question as you have now just posed, and as I understand it, Mr Andrews did give an answer to Mr Schwartzberg.

Since they are on the same subject, the Western Sahara, Question No 87, by Mrs Lizin (H-241/79):

Can the ministers report on the progress made in talks on political cooperation on this matter?

When did discussions begin, what political conclusions have emerged from the debate and what action do the Ministers intend to take to promote a negotiated settlement of the conflict?

and Question No 89, by Mr Gremetz (H-250/79):

Now that the Sahrawi people are achieving further successes in its struggle both at political level and in the field, do the Foreign Ministers not consider it essential to help to secure recognition of the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination and independence and of the Polisario Front as its sole representative?

will be taken together.

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — The question of the Western Sahara is not a subject of discussion in the framework of European political cooperation. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to recall that in the context of their usual coordination, the Nine have so far voted together on draft resolutions on this issue at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Mrs Lizin. — (F) The resolution adopted by the United Nations on 2 November on which the Nine — I assume in a coordinated fashion — abstained, states that a report on this question is to be submitted in the near future to the 35th session of the General Assembly. Is any preparatory work being done in this respect, and if so what direction is it taking?

Mr Andrews. — The Nine, I would assure the honourable Member, will continue to coordinate their positions at the United Nations, but she is quite right when she says that the vote on the draft resolution on the Western Sahara took place on 2 November. The resolution was adopted by 83 in favour to 5 against, with 43 abstentions, and the lady Member is also correct when she says that all members of the Nine in fact abstained.

President. — Since there are only three other questions, I propose that we extend Question Time by 15 minutes.

Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

Mr Habsburg. — (D) Is it realized that politics in the Western Sahara, as far as Polisario is concerned, are to a great extent inspired by the Soviet Union, and is the Community prepared to draw the consequences from this fact?

Mr Andrews. — As I have pointed out, the matter has not been discussed in political cooperation.

President. — I call Mr Radoux on a point of order.

Mr Radoux. — My point of order, which I wanted to bring up a moment ago, concerns Mr Schwarzenberg's question. I maintain that we cannot accept the reply given by the President-in-Office since what is concerned here is an event taking place in a state which, like the Community, has signed the Helsinki Agreement.

President. — Many people may not agree with the answers that the Minister gives. Unfortunately questions do not always bring the answers that people want. But that is not my responsibility or that of the House.

Question No 88 (H - 248/79) by Mr Baillet, for whom Mr Chambeiron is deputizing,

What has so far been achieved by the 'group of experts' set up to ensure practical progress in the introduction of 'European judicial area', in particular through the draft convention on criminal law, and its possible extension, as envisaged by the Nine, to the field of civil law?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — 1) A group of senior officials of the Nine has been considering a draft convention on cooperation in criminal matters. This draft, which is concerned mainly with extradition, constitutes the first step in the proposals for a European judicial area. As a second step, the group will extend its study to other matters in the criminal field.

2) The Member will recall the reply given in September to Oral Question No 0-19/79 by Lady Elles, which set out the position regarding the draft convention and cooperation in criminal matters. The group of senior officials is continuing with its examination of the draft.

3) The mandate for this group is confined to consideration of proposals for a European judicial area in criminal matters. There are a number of conventions and draft conventions between Member States on various aspects of the law but none of these is concerned with the establishment of EJA.

4) In connection with the creation of the EJA on civil matters, proposals have been made to set up an exploratory group which would be charged with identifying areas which could be suitable for harmonization in the field of the civil judicial procedures of the Member States. But the decision to create such an exploratory group has not yet been taken.

Mr Chambeiron. — (F) Would the President-in-Office be in favour of Parliament being informed periodically of developments in the regular discussions, which are going on at the present time, between the Ministers of the Interior of the various Member States on this extremely important and serious matter which

is a central issue in legal circles and democratic circles in general?

Mr Andrews. — I understand from all the advice I have received that the European judicial area and its development both in the criminal and in the civil fields are reported to the Parliament in the usual ways, and to the colloquies and so on, and there is, I understand no lack of will on the part, and certainly of the Council, to produce whatever information is available on the development of this very important legal concept.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) On what basis, by which I mean on the basis of which articles in the Treaty is this attempt to establish a European judicial area going forward, or what other clear agreements among the Nine form the basis for it?

Mr Andrews. — The respected Member will appreciate that this is not based on Treaty considerations as such, it is based on intergovernmental cooperation.

Mr Tyrrell. — The answer that has been given is almost identical to an answer that was given last April, to one that was given to this House in September, and, to my knowledge, again in October. Now we have it again in November. Things would even appear to have gone back a little because in April one understood that there had been in fact at least an agreed agenda. Could the President-in-Office please tell us: what are the difficulties in the way of the Ministers of Justice getting on with the job?

Mr Andrews. — The Member will appreciate that this is an extremely difficult area, that we are in fact getting on with the job apace. I do not think there is any doubt about that, and there has been no suggestion during the course of this short discussion that we have not been getting on with the job. We have not, however, come to our conclusions, but I should like to assure you that, when we do come to our conclusions the respected Member will be one of the first to know we have done so.

Mr Sieglerschmidt. — (D) Has the implementing agreement for the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism been submitted to the nine Member States for signature and ratifications? Without adopting a position with regard to the proposed criminal law convention, do you not think, Mr President, that the European judicial area could be put in an unfortunate light if it concerned only penal matters, and, as you yourself have just reminded us, civil law was dealt with at a later stage? Could not the Council perhaps do something to establish a better balance in this respect by adopting in the near future a series of important civil law directives which are now before it, complete with the opinions of this Parliament?

Mr Andrews. — I should like to make it very clear that there are two separate questions raised by the Member, and that the first question is really a separate question in the sense that it does not necessarily arise in this particular connection. However, to put the matter of the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism again into perspective, that agreement was drawn up in response to the declaration adopted at the Fifth European Council, and can be distinguished from the draft convention, on cooperation in criminal matters. The draft convention, which covers a broad range of criminal offences, is seen as a first element in the European judicial area and, as I mentioned last September, when this matter raised its head once again in your Parliament, it is our hope that the agreement of the Nine on terrorism will be formally open for signature in the near future. We hope to arrange with the agreement of all partners, a date for this purpose during the Irish presidency.

The second part of the question was concerned with the precedence of criminal law over civil law. Well, one has to put the cart before the horse in the nature of things, and I think that the most serious aspect of jurisprudence is a consideration of the element of criminality, and that when we have dealt with the criminal aspect of the matter, then we can get on to the civil aspect.

President. — Question No 90, by Mr Berkhouwer (H-265/79):

Can the President-in-Office say whether the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation are considering taking action about the combined Cuban-Congolese deportation of 600 children from the People's Republic of the Congo to Cuba (which has been confirmed by the French Ministry of Development) for the purpose of political indoctrination, against the wishes of their parents, which constitutes a flagrant breach of human rights by a signatory of the Lomé Convention?

Mr Andrews, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — The matter to which the honourable Member refers is not being considered by the Nine in political cooperation. The full circumstances of the events which have been reported are not yet clear. If it were to become evident that there has been a serious breach of human rights, this would of course, be of concern to the Nine.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Is the President of the Council of Ministers not aware that certain Member States of our Community have particular relations with the country from which these children have been deported, and is it not strange that the Irish Foreign Minister, the President of the Council of Ministers, does not know that the accuracy of this report has been confirmed by the French Ministry of Cooperation? Is he also unaware that the same appears to have happened with children from Angola? If the Minister is unaware of all these facts, will he look into what is currently going on in that part of Africa, i.e. forced export and deportation of children to Cuba?

Mr Andrews. — I would be delighted to deal with the question of Angola on another occasion, but, with the greatest of respect to Mr Berkhouwer, my information is that, as I already indicated in my reply, the full circumstances of the events which have been reported are not yet clear. But in relation to the confirmation, as you describe it, by the French Minister of Cooperation, my information is that he has not confirmed the deportation of these 600 Congolese children to Cuba.

President. — The second part of Question Time is closed. I thank Members for having allowed me to extend it for 14 minutes in order that we could entirely clear the agenda of questions put to the President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers.

I also wish to thank Mr Andrews and his staff for the extra time they have given us this afternoon. This, I am sure, is much appreciated by the House.

(Applause)

I call Mrs Kellett-Bowman on a point of order.

Mrs Kellett-Bowman. — Mr President, I am puzzled and I seek your guidance on Rule 47 and the annex thereto. Are we to understand that in future we are to catch your eye, rather than, as has been the practice in the past, that of one of your officials, who then compiles a list, and are we to conclude from your saying that you will try to get a balance of supplementaries from all parts of the House, that you no longer take the supplementaries in the order in which Members are inscribed, which on the face of it would appear to be the fairest way?

President. — I can assure you, Mrs Kellett-Bowman, that the practice is unchanged. All I have attempted to do is to limit supplementaries to the position where people who have properly and legitimately put down questions have a chance of putting them to the Minister, rather than allowing so many supplementaries that we only take one or two questions. I can assure you that I have attempted to be fair in all I have done, and I hope you will accept it at that.

8. Economic convergence (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the Lange report (Doc. 1-512/79).

I call Mr von der Vring.

Mr von der Vring. — (D) Mr President, my Group is fully behind the United Kingdom in its desire to correct the growing imbalance between economic performance and contributions to the Community budget. We also support the Committee on Budgets' report on convergence and budgetary questions.

von der Vring

I quite appreciate that a number of Members of this House are unhappy with the wording of certain sections of the report. After all, this is a matter of the utmost importance for the future of the Community, and it is all too obvious that some of the parts of the report are not very clearly worded. But this kind of thing is inevitable, Mr President. We must, on the one hand, recognize the urgent nature of the problem and, on the other hand, at all costs prevent the necessary financial equalization within the Community from taking the form of a pure and simple transfer of resources, which would adversely affect Community policies. It is therefore essential for us to lay down right from the word go a number of very rough and ready *ad hoc* guidelines or principles for any such financial equalization exercise. We shall have to discuss the problem in more specific terms and come to definite decisions at some later stage on such matters as the criteria for poverty and wealth, the conditions for the utilization of Community funds, decision-making and supervisory structures, the amounts involved, and so on.

The important thing is, firstly, that the wealthy countries should provide a substantial amount of help to the poor countries and, secondly, that the sums involved should be genuinely used to bridge the gap between rich and poor in Europe. That is what we mean by a policy of economic convergence and that is the kind of solidarity which we Socialists support.

Incidentally, Mr President, may I advise all those Members who have some difficulty with the text of the report — which is, after all, a compromise — to refer to Article 11, which says that any proposals of this kind will first have to be discussed and agreed by Parliament.

Moving on to a substantive point, Mr President, it is remarkable how little reference the Commission's two documents make to the real problems of economic convergence. I am sure we all realize that even a fair solution to the United Kingdom's budgetary problems would not make any real difference to the problem of economic convergence.

Perhaps I may refer briefly to what Mr Scott-Hopkins said about the economic decline of the United Kingdom. He put the blame on the internal policies pursued by past British governments. This is a difficult question, and Mr Scott-Hopkins may even be right in certain respects, because it may well be that British governments in the past were not sufficiently energetic in combating the unwillingness and the lack of patriotism shown by British entrepreneurs in preferring to invest their capital abroad rather than using it to modernize British industry.

(Scattered applause from the left — cries from the right)

This goes to show, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, that if we really want to achieve economic convergence, we must not leave investment decisions to private enterprise.

Strictly speaking, we ought to be talking about divergence and not convergence, because the gap between rich and poor in Europe is widening all the time. Whereas Italy, Ireland and the United Kingdom supplied 44 % of the working population in the Community and accounted for 35 % of the gross Community product in 1970, this latter figure had fallen to 28 % by 1978.

This — I would remind you, Mr Bangemann — is not purely coincidental, nor will it be a once-only consequence of the economic crisis, as the Commission appears to think. There is a definite logic behind this widening gap between the rich and the poor, and it is high time all sides of this House gave serious attention to its underlying economic causes.

What do we mean by the relative poverty or the economic weakness of a country? There are many factors to be taken into consideration, but the most important among these, the most serious shortcoming — and this is something that affects the United Kingdom as well — is the lack of investment capital. Let me draw a comparison here between the processing industries of Ireland and the Federal Republic of Germany. The capitalization per workplace in Irish industry is only 40 % of that in the Federal Republic of Germany, and production per person employed is only 30 % of the German level. We have a free, common, European market for goods. Now let me ask those people who believe in the inherent reasonableness of this market economy — Mr Bangemann, for instance — how, under these conditions, a poorly capitalized industry can possibly compete successfully with a highly capitalized industry? Bourgeois economists have had a pat answer to this for the last 200 years. The claim that low wages should balance out the competitive disadvantages of a low level of productivity, and it is true that wages in Irish industry are something like 50 % of those in Germany. But, Mr President, this is an increasingly ineffective solution, given a common labour market. It will become increasingly difficult to maintain this differential in wage levels as the workers from the low-wage countries become more and more mobile, and it will soon become impossible to find skilled workers in Southern Italy or Ireland for love or money.

This problem will get even worse when the European Monetary System begins to make it more difficult to devalue currencies. No, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this widening gap between the rich and the poor is not purely coincidental; it is a logical consequence of the Common Market. In free-market terms, it is quite natural for the rich to get richer and the weak to get weaker, just as it is quite natural for the flourishing conurbations to exist side by side with declining peripheral regions, and just as it is perfectly natural for workers from the poorer areas to migrate to the richer areas. That is a perfectly logical product of our liberal market economy, and the consequences

von der Vring

will become even worse after the enlargement of the Community. We European Socialists, together with the many victims of this economic system and also, perhaps, the elements on the right of the political spectrum in Ireland and the Christian Democrats from Southern Italy, call on the Community to pursue an active policy, on an appropriate scale, of directing capital investment towards the weaker parts of the Community. Let me give you one example, Mr Bange-mann, of what I mean by an appropriate scale. To reach the level of German industry, Irish industry alone would have to invest an additional six-and-a-half thousand million EUA, which is equivalent to four times Ireland's annual industrial production. Against the background of a problem of this magnitude, the Community's current regional policy pales into total insignificance.

Economic convergence in Europe is getting nowhere fast, and therefore it is illusory to say that at least something is better than nothing at all. A policy of economic convergence must mean enabling the economies of the poorer areas to compete with those of the wealthier areas in terms of cost. This would be the absolute minimum for maintaining the *status quo*. Secondly, industry in the poorer areas must be enabled to double its investment so as at least to catch up in terms of productivity over the next twenty years. This, Mr President, is the central task facing the Community over the coming years, and it is why my Group is addressing an urgent appeal to the Commission to develop, at long last, proposals for an appropriate convergence policy and for a system of finance which is commensurate with the scale of the problem.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Tindemans.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in my opinion, everything a Parliament does is good. One day we are talking about the Rules of Procedure, the next about hunger in the world, and the day after that about the budget. But my Group and I feel that the Committee on Budgets' report on the Commission's communication entitled 'Convergence and budgetary questions' is especially important. This debate is about the very basis — and, at the same time, the future — of the Community and of European union, a concept that has been around in Europe for quite a long time now.

I should like to begin by paying tribute to the members of the Committee on Budgets for their really quite outstanding work, and especially to the rapporteur Mr Lange. I say this not because it is customary to do so in a parliament, but because I really mean it. As far as I am concerned, there are three elements in this report. Firstly, we have the question of convergence, which I take to mean convergence of the Member States' economic policies. I must admit that I was a little surprised this morning to

hear the Chairman of the Committee on Budgets say that the exact meaning of convergence had become rather obscured recently. To my way of thinking, convergence means the convergence of economic policy, and that is the way the term has been used for years past in the final communiqués issued at the end of summit conferences. Convergence of economic policy must be our aim, and it is in this spirit that I shall continue my remarks.

The second element in this report concerns the principle of *juste retour* — I think nearly all the speakers so far have used the French term — and the third is solidarity, otherwise known as financial equalization. In my opinion, it is quite possible to deal with these three basic concepts separately, because, strictly speaking, they are not connected. You could of course say that they all fall within the framework of the development of the Community, but they can just as well be dealt with separately, and that is what I propose to do.

This debate really concerns much more than just the budget or just the concept of convergence and budgetary questions. As the concept of the convergence of economic policy has been used for years now in the final communiqués issued at the end of summit conferences and meetings of the European Council, I do not think I need tell you how enormously important this element is for the development of the Community towards economic union. That does not mean to say that I underestimate the difficulty of the task in any way. Let us take a look for a moment at the economic policies pursued by our Member States. The major problem at the moment is that we are still in the midst of an economic crisis. That is the main topic of discussion in our Member States, and what we should be asking ourselves is what economic policy we should be pursuing.

If I have understood the term correctly, convergence means that the economic policies pursued by the Member States take on a European dimension. This is probably the most serious and most difficult problem we have to face today, and that is why I said a few moments ago that the whole thing involves much more than just a single aspect of budgetary policy. The point of economic convergence is that it should eventually lead us to Economic Union. I have no wish to start an ideological debate over the future of Europe, but I do feel that the first major pragmatic step we can take and which, I believe, meets with the approval of most of us here, would be the creation of an economic and monetary union.

Today I should like to go into the question of economic union in more detail. So far, we have achieved precious little in this field. I have taken the trouble to consult the famous Marjolin Report, which I have before me now, and in which Mr Marjolin says:

The only thing to be said is that each national policy is seeking to solve problems and to overcome difficulties

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which arise in each individual country, without reference to Europe as an entity. The diagnosis is at national level. The coordination of national policies is a pious wish which is hardly ever achieved in practice.

He goes on :

In an Economic and Monetary Union, national governments put at the disposal of the common institutions the use of all the instruments of monetary policy and of economic policy whose action should be exercised for the Community as a whole. These institutions moreover must have a discretionary power similar to that which national governments possess now, in order to be able to meet unexpected events.

One final quotation :

Therefore, in view of the above analysis and given the general political and economic circumstances which exist in Europe today, it did not seem useful to the Group to draw up a plan for EMU which would have a sufficient degree of credibility.

Mr Marjolin said in a personal comment :

I refuse to make any more proposals on Economic Union. Every communiqué published at the end of a summit conference says : 'We are in favour of the convergence of economic policies', or words to that effect. These are nothing more than pious wishes.

Let me also quote you a section of another report bearing a famous name, that of Mr Raymond Barre :

Concerted agreement on the Member States' medium-term guidelines will not be successful unless the States pursue joint short-term economic policies related to these guidelines. Here again, this does not mean adopting identical policies in every member country, but ensuring that the policies are sufficiently mutually consistent when studied at the level of the Community as a whole to prevent the development of the various economies departing from the guidelines laid down for the medium term.

I believe that these quotations clearly show what is meant by 'convergence'. After all, this is one of the fundamental objectives of the Community, and we must now show whether or not we really want economic convergence. Just producing a report is not enough. With all due respect to the honourable members of the Committee on Budgets, what counts is not one particular aspect of the budget, but rather the major debate going on in this House right now. The few hours we have at our disposal here today are insufficient for us to set out precisely how economic convergence should come about. I hope — and I shall be coming back to this point that we shall have a chance to do so at some later stage. I should just like to explain to you how we see the problem. As you know, my Group is a confirmed supporter of the social market economy, but I am determined to avoid any ideological argument on this point. As far as we are concerned, the Community's economic policy should primarily be to work towards more stability and qualified growth, and this means that quality should play a more important part than it has done in the past.

Secondly, it means that we must mobilize all the Community's economic reserves in a drive to reestablish full employment.

Thirdly, we believe that convergence should be used as a means of overcoming the imbalances within the Community, and fourthly, we should not neglect our obligations *vis-à-vis* third countries. In other words, we must honour our undertaking to reform our economies and work towards a new international division of labour. The European Parliament has the major task of helping to work out this policy. But before we can discuss the question of convergence as such, we must first of all be clear in our own minds as to what kind of economic policy, what kind of economic union we are aiming for. I am delighted that at least a start has been made on a European Monetary System. But can anyone here in this House seriously believe that a system of this kind can possibly function effectively on its own, in isolation ?

Surely not. If we really want to make a success of the European Monetary System, we must have a common policy in other fields or at least work towards convergence of our policies in these fields. German politicians have a good word for this kind of thing : *flankierende Politiken*, or accompanying policies. Such policies will be absolutely essential if we are ever to bring about a European Monetary System, followed at a later stage by monetary union.

The second element in this report is the principle of *juste retour*. Mr President, let me say quite unequivocally that my Group is opposed to this principle. It is not worth wasting too many words on this point. It is simply out of the question.

(Applause from certain quarters on the centre and the right)

The very idea is a negation of the Community ideal and of any future European Union. We do not want an *à la carte* Europe, in which the members take only what they want and look for solutions from case to case. We must adhere to the Treaties and to certain general rules, otherwise we have no way of knowing what the Community means and how it should develop. The Community is not a clearing house where everybody knows what he is putting in and what he should be taking out to break even at the end of the year. I have nothing more to say about this point, apart from repeating that we reject the principle of *juste retour*.

(Applause from certain quarters on the centre and the right)

The third aspect of the report is the principle of solidarity. This is a lofty ideal. My Group is concerned that there should be no abuse of the ideal ; to quote a German statesman : 'This is not a subject to be bandied about only in weekend speeches'.

When we talk about solidarity, we must realize precisely what we are committing ourselves to, and what it means in Community terms.

Tindemans

My Group believes that solidarity should be seen to be practised. In other words, the wealthier Member States of the Community have certain obligations and should do their bit to ensure that the poorer countries benefit from such things as a regional policy, an agricultural policy and a structural policy. These are all things that we support. But we should like to know what all this means in practice. If my memory serves me right, the financial mechanism was worked out at the 1976 European Council in Dublin. To my knowledge, that mechanism has never been applied and, indeed, is unfit to be applied. But surely, if it is not an effective instrument, it must be changed: we must work out some better mechanism. But we must at least be clear in our own minds as to what are to be our guiding principles and that Europe cannot be built *à la carte*, with money or solutions being sought as and when required. Can you imagine what it would be like if a Community of 10, 11 or 12 Member States were to try to find solutions to odd problems here and there without reference to any general rules of procedure or any appropriate mechanisms? We believe this must be made perfectly clear, starting with the United Kingdom's own particular problem. We want to find a solution to this problem, because the United Kingdom is still in a transitional phase and the situation is therefore a rather special one. But, as far as the day-to-day functioning of the Community is concerned, we must know where we stand, we must know what code of conduct applies and we must respect agreements reached collectively.

These are problems which affect the very foundations of the Community, assuming that our eventual aim is economic and monetary union. This debate is therefore an extremely important one, and we hope we shall be coming back to the subject at some subsequent stage. The Member States' governments should take note of what we are doing here; after all, I do not need to remind you that all the governments are seriously concerned about economic policy at the present time. The European Parliament must gain maximum credibility for itself by setting out what line we should be following and organizing the debate on economic policy in such a way that our governments are forced to listen and cannot simply claim that what goes on in the European Parliament is irrelevant and does not need to be taken seriously in view of the enormous responsibility those governments are having to bear at national level in the face of the economic crisis.

(Applause from certain quarters on the centre and the right)

The document produced by the Committee on Budgets is useful as a basis for further discussion, but the debate must go on, and that is the most important thing at the present time. What we need is a thorough going debate which, together with this report, will show the European Council what this Parliament is

really capable of, but we must tackle the crux of the problem on another occasion. We must resume this debate at some later time, and here I should like to appeal to the Commission. I understand, Mr Jenkins, that the Commission is drawing up a document. May I ask you — indeed, may I implore you — to have a really sound document drawn up on this essential point of economic policy and solidarity, so that the Commission can play its full part in this process and show that it will not simply cave in under pressure, but is mindful of the interests of Europe and is capable of producing valuable documents.

(Applause from certain quarters on the centre and the right)

Let me appeal to you to use your right of initiative to initiate in this Parliament the great debate on economic policy and solidarity. The job of this House is to say what we want, and given the right support, we may prove capable of doing useful, and even pioneering, work.

We must be given the chance to show that convergence and solidarity are not just empty words used in fine-sounding speeches and reports, but that we want to see really useful work done in this field in Europe.

We can perhaps equate the Committee on Budgets' report with a signpost, pointing us in the right direction. But the road itself — and, indeed, our ultimate destination — still have to be built, and that will be our job. At any rate, my Group will insist on the debate taking place and on concrete proposals being formulated, proposals that all Europe is waiting for. We must show what the European Parliament is capable of. We are representatives of the people of Europe, and it is incumbent upon us to show that we are concerned about economic policy and about solidarity in Europe. My Group will insist on these points, and we Christian Democrats — and, I hope, the whole House — will be looking forward to this great debate.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Taylor.

Mr J.M. Taylor. — Mr Lange spoke in the introductory remarks to his own paper about 'getting back what you pay in', and he explained as others have done, not least Mr Tindemans and Mrs Scrivener, that you do not participate in the Community in the spirit of wishing to receive the same as you pay. I want to make it perfectly clear on behalf of my colleagues in my Group, that we take that view entirely; we do not argue for *juste retour*; we are perhaps asking for a degree of broad balance, but that is some distance indeed from the concept of *juste retour*. I suppose that in many sections of this Chamber there are those whose upbringing taught them that it was better to give than to receive; but there are limits even to that unselfish philosophy, and the Community must be seen to appeal fairness, reasonableness and equity.

J. M. Taylor

I think my colleagues and I have been quick to learn the obvious fact that only a group with 206 Members or more, if such a thing were possible, could impose its will on this Parliament. Shrill nationalism leads to isolation, and a rehearsal of domestic political differences in this Chamber is not only bad manners, which in fact may not matter in politics, but also fails to deliver results, which does matter. It is in that spirit that I welcome the Lange report generally and paragraph 6 in particular, noting with some pleasure that it is very close indeed to an amendment proposed by this Group, injecting as it does a sense of seriousness and urgency, not least into the short-term problems.

Mr President, Mr Lange's report represents an acknowledgement by Members in other parts of this House that certain Community countries have a problem, and that a problem exists. Some might say it has been a slow acknowledgement, but I do not think that would be very gracious, because those who ask for redress must recognize that others must pay, and that acceptance of that position is not one that the others who must pay should be expected to hurry towards. None the less, the acknowledgement is very important and we are grateful and appreciative; and I would like, if I may, to single out Mr Ruffolo in particular, for especial appreciation by us of his contribution, not only on account of the spirit of his remarks but also of his favour of *per capita* income as a measurement of national wealth.

Mr President, I would contrast very much the contribution of his own colleague, Mr von der Vring and I would, frankly, put aside the contribution of Mr Fernandez. Here we are discussing a Commission analysis of various problems — not a British analysis — as well as a report from the chairman and rapporteur of the Committee on Budgets, who is a German Socialist and Mr Fernandez whips himself into a frenzied defence of French farmers, a blatantly nationalistic attitude in a debate that is supposed to be about convergence.

If I may revert to what I think is almost certainly the consensus, and the broader view of this Parliament, we find today with the reception of Mr Lange's paper that Parliament now joins the Member States and the Commission in the recognition of a problem which will be tackled next in the European Council in Dublin at the end of this month, and we do sincerely wish the participants well in those deliberations.

Personally, Mr President, I hope that European solutions will be found, in the medium and long-term at least, which is why I welcome President Jenkins' remarks about the excessive preponderance of agricultural spending in the budget and the need to exercise control over agricultural costs. Indeed, I think many of us in this quarter of the Chamber would offer to

Parliament the observation that it is interesting to reflect that one Member State, at any rate, probably would not have a problem at all if there were a different attitude to agriculture and if a common energy policy had already been developed.

Mr President, Mr Jenkins deferred mention of convergence until late in his remarks and so do I. 'Convergence', like 'harmonization', is rather an abstract word in English. Many people in my country whose European goodwill I care about very much, whose European goodwill will be at risk in a financial sense in Dublin are, to say the least, puzzled and disturbed about the more frivolous manifestations of convergence and harmonization. Why, they ask, should anyone argue for standard sizes of lawn-mowers or standard numbers of peas in a pod? Those are the applications that take harmonization to a point where it ceases to be commercially valuable and jeopardizes the confidence and credibility of the people of the Community.

However, there is a point at which harmonization and convergence are crucial. In a dangerous and violent world there are crucial areas in which Europe must converge, and on almost all of those areas there is agreement by almost all of our peoples who care about our joint future together. Europe must converge on the question of its own safety. Europe must converge on an energy policy. Europe must converge in its external policies. If I may say so, Mr President, Europe must converge on the defence of Western civilization and democracy. Of all the limited and decreasing number of democratic countries in this world today, the highest concentration, thank God, remains in Western Europe. That is where the values are that we wish to protect in an alien and hostile world, and to make these things possible, Europe must converge about Europe.

Mr President, all the worthwhile projects of mankind have encountered great obstacles and great crises on their way, and the European Community is no exception. Nor does the fact that great obstacles and difficulties were encountered mean that the projects themselves were not worthwhile, nor for that matter does it belittle those difficulties. We are amid great difficulties now: on the one hand there is the increasing exhaustion, which will rapidly and imminently be upon us, of our own resources; there are imbalances within the Member States; and there are imbalances within the Community budget itself. We are amid these difficulties and we must face them, and I must say, in a mood of qualified optimism, that even in my short service in this Parliament I believe I have actually observed a degree, if a small degree, of convergence within this very Chamber. Mr President, I sincerely hope that that is so.

(Applause from the middle and from the right)

President. — I call Mr Bonaccini.

Mr Bonaccini. — *(I)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we are very pleased that this debate is taking place on the eve of the European Council meeting in Dublin. This irregular body can and must on this occasion emerge from the rarefied atmosphere which characterizes it and its final communiqués — those brief and sibylline utterances interwoven with esoteric allusions which give the European masses no more than a glimpse of what is going on.

Whether it likes it or not, the Council's reply will this time be conspicuous even if it may lack clarity. I am aware, however, that this debate and this motion for a resolution would have had a very different impact and significance if they had taken place before the recent budget debate.

I take this opportunity to stress once more that we Italian Communists felt that that debate was of considerable importance, despite the indecisiveness and uncertainties on the part of Parliament which led us to adopt a somewhat different position. However, we all realized that the debate and the decisions taken lacked essential points of reference, such as a deeper and fuller consideration of the further development of European integration, of Community enlargement, of the necessary pooling of new political areas, of the opening-up of the Community to increasingly fruitful and coordinated relations with the rest of the world, and especially with the peoples of the so-called Third and Fourth Worlds. That debate reflected a serious contradiction between the will to achieve substantive and formal changes — and the traditional, routine appearance of that budget, despite the last-minute cosmetic alterations.

That is why we regard today's debate as the basis of further work on the budget and its management, and at the same time as a step forward, an important contribution made by Parliament to the complex process leading towards economic and political union.

At this point I should like to congratulate Mr Lange who, although the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs was unable to contribute, did a great deal of useful work.

The Members of the Commission will of course understand that Parliament is in no way prejudiced against their work. It is our duty to judge their individual administrative and political acts for what they are, and that is what we do. More generally, however, gentlemen of the Commission, we judge your will to be or to become in a real sense the potential government of the Community. We must tell you very frankly that your recent Document No 620 does not do much to convince us of such a will. The refusal to develop the ideas suggested by our debate is clear

from this Document, so much so that even some passages of Mr Jenkins' speech this morning seemed less Hamlet-like than Document No 620. It is unacceptable that the Document should confine itself to dealing in substance only with the Italian and British cases, and only with the questions which it calls medium-term (priority expenditure in the budget) and short-term (financial imbalances deriving from the position of the Member States with regard to the budget itself).

We all know that other problems said to be structural have required solutions whose effects will appear in the longer term, but it is high time they were tackled with awareness and consistency. Moreover, the Community is 22 years and not 22 months old. The main question is not so much the obvious point that some time must elapse before the effects are visible, but the approach which must be adopted today, the choices which must be made today and whose effects will begin to be seen from now onwards.

The concept of economic convergence, fully dealt with by a number of honourable Members and pervading Community thinking which would otherwise contradict itself, played a dominant role — as has been mentioned — in the negotiations to achieve the European Monetary System, and is one of the obligations enshrined in the final texts of those negotiations. In my view, therefore, the first three points of the motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Budgets are particularly apt.

You are at least as well aware as we of the present extremely complex and serious economic and social situation, which is characterized by very high inflation rates — albeit with differences from one country to another — by the scarcity for very high price of energy resources, by inflation levels and oil prices chasing each other, by inadequate development, indeed by a drop in overall demand and, even in the optimum case, by stagnating investment, rising of unemployment and certain employment forecasts for 1985 — by the way, whatever became of the famous full-employment forecast for 1980? — which are terrifying to all but the stoutest-hearted. At the last meeting of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee Mr Ortoli told us that the decisive question in this complex set of problems is the so called 'social consensus'. It is certain that for every government this has always been and always will be the decisive question. But consensus on what? For what? On what proposal worth putting forward? on the creation of a reserve army of unemployed? On permanent unemployment? On the headlong collapse fall of whole essential sectors of production? We cannot meet to the present economic and social challenges by shutting ourselves in our European fortress, over-protected and divided within itself.

Bonaccini

We shall overcome these challenges only if we oppose them with the will and the ability to bring about the convergence of the economic and social bases of the Member States. Many have said this, and I add my voice to theirs. This Europe marked by diversity — I am glad that Mr Tindemans himself, who earlier formulated the concept of a two-tier Europe, has reached the conclusion that today no such Europe is in fact being created — is not Europe, it is something else. A true Europe can only be a one-tier Europe, that of the convergence of our economies and our societies, a convergence capable of guaranteeing and protecting labour and improving the quality of life for all European citizens. Hence the great strength of the integration process as a meeting place of cultures and traditions, which through bitter experience have demonstrated that war is detestable and must be banished from the history of our peoples and our continent. This cannot be brought about of itself, nor by general speeches in praise of Europe, nor by hidden or indeed obvious attempts at hegemony, even if only of a cultural or economic nature. To reject joint policies in sectors in which national efforts are increasingly inadequate in the face of worldwide challenges — take energy, steel, shipbuilding, textiles, the need for structural changes and for the adoption of new policies in agriculture, the European regions in need of development or threatened by decline, the new pockets of poverty and social suffering to be eliminated — to reject joint policies and the pooling of resources is to deal the Community a mortal blow, to deprive it of its *raison d'être*, which is social consensus, to give it an unwelcome image in the eyes of our peoples, and to strengthen the negative impression which I received a short time ago during Question Time with regard to the sectoral problems mentioned by various Members. We are fighting for a Europe of convergence, because that is closer to the needs and concerns of the workers and of our people.

Nor is great enthusiasm likely to be aroused by a Europe of aids granted to this or that sector, to this or that region, while the processes of restructuring continue, together with new concentrations and new imbalances which the very creation of a Common Market spontaneously and naturally encourages. We are convinced that these problems cannot be dealt with by turning back, against the tide of history, but by at last going forward on lines which by correcting the original imbalances and inadequacies favour the convergence of national economies and societies. To revert to a concept of merely or almost exclusively intergovernmental cooperation has represented in the last few years and would represent today a retrograde measure, realistic perhaps, but very grave and compromising. Today nothing appears more abstract to us than the so-called concreteness of a cost benefit analysis in the strict sense of the term. The motion for a resolution is right to state that this would be contrary to the spirit and aims of the Treaties. There are distortions and inconsistencies to be corrected,

and our Group hopes for and supports such correction. Among other reasons, we support the motion for a resolution because, contrary to what was stated in a certain press campaign some time ago, some documents and calculations drawn up by the Community show that on 30 September, by small margin, Italy was a country whose so called costs exceeded the so called benefits.

In the debate on the budget we have suggested the road to take — that of an increase in own resources and certainly not that of going back to national contributions, but the majority of Parliament decided not to follow this suggestion, thereby creating a new and serious contradiction. Nor can the condition of parity be interpreted in abstract terms, for it should be applied to specific economic, social and geographical situations which take account — by all means let us go into it more deeply, Mr Tindemans, but today we are already in a position to say this — of gross domestic product, economically strategic resources, energy resources, basic foodstuffs, and entrepreneurial skills. What is required is therefore not only the comparison, however revealing, between gross domestic products (and here I agree with Mr Ruffolo, who suggests the more accurate criterion of *per capita* income) but also the comparison of structural unemployment levels, capital investment, structure of the balance of payments, migration, the availability of jobs and so on — all aspects of which we are very well aware. We also know where they lead. They lead to the real Europe. That is why we call for a policy, manifest in every act of the Community, of aid to development and of support for the weaker regions, including the Italian Mezzogiorno. And we call for this not as Italians but as Europeans, in a Europe which cannot be fully integrated if a Calabrian can find work only in Hamburg or has an income one fifth that of his Copenhagen counterpart.

Here an essential part — let me repeat — can be played by the radical revision of the agricultural policy, as we pointed out during the recent budget debate. We are in favour of the adoption of the resolution on convergence not only so that the European Monetary System may face and overcome, as we hope it will, the coming serious storms, but so that it may be realized in all its aspects and not merely in the enforced stabilization of exchange rates, for we do not need measures which are apparently severe and genuine — as proposed by some — but are in fact hypocritical and likely to lead to disaster. We need priorities and choices — not minimalist interpretations such as those which emerged in this afternoon's debate, but the capacity — which Mr Ruffolo described this morning as a 'programme' — to make choices for Europe so that our budget and revenue options may derive from these choices and not vice versa. We are convinced that this is a great opportunity for our Community and for Europe, and we are committed to positive action to this end.

IN THE CHAIR : MR DE FERRANTI

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Damseaux.

Mr Damseaux. — (*F*) Mr President, without going into details I would like to add three comments to the excellent speech made this morning on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group by my colleague, Mrs Scrivener, in advance of the general debate on convergence which we shall be holding in December.

Firstly, the basic question which has been raised is how can we allocate, or rather re-allocate, Community resources. Our policy has always been and must continue to be geared towards helping the most underprivileged regions and the sectors in greatest difficulty by transferring resources to them. This is, moreover, the position of the Commission as stated in paragraph 1, subparagraph 5 of its document No 620 on convergence and budgetary questions. This policy must remain one of the Community's fundamental objectives in the years to come, and we should examine the problems and objections now being raised by the British Members in this light.

It would be unrealistic to approach the problem solely from the point of view of the net contributor, and it would be against the spirit of the Community to tackle it on the basis of the *juste retour*, which we also oppose; our aim is to serve the Community by ensuring that it is integrated to a large degree. We do not want to reduce the Community to a mere free-trade area by devising a system to provide satisfactory balance of payments figures for all the Member States.

The fact that Britain will have a low growth in GNP in 1981, cannot, therefore, be accepted as justification for the special treatment. If we accepted such an arrangement, we would have to bear all the consequences. If we agree to a special system for Britain today, we will have to do the same tomorrow for Greece, Spain and Portugal, countries whose GNP growth rates are still lower. Rather than destroy the system, we should devise a system which is tailored to present needs and which does not in any way prejudice our ultimate objective.

In this connection, the proposal by the rapporteur, Mr Lange, which is mentioned in paragraphs 7 to 10 and which is aimed at setting up a Community system of financial equalization between the Member States — subject to the three conditions specified this morning by my colleague, Mrs Scrivener might be a medium-term possibility which we could discuss. It might prove a more acceptable solution than the guarantees offered by the financial mechanism currently being proposed by the Commission, but it would certainly not solve the structural problems facing us in the medium and long terms.

Secondly, we cannot confine our discussions to convergence in the strict budgetary sense, and on this I fully

agree with the point raised this morning by Mr Delors; the budgetary and monetary elements and the economic and social policies are all inextricably linked. The development of the EMS budgetary and interest rate policies cannot be viewed in isolation. The budget is a means of implementing all the other policies. The importance of greater convergence within the EMS should therefore be underlined. The ultimate aim is to achieve a single European currency, and the way to do this is to at any rate, indeed reduce the fluctuations between the European currencies. In the short term, Britain's currency should be integrated into the system, with identical and increasingly narrow margins of fluctuation for all the Member States. But the final objective can only be achieved in the context of Economic and Monetary Union, as is rightly pointed out in paragraph 2 of Mr Lange's motion for a resolution.

To achieve this goal, we must ensure that the Member States' internal budgetary policies do not evolve along different lines with no coordination or regard for their impact on the other Member States, otherwise it will be virtually impossible to overcome most of our fundamental economic problems. This does not mean that I think all the nine Member States should pursue the same budgetary policies, but I believe that the national budgetary policies should be geared to the main problems in the Community as a whole, rather than to those of any one country.

My third comment is one which I made during the debate following Mr Jenkins' speech in Florence; it is therefore merely a reminder, and I shall of necessity be brief. The nine Member States should also achieve greater coordination in their interest rate policies. In the short term, it should be possible to establish a system of consultation as practised by the Council of Ministers for periodically adjusting the central rates. Rather than apply multi-stage adjustments, which are often only reactions to previous adjustments or to their effects, it is high time we made our adjustments simultaneously and after joint consultations.

In conclusion Mr President, I repeat that we regard the budget merely as a means of achieving convergence in all the other policies. I have tried to show that we must speed up the implementation of programmes on which we have already agreed, while at the same time introducing additional objectives to attain greater overall convergence at Community level.

President. — I call Mr Ansquer.

Mr Ansquer. — (*F*) At its meeting in Strasbourg last June the European Council requested the Commission to conduct a study on the effects of the participation of each Member State in the Community and on the Community nature of the components contributing to the Community's own resources.

Ansquer

This document gives the Member States an opportunity to express their opinions and submit their requests so as to enable the Commission to make its proposals for the European Council in Dublin.

I shall make no further comment on the unusual procedure adopted by the Commission, as I wish to discuss the fundamental issues involved.

The communication to the Council raises the question of the Member States' financial involvement in Community expenditure, in line with the request made by Britain. This question has not been answered because we do not know what proposals the Commission intends to submit to the Council. That is why the Committee on Budgets, acting in place of the Commission, has put to the House a motion for a resolution which, it is hoped, provides an answer.

We feel that the problem should be viewed in its proper context. Is it not true to say that Britain's claim amounts to a third renegotiation? One wonders whether this could be followed by a fourth if the Labour Party comes to power.

We cannot, therefore, accept these repeated attempts at renegotiation.

Admittedly, the considerable increase in Britain's contribution to the Community budget poses problems in the short term which can and must be taken into consideration over a limited period. But we cannot allow the constant changing of the rules of membership to become the norm. That is the first reason why we oppose the motion for a resolution.

Moreover, the proposed system of financial equalization based on *per capita* gross domestic product and organized within the Community budget will in practice result in the creation of a new category of resources paid for by some Member States for the benefit of others.

Such an arrangement is in conflict with the Treaty. True, the Treaties can always be amended, but we must ask ourselves whether we want to jeopardize the Community's achievements or allow it to make progress. Own resources have led to profound changes in the Community budget.

The Community budget is no longer financed by contributions from the Member States, but by taxes, customs duties, agricultural levies and VAT. Expenditure is also not intended merely to provide a given Member State with financial assistance. Its main purpose is to finance joint policies.

Consequently, we regard any system which directly or indirectly introduces an arrangement based on a balance between contributions and benefits as totally unacceptable because it is contrary to the nature and objectives of the Community. Such a system would be a definite setback to the construction of Europe.

We must therefore analyse, dispassionately but accurately, the nature of Britain's financial imbalance.

It is widely held that the size of Britain's contribution to the Community budget is the result of the characteristics of its foreign trade. If we examine each item of own resources, we find that the least favoured Member State is not always the same. In addition to Britain's slight disadvantage with regard to VAT, its situation is aggravated by a high level of customs duties, which make up 26 % of its contribution. Britain imports far more industrial goods from outside the Community than other Member States and therefore pays proportionally more customs duties into the Community budget.

If Britain purchased more from the other Member States, the principle of Community solidarity would be respected and its financial contribution reduced.

The same applies to agriculture. By continually obtaining supplies from outside the Community to a far greater extent than the other Member States, Britain incurs levies which are paid into the budget in addition to the budgetary expenditure required to market throughout the world Community products which have been replaced by imported produce.

The purpose of the common external tariff is to safeguard Community preference. If, despite this, a Member State continues to obtain its supplies mainly from outside, surely it is justifiable to tax its imports in some way? While on the subject of fairness, surely a Member State should first and foremost become fully integrated into the Community and respect the principle of Community preference?

In drawing attention to imbalances in the Member States' contributions towards the Community's own resources, we should not forget the Community's primary objective, which is to develop intra-Community trade with a view to consolidating economic and monetary union and to develop joint policies.

In short, Britain's 'poverty' is completely relative. International comparisons of *per capita* GNP are very unreliable, especially now, as they are greatly distorted by fluctuations in the exchange rates. Assessments based on a comparison of effective standards of living indicate that the situation in Britain is much less unhealthy. Furthermore, it is one of the few Member States with a surplus in its balance of payments. There is every likelihood that this favourable situation will continue thanks mainly to North Sea oil, and we welcome this.

We appreciate, however, that in 1980 Britain will be in an unusual situation as a result of the discontinuation of the mechanism for the gradual increase in contributions provided for under Article 131 of the Treaty of Accession.

This abrupt increase in Britain's payments deserves consideration. It can and must be corrected by specific short-term economic measures.

Ansquer

However, the proposal for a new and lasting system of financial equalization between the Member States, based on the *per capita* gross domestic product, seems to us to be premature, restrictive and harmful to the proper application of Community rules.

We cannot accept such a system for the following simple but fundamental reasons :

- firstly, it would prejudice the autonomy of the system of own resources ;
- secondly, it would be difficult to control financially, especially since gross domestic product is derived from national statistics which may be compiled differently from country to country, with the result that assessments are not uniform ;
- thirdly, would such a move be timely now that the negotiations for Community enlargement are under way ?

For these reasons I have tabled several amendments.

The first relates to paragraph 4 and outlines our approach to restoring the balance of the common agricultural policy.

The second amendment, while modifying paragraph 6, is in line with the views expressed by most of the members of the Committee on Budgets, i.e. it seeks to remedy the difficulties faced by Britain. We therefore propose that selective measures should be taken which would, for example, help Britain to restore its investments to a level comparable with that of its partners and to reorientate its international trade policy.

The third amendment takes the form of a reminder that any new system of resources requires an amendment to the Treaties, and this — as we are all aware — would have to be approved unanimously by the Council and ratified by the national parliaments.

In conclusion, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, my comments should be regarded as an expression of our desire to safeguard the Community's achievements in order to apply more effectively the new joint policies which Europe needs in order to assert its identity and image and to serve the Community's real interests.

IN THE CHAIR : MRS DE MARCH

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Bonde.

Mr Bonde — (DK) Madam President, as a result of an imminent threat to my group, i.e. the Technical Coordination Group, I was not able to take part in yesterday's discussion of the report on convergence in

the Committee on Budgets. However, my colleagues in that committee will hardly be surprised that the representatives of the Danish People's Movement intend to vote against the motion for a resolution on the Commission's communication on convergence and budgetary questions.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, I should point out straightaway that our reason for opposing this report is not that we oppose the desire to iron out the economic disparities between poor and rich regions or poor and rich countries. The reason we oppose it is that, in our view, this equalization policy is not really a matter for this Assembly but rather one which, in our case, should be decided in the Folketing. In this connection, I should like to know the attitude of the Council and Commission to paragraph 11 of the report by the Committee on Budgets, in which the supranational parliamentarians state that no proposals of this kind can be adopted by the Council without the agreement of Parliament. What provisions in the Treaty form the basis for this view ? Which articles are being referred to here ? As far as I know, the Danish people has not agreed to any articles making financial equalization a matter for the European Parliament. The treaty we adhered to following a referendum is the Treaty of Accession, in which Denmark's contribution is laid down as a certain percentage of the Community's operating costs. Suggesting that the distribution key we agreed to should now be changed so that those countries with an above average gross domestic product would, via the Community, subsidise those with a lower than average gross domestic product, is tantamount to a distortion of this Treaty of Accession. If this proposal is put into practice, we will in future be financing a larger proportion of the Community's expenditure, and I should like to ask the Council and Commission whether the Danish government has agreed to this idea and, if so, how it is intended to render a new distribution key legally compatible with the Treaty of Accession. Is it, as the Commission's paper suggests, Article 235 which is to be used for the umpteenth time, even though we have been assured that this article could only be used to fill gaps in the treaties ? As far as I know, no one has ever told us that Article 235 could also be used to fill gaps in other countries' public purses.

I will make no secret of the fact that I personally am rather taken with the idea of the richer countries contributing to the poorer countries, but even from this Robin Hood point of view, the Commission's document and Parliament's motion for a resolution are fairly makeshift affairs. And what is worse, Parliament's report advocates a totally unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of other countries. What sort of a way to give gifts is it to accompany them with instructions as to how they are to be used ? I am referring here to that part of Parliament's report which states that the money should, and I quote, 'be used in accordance with guidelines flowing from the common

Bonde

policies and annual decisions taken by the budgetary authority'. If aid is to be given, it should be given unconditionally, and if Denmark is to contribute to this aid, this must be decided in the Danish Parliament, and not in a foreign parliament.

One point on which I agree with the Commission is that the advantage of Community membership cannot be seen only in terms of the flow of payments through the offices in Brussels. As I see, it, there are far more disadvantages than those ascribable to the Community budget, and the advantages which a country such as the Federal Republic derives from the Community membership are far greater than its contribution to the Community budget might indicate. What is the value of a guaranteed export market? Is the Federal Republic's contribution to the Community budget really commensurate with the advantage of being able to force my country, for example, to follow the deutschmark, which has resulted in the export of thousands of jobs to our southern neighbour? What is the price we must pay for allowing foreign firms to bid freely for Danish building projects and get the jobs at an 8 % interest rate, while the interest rate in Denmark is 16 % and wages are higher than those in West Germany? In my view, Danish wage earners and self-employed persons are extensively subsidizing the country which owes Denmark reparations which are far greater than Denmark's notorious balance of payments deficit. I have the impression that many other people in the Community take the same view, or would do if they looked at the payments that take place outside the Community budget and consider what the so-called free movement of labour, capital and services has resulted in.

Now that we have received a report on convergence and the Community budget, it would also be a good idea if researchers in our universities made a report on how the Federal Republic, for example, has become richer at the expense of its weaker neighbours?

If we look only at the Community budget, Denmark appears to be one of the countries which has got most out of the Community. We get more money back through, for example, the agricultural fund than we pay into it. This is what we see from the budget and, in particular, from the various brochures issued by the Commission's propaganda office at the taxpayer's expense. In some accounts, they have even gone so far as to list quite cheerfully the subsidies to British housewives as a gain for Danish agriculture. Fair enough Danish agriculture has gained from the Danish accession to the Community. The Danish opponents of the Community have never disputed this fact, but since 1973-1974 agricultural incomes have in fact dropped in real terms in Denmark. The farmers may well have received more for their

products, but costs have risen even more steeply, and it is not true — as some people in other countries might be tempted to believe — that the problems facing Danish agriculture were solved with the accession to the Community. This is a question to which we will return on another occasion. For the time being, I should merely like to draw your attention to a number of disadvantages which do not result directly from the Community budget. The Community's external tariff barrier has been forced on our industry, which has meant that we have had to spend hundreds of millions of kroner more for raw materials which are not found in Denmark but which we could previously import duty-free. Why can we not obtain figures for this disadvantage from the Community's so-called information office? In addition, the Community's steel policy means that Danish undertakings, among others, pay hundreds of millions of kroner to the shareholders of steelworks in other countries. These figures cannot be seen in the budget either, but why can't the ever-watchful information staff give us some up-to-date figures on this additional expenditure? If membership of the Community was to have been in the general interests of Denmark, it would have been reasonable to expect that the promises made to the Danish people before the 1972 referendum — to the effect that Community membership would mean the end of our balance of payments deficit — should in fact have been fulfilled. However since Denmark joined the Community, our balance of payments deficit has increased from Dkrs 17 000 million to Dkrs 70 000 million. Even if we disregard the increase due to higher oil prices, Denmark's deficit has continually grown — not by a great deal, I admit, but nevertheless it has increased and not decreased. The increase in our balance of payments deficit has not, however, been accompanied by a drop in unemployment. Indeed unemployment has increased from 21 000 in 1973 to approximately 200 000 this winter. We have become part of the common unemployment market, whereas Norway and Sweden, who were content with a general trade agreement with the Community and which have retained their economic freedom of action, have not had a substantial increase in unemployment. I will make no secret of the fact that we would like to have a little more convergence with the countries which have full employment and a little less with those which do not.

President. — I call Mr Almirante.

Mr Almirante. — (I) Madam President, firstly, in accordance with the new Rules of Procedure, I should like to ask you if I may also use the time allocated to my colleague Mr Petronio, who has decided not to speak in this debate, among other reasons because as a member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, which has met to express its opinion, he would not be in a position to give his views fully in this debate. Moreover, I assure you, Madam President, that I shall not abuse your courtesy. I do not think I shall even use up the time allocated to the two of us.

Almirante

Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, after the customary anti-European speech by the Danish Member, I think I can evoke the spirit of Hamlet, who on this occasion might well have asked himself 'Convergence or divergence that is the question.' But I think he would have asked 'Europe — to be or not to be ; that is the question.' For we are at a turning-point, and we must have the courage to give a meaning to the word 'Europe', to the European Community and above all to the work of the European Parliament.

I was disappointed to hear the spokesman for the EPD Group just now stressing the dangers involved in a renegotiation of the Treaty of Rome, although he was addressing his remarks to our British colleagues and not to us. On the contrary, I think it is a question of emerging for good from the negotiating phase in which Europe has been struggling up to now.

It is not succeeding in being the Europe of peoples, but only, and with difficulty, in being the Europe of states and sometimes of nations. It is a question of at last entering the phase of European inspiration and of trying to do, albeit many years later — but they were not wasted years — what the initial founders — I would like to mention Robert Schuman, if my French colleague will allow me — would have wished to be done. In this spirit, which, despite any special qualifications, I wish to try to interpret, I express the gratitude of our small Group — the Italian National Right Group — towards the rapporteur Mr Lange, who has adopted a very clear and courageous approach to this problem. I hope that this clarity and courage will be shared by Parliament, and I also hope that this motion will be adopted. I hope Mr Lange will forgive me for having some doubts about paragraph 5, and I stress above all the importance of paragraph 11, which points out that no proposals of this kind can be adopted by the Council without the agreement of Parliament, and stresses that the conciliation procedure is fully applicable in this matter. We hope that this point in Mr Lange's report will not be disregarded or modified, and above all that it will be applied using a conciliation procedure, and not merely consultation which could be useless. I say this, ladies and gentlemen, Madam President, because it is not only a question of harmonizing different economic policies, but of giving a social dimension to Europe. The rapporteur said that we should try to move from an economic market to a social market. I am not very enamoured of the expression 'social market'. I think it would be more accurate to say that we are trying at last to enter upon that Europe of participation, or that Europe not only of states or nations but of peoples, of which we spoke at electoral meetings in our various countries in the elections for this Parliament, but which has perhaps been forgotten.

I say this with grave political concern for the future of Europe, about which we should have no illusions. May I address the French and German Members in parti-

cular: do not delude yourselves, social and economic imbalances lead to political imbalances. If we want Europe to mean something, if we want it to become — for it is not yet — a social model and above all a model of civilization, if we really want — as we all claim to want — a truly independent Europe, with regard to defence, legislation and the European judicial zone, if we want a Europe which is politically and culturally autonomous, we must correct the social imbalances which still exist in Europe and which, indeed, according to the Lange report, have become worse in the last twenty years, because social imbalances inevitably give rise to political imbalances.

To put it more clearly, if we want a Europe which is independent of the pressures from Communism on one side, and from decadent, frequently impotent and corrupting American capitalism on the other, we must really bring about a fundamental change leading to a Europe of social awareness and social justice, and to the elimination of the severe imbalances existing at present in Europe and especially in some European countries

Listening to this debate and trying to plan this brief speech, I wondered whether perhaps, since I am Italian and represent the Italians of the Mezzogiorno, my motivation was nationalistic rather than European. But I think I can say that, precisely because I am Italian, precisely because I am not in a position of power and am against power, and therefore against any class privilege, precisely because I am decidedly anti-communist and therefore opposed to those class privileges which in my country often amount to caste privileges, precisely because I am a Southern Italian by origin, political vocation and by the electorate that I represent, I think that the only way to speak Italian is to speak European, and that the only way to speak European is to speak Italian. What do we Italians of the Mezzogiorno demand? I say to the Members who are fortunate enough to live in countries which lack those economic imbalances which we unfortunately have, that we do not ask for a policy of aid, we demand the right to contribute in a civilized way to the development of Europe. We demand that Mediterranean Europe be regarded with the same interest as Northern Europe, and we maintain that our people, our economy and our society can contribute significantly in the Mediterranean region to ensuring that the policy towards developing African countries, instead of being a policy based on aid achieving little in terms of political and cultural proselytism, can instead become a policy of broad economic and social development. We think that the contribution which the Italian people, and above all the people of the Mezzogiorno, can make to economic, social, and therefore political relations with the countries of the Middle East bordering on the Mediterranean is of considerable importance, that our contribution needs to be appreciated, to be asked for in the right way, and to be accompanied and preceded by a contribution by

Almirante

Europe to the understanding of the problems of Italian underdevelopment. It is painful to say this, but that is how things stand.

My short speech therefore ends with an exhortation to the European Parliament that all its Members approve the Lange report, although, I repeat, we have some doubts about paragraph 5. In this connection I heard a strong and rightly applauded speech by Mr Tindemans, with which we agree to a large extent. Of course we would like some of his perhaps rather too rigid rejections to be toned down, especially his rather too symbolic rejection of any policy of solidarity. Solidarity is a term which can have many meanings. If, Mr Tindemans, it merely meant aid, we would reject this term as energetically as you did. However, when one speaks of solidarity in European terms, and faced with a Europe in which there are great differences in the standard of living, a Europe in which there are peoples — that of Ireland for example, but also and above all that of Southern Italy — whose standard of living is a quarter or even a fifth that of other peoples — undoubtedly hardworking and highly civilized people, undoubtedly very worthy of respect, and whose interests must not be sacrificed. As long as there are imbalances of this kind I think one is right to use the term solidarity, unless — I repeat — the term solidarity conceals or tries to conceal — as it certainly does not when we use it — requests for aid which would embarrass us and which we certainly do not allow ourselves to make.

We therefore hope that courageous steps will be taken towards a European Parliament which will draw up European laws, and which instead of beginning with the admittedly necessary and urgent laws against terrorism, will begin by trying to draw up legislation, or at least a joint approach, for European social and economic planning, i.e. for harmonization not only of laws but of the economies of our continent.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Castle.

Mrs Castle. — Madam President, the Socialists have been foremost in pressing for this debate, and our attitude to it is very simple. We Socialists think there is something very wrong with a Community in which poorer nations finance richer ones, wealthy farmers get more help than small struggling ones, the rich northern regions prosper at the expense of the poor southern ones, the needs of industry are totally neglected and the inequalities of wealth and opportunity are actually increasing year by year.

I entirely agree with my comrade Mr Ruffolo in that excellent speech of his, when he warned us that the Community will collapse unless it can find fundamental solutions to these inequalities and divergences. I agree with him, too, that the pursuit of laissez-faire policies, some of the original free market ideas of the Community, has been a big contribution to the

growth of these divergences. He is right when he says that we need a massive switch of Community policy towards a deliberate goal of achieving greater equality. Oh yes, I am with him all the way; and it is, I claim, in the context of that determination that the United Kingdom's complaint about her excessive contribution to the Community budget must be judged.

Madam President, thanks to the Commission's documents, the facts are no longer in dispute. There have been attempts in the past to suggest that Britain has exaggerated; but even if we take the Community's figure, less favourable to Britain than the one I think they ought to take, then they admit that next year Britain will be paying a subsidy of over £ 1 000 million, or 1 500 million units of account to members of the Community whose economies are stronger than hers. Now, I repeat, I think the Commission has taken the wrong figure in taking the lower one. I would not accept for a moment that the monetary compensatory amounts should be counted as a benefit to the importer rather than to the exporter, who without them would not be able to sell his higher and more costly products. So I believe the real net contribution that Britain will be making next year is about £ 1 125 million, or about 1 800 million units of account. That is half the size of the balance of payments deficit Britain will have run this year.

Everybody who has talked about convergence, and the economic policies that are needed to achieve it, knows that balance of payments deficits are a major factor in holding back economic growth. Yet the United Kingdom is having to run up half of her balance of payments and the expenditure system in this Community. I do appeal to every reasonable person in this House to recognize that that makes a mockery of all the talk we have heard about convergence this morning and this afternoon. I ask them to realize, too, that even this huge sum does not reflect the full cost to Britain of membership of the European Community. I know it is sometimes argued that our contribution to the budget would be less if only we bought more of our goods from the Community and so had to pay less to the budget in the form of customs duties, but you know, Madam President, Britain has in fact reoriented her trade towards the Community more than any other Member State, and that is what has led to our adverse balance of trade with the European Community. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say as the British Government argues and I support it in this that Britain is carrying an extra budgetary cost of some £ 600 million a year: the cost of having to buy dearer food than we would have done; the cost to us, as food importers, of the Common Agricultural Policy.

But this, surely, is something that the Community, in its own interest, cannot tolerate because you see, it is something very different from what was intended when Britain joined the Community in 1970 something very different from the sort of language that was

Castle

used at the time of the accession talks. Indeed, the representatives of the Six who were negotiating with us at that time were perfectly well aware that Britain stood to gain less than other people from the Common Agricultural Policy; and the Commission and the Council therefore jointly gave Britain two assurances. In the documents sent to Britain in November 1970 they forecast that the agricultural share of the budget would fall to 60 %, or even 40 %, they said, over the following six years. Well, nine years later it has actually increased, and it is still going up! Nobody can say that that change is the fault of Britain, or that it is something for which in justice she ought to pay. Indeed, they held out the promise that with this fall in agricultural spending Britain and these are the words they used would benefit, because it is precisely a country like Great Britain which can benefit to the greatest degree.

Secondly, however, they gave us an assurance that if things did not turn out as had been estimated, adjustments would be made. I remember as an anti-marketeer at the time being told I did not understand the European Community, how flexible it was, how generous, how, of course, it would not stand by and see a gross injustice done to a Member State. The words used to Britain then, repeated in 1975 when the re-negotiations took place, were these: 'Should any unacceptable situation arise within the present Community or an enlarged Community, the very survival of the Community would demand that the Institutions find equitable solutions'. Well, we know that nine years later the CAP share of the Community budget is still going up, and as a result the situation for Britain by any objective criterion has become unacceptable.

We have heard a lot during today's debate about how it is contrary to the principles of the Community to talk about the *juste retour* — the fair return. I don't know what the Community principle is then; is it an *injuste retour* — an unfair return? Of course, if you are talking about getting out every penny that you put in, I agree that would be contrary to the redistributive principles the Community's budget is supposed to represent; but what I complain about is that the redistributive principles of this Community budget have gone into reserve. It is the poorer nations who are being expected to subsidize the richest ones. And it surely is economic nonsense for a Community which believes in equalizing standards in convergence and all the rest of it to make the third poorest country pay the most.

So what, Madam President, should we do? We all know there are two main causes of the UK's big net deficit in payments vis-à-vis the EEC, and the Commission, of course, points them out in its report.

First, our contributions are not related to our ability to pay. In other words, they do not take any account of

our national wealth per head compared with the average wealth per head throughout the Community. And second, we are just not getting our share of Community expenditure — as we were promised we should in the future. In 1980, as again the Commission points out, Britain will get only one-tenth of the whole Community budget, and that will represent a fall of a quarter over the years from 1978 to 1980; so our share is going down, and the reason, of course, is the vast preponderance of the Common Agricultural Policy in the Community's spending. It takes 70 % of the budget, and 25 % of that CAP expenditure is spent in Germany, 20 % in France and about 8 % in the United Kingdom.

Clearly, something must be done to rectify that double maldistribution of burdens according to needs and ability to pay. I want to assure my good comrades, whether from Italy or from France, those who have pressed for the role of the Common Agricultural Policy in all sorts of social forms, that I understand perfectly well that we cannot solve this crisis — and it is a crisis — that faces the Community in the next few months by slashing Common Agricultural Policy spending in the coming year overnight.

Mind you, I think it is a crime that the Council of Agricultural Ministers agreed in June that it should be increased — and certain people who have been making noises today about Britain's contribution to the budget being unfair helped to increase that spending by their vote in the Council of Ministers; so I wish there were a little more consistency.

But I recognize that you cannot come along with a great scythe and scythe out the agricultural spending on which so many people depend, and which we Socialists can support, though I must say I will fight ruthlessly, as I did for the amendments to the budget — again, not with support from all the quarters where one might have expected it — for reductions in the agricultural spending. These must be reductions of a reasonable kind, to get us on our way to containing expenditure and on our way to redistributing agricultural spending more constructively, so that out of it will come more help to the North. We in the Socialist Group have set up a working party to review the whole working of the Common Agricultural Policy. It is desperately urgent that this Community finds a way of giving income support to the agricultural community in a socially responsible and an economically responsible way at the same time.

The moral of what I am saying clearly indicates the help Britain demands in the next budget round and what it is entitled to expect. Britain cannot in the meantime be expected to continue to carry such a large part of the burden the Common Agricultural Policy puts on her. We have to buy in the dearest market and then pay for the surpluses that other countries produce. It is not good enough and it has got to stop.

Castle

Therefore I say that Britain has a right to ask that a broad balance should be struck between her outgoings and her receipts, and to achieve this we shall have to have a two-pronged attack on the present injustice. First, Britain's gross contribution must be related more tightly to her ability to pay, by taking account of her national wealth per head and the extent to which it is lower than the Community average. An adjustment of that kind could reduce Britain's contribution by something like 600 million pounds a year. I say advisedly and in the name of justice this afternoon that the balance of that thousand million must be found by a straight cash payment to Britain to compensate her for her loss of spending out of the Community budget. It is the *just retour* to us of what other people have gained out of the Common Agricultural Policy at our expense.

Therefore I say also that in giving this adjustment for the sake of the Community, there must be no strings attached. It must not be part of one of those complicated deals: 'Oh you in Britain must spend more on defence, or abandon your point of view on fisheries policy or sheepmeat or whatever'; it must be a straight act of justice done on the merits of the arithmetical calculations and the reading of past history, as well as on the basis of future hopes. It is a solution too, you know, that must be applied as long as it is necessary; we talk about a short-term solution, but we have got to be prepared for it to last a number of years, because the common agricultural policy is not going to be reformed very rapidly and fundamentally. The upheavals would be too great, we know that. Nor are we going to see a rapid disappearance of Britain's relative poverty; all the independent economic forecasts show that Britain's output next year will decline. That, of course, is the result of the pursuit of monetarist and deflationist policies: Britain's growth is actually going to go down in the coming years.

Now I am not going to introduce those wider arguments into this debate, but I do say that Mr Ruffolo is right when he draws from Britain's experience the lesson that Europe needs entirely new economic policies. We Socialists will certainly work for this. In the meantime we ask for a little of the solidarity of which Mr Tindemans spoke so movingly, and I offer this solidarity to Margaret Thatcher: for heaven's sake stand firm, and I will back you up.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr von Bismarck.

Mr von Bismarck. — (D) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I would first like to join in thanking Mr Lange for raising in his committee the fundamental issue prompted by the topical matter on which Mrs Castle and others have spoken so passionately. There can be no one in this House who does not appreciate the problem dealt with by the previous

speaker or hope that a solution can be found. Parliament's essential role is to exercise the fundamental responsibilities and uphold the principles which we all believe must be adhered to if we are to complete the process of European union. I would remind the House that at the next part-session we shall be discussing the Commission's report to the Council concerning economic policy for next year. On 18 February 1974 the Council decided that it would adopt proposals for decisions, directives or recommendations every year on the basis of this communication.

We shall therefore be holding a detailed debate on the basic principles of this issue at the start of December. We can therefore be more brief today, as indeed I intend to be.

The essential position of the European People's Party was outlined this morning by Mr Tindemans. Convergence, or 'growing together', is in our view the only way of achieving European union. This is especially true in the case of economic policy. Only by growing together can we create the conditions necessary for the achievement of full European union. No solution — however urgent — should therefore be adopted which ignores or runs counter to the principles of convergence. What does my group believe these principles to be?

Firstly, the correction of existing structural disparities is one of the major prerequisites for the achievement of European union. This is also the purpose of the efforts to establish the EMS, whose fate will in its turn depend on the success of convergence.

Secondly, the principle of *juste retour* should be rejected, as it is in the very antithesis of convergence.

(Scattered applause)

I think a linguistic difference should be considered here. *Juste retour* cannot be translated by 'fair balance'. *Juste retour* implies that the first thing we ask ourselves is what we can get out of the system, without considering all the objectives and the many indirect effects of, say, a market of 260 million people.

Thirdly, the completion of European union on the basis of a social market economy geared towards human needs. The real purpose of the Treaties can only be achieved by setting up a lasting system of financial equalization between the Member States, taking into consideration their different structures and capabilities. The Commission should come up with detailed proposals to ensure that this matter, which is of fundamental importance for European union in the longer term, is discussed jointly by Parliament, the Council and the Commission as soon but also as thoroughly — as possible. The same careful attention must be devoted to the raising of funds as to checking that they are being used for the purpose specified and also — and I would stress this point — effectively and successfully.

von Bismarck

Mrs Castle maintains that the Socialists are always in the forefront. That was true in the last century, but they have been lagging far behind for a long time now. Mr von der Vring advocated more state control; the state should decide how companies should use their capital. Mrs Castle, some time ago a German undersecretary, a member of Mr Schmidt's government, expressed my point well when he said that industrialists have a solution for every problem while bureaucrats have a problem for every solution.

(Laughter, applause from the right)

So the Socialist Party is not up in front but far behind if it takes its cue from great-grandfather Marx and thinks that bureaucrats can predict the future better than industrialists.

In a social market economy, industry and its self-interest are placed in the service of society and are forced by competition to meet society's needs. The only thing is that competition must become firmly established everywhere. We must support the Commission in its effort to eliminate all obstacles, and not argue in favour of regression and of replacing personal responsibility with state intervention.

There is nothing so dangerous, Mrs Castle, as to separate responsibility and freedom, and that is precisely what Mr von der Vring is proposing to do. In view of our quite different experience, we firmly reject this suggestion.

(Applause from the right)

The principle of solidarity must be supplemented by that of self-help, in other words we must help people to help themselves, so that we do not create a Community based on handouts or allow anyone to join the ranks of the poor.

Fourthly, we must not forget that growing resources which are not dependent on distribution are one of the basic prerequisites of progress towards union.

Those who believe, as is suggested in the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Budgets, that regular, guaranteed and growing own resources can be replaced by distribution are in danger of destroying the foundations of European union. In future, only, a budget geared to the importance of the entire Community will enable us to achieve social objectives and, above all, implement a practical convergence policy. I just wanted to point this out so that we are under no illusions.

We support the principle of the motion but shall be tabling certain amendments to paragraphs 7 to 10, because we feel that the proposed procedure still involves some problems which will have to be carefully considered before it can be adopted by the House.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr de Ferranti.

Mr de Ferranti. — Madam President, may I first of all, with some pleasure, welcome Mrs Barbara Castle to the club of those of us who are trying to do something constructive for Europe. We have watched her anti-marketeering over many years: now she has come here to this House and, like so many people before her, is joining in the process of discussing and trying to make progress in the Community. May I also welcome Mr von Bismarck to another club, the club of those who are trying to keep Mrs Barbara Castle on the strait and narrow economic path. We are glad to have his support in an activity which we have been engaged in on this side for many years.

I am also pleased to hear from Mrs Castle that she, provided Mrs Thatcher stands firm, is going to support her in the future. I am quite certain that Mrs Thatcher will stand firm, but she will stand firm in a way that will not be fanatical. She will stand firm in a way which, I believe, at the end of the day is going to enable a reasonable compromise to be reached and we look forward to Mrs Castle having to keep her word and support Mrs Thatcher.

I do not think, though, that the way in which Mrs Castle's words were phrased is such as is going to appeal to Mr Ansquer, whose somewhat inflexible speech we all listened to with, perhaps, some discomfort. I think it behoves us to think of ways in which we can express our point of view so that we can get through to Mr Ansquer and make him understand the benefits that there are, not only for his own country, with which he is rightly concerned, but for the Community as a whole in endeavouring to solve the problems that are in front of us, because we have got to solve those problems. We cannot just say, as Mrs Castle did: Give us back the money! It is not good enough. What we have got to say is what each and every Member State is going to do to help the Community as a whole which justifies an appropriate budget arrangement, and that is what I would like to try and do in the brief time that is available to me. I hope that if I can measure my success in any way at all, it will be that perhaps I might slightly melt the heart of Mr Ansquer and make him feel that we are in this thing together and that we must find a solution, neither by demanding the money, as Mrs Castle has said, nor by refusing to give it, as he has said. We must be constructive.

(Applause)

Now, both Mr Ansquer and Mr Fernandez, who came in for a bit of stick later on in the evening, said that if only the British could reduce their imports from third countries and increase their imports from the Community, then all would be well. And this is constantly

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being said. Now it is true that we only derive something like 38 % of our imports from other Community countries, whereas the rest of the Community imports something like 50 % ; but in fact over the last 6 years we have increased our percentage of imports from 26 % to the 38 % that I mentioned. It really is a dramatic shift in imports over a brief period of six years. We have done this despite the recession in the world at large and despite the difficulties faced by the Community, and if other Member States' representatives here present will forgive me, despite the government supported by Mrs Barbara Castle. We have done this as well at a time when some other Member States' share of Community trade measured by imports has dropped from some 55 % or 56 % to 51 %. It has been a long, hard and difficult struggle ; we needed the transitional period that was provided for us under the Treaty, but we need still more time in order to take it yet further. This change in trading patterns in sheer physical terms is a tremendous effort ; actually to change the methods of production and the methods of distribution so as to bring it about represents a colossal physical achievement.

But it also, let us face it, as the other Member States know who also have their colonies, their empires to cope with, involves a change of attitude. The changing of that attitude has come later to us than it came to the original six Member States. This idea of Community preference is one which has to become a habit of thought as a result of experience, and it takes time to achieve that habit of thought. It especially affects the way one regards the old arguments about free trade and protectionism, which we all of us have had in economic schools during our education. It is no longer just a question of championing free trade, as so many of us have done as a sort of article of faith. What we must do now, and are increasingly beginning to do in the United Kingdom, is to see the thing in terms of the strength of the negotiating position of the Community together and make the most of that negotiating position, both in terms of achieving free trade where it is sensible and also making sure that we have a reasonable degree of protection when that is sensible. It means that we can say to our firms, to the management and work people in our firms throughout the country : Listen, the European Community has the strength, the muscle, to protect you when protection is appropriate, but in exchange for that we must accept free trade within the Community.

However, even though we accept that, we have also got to realize, and this is a particular United Kingdom problem which I have got to mention, that whilst our imports from the Community have increased dramatically, our exports to the Community have not. Whilst we have been living in a socialist period of inevitable consumption and not enough attention has been

applied to production, our imports have gone up, but we have not solved our export problem, and we have an imbalance of trade of nearly a billion pounds.

Now this is our problem, as Mr Scott-Hopkins said earlier this morning. We can do it. ICI, a big firm, has managed to so set out its affairs that it has increased its sales to other Community countries from 600 millions in 1960 to nearly 800 millions last year. It can be done by the normal processes, I would suggest, of private enterprise rather than the enthusiasm that Mr von der Vring had for public enterprise. And it can also be done by small businesses, and very many small businesses are doing it.

It is possible because the tariffs have gone, and many of the non-tariff barriers have gone. Our biggest single problem now in order to make progress is to create an economy not only in which we go back to normal motivation and enterprise — private enterprise again — but also where we remove so many of the non-tariff barriers to trade that still remain.

I do not mean just things like motor-car type-approval tests, important though that is : that is something this Parliament has got to get on with. I mean, as Mr Tindemans said earlier this afternoon, progress with the major things : progress with public purchasing, progress with purchasing by the nationalized industries, so we have a new economic policy ; progress as well, as mentioned by Mr Taylor, in the defence field. These are the major areas of policy in the area of non-tariff barriers to trade with which we have got to make progress.

But we need confidence as well, Madam President. If we are going to remove these remaining non-tariff barriers, we all need confidence. Mr Ansquer needs confidence ; Mr Debré, who spoke from behind me in the debate on the internal market, he certainly needs confidence. He made a scathing attack on the extent to which this Community can protect itself as compared with the protectionist policies of Japan and the United States. We do need confidence.

Now as I have said, I believe there is increasing understanding throughout the Community countries in this new era of balance between free trade and protectionism. It was typified by the CBI conference in Birmingham this last month. We need to understand what the Community can do for us on anti-dumping policy. We need to see the importance of the textile agreements, of the shipbuilding agreements, of the steel schemes ; we must have the ability to understand the right balance in these policies, and support them when it is appropriate. We do, as Mr Tindemans said, need a new debate, a new economic policy. We need to re-think these things together and get the confidence that is required to enable us really to make some progress with the removal of the remaining non-tariff barriers to trade and the attitude of mind that lies behind their maintenance.

de Ferranti

So, Madam President, first we have got to deal with the trade flows so that no one Member State is over-dependent on imports. That is the longer-term prospect which should ease the agreement for the shorter-term measures that are to be discussed in Dublin. Next, we must be clear that this short-term problem is a Community problem, that underlying it is the necessity for the Community to find a solution and to be seen to find a solution. Not only do other Member States want to know that they too will have the benefit of sensible Community decision-making if they get into trouble, but the rest of the world needs to see that we are capable of coming to these conclusions, because Community credit depends on how we behave, not just on the number of Member States that belong to us.

Further, we must solve, as everybody has said, the agricultural imbalance and develop the new Community policies that we need. I was very interested when President Jenkins — who has been good enough to be with us all today, we very much appreciate that.

(Applause)

He mentioned the Italian suggestion that perhaps we should work towards some definite percentage of balance in the Community budget and that these new policies must be aimed at the social consequences of the new division of labour to which Mr Tindemans referred.

That is where the Community should be applying its strength and its competence. So let us hope that this vote that we are going to take on the resolution will show a measure of convergence, anyway amongst us in this Parliament, and that the statesmanlike lines on which this has been proposed by Mr Lange will be the key to enabling that vote to show overwhelming support for common sense and show that we in this Parliament can lead the way.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Boserup.

Mrs Boserup. — *(DK)* Madam President, good and patient colleagues. As a member of the Committee on Budgets I was unable to observe the considerable efforts made by Mr Lange, the Chairman of the committee, to obtain a majority for the report currently under discussion. However, there were five votes against it, one of which was mine. This is not because I am opposed to the idea of rich countries transferring resources to less wealthy countries — indeed, for my party, the Socialist People's Party, the idea of international solidarity is one to which we always attach considerable importance, and we could perhaps for this reason accept Denmark's making a larger contribution. However, the proposals of the Committee on Budgets have not arisen out of a concern for international solidarity. We have been

forced to admit that the Community will grind to a halt if the present imbalances are allowed to continue, which is why paragraph 9 contains the unfortunate phrase to the effect that, this component would be used in accordance with guidelines flowing from the common policies and annual decisions taken by the budgetary authority'. Thus, these transfers are to be subject to conditions, some of which are to be laid down by this Parliament. I cannot accept this.

I tend to feel a certain anxiety when people start speaking about common policy — for example when I read paragraph 2 in the motion for a resolution, which states that convergence between the economies can result only from the coordination of the policies pursued by the Member States in the economic and monetary spheres. What sort of coordination and what sort of economic and monetary policy is this referring to? The report is very reticent on this point.

Is this a reference to the proposals made by the Commission in its draft annual economic report, which states generally that there is to be a drop in workers' incomes in real terms and specifically proposes interfering with the Danish workers' cost of living arrangements, i.e. interfering in collective agreements on our labour market? My party was not all that happy about these agreements, but we are certainly not in favour of their being further weakened as a result of pressure from the Community. One cannot talk of international solidarity when aid from richer areas to poorer areas is to be made dependent on acceptance of the Community's common policy on the part of the recipients — which is what this would amount to.

We are in favour of contributing to full solidarity, but we are not in favour of our contributions being used to support a policy which can be turned against the workers.

President. — I call Mr Cecovini.

Mr Cecovini. — *(I)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, there is no doubt that the problem of convergence of the economies of the Member States is one of the central problems of the Communities, indeed one which affects the very development of Europe, whose unification cannot take place without as fundamental as possible a coordination and approximation of the economies of its regional components.

Similarly, there is no doubt that these economies today still show serious imbalances which, at least in part, can be tackled, and an outline solution found, by means of the budget. Nevertheless, converging economies — and therefore, as a final aim, a common economy — imply converging and joint policies, and not — as one finds even now, and as can be seen from some debates in this Parliament — policies obstinately based on the defence of private and national

Cecovini

interests, frequently opposed to other national interests — in other words, policies riddled with protectionist thinking which comes to light, even in violation of the Treaties, whenever it is a question of defending one's own prawn fisheries, one's own wine, one's own aubergine production, sheepmeat, or butter, against the agriculture or fisheries of other Community countries.

It is not by continuing on this road that progress will be made in European integration, nor by granting subsidies in some sectors which produce surpluses, which then have to be sold to non-Community countries! This expenditure, in the final analysis, is paid by all the countries of the Community — even the poorest — to help not the Community itself but above all the economies of countries outside the Community.

I therefore have no doubts about the correctness of the approach suggested by the Dankert Report and adopted by this Parliament with regard to the reduction of some agricultural expenditure, although I must stress that it is in the Regional Development Fund that changes must above all be made — massive changes, both by increasing this predominant form of balancing aid to regional economies, and above all by significantly developing the quota-free funds which constitute — or at least could become — by far the most important instrument of a genuinely Community policy designed precisely to build a united Europe.

The main task of this directly-elected Parliament is that of promoting, calling for and suggesting the instruments required for a gradual transformation of this European Community into a united and close-knit political entity which can overcome national attitudes and assert itself as a major balancing force between the blocs which today dominate world politics. It is above all a question of persuasion and education. An effort is required to create a new and forward-looking attitude in all the Member States, which would have as its aim not the maintenance of the status quo, but the achievement of a new situation, and above all a new state of mind, which would make us all feel that we are citizens of Europe.

In the event everything else would become a corollary, the executive or technical phase of an undertaking — the creation of a united Europe — which first requires the consent of our hearts and minds.

This concept covers not only the instruments for achieving a new economic balance among the various regional components of the Community, but also its potential autonomy in production and in defence. The Community must finance every measure it takes to achieve this final aim, although in the medium term

this may involve some sacrifices of individual nations — sacrifices on the part of the richer members in favour of the poorer. A society can be created only by fusing the contributions of all its members — different contributions, but all equally necessary. I think, Madam President, that this point was made in the brilliant speech by Mr Jenkins, with regard to the Common Agricultural Policy, and particularly in his reference to Italian and British concerns.

As a European and as an Italian Liberal, I cannot but share this viewpoint. No 'juste retour', therefore. Indeed, I think that every citizen of the Community would be justified in asking for more than his personal share in the Community, because the term 'community' means organization, savings and joint wealth.

At the national level we have consistently fought to persuade our government to dissociate itself from the British proposal to adjust the national percentage contribution to the budget according to the benefits received. This is precisely the way to put a brake on the development of Europe. The correct system, on the contrary, is that based on our own resources and accepted by eight out of the nine Member States. Let those who want to benefit from the international market — and they are entitled to do so — by importing foodstuffs and industrial products from third countries, also agree to pay larger contributions to the Community budget!

The proposals put forward by Parliament last week must be respected. They represent the minimum compatible with a policy designed to unify Europe and therefore to avoid a possible institutional conflict.

One must also bear in mind the forthcoming enlargement of the Community and the related problem of the development of Southern Europe, the solution to which can be postponed no longer. Let me remind you now, reserving the right to explain it fully at a later stage, of my plan for the Adriatic waterway as a route from Central Europe to the Middle East and the countries beyond the Suez Canal. Such a southern route would make possible, among other things, a considerable saving of energy resulting from the saving of five days' voyage compared with the present route via Hamburg and the Suez Canal. This plan, which takes overall consideration of the road, rail and port infrastructures from Munich to the Adriatic, and which has already been approved by the Liberal and Democratic Group, will shortly be put on the agenda of Parliament. For the reasons I have outlined, we shall vote in favour of the Lange report.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Delors.

Mr Delors. — (*F*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, this debate has been very wide-ranging, but I would like to confine myself to just one topic. A very clear distinction should be drawn between the undeniable short-term problems of Britain's contribution, and the medium and long-term problems raised by 'convergence', which is a source of considerable difficulties. From what the many Members who have spoken before me said, one has the distinct impression that the Community is flagging and going through a difficult period. The only encouraging sign which I have been able to detect is the obvious desire of Members not to 'fan the flames' but to seek solutions.

With regard to the short-term, I shall be very brief and deal with two points: firstly, let us not confuse convergence with equalization. The concept of convergence is already in itself difficult enough to pin down, so we should not let ourselves be sidetracked by a simple and obvious problem, in this case the balance of Britain's contributions and receipts. Secondly — and here I shall sound more than just a note of caution with regard to the Committee on Budgets — let us not be too hasty in applying proposals for lasting solutions without first having examined them in the context of the Community's long-term future. For this reason, from the point of view solely of enlargement, I feel some misgivings concerning the proposed mechanism. For this reason too, contrary to what has been said by many colleagues, I consider the report presented by the Commission to be useful, constructive and reasonable. It is the result of careful examination and represents a compromise which should enable the Heads of Government at the Dublin Summit to find the least unpleasant solution to Britain's short-term problems.

For my part, I think the House would do better to concentrate on the medium and long terms and to consider whether this concept of convergence really can be clarified. Could the Community not achieve further progress if its action went beyond present Community practice?

That is the question raised by both Mr Ruffolo and Mr Tindemans. I don't want to appear overpessimistic, but to any assessment we can apply the maxim that a cup may be regarded either as half full or half empty. As far as the Community is concerned, I shall concentrate on the empty aspect for that is more stimulating than being content with the full part. I believe the Community has not achieved convergence for three fundamental reasons.

Firstly, in economic affairs and during the serious events which we have been through the Community has not shown sufficient autonomy to assert its identity and help solve the major world problems, whether

these relate to economic disorder or to the North-South dialogue. Secondly, the liberalization of trade has created a common market which has had positive effects but which now has two main features the first is that this market is perpetuating imbalance, since over the last 22 years the disparities between both the countries and the regions of the Community have not diminished, and the second is that the market, although it is in difficulty, is dominated by big business. The Community does not have the same political will as the Member States to try to engage in a dialogue with these giant concerns which are reshaping the world economy. Thirdly — and this is a point which I fully appreciate, even though I am French — there is only one common policy: the agricultural policy, and even it is being heavily attacked I have already told the House that we have no objection to this policy being scrutinized, though this is not a task which we would be prepared to rush.

What the Community, lacks, therefore, is an appropriate and effective means of combating those imbalances, ironing out the disparities and strengthening its position.

We in this House may disagree — and heaven knows we do! — on how we should go about this, but this appraisal cannot be contested for the simple reason that all the Member States have accepted the idea of a mixed economy and have struck a compromise between market forces and state intervention. This is not the case at Community level, and this, I feel, is what is most lacking. I shall mention just one example of a mistake not to be repeated, the abortive attempt at economic and monetary union in 1970. It is widely held that this attempt failed then and subsequently for lack of political will. But this is just playing with words, because if the Community lacked political will, the answer would be both easy and hopeless. Easy, because we would merely have to cast around for some political will with which to make a fresh start and hopeless, because we could never find any. The fact is that economic and monetary union failed in 1970 because it was an unrealistic project. It totally disregarded specific national problems, traditions, social systems and the relative strengths of the Member States. The fact that Europe can only be built on the basis of pluralism and on the recognition of our differences was not accepted. This is, in fact, the paradox: we must recognize our differences from the outset, so that we can cooperate more effectively later. Only in this way can we draw up a broad, universally acceptable definition of convergence. We must therefore establish a suitable plan of action — at Community level and based on genuine cooperation with no lofty speeches — and for this we shall need to increase the Community's resources.

Delors

All the speeches which will be delivered here in favour of pruning the Common Agricultural Policy or anything else will be to no avail unless we realize that by about 1985-90 the Community will only have overcome its present difficulties if its own resources represent 2 to 2.5 % of the Member States' GNPs. It was pointed out in the MacDougal report two years ago that an extra 10 thousand million EUA would be needed to reduce the disparities within the Community by 10 %.

This more ambitious approach, which we have time to work out, could be based on three guiding principles: the correction of imbalances, achieving economies of scale and the 'snowballing' effect of Community intervention. Community intervention is justified only in these three cases and cannot be applied to all fields. If Community intervention is more effective in correcting imbalances, let us use it. If Community intervention permits economies of scale in the industrial and energy policies, let us use it. If Community intervention has the effect of increasing the effectiveness of national measures, let us use it. Only in this way can convergence take on any real meaning. It is pointless to spend much more time discussing its objectives.

Once again we are different, but the most striking thing is that the Community is not at present a suitable and realistic channel through which to apply economic measures as they are understood at national level. If we were unable to overcome this stumbling block, I greatly fear that our problems will only be resolved by dispassionate, Metternichstyle diplomacy.

IN THE CHAIR : MR DE FERRANTI*Vice-President*

President. — I call Mr Giavazzi.

Mr Giavazzi. — (*I*) Mr President, at this point speeches are called for which take account of the late hour, of the patience of the listeners and of what has already been said. However, I think it should be stressed above all that this debate has special importance because it shows once more the determination of Parliament to play a more incisive role in the laborious but by no means pointless efforts to fulfil the desires and wishes which gave rise to it.

This debate therefore also has an institutional significance which should not be underestimated; but if this may be true — and it is true if we give this problem of convergence, so difficult to define, the exact meaning which it should have — that of a wide-ranging and fundamental problem for the life of the Community itself, because it relates to the guiding principles of the Community, rather than the meaning of a recurring but sporadic need for correc-

tive or adjusting measures — it is an incontrovertible fact, frequently stated here, that the Community still contains imbalances between the economies of its Member States which are even being accentuated rather than reduced. However, this must not give rise to incorrect conclusions which might cast doubt on the aim of joint action — an aim recently reaffirmed as the reason and condition of a unified monetary policy. It must, instead, spur us on to search for means to eliminate, or at least to reduce such imbalances. Broad and lasting guidelines, then, based on mutual solidarity in the context of joint action, even if implemented merely with mutual respect for temporary requirements and in suitable stages.

It is along such lines that the search for a common policy must continue, even more than the efforts to coordinate policies, and the first five paragraphs of the motion for a resolution submitted to us must be interpreted in this sense, so as not to become restrictive, and so that the motion may — as it must — go beyond strictly budgetary terms and take on a wider significance. This applies where these five paragraphs reaffirm fundamental concepts, such as the interdependence of the individual economies and the consequent need for an overall approach to aid, where they provide a stimulus to practical implementation of guidelines frequently affirmed but never applied, such as the decisions of the Council of Ministers on convergence, and where they reject principles such as that of the so-called 'fair-return', which — if implemented on a general basis — conflict even with the very concept of joint action. But the efforts of the Community must not stop here, nor must they be confined merely to search — however necessary — for purely financial aid to correct imbalances — in this respect the paragraphs following number 5 of the motion are somewhat worrying — but must rather, and in addition, establish a criterion for pursuing economic policy aims, with joint objectives, mutual intent and adequate funds.

That is why, unless there is a revival of Community spirit, a determined search for additional own resources, and a restructuring of the budget so that it can achieve a new balance on a multi-national basis, one cannot really contemplate an economic policy designed to achieve the aims laid down in the Treaties, let alone the progress of the Community which we all want.

In this sense, this debate has a meaning, Mr President, but in conclusion it seems to me useful to remind you once more of the principles, because it is only on that basis that the associated problems can be tackled, and the difficulties which accompany any growth overcome. Only by reference to the principles can executive practical action proceed smoothly and unerringly towards criteria of stability. And, since it is the task of

Giavazzi

Parliament to affirm and defend the principles, this debate has taken place in the right place, and it is here that it must find a wider development.

(Applause)

President. — I call Sir Frederick Catherwood.

Sir Frederick Catherwood. — Mr President, I would like to say first why convergence of our economies is absolutely vital to our future as a Community. If we are going to survive as the highly industrialized economies on which our income depends, then we have got to be able to stand up together to the oil producers and to all the other producers of vital raw materials, to Comecon, to America, to Japan and all of those countries and groups of countries that are going to look after their own interests. We need, in the European Community, the strength that comes from unity. But we are only 5 % of the world's population, and we are only going to be able to stand together in this hostile world if it is quite clear that all our major interests are common interests. If any major sector of the Community feels that membership is damaging its own vital interests, then it will be extremely difficult to develop constructive Community policies and to hold those policies under external pressure.

There is a view in Britain that membership of the European Community is damaging to our vital interests, because we are too weak to remain in the Community. We in the European Democratic Group repudiate that view. We in this group see no alternative to solving our problems within the Community. But of course this needs the kind of Community recognition of these problems which is given in the report of the Committee on Budget, which we welcome most warmly.

In Britain we are doing what we can ourselves; our trade with the Community, as you pointed out Mr President, has increased dramatically from 26 % in 1968 to 38 % in 1978, and another 15 % of our trade is with those countries in Europe associated with the Community, some of whom are shortly going to join. I myself have spent the last four years as chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board giving overriding priority to the promotion of trade with the European Community. I really do not believe that we in Britain could have done more to try to redirect our trade from our old and extensive Commonwealth interests through the Community. The switch has been enormous, even on the agricultural side, although we are not basically an agricultural country, and there is relatively little that we can do on that side to put things right.

Our basic problem is that Britain was excluded from the Community against our wishes for 12 vital years from 1961 to 1973. When people remind us of the

Treaty, we do not see anything in that Treaty which justified the exclusion of the United Kingdom from the Community, to which we applied in the early 60's, for 12 years. And I would remind people who stand on the Treaty that we have been damaged extensively by those who ignored the Treaty at that time. Those were the Community's twelve most prosperous years, when intra-Community trade expanded and exploded, and world trade also expanded at record rates. During that time the Community was able to expand its industrial capacity continuously year by year at a rate 50 % greater than did British industry.

By 1973, when Britain entered and the expansion of world trade collapsed, Community industrial capacity and output was 50 % higher than British output. That alone explains the British weakness. We have all kinds of other problems which everyone knows about, but it is not acceptable to fall back on those problems to explain the British weakness. The British weakness is explained totally by our exclusion from the Community for 12 years, against the provisions of the Treaty. The Community at the end of that time had plants that were newer, producing newer products at lower unit costs, giving an immensely strong competitive advantage which has resulted, naturally, every time we have expanded our economy, in a flood of Community imports; so that now, when we expand our economy, we do not in fact improve the position of our own companies, we improve the position of the Community countries who can import to take advantage of our growth.

Our trade deficit within the Community has risen to two thousand million. After the transition period, the existing financial mechanisms, which seem quite arbitrary to us, require us to make a contribution of over one thousand million on top of that. That is not convergence that is a damaging divergence. Mr Ruffolo has said — and we entirely agree with him — that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. That is not a policy that we can defend when we go back to speak to our own people, because it offers absolutely no hope to our own people. We are not asking for a *juste retour*, we are simply asking to be allowed to give some hope to our own people about their membership of the Community. We do not want mechanisms that infringe the doctrine of the Community's own resources; nor do we wish to infringe the Common Agricultural Policy, the objectives of which we entirely respect. We want to see a successful agricultural policy, and a sound one. What we are asking for is Community policies which help the most urgent needs of the Community today — and one most urgent need is the damaging divergence of the British and Italian economies, and the needs of the Greeks, the Spaniards and the Portuguese when they arrive.

Catherwood

The short-term answer has got to be to prevent an unfair burden from falling on the weak economies, and the longer-term answer must be, as Sir Henry Plumb has suggested, a stronger regional policy — strong enough to help the weaker economies to catch up. We are not going to get the monetary stability which Mr von Bismarck wants, unless we can transfer resources from the strong to the weak economies without major changes in the exchange rates of Member States.

We also all want to get on with policies which will give work to the six million unemployed; which will reduce our dependence on imported energy; which will reduce our dependence on American leadership. But for all this, we need a sense of commitment throughout the Community — a hope in the Community — and that hope will be lacking in our country unless we see a greater sense of fairness. We were kept waiting for membership for twelve long years, during which we told people to look forward in hope to what would happen when we got in. But our six years of membership of the Community have been years of inflation and stagnation. The Good Book tells us that hope deferred makes the heart sick; it certainly gives the British Members of this Parliament an enormous political problem, especially the vast majority of us who really do want to make this Community work. So we need to give hope in our own constituencies, and to give hope, colleagues, we need your help. Please do not disappoint us.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Gredal.

Mrs Gredal. — *(DK)* Mr President, allow me to make one point which does not have a direct bearing on the rest of what I have to say. It has been said in this Parliament — and I quote, that 'Danish wage earners and self-employed persons are extensively subsidizing the country which owes Denmark reparations greater than Denmark's entire balance of payments deficit'. I deplore the fact that remarks of this kind should be made by Danes. Regardless of whether one is for or against the Community, statements like this will do nothing whatsoever to further cooperation within Europe, and I therefore wish, in a personal capacity and on behalf of other Danes, to dissociate myself from such remarks.

To return to the subject in hand, I am not one of those who thinks that this report is a trick to give this Parliament more power.

I do, however, think that the report contains proposals for increased Community resources. I can fully understand Mr Lange who, in connection with the amendments, all of which in one way or another aim at

correcting the contribution of certain countries to the Community budget, wishes for a longer-term policy in the entire resources and expenditure sector. I might point out at any rate that no one surely can believe that harmony or, to use the latest 'in' word, convergence can be established by means of the existing budget amounting to only 0.8 % of the GNPs of the Member States. Thus, the proposal must inevitably advocate an increase in resources.

I also understood from Mr Lange's speech that paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 were merely examples, and that other possibilities were also open. However, I cannot go along with the report. I voted against it in the Committee on Budgets and I will oppose it here too, since I am not in favour of increasing Community resources at this stage. As I said to the spokesman of the Socialist Group last week in connection with the budget debate, I am not in favour of increasing Community resources before agricultural expenditure has been reviewed. Changes in the United Kingdom's contribution to the Community are also advocated. This contribution could be considered unreasonable in some respects, but I might point out that other things could be considered unreasonable and just as pressing for other countries too, and I will refrain from going into the question of fisheries policy. Thus this far-reaching proposal from the Committee on Budgets arises from the problems of the United Kingdom.

In my view, this Parliament, which only came into being a few months ago, cannot seriously believe that we can put forward such far-reaching proposals. A great number of amendments were discussed in the Committee on Budgets, some of them advocating other radical changes, but I have grave doubts as to whether they are realistic. Having said this, I nevertheless think Mr Lange has done some very valuable work and I hope that the Commission and Council will draw inspiration from it.

Finally, I should like to say a few words about solidarity, which has frequently been mentioned in this debate. As a socialist, I am also in favour of solidarity between the various peoples, but when I hear right wing parties using this word too I do not have great confidence in their sincerity. I would rather see them doing something at national level to promote greater solidarity between rich and poor in their own countries. When this has been achieved, their calls here in Parliament for greater solidarity within the Community would carry more weight. One cannot solve the problem of inequality and imbalance in one's own country merely by means of the Community budget.

President. — I call Mr Schön.

Mr Schön. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I have already voted in favour of Mr Lange's report in the Committee on Budgets and shall do so here too. My reasons, very briefly, are as follows. Firstly, the report, Mr Lange presented this morning is more than just a budgetary document. Owing to unfortunate circumstances, it fell to the lot of the Committee on Budgets to deal with convergence with particular reference to the Community's budgetary problems. But this could prove to be a blessing in disguise — as, indeed, the debate has shown — for the following reason: this report is primarily a political document! Why? Because — as I said in committee — it seriously applies the undisputed economic and financial tenet that financial equalization is of fundamental importance to all political communities or federations — a term which I use here with the utmost caution. If we fail to achieve financial equalization and do not have the courage to create a lasting system of equalization in the light of present circumstances — I am thinking here of the difficulties of certain Member States which have been discussed at great length — then there is no point in our discussing convergence. Although I do not want to exaggerate the importance of what has been said here concerning financial policy, this does provide a key to the situation, and those who favour political union in Europe and who call themselves federalists should use this key.

Secondly I agree that there are doubtful points which we shall have to discuss, and we shall also have to continue our present discussion. But if we take this proposal to heart, I think we shall have to make it clear to those Members here who have serious problems that a political community, especially in matters of financial policy, implies give and take. This is true in a dynamic sense: those who today, because of the forthcoming restructuring of all our regions and of the further development and creation of joint policies, are the takers in areas apart from agriculture, may perhaps be the givers tomorrow.

I shall not quote examples of the financial equalization of other federal systems by referring to the fiscal adjustment between the federal government, Länder and local authorities so familiar to us Germans. I would especially urge our British friends to consider such systems favourably some time. Convergence becomes a positive reality when the sacrifices — I use the word deliberately — of those who must now be the givers if we want to achieve financial equalization are rewarded by results which are completely unquantifiable and more diverse than what was put into the system. That is the meaning of give and take in the Community.

I must also address my German friends: if we are in favour of Europe and wish to progress from the present situation to complete fulfilment of the require-

ments of the Treaties, we must get away from the strictly quantitative restitution approach. The Treaties were meant to achieve more than just a customs union, their second guiding principle being the development of economic and monetary union, as well as the approximation of the taxation and legal policies, in short the approximation of all policies which are so important for our people, especially the energy and employment policies etc.

The next important point is that we must get away from *juste retour*. If, for example, my own country can export over 50 % of its goods to Community countries, and if the Community provides us with the most stable market in the world, this is in itself an achievement, for my country benefits from the stable conditions in Europe.

For this reason alone we should be prepared to discuss and approve the principle of financial equalization in a spirit of genuine cooperation and partnership although I am well aware of the difficulties involved. For in the coming years we will one day clearly have to point out to our fellow Europeans that this 'give and take' approach implies, first and foremost, that we should give correspondingly more.

My next point is that these resources must clearly be channelled through the Community budget so that we can avoid non-budgetary transfers and bilateral agreements and thus enlarge the Community in the true sense of the word. That is why it is so important that we should approach this proposal, which was presented this morning very clearly and simply and in a way which is intelligible to the man in the street, from the point of view of the budget. I therefore believe that this report by the Committee on Budgets and its presentation by Mr Lange have given us an opportunity to achieve progress in developing the Community and in developing political union — although I say this only as a representative of the European People's Party. Today's debate has made it clear that, in the long run, we can achieve nothing in the financial, economic or social spheres if we fail to harmonize our national policies.

I should like to address a further comment to the Council. The Council of Ministers, within the meaning of the Treaties, should cease to regard itself as merely a forum for national self-interest and should reassume the role, assigned to it by the Treaties, of a Community institution responsible for formulating Community policies together with the other institutions. I would also like to offer encouragement to the Commission, since it has a sort of executive role in Parliament with regard to the Treaties and can count on our support if it has the courage to go further than certain half-hearted measures mentioned in its report. We who represent the people of our countries are in this case your natural allies.

Schön

I therefore ask the Members still present to consider this. We should vote in favour of this report and thereby, as I have just said, take a step forward and overcome our timidity, so that what the people of Europe expect from the European Community does not remain half-finished, so that the Community does not stagnate and so that the political objectives of the Treaties can be attained.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr C. Jackson.

Mr Christopher Jackson. — Mr President, I want to make one point and one point only: the current budget is totally inadequate to have a significant effect on convergence, and yet without convergence the very long-term future of the Community itself will be in doubt.

In his report, Sir Donald McDougall indicated that to have a significant effect on convergence between Member States, the Community budget would need to be, not some 0.8 % of Community GNP, but at least 5 % or 7 %. So, while convergence is politically vital to the Community, the resources to bring about significant convergence require a budget five or six times as big as at present. To put that seemingly enormous sum in perspective, I may add that even such a budget would only be one-fifth of the size of a typical federal type budget, and would be perhaps one-eighth the size of the average Member State's budget.

But so important is this issue that I am drawn to the conclusion that if the Community is to achieve its essential objectives, it will have, in the next few years, to take some very bold action. As Mr Jenkins said in his first speech to this new Parliament, the risk is not of doing too much, but of doing too little. May I suggest that in respect of the wider issues in this debate, he heeds his own words and causes the Commission to prepare indicative plans for the way in which the Community might utilize budgets two and a half and five times as big as at present to promote growth and the reduction of regional differences.

Following Mr Tindemans, we certainly want to see the menu before we place our order. We do not want a Europe of handouts. We want a Europe of opportunity, working and progressing together.

Of course the chance of getting a budget of that size in the immediate future is slight, certainly until the manifest waste and imbalance in parts of the current budget are brought under control. But the wider issues are compelling, and in supporting the excellent motion for a resolution before us, I urge the Commission to prepare and to present to us for debate a politically convincing blueprint of how, given the resources, it could promote both growth and convergence of wealth in the Community.

President. — I call Mrs Charzat.

Mrs Charzat. — *(F)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this debate on convergence marks the moment of truth for Europe. The Community has already managed, of course, to overcome many difficulties since its creation. However, given the present world crisis, the problems of convergence can but reinforce Europe's determination to go forward, consolidate the Community's achievements so far and ensure better coordination and cooperation between the Member States.

Convergence involves three closely linked issues: firstly, the budget; secondly, monetary policy; thirdly, energy. These must be dealt with in the short term. In the present climate, any hint of faltering would be a betrayal of the Community's determination.

First of all, the budget. The problem of the budget cannot be solved simply by making the present financial mechanism more flexible. The difficulties surrounding the British contribution to the Community budget would arise once more when Portugal or Spain joins the EEC. The creation, on a very temporary basis, of a new mechanism to reduce the British contribution to joint expenditure would doubtless be a gesture of goodwill on the part of the Community in consideration of the United Kingdom's heavy and still growing contribution to the Community budget.

But how far would such a gesture be significant if it was clear from the outset that the United Kingdom would persist in refusing to accept the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, any increases in appropriation for the Regional and Social Funds, or any extension of Community loans. Convergence as far as the budget is concerned means that each Member State must faithfully observe the principle of Community preference. This is the Commission's responsibility. As long as this principle is not applied, Great Britain will continue to buy agricultural and industrial products on the world market.

Further, every formula for adjusting the British contribution is restricted by the prospect that our own resources will soon be exhausted. One of the fundamental commitments of the EEC is the positive development of the Common Agricultural Policy, which means protecting small and medium-sized dairy farmers, greatly reducing our dependence on imports of protein products and defending the interests of Mediterranean agriculture. Agriculture in the North, which is responsible for the surpluses and is too closely associated with the interests of the multinationals, leaves little room for minority interests, other than self-centred ones, in the process of building European unity.

In becoming a member of the EEC, the United Kingdom accepted a set of Community rules. Failure to apply these rules, above all that of Community pref-

Charzat

erence, leads to futile, dangerous attempts to find compromises in the face of particular conflicting interests of this or that Member State. Besides, the system of own resources is incompatible with an analysis in terms of net contributions and fair return.

The second problem posed by convergence is concerned with the monetary question. This involves effective use of European funds in the context of Community structural policy. The creation of the European Monetary System before the implementation of effective structural policies — in the aerospace industry and nuclear energy for example — is a situation the French Socialists find deplorable. The strains on the European Monetary System as a result of the waves of speculation, which in turn result from the wild fluctuations of the dollar, are putting the solidarity of the Member States in the system to a very severe test. Because of the continuing revaluation of the Deutschmark and the other strong currencies, even the Member States with the best industrial prospects will no longer be protected from the effects of the relocation of industries elsewhere.

The final aspect of the debate on convergence concerns the energy problem. In view of the impending second oil crisis, a genuine common energy policy is becoming essential if we are to have monetary and industrial policies. Need I remind you that the Community's oil import targets for 1979 will not be met? I am sure you are all aware that price mechanisms continue to ensure that various consumer countries, like the Federal Republic of Germany or Italy, can acquire extra oil on the spot market, as at Rotterdam. Such a system is prejudicial to the interests of the European Economic Community. The oil producing countries use the rise in free market rates as their excuse to raise their official prices, thinking that the consumers can pay the same price for the whole of their requirements as they pay to meet their marginal requirements.

The debate on convergence presents the Community with the following choice. We can either run down the Common Agricultural Policy — and in that case, with the combined effects of the oil burden and deflation, there would be an increasingly rapid decline in intra-Community trade, giving added impetus to international transactions, which would mean playing right into the hands of the American multinationals — or we can give a new boost to European cooperation by carrying out structural policies which will give real meaning to the whole concept of convergence.

The choice is urgent, of immediate importance. At stake is no more nor less than the affirmation of Europe's will to survive and be independent.

President. — I call Mr Notenboom.

Mr Notenboom. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to make a few brief comments which may perhaps be

somewhat out of step with the other contributions to this debate, although that need not necessarily be a bad thing.

I can go along with paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution. Something must be done, and I trust that something will indeed be done. We expect to see specific proposals put forward, and I trust that something will be forthcoming from the European Council in Dublin. I have a number of doubts on this score, though. I should like to point out first of all that every country which joins the Community is aware of the consequences of its action. A country with a relatively small farming population, which joins a Community in which the agricultural policy is the only integrated policy knows full well that it can expect to receive very little in the way of agricultural refunds. So you cannot then come back every three years with fresh demands, like the ones the Community is facing now. I just wanted to get that off my chest before moving on to comment on Mr Lange's proposal.

I have nothing against trying to reach agreement and calling for a bit more solidarity from all of us. What I would like to comment on — and query — is the new mechanism proposed in this report. I would agree that the proposal has its attractions, and I am all for a bit more solidarity.

After all, a strong pair of shoulders can bear a bigger burden than weak ones.

But I would particularly stress the report's reference to 'a new and lasting system'. In other words, what we are talking about is not solving this immediate problem, but about something of a lasting nature. This being so, I feel I must make the point that the proposed new instrument is something that will perpetuate national contributions to the budget, just at the time when — from the beginning of this year — we had practically abolished all national contributions. This House has always fought for the principle of the European Community being financed exclusively from own resources. This method of financing is part and parcel of the ideal of financial autonomy, which is closely connected with the powers of this Parliament. Now we have a proposal for the reintroduction of national contributions, and that is something I would warn this House against. I would have no qualms about the idea if the Community were a stable federation of states, with no destructive elements in its midst. Unfortunately, there are such elements, which is why I think we are moving too fast in trying to put forward proposals in the space of 24 hours. Moreover, the national contributions worked out on the basis of this kind of new instrument could well get bigger and bigger and eventually prove to be a permanent obstacle to an increase in own resources which are when all is said and done, the main and — as far as I am concerned — the only source of revenue for our Community.

Notenboom

Finally, I wonder whether this proposal is contrary to the spirit and perhaps also to the letter of the Treaties. If this were so, the introduction of an instrument of financing in addition to financing from own resources would constitute an amendment to the Treaty, I am not saying that this will never become necessary; I merely want to put in a word of warning here — we must be quite clear in our own minds as to what this proposal really involves. That was why I was unable to go that far yesterday in the Committee on Budgets, although I personally endorse the principle of financial equalization. I am only worried that this House may be proceeding too fast and trying to be too specific, with the risk that our hands may be tied before the Commission has submitted a proposal of its own. I think both the Commission and the Council will have got a reasonable idea from today's debate of the feelings of this House, and in that respect, the debate has been most successful. But — and here I am speaking in a purely personal capacity — must we really go out on a limb on this proposal before the Commission has submitted a proposal of its own? Do we really have to stake out our position before we know what is in any subsequent proposals? I am afraid of our making decisions in haste and later repenting at leisure. I have kept my remarks very brief because of the lateness of the hour. Needless to say, they do not in any way affect my admiration for the author of the report and for the imagination he has shown in drawing up his report. I do admire his work very much, but I thought I should raise these constitutional points to temper all the admiration that has been expressed in the course of today's debate.

President. — Before calling Madam Cresson, could I just mention that there are two more speakers on the Socialist list and four minutes left to run.

Mrs Cresson. — (*F*) Mr President, first of all I regret that such an important debate has had to be prepared so quickly. For the majority of the new Members of Parliament, one of the great surprises has been the conditions in which we work. Having said that, I would like to make a few brief remarks to present the amendments I have signed together with a number of colleagues.

The convergence of various policies is not an end in itself. It is a means of reducing the disparities that exist between the different countries. It is all too obvious that as far as the only true common policy, the CAP, is concerned, the divergencies are getting larger. We must therefore concentrate our attention on the factors which thwart our attempts to achieve an increasing degree of convergence. This is what the French Socialists want as regards the CAP.

The principle of fair return, which is quite rightly condemned in the Committee on Budgets' motion, immediately reappears, although in rather veiled

terms, upon examination of the details contained in the motion.

Some Member States may feel that a limited, temporary measure is justified, but it seems to us that the introduction of a permanent arrangement, alongside the other Community mechanisms, is not compatible with the spirit of the Treaty.

A permanent system of financial equalization would be anything but a useful contribution to the necessary harmonization of agriculture. Are the levies, for example, to be taken into account in calculating each Member State's contribution?

The more a Member State buys from outside the Community, the more levies she pays. This scheme would have the effect of encouraging purchases outside the Community and creating distortions of competition, two results quite contrary to what we all want.

Is the calculation of this contribution to take customs duties into account? Or is the contribution to be calculated entirely on the basis of VAT?

While we support the three amendments tabled by the members of the Committee on Agriculture, we would like to supplement them with a reference to the need to take account of all the factors which contribute to the present imbalances.

We do not propose this amendment in order to challenge the practices of any particular Member State, but rather to warn everyone of the possible consequences of a hasty decision.

President. — I call Mr Balfe on a point of order.

Mr Balfe. — I want to ask why the French members of the Socialist Group are deliberately talking out the second British speaker. Before Mrs Cresson began, you, Mr President, rightly said four minutes; we agreed within the group on two minutes each and more than three minutes have now elapsed, and she is not sitting down. I wish formally to record my protest.

Mr President. — Since Mrs Cresson has closed her remarks, I call Mr Diana.

Mr Diana. — (*I*) Mr President, I think today's debate is highly important and necessary. We are discussing the concept of supranational solidarity, which is the very basis of the philosophy underlying the Treaties of Rome.

I agree with the committee's views on the inadequacy of the method of assessment chosen. Regional and sectoral imbalances cannot be assessed in terms of the Community budget, for the budget records the stimuli and not the results achieved by them. On the contrary, it is essentially a question of discovering what benefits in terms of economic progress the Member States have derived from the process of Community integration.

Diana

From this viewpoint we must acknowledge that the efforts to harmonize incomes have so far failed dismally. In some cases, as in Italy, the divergence from the average has in fact increased. If we go by the index of average *per capita* income in the Community, the corresponding index for the richest region of my country, Val d'Aosta, is 86 relative to the Community average, and therefore not only below that average but also below the index for the poorest regions of Belgium and the Netherlands, and only slightly above that for the poorest region of France.

The Community cannot go on underestimating the seriousness of this situation, which conflicts with the aims of the Treaties. It must implement positive steps to restore a balance. Moreover, this cannot be done within the limits of the Community budget, which are too narrow, and which, as a result of the budget commitments made last week, will soon prove to be insufficient to cover expenditure. Nor is it conceivable to freeze agricultural expenditure or even reduce it — as some would wish — unless we want to accentuate the intersectoral imbalances which are even more serious and conspicuous than those between regions.

Thus, a balance cannot be restored except by increasing the own resources of the Community, in other words by breaking through the 1 % ceiling for VAT, which is too low. If the road towards achieving this aim is strewn with difficulties, that is not a valid reason for failing to follow it at once and without hesitation. The imbalances can undoubtedly be overcome by making up lost ground with regard to social, regional and industrial policies, but the policies already implemented must also be carefully reviewed in the light of this need to restore a balance.

In this connection we cannot fail to take account of the greater emphasis which has been given to prices policy rather than structural policy, but we must also remember the greater support which has been given to 'continental' crops which, while they represent 62 % of the gross saleable product of the EEC, absorb 75 % of the Guarantee Section expenditure, whereas Mediterranean crops, which represent 18 % of the European agricultural product, have so far received barely 12 % of this expenditure. To this end I have tabled, together with other Members, an amendment to the motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Budgets.

I am very well aware, Mr President, of the fact that the balance can only be restored gradually and in the long term. The important thing is to show that we are determined to take steps to reverse a tendency which has so far reinforced the stronger economies and made the situation worse in the more disadvantaged regions. This commitment assumes even greater urgency and importance in view of the forthcoming accession of three more Mediterranean countries. Parliament

cannot regard its task as completed with today's debate and with the hurried examination which unfortunately was all the committee were able to devote to this problem. On the contrary, it must become the permanent institutional forum for stimulating the process of economic convergence and monitoring the results achieved.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Pearce on a point of order.

Mr Pearce. — Mr President, I wonder if Mr Balfe was in order a few minutes ago in wasting the time of this House in a rather squalid debate between members of his own group. It seems to be a bit poor that we should have to listen to the internecine strife of the Socialist Group. He also rather seemed to be challenging your authority, Mr President, in not having limited the previous member of his own group to the correct amount of time, and I wonder if you would care to advise Mr Balfe, Mr President, that he should not waste the time of the House on that kind of intervention.

President. — Mr Balfe has heard your remarks. I call Mr Balfe.

Mr Balfe. — Mr President, I shall speak rapidly.

Firstly, let me make the point that we are not trying to renegotiate the terms yet again, on either side of the House, although this has been said. What we are saying in our different ways is that the expectations which we had, first when we came in, then when we renegotiated, have not been fulfilled: there has not been the switch in the balance of expenditure, there has not been the direction of the Community budget which we expected. We have also been hampered by the fact that the financial mechanism, not so much by the fault of the Community but also because of negotiations, has not come into play: a very large amount of money is being paid in by a relatively poor country, and that is the basis of our difficulty. Whichever government was in power in Whitehall, that difficulty would, I think, be roughly the same.

What we are asking for from the Dublin Summit basically is, firstly, an adjustment to the financial mechanism the only mechanism we have, the only mechanism we know, and the only one that is ready and there to work. We hope it will be possible to adjust it, preferably by removing some or all of the restrictions. But even the amount of money that comes from that will be a small percentage of the net sum that will go from the UK as contributions next year.

Secondly, what we are looking for is a new system developed from that to fulfil the Treaty obligations — and let us remind you, we have had a lot of talk about the Treaty — towards the Member States, and espe-

Balfe

cially those obligations regarding what one might call equality of sacrifice. We endorse the idea of a broad balance. But if there is to be a broad balance, there is as much of an argument for saying that the broad balance should bring money into Britain — in fact, there is probably more of an argument for saying we should be a net beneficiary than that we should be a net contributor.

I realize that the money to solve this problem can only come from the national exchequers of Europe. In election year in Germany, and at a time when the elections in France are approaching, that is not going to be easy, and we have to be practical about it. But what we hope to see are some steps in the right direction, the beginning of diminution and a direction of the budget which makes it apparent to us that within a reasonably short period of years the concept of broad balance and broad equity will be there for all to see.

President. — I call Mr Bocklet.

Mr Bocklet. — *(D)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, it could be assumed that convergence is not a problem which affects agriculture, since agriculture has attained the greatest degree of convergence of all the political sectors in the Community. It has, however, been affected in several ways by the lack of convergence in general.

The levies on Britain's farm imports represent part of its allegedly excessive net contribution towards the Community. The disparity between the agricultural structures of Britain and the rest of the Community is one of the main causes of the specific problems and imbalances between the various regions and between the North and South. As it has the most highly integrated policy, agriculture suffers most from the lack of convergence in the other sectors and in the agricultural structure itself. The Committee on Agriculture agreed that, since some people argue that the agricultural policy is itself a source of disparity and since Commission documents have referred darkly to the need for drastic measures, the generally recognized principles of the Common Agricultural Policy should be maintained, especially as the CAP does not offer any immediate prospect for a solution to the short-term problems of imbalance in budgetary expenditure.

The Committee on Agriculture is wholeheartedly committed to restoring the balance of certain markets with big surpluses. It is equally emphatic, however, that this can only be achieved by maintaining the principle of Community preference. Agriculture and fisheries can thus create jobs outside farming if the Community promotes the setting up of agriculture-oriented industries in the poorer regions.

The construction of Europe is a dynamic process, and the benefits of Community membership can only be accurately assessed in the long term. The established principles of the Community farm policy should there-

fore not be jeopardized for the sake of short-term solutions to short-term problems.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Nielsen.

Mr Nielsen. — *(DK)* I have no doubt that Mr Balfe may well have had several important things to say, but I nevertheless feel that I must speak myself, since I should like to stress a number of what I feel to be important points, i.e. the views of the Liberal Group regarding these deliberations on the budget and the contributions to the budget in connection with the Community's agricultural policy. As we see it, it cannot be right, as has been the case frequently here in this debate and as also implied in the report, that it should be the agricultural policy which should come under attack as a result of this more strictly budgetary question. It is completely unreasonable that the only field in which we have a common policy actually in operation should be the one we crack down on and perhaps destroy, at least partially, in order to make up for the fact that we have failed to achieve a common policy in other fields — since this is in fact what is happening. Some of today's speeches reflected an attitude so antagonistic to the Community as to advocate sabotaging those areas in which a common policy exists, i.e. common agricultural policy, because we have failed to achieve an adequate degree of Community solidarity in other fields. I might quote as an example the monetary compensatory amounts. It is not correct to claim that these are an item of agricultural expenditure. They are a form of expenditure made necessary by the fact that the system does not work in other fields. There are other things which people tend to refer to as agricultural expenditure when this is not in fact the case, for example, a great deal of development aid, which cannot simply be lumped together with agricultural expenditure and incidentally, that is something which — as Parliament has demonstrated over the years — we are very much in favour of increasing. However, there is not much use in first of all entering them as agricultural expenditure and then deciding to cut down agricultural expenditure as a whole, if this is a sector we wish to support.

I should like to stress that the agricultural policy, which is thus the only common policy we have managed to conduct in any major field, has been particularly successful and I think even the United Kingdom must recognize this fact. I suspect, however, that one of the reasons for the problems raised here by the British is that consumers pay less for their foodstuffs in Great Britain than elsewhere. I would like to see some figures on this matter. I realize now that Mr Jenkins understands Danish so I assume I will get an answer to this question, since I see the Commissioner is not wearing his headphones. This policy has guaranteed supplies, as laid down in the Treaties, and

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it has guaranteed them at stable prices. Even during a period of difficulties and price fluctuations, we have enjoyed stable supplies at stable prices.

I cannot help drawing a comparison and pointing out that the press has recently reported fears of a new revolution in Poland, i. e. the Polish regime was afraid of this happening as a result of serious food shortages involving long queues and great difficulty in obtaining everyday foodstuffs. I think we all have enough geography to realize that Poland is a country — I have a great deal of respect for Poland and its people — which, purely geographically speaking, has a remarkably similar climate to the major proportion of the Community. However, the situation is diametrically opposed. We are fortunate enough to have plentiful food supplies, there is no queuing for food at all and we can see food shops bursting with goods. This should give some indication of where the agricultural policy has been successful and where it has completely failed. I am not saying that the Socialist Group or Communist Group would be in favour of precisely the same policy, but one occasionally gets the impression that they are thinking along more or less the same lines.

In my view, it is very wrong-headed and dangerous to attack the agricultural policy on the grounds of the budgetary problems which some people think it has run into. Considering how much trouble, problems and discussions have arisen in this Parliament alone with regard to energy supply, I hope people will have enough imagination to realize what the public reaction would be like if it was food supply with which we were having difficulties, since it is not true that we would be able to buy cheaper on the world market, nor can one count on large quantities being produced elsewhere in due course. An FAO conference is being held in Rome at this very moment and it has been stated quite clearly by the heads of the FAO, the UN's food and agricultural organization, that there were fears of a steady increase in food problems on this planet. Is it not then a totally irresponsible policy to destroy, because of a few budgetary problems, the really good agricultural and foodstuffs production we have within the Community and which we can also use in the longer term to help others? I can point out in this connection that one of the ways in which we can help others is by not importing so much from third countries. We must attach greater importance to self-sufficiency as regards food supply.

Indeed, one of the reasons for the problem of so-called surpluses is the very fact that we import so much. This is true in the case of both butter and sugar, two which have not been entirely trouble-free recently.

I should like to repeat that it cannot be right to attack one field in which we have managed to conduct a successful common policy and which is the most vital

for the existence of all of us, namely food production, simply because we have failed to do the same in other fields. This cannot be right, and it should not be allowed to happen. This is the view which Parliament should unambiguously adopt on this point.

President. — I call Mr Maffre-Baugé.

Mr Maffre-Baugé. — (*F*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, although I am very nearly the last speaker, I'm sure you will allow me to give you my views on convergence. There would be no doubt about the meaning of the word convergence if it fitted into a kind of unambiguous moral code which did not have numerous different and sometimes Sibylline interpretations.

It seems to me that any kind of convergence involves a coherent set of measures aimed at achieving a harmonious balance which means a definite policy based on precise criteria.

One is bound to have doubts about a convergence which is described in such a welter of words, or rather a piece of buffoonery such as we have been offered by certain speakers who are specialists in shooting off a barrage of dilatory amendments.

Can we really believe in convergence, at a time when regional disparities are getting worse all the time, to the point where the Europe of the Nine is in grave danger of social and economic disintegration. Let us look, for example at my own region, Languedoc-Roussillon, and more generally the Mediterranean area of Southern France.

At the moment unemployment there is amongst the highest in France and in Europe. Agriculture — based on vines, fruit, vegetables and sheep — is in a grave state so that we are sinking almost imperceptibly, to the level of the most impoverished area in Europe.

Our small industries are going through a slump and the prospects for employment, which are already going from bad to worse, will become even more gloomy when membership is extended to Greece, Portugal and then Spain.

The present approach to budgetary and agricultural matters jeopardizes the Common Agricultural Policy and aggravates regional disparities, which means not convergence, but divergence.

Mr President, during the coming part-sessions, my colleagues and I will be returning to the serious problems of the Mediterranean regions and asking some clear-cut questions about the economic future of these regions. Today, I have a question which demands a straight answer:

What does Parliament intend to do to remove regional inequalities? Is it true that the enlargement of the Community, the cause of so much rejoicing here, will make the disparities increase at an even faster rate? More and more I get the impression that

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the Treaty of Rome, at least what remains of it, is being trampled underfoot.

The Treaty of Rome provided for the protection of jobs, the harmonious development of the regions and protection for the farmers at the bottom of the scale. How far have we got?

The principle of free trade prevails, to the advantage of the lobbyists and unscrupulous businessmen.

The future development and equilibrium of the regions of Europe calls not for words but for real convergence in practice, to help people and not capital.

Our judgment of this desire for convergence will be determined by the attitude Parliament takes towards the fundamental problem of regional disparities. Convergence on compensatory amounts, on measures against fraud in the Community, on social conditions, transport, coherent forward planning, convergence in all these fields, and not that of words and oratory...

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Jenkins.

Mr Jenkins, President of the Commission. — Mr President, my role today, apart from my, I think, 24-minute opening speech this morning, has been primarily a listening one. I do not think that it is a bad role for a President of the Commission to listen to a Parliament; though I am bound to say, looking round the Chamber this evening for some of those whose interventions I would like to reply to, and whom I do not immediately see springing to my eye, that the ratio of listening to speaking which I, on this one day at any rate — I do not say on all days have achieved is perhaps a little higher than the average of those who have contributed to our debates over the past five and a half hours.

No doubt many of them will emerge from the important meetings they are attending at the moment in the course of my remarks. I will, however, not endeavour to respond to everybody. There have been 37 speeches, and I believe I have heard 34 of them; I apologize to the three speakers that I missed. I could, of course attempt to reply seriatim to all 37, but that I fear, Mr President, might not command your enthusiasm; still less, I suspect, would it command the enthusiasm of the interpreters and the others who are serving us this evening. Alternatively, I would be very happy if I could make a complete and brilliant synthesis in a few minutes out of everything that has been said, but that equally I would find a little difficult. Therefore I will, if I may, pick out, whether the speakers be present or not, certain speeches to which I would wish to reply. Let me hasten to say, in order to avoid any sense of discrimination, which would indeed be quite misplaced, that the speeches I reply to are not necessarily those which I regarded as the

most important, or even the wisest; they are speeches which I particularly wished to comment upon for reasons which may emerge in the course of my reply. Some of those I shall mention were certainly speeches of a significance and very worthwhile.

Mr Ruffolo early on this morning raised the question, which was also raised by two or three but not, I think, by many more speakers throughout the long day, why the Commission had not put a specific proposal before the House at this stage. To some extent I endeavoured to deal with that point in my opening remarks this morning, but as I think it is of some significance I would like to come back to it. The Commission did not do this because the Commission judges that it has a great duty at the present time — as I endeavoured to express this morning — to try to see that over the next few crucial weeks the Community does arrive at a solution to what is a very dangerous problem, and does not find itself in a state in which it is torn apart after the Dublin summit and beyond that.

I regard that as a real danger at the present time, and I regard it as the primary duty of the Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, as the guardian, in a sense, of the Community with the other Institutions, to try and avoid such a dangerous event. It would, in my judgement and that of my colleagues, have minimized our capacity to do that had we said: This is our single proposal, our single method, our single figure for solving this problem. There is no God-given figure, there is no perfect method. It is a question which has to be discussed: a balance of interest has to be arrived at, and the figure to some extent — not entirely, but to some extent — determines the methods which are the best to use. Therefore, having listened to this constructive debate — and it has on the whole been very constructive and, so far as the generality of the speeches and the main speeches are concerned, has shown a considerable appreciation of the problem, a considerable, if I may use the word, convergence of views; indeed, I am not sure that we are not nearer to a convergence of views in this Parliament than we are to a convergence of economies in the Community at the present time — I do not think that any single proposal with a single figure and a single method would have commanded the support of the majority of this Parliament. We should have prejudiced our ability to try and arrive at a proper Community solution. It is very easy to say that the Commission should have raised one particular flag and said: Well, we have done our duty, we have put forward a clear proposal, take it or leave it: it is up to you, it is up to the Parliament, it is up to the European Council, it is up to everybody else; you cannot say we have not been clear, and whatever may happen in the future we wash our hands of it. That, in my view, would not have been the path of true courage, and certainly not of true judgment in these circumstances. I therefore believe

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that while we were right to come forward with a proposal in the near future to help solve this problem, it would not have been right to have done so until the debate, not only in Parliament but in the Institutions as a whole, had matured to a greater extent than was the case on 31 October. Nor do I believe that it would have shown a greater respect for Parliament, rather less. We wanted very much to hear, and have benefited very much from hearing, the spread of views across this Chamber in the course of this six-hour debate.

Now, a similar point but in a different way — a slightly less acceptable way, if I may say so — was put forward this morning by Mr Coppieters, who referred darkly to certain press reports. It is always very easy to refer to unspecified press reports; these, he said, indicated that the Commission had wished to make a single proposal, but that I, as a sort of British agent, vetoed it because it would not have been sufficiently favourable from this point of view. Mr President, in some parliaments that would be an occasion when one should have risen on a point of order and said that the honourable Member should withdraw, that the debate could not proceed. I was not quite sure how closely he was being followed, so I did not take that rather extreme course.

(Laughter)

In a more heroic age, I suppose it might have been a matter for a duel or something even more exciting than that. But let me assure the honourable Member that he is totally misplaced in his judgment. It was the unanimous view of the Commission, the spontaneous view of all who spoke, that it was unwise to make a single proposal two weeks ago, and any press reports to the contrary are wrong. Furthermore, my duty in this, as in other respects, is to endeavour to do what I regard as best for the Community, and not for any particular country. If the honourable Member would be kind enough to look at yesterday's *London Times* — it is an interesting edition to look at, as it is the first for 11 months — he would see a headline saying: 'Jenkins warns Mrs Thatcher'. So I hope nobody will press those particular views.

Mr Bonaccini, in a thoughtful contribution which I followed with interest, raised the question which in a way underlies a large part of our debate, and which, of course, Mr Lange, with his opening remarks and his very significant report, has placed fairly before us: How do we strike the right balance between the short term and the medium term? Mr Bonaccini said that the Commission document was only concerned with short-term — and, he added, medium-term — problems, and not with the long-term problem. It is very difficult, but very important, to get this balance right. If you only concentrate on the short term and lose all sense of direction of the Community in the long term, of course you are neglecting your duty; but

equally, if you are confronted with an acute, real, possibly dangerous, short-term problem, and you only talk about the long term, then you are also neglecting your duty and asking for difficulty. Feet on the ground, but eyes lifted occasionally to the distant hills seems to me an appropriate recipe and an appropriate method to follow, and I certainly am very grateful to Mr Lange for having raised our eyes and raised our sights in this respect, and to other speeches, like that of Mr Tindemans, which have also elevated the discussion. We are glad of that, and the Commission will be glad to study this and to make proposals, if it judges it right, on medium- and long-term issues. But not to the extent of believing we have not got a short-term issue, one which I think we must try and get a good Community solution to in the course of the next few weeks.

Most people who have spoken have been ready to recognize that such a problem does indeed exist. Such a problem exists to some extent for the Community as a whole, because everything is a Community problem, but specifically for the United Kingdom in relation to questions of broader balance and, of course, for Ireland too, when one is dealing with the poorer members of the Community. A good deal of understanding was expressed about this, though a number of Members, notably Mr Ansquer, who spoke this afternoon, and also Mr Fernandez, were very much inclined to raise the question of trading patterns. And you, Mr President, also referred to certain trading figures.

I think it is important, when dealing with this problem, to believe, as I do, that from the point of view of the long-term, and probably the medium-term as well, we must cure the roots of the problem and not the symptoms. One way of curing the roots of the problem is to get a better budgetary balance between agriculture and other Community programmes and, within agriculture, a better balance between the South and the North of Europe. As speakers have rightly pointed out, that will not happen overnight: we can make a start on it overnight, but it will not happen overnight.

I believe it is also the case that the United Kingdom's trading pattern, which has moved very significantly and fast over the past 5 years, will continue to move further in the right direction. But still I do not think that one should talk, as one or two honourable Members have done, in too autarkical terms, as though the aim of the Community was to become an almost entirely protected unit not trading in the world as a whole. The Community is a major factor in world trade, it is a major exporter, and has to indulge in major trade negotiations. While it is, in my view, entirely right that Britain's direction of trade should go on moving, let us be in no doubt at all that if Britain's trade were to jump by 10 % overnight —

Jenkins

which it could not do — and if she were to buy 10 % or even 20 % less from the outside world, although that might help to solve the problem of customs duties and agricultural levies, and thus the budgetary problem, it would certainly not make easier the problem of the Community as a whole when negotiating in trading matters in the world field. Such a sudden shift would undoubtedly have made it very much more difficult to bring the MTN's to a successful conclusion, and would have affected us in a range of fields. Other countries which are strong exporters have a considerable interest in seeing the Community as a whole, and the countries which contribute to it, importing from the rest of the world, because there is no future in present circumstances in a group like the European Community believing that it can primarily only export, and not import. Let us therefore see this in some appropriate balance.

Let me conclude by replying to Mr Nielsen in particular, because he spoke late and is here. He spoke forcibly about the Common Agricultural Policy. Let me remind him of what I said this morning: the Common Agricultural Policy is indeed the most developed common Community policy which we have. That is not a bad thing, that it should be a developed policy. It is perhaps a matter of regret that other policies are not equally developed. But there is no question of the Commission or, I believe, many other people, taking the view that the Common Agricultural Policy should be damaged, still less destroyed, in order to solve a particular short-term problem. What threatens the Common Agricultural Policy at the present time, and I in no way underestimate its value is not the British budgetary problem or the lack of balance between Italy and the rest of the Community in this respect; what threatens it is the fact that in certain respects it has got out of control and is accumulating surpluses and costing money. If these problems did not exist, this situation could not possibly continue indefinitely in a way that has been the case in the past few years. I believe it is in the best interest of those who are the best friends of the Common Agricultural Policy to sustain the policy in the future by making sure that this situation does not continue.

We have before us some particular problems. Let us endeavour, in a Community spirit, in a spirit to solve them quickly. Let us expect from those who are the *demandeurs* in this respect to show a strong Community spirit, a strong Community response and a willingness to push forward other policies, because there are many other vital policies to be pursued. Energy I have mentioned, but we also need a major and more precise approach to the general convergence policy, to which Mr Lange has opened our eyes and lifted our sights, at the present time. Unless we achieve this we shall not be able to give the Community the full cohesion which it will certainly need in what I have previously described as the sombre decade of the eighties.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, I do not wish to detain you and the other Members unduly. I shall be commenting on the amendments to the motion for a resolution tomorrow, when they are put to the vote. I do not intend to discuss them in detail at the moment. I would like to begin by saying that I am gratified to note that the President-in-Office of the Council and the President of the Commission have sat through this debate from beginning to end.

(Applause)

I am not only gratified but extremely grateful to both presidents, and when a suitable opportunity arises, as has already happened in the past, I shall recommend that our own Members adopt a similar attitude. That is precisely our problem: we fail to practice what we so often preach.

(Applause)

I am also pleased that Mr Jenkins, in his closing remarks, confirmed my assumptions concerning the reasons for the Commission's behaviour in not tabling any detailed proposals before the meeting of the European Council. I voiced this assumption at a meeting of the Committee on Budgets, although I have not yet made my views public. That is the reason for my, or rather our, reticence with regard to the communication to the Council on convergence and budgetary problems.

I would add here that our comments were not prompted by pessimism. If we were as pessimistic as one two speakers think, we would have acted quite differently and said that we felt the Community had no future. But this document shows quite clearly that we may expect the Community to prosper.

I would add that apart from the first section of the motion which is concerned with the need for economic, social and other measures, we have obviously drawn both positive and negative conclusions from the document which are backed up by the practical experience of a decade's discussions in this House and in the Community. This is of particular significance in view of the 'lack of political resolve', since there is no point in our making after-dinner speeches on the Community and then doing the exact opposite in our everyday affairs. This is the key issue, otherwise we would not have needed to discuss convergence today.

The proposal for a solution, which, as I said this morning, is not exactly a triumph of reason, does offer some possibilities. The Community needs financial equalization, but the proposal tabled here and deve-

Lange

loped further on the basis of the Commission's document admits several possible solutions, not just one. There are therefore some very well coordinated proposals for solutions to the short-, medium- and long-term problems. That was also the purpose of the proposal tabled here — to consider the short-, medium- and long-term requirements.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Presidents of the Commission and Council, I shall now draw my remarks to a close. I hope, however, that this rather controversial and polemical debate, to which the Committee document has contributed, will be sufficiently successful tomorrow to enable us to pass on our views in an appropriate form to the Commission and Council, so that they in turn can offer us some useful suggestions.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote tomorrow at 3.45 p.m., together with the amendments which have been moved.

9. Urgent debate

President. — I have received the following three motions for resolutions, with requests for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure :

- from Mrs Dienesch, Mr Lalor, Mr Ansquer, Mrs Ewing, Mr Druon and Miss de Valera (Doc. 1-519/79) on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the situation in Iran ;
- from Mr Prag, Mr Marshall, Mr Howell, Mr Tuckman, Mr Simmonds, Sir Fred Warner, Mr van Aerssen, Mrs Lenz, Sir Henry Plumb, Miss Brookes, Mr Curry, Mr Simpson, Mr R. Jackson,

Mr Dalziel, Mr Provan, Mr Hopper, Miss Forster, Mr de Courcy Ling, Mr Battersby, Mr Patterson and Mr Forth (Doc. 1-520/79) on the attack on the Israeli Ambassador to Portugal ;

- from Mrs Castellina, Mr Ruffolo, Mr Pelikan, Mr Van Minnen, Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul, Mr Ferri, Mr Arfè, Mrs Boserup, Mr Bonaccini, Mrs Macciocchi, Mr Cardia, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Martinet, Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli, Mr Blaney, Mr Bøgh, Mr Ceravolo, Mrs Dekker, Mr Gatte, Mrs Squarzialupi, Mrs Bonino, Mr Balfe and Mr Capanna (Doc. 1-521/79) on interference by the Greek government.

The vote on the request for urgent procedure will be taken tomorrow.

10. Agenda for next sitting

President. — The next sitting will be held tomorrow, Thursday, 15 November 1979, at 10 a.m., and from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m., with the following agenda :

- Decisions on urgency of six motions for resolutions ;
- Joint debate on a motion for a resolution and an oral question to the Commission on energy ;
- Peters interim report on restructuring in the iron and steel industry ;
- Aigner report on the discharge for the 1977 budget ;
- Pearce report on generalized tariff preferences ;
- Hoffman report on international action on air transport ;

3.00 p.m.

- Question Time (questions to the Commission)

3.45 p.m.

- Voting time.

The sitting is closed.

(The sitting was closed at 9.05 p.m.)

ANNEX

Questions which could not be answered during Question Time, with written answers

Question No 62, by Mr Bangemann (H-196/79)

Subject: Ratification of the Treaty of Accession between Greece and the European Community.

Can the Council confirm that ratification of the Treaty on Greek accession to the European Community, signed on 28 May 1979 in Athens, is encountering considerable delay in the national parliament? If so, what steps does the Council intend to take to keep to the date of accession of Greece to the European Community (1 January 1981)?

Answer

The Council would point out that the procedure for the ratification of the Treaty of Accession between Greece and the European Community is the responsibility of the Member States.

According to the information available to the Council, it seems premature to speak of delays at the present stage of the ratification procedure when there is more than a year until 1 January 1981. Although the texts have not yet been presented for ratification to the parliaments of some Member States, there are essentially practical reasons for this (printing delays). Generally, however, preparations have advanced to such a stage that the ratification texts are likely to be presented within the next few weeks.

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Question No 64, by Mr Davern (H-138/79)

Subject: The CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) and Labour

Is the Council satisfied that one of the guiding objectives of Article 39 of the EEC Treaty, namely, the optimum utilization of the factors of production, in particular labour, is being achieved?

Answer

Article 39 of the Treaty forms a composite whole and the Community's agricultural policy is implemented progressively with a view to achieving in a balanced manner the objectives set out in paragraph 1 of that Article while taking into account the considerations put forward in paragraph 2.

At the present stage considerable steps can claim to have been made towards achieving the objectives of Article 39 and in particular towards optimum utilization of the various factors of production.

However, the Council is aware that achieving the objectives of Article 39 is an ongoing process requiring a constant effort on its part to adapt the instruments of the Common Agricultural Policy to developments in the economic and social situation. And to the needs of consumers, not to mention certain imperatives of budgetary equilibrium.

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Question No 65, by Mr Kavanagh (H-171/79)

Subject: Energy policy

Is the Council satisfied that the necessary concrete measures have been taken to ensure that there will be adequate stocks of energy for domestic and industrial requirements for the coming winter?

Answer

The Member States have taken the measures necessary to ensure that there will be adequate stocks of energy for domestic and industrial requirements for the coming winter. As at 1 September 1979 the Community's oil stocks had reached the level required under Directive 72/425/EEC, namely the equivalent of 90 days' average daily internal consumption in the preceding calendar year.

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Question No 78, by Mr Scott-Hopkins (H-246/79)

Subject: Austria's trade balance with the Community

In the context of Austria's large trade deficit with the Community, does the Council intend to offer tariff concessions for Austrian exports to the Community, particularly for perry pear concentrate?

Answer

As yet the Council has not received any Commission proposals for offering new tariff concessions for processed agricultural products and, in particular, for pear juice concentrate.

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Question No 79, by Mr Wurtz (H-249/79)

Subject: Seat of the European Parliament in Strasbourg

Will the Council solemnly and unequivocally confirm that Strasbourg is and must remain the seat of the European Parliament; in other words, that it must be the venue for all part-sessions of the Assembly?

Answer

The answer can be only that given during the October part-session: The Governments of the Member States do not at present propose to alter the provisions currently in force, either in law or in fact.

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Question No 80, by Mr Boyes (H-252/79)

Subject: Combating poverty in the Community

Will the Council ensure that a full and thorough assessment is made of the results of, and experiences gained through, the Programme of Pilot Projects and Studies to Combat Poverty, with a view to establishing policies towards combating poverty throughout the Community?

Answer

In its decision of 12 December 1977 on the programme of pilot projects and studies to combat poverty, the Council stated that Community aid to finance this programme could be granted under Community budgets for the years 1975 to 1979.

In addition to periodic progress reports on the programme, the Council provided for a Commission report comprising an assessment of the results obtained once the programme was completed and no later than 30 June 1981.

As soon as it receives this report, the Council will examine it with the greatest attention.

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Question No 81, by Mr Price (H-254/79)

Subject : Community education policy

Why has there been no meeting of the Council of Education Ministers since 1976, and what plans are there to hold such a meeting in the near future ?

Answer

The Education Committee created by the Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council adopted in February 1976 has been working over the past three years. During this period very considerable progress has been made in the preparation of concrete measures in four of the areas covered by the Resolution.

However, certain developments during the final stages of preparation made it necessary to postpone a ministerial session planned for 6 November 1979. Every effort will be made to resolve the outstanding difficulties quickly, but it is not possible at present to indicate when the session will now be held.

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Question No 82, by Mr Damseaux (H-270/79)

Subject : Exchange rate of the Belgian franc

Would the Council explain the economic reasoning behind the rate fixed for the Belgian franc at its meeting of 24 September 1979 ?

Answer

The exchange rate adjustments agreed on 23 September 1979 were the result of an overall assessment of the economic and monetary situation in the countries in the European monetary system.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR DE FERRANTI

Vice-President

*(The sitting was opened at 10.00 a.m.)***President.** — The sitting is open.1. *Approval of minutes***President.** — The minutes of proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments?

The minutes of proceedings are approved.

2. *Decision on urgency***President.** — The first item is a decision on urgent procedure for six motions for resolutions.We shall first consider the request for urgent procedure for the *motion for a resolution by Ms Clwyd and others (Doc. 1-509/79 rev.): External services of the BBC.*

I call Ms Clwyd.

Ms Clwyd. — Mr President, I would like to explain why I have put this particular matter down for urgent debate. It is because the external services of the BBC are likely to be affected almost immediately by the decision to make cuts of £2.7 million in its capital programme. The BBC has already warned that the decision will lead to a rapid deterioration in the volume and quality of transmissions, making the broadcasts inaudible for millions of people in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The free movement of information and ideas has thus become a major international issue, and that is why I have brought this matter to the attention of the European Parliament. In no more than 30 of the 152 member states of the United Nations is there genuine freedom of informa-

Clwyd

tion. In the remainder, state or party control the media to a greater or lesser extent. The BBC external services have established a reputation for integrity and straight reporting...

President. — You must keep your remarks to the question of the urgency, rather than pleading the case.

Ms Clwyd. — ... Yes, I am trying to explain the urgency, Mr President, in some sort of context. It is likely that the £ 2.7 million cuts will, if they are put into effect, immediately affect the quality of transmission. What is the point of broadcasting unless people can hear you? That is why this is a matter for urgent debate. We have had a large number of signatures from all sides of this House supporting the request for urgent debate; and I would ask for their support and that of others from all sides of the House.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch, who wishes to speak against the request.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Mr President, some members of my group did in fact sign this request, but we managed to convince them that there is no call for an urgent debate. Another reason why I am against the request is that what our colleague has just said has failed to convince me of the need to deal finally with this matter tomorrow with thirteen or fourteen people present. We feel that, if the request for urgent debate is rejected, the appropriate committee can really get down to studying the question. Secondly, we have repeatedly complained that there are so many requests for urgency, which then have to be dealt with every Friday between 12 and 1 p.m. Normally the subjects do not warrant it, but above all it is a great pity that every morning the House has to vote on ten or more requests for urgency. We shall vote against the requests!

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Mr President, I do not believe that the case for urgency is made out, and certainly not following the events in the United Kingdom yesterday. The broadcasting of these overseas services will not be affected immediately. It is a question of a capital cut, and that obviously is a matter of importance, but is not a matter, in the view of my group, of urgency. We shall therefore vote against urgency.

President. — I put the request for urgent procedure to the vote.

Urgent procedure is rejected.

The motion for a resolution will be referred to the appropriate committee.

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President. — We shall now consider the request for urgent procedure for the *motion for a resolution by*

Mr Vergès and others (Doc. 1-514/79): Proposal to reduce the sugar quota of the French overseas departments.

I call Mr Vergès.

Mr Vergès. — (F) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, when the Commission's proposals for reducing the sugar quota for Reunion, Guadeloupe and Martinique were announced in the overseas departments, it caused a considerable stir in all sections of society, particularly in Reunion.

Indeed, these proposals stem either from a most regrettable failure to grasp the true situation in our countries or from a policy diametrically opposed to that which the Community itself has hitherto advocated. I do not wish to go into detail, but I should just like to say that in these overseas departments there are current projects for developing sugar production covering the period 1974 to 1981 for Réunion and 1976 to 1980 for Guadeloupe, and a project for Martinique is being drawn up.

The Community has provided 85 % of the cost of dams and irrigation networks, and the brochure published by the Community itself states that these projects are vital for the economy of these regions.

It now seems that these sugar quotas are to be reduced; the problem of Réunion, which is one of underdevelopment, has been confused with a problem of sugar production. And this gives rise to the following contradictory situation, Mr President: our overseas departments are surrounded by neighbours which are ACP countries to which the Lomé II agreement has just guaranteed a market for their sugar production in the Community because they are underdeveloped. Thus the overseas departments surrounded by these ACP countries will be discriminated against because they are members of the Community!

It is obvious that there is a tremendous contradiction here which betrays a very inadequate grasp of the problems of our overseas departments.

A month after this House voted unanimously for appropriations to repair the damage done by hurricanes David and Frederick and to restore the agricultural potential of these areas, you simply cannot announce to the people there that Parliament has reduced the sugar quotas, since the immediate and long-term effects on these areas will be worse than those of a hurricane.

This is why we expect this House, a few months after the overseas departments took part in electing it, to adopt a stance in keeping with that adopted last week, since the Community proposals are to be put to the Council at the end of this month, which justifies the urgent adoption of a position on the matter by Parliament today.

(Applause)

Vergès

President. — I call Mr Estier, who wishes to speak for the request.

Mr Estier. — (F) Mr President, the French Socialists fully agree with what Mr Vergès has just said and support the request for urgency.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch, who wishes to speak against the request.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) I feel I must say the same as for the previous request. It is obvious that the appropriate committee should state its opinion on the matter and will in fact do so. There is no need why we should now agree to an urgent debate. Furthermore, Mr President, I should like to ask you to make very sure in future that speakers merely state their reasons for requesting an urgent debate and that we do not engage in debates on the actual subject in question.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Chouraqui to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mrs Chouraqui. — (F) Mr President, the Group of European Progressive Democrats will vote for an urgent debate. However, we do not support the content of the motion for a resolution and shall ourselves be tabling another one on the subject in due course.

President. — I put the request for urgent procedure to the vote.

Urgent procedure is rejected. The motion will be referred to the appropriate committee.

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President. — We shall now consider the request for urgent procedure for the *motion for a resolution by Mr Van Minnen and others (Doc. 1-515/79): South Africa*.

I call Mr Van Minnen.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) Mr President, this is a typical example of a situation in which Parliament can and, in my view, must react to an event without it costing us much in lost time. Otherwise it is our credibility which we stand to lose if we do not roundly condemn this visit by seven South African politicians, described as a visit on the initiative of the European Parliament. It is not simply a question of a reception given by the Mayor of Strasbourg, who also happens to be one of our Vice-Presidents, but of the whole context in which the visit is taking place. And even if it is only alleged that this 'initiative' springs from the European Parliament, it is being bandied about in both the South African and European press, and I

would therefore ask the House to make it abundantly clear where we stand. Otherwise anything we say against the policy of apartheid will seem to the black population like empty words and a complete mockery. I therefore urge you to vote for this request.

President. — I call Mr Bangemann, who wishes to speak for the request.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Mr President, on behalf of my Group I should also like to support the request for an urgent debate, and I do so for two reasons. Firstly, to show up the dishonesty of this request; I really feel there is an urgent need for us at last to vote to put a stop to this kind of request ...

(Scattered applause from the right)

... and what is the outcome? The people who vote against urgency will then be accused in public of supporting the policy of apartheid. My Group is against apartheid. My Group and those who are against urgency ...

President. — Mr Bangemann, please explain to the House why the matter is urgent.

Mr Bangemann. — ... Yes, I am doing it. It is urgent, Mr President, because this is a matter of honesty. That is the reason why I am for the urgency.

There is a second reason, Mr President, which I should like to state straight away. Among the reasons supporting the request for urgent debate something is stated which must be rejected immediately, namely that welcoming this delegation is tantamount to supporting the policy of apartheid. If you look at the press communiqué issued by this Group, you will see that of the seven people who signed it and were members of the delegation, six belong to opposition parties and are members of the South African Parliament, some of them having fought against apartheid all their lives. Mr President, it is a matter of urgency to state, for example, that Harry Schwarz, whom I know personally, has fought against the policy of apartheid in South Africa all his life. And the Socialist Group refuses to welcome such a person, but at the same time talks to the Polisario ...

(Scattered applause from the centre and right)

... There is an urgent need for us to show up such hypocrisy for what it is, and for this reason my Group is in favour of an immediate vote.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch, who wishes to speak against the request.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Mr President, although I go along with almost everything Mr Bangemann has just said, I should like on behalf of my Group to ask the House not to adopt the request for urgency for the very reason that we want clarification of the facts and

Klepsch

a real discussion on the matter. What will happen if we agree on urgent debate now? Between 1 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. tomorrow 14 or 18 members will discuss the matter in the House and then vote. I feel this is the wrong approach. We want the matter to be settled once and for all and the question before us to be dealt with in the proper way. That can only happen if we reject the request. Then the appropriate committee will have to discuss the matter properly and we shall have the chance to debate the outcome of these deliberations in this House. We specifically want the whole matter clarified and are fed up with seeing the House adopt such requests for urgent debate, which are nothing more than window-dressing.

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

President. — I call Mr Glinne to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Glinne. — *(F)* Mr President, I must reject Mr Bangemann's accusations. One of the basic reasons why the Socialist Group has adopted this position is that positive contacts with the delegation in question would lend support to the Bantustan system. It is common knowledge that one member of the delegation is a chief representing the tribal system of the Siskai. This is one of the reasons why we do not want any contacts with this delegation, and similarly we do not want to see any consolidation of a system under which populations are represented by people who do not belong to their ethnic group.

President. — I call Mr Rogers on a point of order.

Mr Rogers. — Mr President, may I, through you ask Mr Klepsch whether he is in fact saying that this is now only to be a four-day-part-session and that there will be no proceedings tomorrow?

(Applause from certain quarters on the right)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — Sir, there has been a mistranslation.

President. — I call Mr de Courcy Ling to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr de Courcy Ling. — Mr President, we are against urgent procedure. We agree in this group with Mr Klepsch that this is a very serious matter which ought to be debated carefully in due course in December. Meanwhile, I would like to put at rest the genuine and sincere anxieties of many honourable Members about the way this occasion to meet the South African visitors was used. It was used, as far as we are concerned in this group to condemn apartheid; to condemn separate residential development; to condemn the

marriage laws; to condemn all the things which we find as abhorrent as other honourable Members. But I would say to them that there is no point in condemning apartheid if no one in South Africa hears you. I urge all Members of this House to vote against urgent procedure and to consider this matter sensibly, honestly and carefully.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

President. — I call Mrs Castellina to speak on behalf of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mrs Castellina. — *(I)* I support Mr Van Minnen's request for an urgent debate for one main reason. Not only because we consider what has happened to be really scandalous, but for another reason also — and I refer to what Mr Bangemann said. I think that it is often useful to have contacts with those who are struggling against apartheid, such as opposition members of the South African Parliament. But this is only possible and legitimate as long as such meetings remain informal. On the other hand, since this delegation has been welcomed here as a delegation from the South African Parliament, it is clear that the contact is no longer between this institution and some opposition party members, but between this institution and another institution, namely that of the South African regime. It therefore seems to me that Mr Bangemann's argument does not apply in this case, although this does not prevent our having contacts — indeed, many of us have had such contacts in the past — with opponents of regimes which we also oppose. For these reasons we shall support the request for an urgent debate.

President. — I call Mr Piquet to speak on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Piquet. — *(F)* This House seems to me to be concerned about human rights. If it does not wish to be hypocritical, the time to discuss them and vote for urgent procedure is now or never. The Communist and Allies Group therefore supports the request for an urgent debate tabled by the Socialist Group.

President. — I call Mr Michel on a point of order.

Mr Michel. — *(F)* Mr President, 12 members of the Christian-Democratic Group also tabled a request for urgent debate on the same subject. This request was rejected because it only had 12 signatures, while the Socialist Group's request had 18.

How can different rules be applied during the same part-session? In any case, we could immediately collect the 21 signatures.

President. — As the House will recall, we changed our Rules of Procedure the day before yesterday, and one now requires 21 signatures for a request for urgent procedure.

(Mixed reactions)

I call Mrs Chouraqui to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mrs Chouraqui. — *(F)* Our group will vote against urgent procedure, but we are of the opinion that a debate on this subject should be held in plenary sitting.

President. — I call Mr Johnson on a point of order.

Mr Johnson. — Mr President, you have just told us that one requires 21 signatures for a valid motion for urgency. This one does not have 21. How can it be put to the House?

(Applause from various quarters on the right)

President. — Because it was tabled before the Rules of Procedure were changed, and we have no retroactive legislation here.

(Loud laughter)

I put the request for urgent procedure to the vote.

Urgent procedure is rejected. The motion for a resolution will be referred to the appropriate committee.

I call Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul on a point of order.

Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul. — *(D)* I should like to know the actual number of votes for and against, since I have the impression that the result has not been correctly announced. I am sure it is not your fault, but I still think we should repeat the vote, if necessary by sitting and standing, so that the matter is properly settled.

President. — Under the Rules of Procedure the presidency is entitled to judge the result of the vote, and that result was perfectly clear. The point of order is rejected.

(Applause from the right)

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President. — We shall now consider the request for urgent procedure for the *motion for a resolution by Mrs Dienesch and others (Doc. 1-519/79): Situation in Iran.*

I call Mrs Chouraqui.

Mrs Chouraqui. — *(F)* Mr President, we realize that this motion comes after those which were adopted yesterday, and thus, if urgent procedure is adopted, we would ask for this document to be debated with the

others. But we would urge you — and here we rely on your courtesy and intelligence — to take account of the fact that the events in Iran are proof of the existence of what is referred to in the animal, vegetable and human kingdoms as the five percent of abnormal behaviour. Yes indeed, Ayatollah Khomeini is one of those whose behaviour may be described as abnormal.

We are deeply committed to the respect of human rights, morality and international law and we feel for those who are being held prisoner. We therefore protest strongly against these unlawful acts and ask for an urgent debate on this motion for a resolution.

President. — I call Mr Patterson on a point of order.

Mr Patterson. — This matter of how many signatures is required to request urgency really is important. This rule is being continuously abused. On this request for urgency I can only see six signatures, so it was not even in order under our previous Rules of Procedure. If you read Rule 14 there is no provision in it, either before or after yesterday, for a political group to request urgency.

President. — The House will accept that there is bound to be some confusion when we have just changed our Rules of Procedure.

I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — Let us take the Rules of Procedure as they existed before we changed them. I ask you to look at Rule 14 (1). Where does it state in that rule that a political group can request urgency?

President. — I call Mrs Chouraqui.

Mrs Chouraqui. — *(F)* Mr President, our group has twenty-two members and we feel that this motion for a resolution, which is being tabled on behalf of the group, is admissible.

President. — The point raised by Mr Patterson is valid as this request for urgency has not been tabled in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. We do not have sufficient signatures and there is no provision in the old Rules of Procedure for a political group to table such a request. However, as a matter of common sense this question must be considered, together with the other questions, in a way which is acceptable to the House.

I call Mr Arndt.

Mr Arndt. — *(D)* Mr President, the sole purpose of the Rules of Procedure is to lay down a clear line when difficulties arise in the House. We already have three motions for resolutions on this subject. I consider it normal parliamentary practice that we should also include the fourth motion, come to an agreement in this case and try to avoid such things in

Arndt

the future; this would be very much easier for all of us. It is obvious that we should all vote in favour after voting for the other requests yesterday.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — *(D)* I agree with Mr Arndt, and my group would be prepared, if necessary, to provide the other twenty signatures so that urgent procedure can be adopted for this motion. I do not think it would be right to reject the fourth motion when we already have three on the agenda. Of course I know what the proposers could do: they could table an amendment tomorrow. But I do not think that would be practical and therefore ask the House to vote for urgent procedure for the Dienesch motion for a resolution.

President. — I put the request for urgent procedure to the vote.

Urgent procedure is adopted.

I propose that the motion be considered in the joint debate tomorrow.

Since there are no objections, that is agreed.

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President. — We shall now consider the request for urgent procedure for the motion for a resolution by Mrs Castellina and others (Doc. 1-521/79): Interference by the Greek government.

I call Mrs Castellina.

Mrs Castellina. — *(I)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like first of all to express some satisfaction at the fact that today, after everything we have said in the last few days about our struggle over the Rules of Procedure concerning not only us, but also the rights of all the Members of this Parliament, we have had such clear and obvious proof of how right we were, since there have been many colleagues who have tabled motions with less than 21 signatures and have thus had them rejected.

With regard to the reason for my request for urgent procedure, I think that everyone is aware of the problem, since it has been widely publicized by the press. The Greek government, in the person of the Foreign Minister, Mr Rallis, issued a very serious statement to the effect that the Greek Government considers that the 400 officials who are to take up posts in the European institutions when Greece joins the Community must not include members or sympathizers of either the socialist or communist parties. I do not think that anyone in this House would accept such a principle, or at least not officially, since it is true in the past representatives of the left on the staff of this institution have been seriously discriminated

against. I therefore think that there should be broad support in the House for a statement making it clear that Parliament and the Community reject any measures involving such serious political discrimination as being inadmissible and unacceptable.

Why then, ladies and gentlemen, do we need urgent procedure? Because I believe that, if Parliament does not immediately make its own statement of principle in response to such a serious attack on the democratic principles which govern or ought to govern our Community, the Greek government might have the impression that it has somehow got away with making those statements. However, now that I have outlined the reasons why we requested urgent procedure — and we requested it with very broad backing — I should like to state we are withdrawing our request for one reason. I realized this morning that, owing to the strike which is delaying flights here and to the fact that flights are also being delayed in Italy, where a similar strike of air traffic controllers has been called, a long and thorough debate on this question tomorrow morning might well take place with only a few Members present. Since this is the case, I — and I hope that the other Members who signed the request for urgent procedure agree, since I have not had a chance to consult them all — withdraw the request because of the time factor, and also because dealing with the matter in committee will make it possible not only to make a statement of principle on it but also to take steps to ensure that there is no discrimination in the recruitment of future Greek officials of this institution.

(Applause)

President. — I note that the request for urgent debate has been withdrawn.

The motion for a resolution will be referred to the appropriate committee.

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President. — We shall now consider the request for urgent procedure for the motion for a resolution by Mr Prag and others (Doc. 1-520/79): Attack on the Israeli Ambassador to Portugal.

I call Mr Prag.

Mr Prag. — Mr President, the signatories are very sorry indeed to propose an urgent motion on Thursday morning, but the events in Lisbon were only reported in some of yesterday's papers. This crime is indicative of the growing disregard for all accepted standards of international morality, whether it is in Iran or Spain, and we feel that we must make our views known. It is no use doing that next week or next month. We really do not want to take up the short time that this parliament has, but urgent proce-

Prag

ture is unfortunately the only way of showing, as our motion says, the horror and disgust of this House at crimes of this kind.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch, who wishes to speak for the request.

Mr Klepsch. — (*D*) Ladies and gentlemen, I am in favour of urgent procedure. This week we have already adopted urgent procedure for three such motions expressing solidarity. Suffice it for me to remind you of the question of the kidnapped Spanish member of Parliament. It would not be in keeping with the style of the House if we did not adopt urgent procedure and then tomorrow express our sympathy for those concerned.

President. — I put the the request for urgent procedure to the vote.

Urgent procedure is adopted.

I propose that the motion for a resolution be placed on the agenda for Friday, 16 November 1979.

Since there are no objections, that is agreed.

3. Energy problems

President. — The next item is the joint debate on :

— motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-472/79) by Mr Gallagher, on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research, on the outcome of the meeting of the Council of Energy Ministers on 9 October 1979 ;

— oral question (Doc. 1-498/79) by Mr Müller-Hermann, Mrs Walz, Mr Herman, Mr d'Ormesson, Mr Fuchs, Mr Sassano, Mr Hoffmann, Mr Sälzer, Mr Rinsche and Mr Croux on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D Group) to the Commission :

Subject: Adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost

It is essential to secure adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost if the European Community is to maintain and improve present living standards, safeguard its international competitiveness and restore full employment within an expanding economy. If unemployment is to be effectively tackled and social security extended, a solution must be found urgently for the energy problems.

In the long term, the European Community has no significant oil and gas reserves and no new, easily accessible coal deposits. Furthermore, there is insufficient Continental shelf for oil prospecting and production.

Given the prospect of fierce international competition in the 1980s for diminishing supplies of oil and natural gas, coupled with the existence of a very grave threat to the political independence of major oil-producing countries and to the safety of sea routes used to transport energy, the Community must, as well as saving energy, as is being constantly reiterated, concentrate in the coming

decades on the use of home-produced and imported coal — as far as possible using refining processes — and on the use of nuclear energy, and the development of new or alternative energy sources.

The Community must also take account of the Third World countries in its energy policy and, as a highly industrialized economic zone, ease the pressure on the world energy market by developing nuclear power and other new energy supply systems and by not depriving the developing countries unnecessarily of the more easily accessible forms of energy. This programme requires exceptionally high investment and is subject to exceptionally long lead times.

Convinced that these problems can be mastered only by a major concerted effort, we put the following questions to the Commission :

1. Given the drop in population growth and the 4 % annual growth target, what is the Commission's realistic assessment of energy needs for 1985, 1990, 2000 ? When will solar, geothermal, wind and tidal energy be available for use, in what quantities and at what cost ? Will it be economic to use biomasses and agricultural waste or surpluses for energy production ? What effects on energy policy does the Commission expect from the more widespread use of heat pumps ?
2. What conservation measures, what technological innovations does it intend to apply and how much money does it intend to invest to ensure a reduction in the prevailing 1:1 ratio between economic growth and energy consumption to around 1:0.6 ? What savings can be made by standardization in industry and the home ?
3. What is the estimated capital requirement for the basis of the Community's new energy supplies ? Is the estimated investment requirement of between \$36 000 000 million and \$46 000 000 million for three generations of world energy production, based on costs and dollar value in 1975, correct ? What is the basis for Commissioner Brunner's statement at the latest seminar arranged by the Batelle-Institute on the occasion of the International Motor Show in Frankfurt, that an unprecedented level of capital expenditure would be required ? How does it envisage that a capital requirement of this order can be accommodated in commercial and economic terms, particularly where the capital invested begins to show a return only after lead times of unprecedented duration ?

I call Mr Linkohr on a point of order.

Mr Linkohr. — (*D*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, since the Liberal and Democratic Group yesterday withdrew its oral question with debate, I should like to ask the authors of the question on adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost to withdraw it so that the subject it covers can be discussed in the Committee on Energy and Research before being dealt with by Parliament. We are afraid that the original intention to discuss coal policy in this House will be weakened by this question and that, by discussing this question now, we shall be anticipating the discussion of these subjects which is to be included in the report on the objectives for Commu-

Linkohr

nity energy policy until 1990. I should therefore like to ask the authors to withdraw their question as the Liberals did yesterday.

President. — I call Mr Müller-Hermann.

Mr Müller-Hermann. — (*D*) Mr President, our group insists that the subject be dealt with today.

President. — I call Mr Gallagher.

Mr Gallagher. — Mr President, it is with some regret that I have to move this resolution once again on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research, because an almost identical resolution was adopted by Parliament on 27 September 1979. That resolution went to the Council of Ministers, who decided in their wisdom or otherwise to do nothing whatsoever about it. I cannot accept this sort of attitude from the Council of Ministers, nor can the committee. I would remind you that the previous Parliament also reached the same conclusions regarding coal policy in the Community, forwarded then to the Council of Ministers, who then decided to defer the matter. It has been deferred ever since.

It seems to me that we as a democratically elected Parliament and our Committee on Energy and Research are being totally ignored in the matters we wish to put to the Council of Ministers. The peculiar thing is that the Council of Ministers have so far decided policy on energy saving, on solar energy, on liquefaction and on Euratom loans, but have decided between themselves apparently that they do not wish to discuss the coal policy at all.

I want to make it absolutely clear to every Member of the House that we are not asking for a subsidy for the coal sector, and I do not wish people to read that into the motion, because that is not what we are asking for. We are asking for a subsidy for the electricity supply industry in order that it may be encouraged to burn more coal, and thus save the Community valuable oil. We are in a better position with coal than we are with oil. That is the view of the Committee on Energy and Research, and, apparently, of Parliament on the last occasion when we met in September, though not, I fear, the view of the Council of Ministers.

We all know that it is the policy of this Parliament that we should limit oil imports. In actual fact whether we had taken that decision or not, events have slightly overtaken us anyway with the Tokyo Summit and with the OPEC agreement. There is no excuse for the Council's ignoring the question at all. We fear that if we do not get a specific answer on the coal question from the Council of Ministers, then the work of the Committee on Energy and Research will be severely hindered. How can we decide policies and bring them before this House and get a majority to accept them if they are then totally ignored by the

Council? We want a concrete decision on the future of European coal before we proceed to bring any of the other policy matters before this House.

We are not asking the Community or the House to accept a coal-based energy policy. We are asking them to accept a comprehensive energy policy, and within that comprehensive policy, we want a place for coal. It seems that the Council are prepared to discuss any form of energy except coal. I ask, as I have asked in the past, for specific assurances. I was told that the matter would be discussed by the Council, but it has not been. I would like to ask a specific question of the Council: when did the Council of Energy Ministers last give detailed consideration to the proposal on the use of coal in power stations? I would like to know the exact dates when they discussed the matter — if indeed they ever discussed it at all, although resolutions have been forwarded to them on this matter.

Nor do we wish to come back here after the meeting of the Council to hear them tell us that they have discussed the coal question in a generalized way, but have not come to any conclusions yet. That is what they have been saying all along. We cannot plan any energy policy, we cannot plan it in the individual nations, nor can we proceed to take any action at all without some specific answer on this particular aspect of the energy policy.

I therefore ask for a solid and concrete assurance that the Council of Ministers will discuss coal at its next meeting, which I understand will be held next month. I ask for that specific assurance. Otherwise the democratic element of this Parliament will be totally destroyed. It is a waste of time for us to go to energy and research meetings, to come before this Parliament, to draft motions and ask people to give their views on them, only for those views to be totally ignored by the Council of Ministers. I leave it at that.

President. — I have 20 speakers on my list. In view of the pressure of business, I must close the list there.

I call Mr Müller-Hermann.

Mr Müller-Hermann. — (*D*) Mr President, firstly I should like to point out that my Group, jointly with the Group of European Progressive Democrats has tabled a motion for a resolution which will be distributed later. This is basically a plea by Parliament to the Council finally to accord due priority to the Community's energy policy, to support and adopt the batch of measures presented to it by the Commission and, thirdly, to step up the utilization of coal and nuclear energy on the required scale, as is essential since they are the only realistic sources of energy available in the medium term, while of course paying adequate attention to the harmonization of safety standards and the establishment of an effective nuclear waste disposal system.

Müller-Hermann

We are all under the shadow of the latest events in Iran. I do not want needlessly to dramatize here their effect on energy supplies but these events demonstrate once again the instability or proneness to instability of these important oil-producing countries and we cannot console ourselves with the fact that at present our oil stocks in the Community are relatively high. This situation can deteriorate quickly and perhaps disastrously for us all.

Since we must be prepared not only for very high capital input when developing both traditional and possible alternative energy sources but also for exceptionally long lead times, the time factor is very important. We must make allowance for this and cannot, as the Council is doing, permit ourselves the luxury of wasting time.

As I said, I do not want to take too dramatic a view of events in Iran, as the oil-producing countries have themselves set clearly defined limits to the quantities of oil which they are prepared to supply, because they wish to eke out their reserves over as long a period as possible in their own quite justifiable and legitimate interests. It is absolutely imperative that we take appropriate action to face up to this situation and its likely outcome. This is why we call on the governments of Member States to act and to act together, to be prepared to mobilize the resources of each country so that we can take joint coordinated action to reduce our still excessive dependence on OPEC oil to a tolerable level within a reasonable period — say by 1990 — so as to ensure that the Community's economy cycle can continue to develop smoothly.

I believe that we who have a responsibility towards others must free ourselves from any illusions about energy policy. Throughout the Community there are many undoubtedly very well-meaning people — and I suppose this also means people of good will — who would have us believe in all kinds of different solutions to the problem. One of these stock recommendations is to forego economic growth. Some believe that the problem can be solved only by energy conservation measures, or by greater use of coal, and of course again and again there is the rejection of nuclear energy.

Mr President, the fact is that our indigenous energy sources in the Community, are also limited and we cannot, either inside or outside the Community produce coal in sufficient quantities to meet all our electricity requirements. It is also a fact — as Mr Gallagher pointed out just now — that the raw material coal is too valuable in the long run to be burnt solely to produce electricity. We must realize — this is also a fact — that the developing countries, which have ground to catch up as regards economic growth and also as regards energy consumption, are of course

in the first instance dependent on traditional energy sources. Assessing the situation realistically, we must also realize that, no matter what great economy measures we adopt — and Parliament will be dealing with this in the coming months — we will at best succeed in stabilizing energy consumption, presuming that we also want economic growth and consider it necessary. We have thus also asked the Commission when, in what quantities and at what cost wind energy, tidal energy and solar energy are likely to become available.

I think that we here in Parliament must find the courage, and call on our governments to find the courage, to acknowledge the fact that, for the next two decades at least, nuclear energy is indispensable if we are to attain our energy policy goals. We must press on with the necessary nuclear programmes on the requisite scale and we must finally press governments to harmonize safety standards and to develop an effective Community nuclear waste disposal system.

The final point I wish to touch on here is that of capital requirements. Mr Brunner has recently made some public statements on this topic. I have had access to data drawn up by a very well known international institute in Laxenburg near Vienna, which estimates total expenditure at between 36 and 46 000 million dollars, a realistic assessment of the capital requirements in terms of 1975 dollars and prices, for the three supply systems we will have to make successive use of in the future, considering that we are already using first of these systems. These are of course orders of magnitude which the human intellect can scarcely grasp; but even if anything approaching such sums has to be spent to secure energy supplies for the next 45-50 years that means, in the final analysis, that there will have to be a shift both at government level and in ordinary people's spending towards investment in energy supplies, with very important consequences for both public and private finance. That is to say that we shall ultimately have to spend less on current consumption and more on safeguarding our future survival.

I would be extremely grateful if Mr Brunner could give more details in reply to the questions we have put before the House today, since I believe that this financing problem is one which we must consider very seriously. In conclusion, let me just add one thing: I am indeed a very convinced advocate of the market economy, and I believe that in energy policy too we can regulate more by means of price than by a policy of too much intervention.

On the other hand, however, I ask myself how such a large capital requirement can be satisfied in financial and macro-economic terms when there will only be a return on the capital invested in later decades.

Müller-Hermann

Whether that can be financed solely by loans is a question which the Commission has also undoubtedly looked into and one on which I should like to have some information from Mr Brunner today.

President. — I call Mr Linde to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Linde. — (*D*) Mr President, in coming years this Parliament will have to deal repeatedly with energy policy questions and all those with a special interest in the subject will welcome a discussion now. However, there is a certain ambiguity about today's debate.

On the one hand there is the motion for a resolution by Mr Gallagher on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research on the unsuccessful outcome of the last Council of Energy Ministers, and on the other hand we have an Oral Question with debate which ignores, and consequently in my opinion prevents public debate of, the indispensable question of coal. In my view the question tabled by Mr Müller-Hermann and other members of his Group is at present superfluous, since the subject will be discussed in depth in the Committee on Energy and Research. In the course of the next few months we will be having a report on energy guidelines up until 1990; the rapporteur will be Mr Fuchs, who is a member of Mr Müller-Hermann's group. A detailed report on energy conservation will also be available and it therefore becomes apparent that while the questions put by Mr Müller-Hermann are undoubtedly urgent issues, some of them would be better discussed on the basis of well-documented reports.

I therefore think that his question is superfluous, it is anodyne and represents a further attempt to get this House to say no to nuclear energy before we have had a discussion on the events in Harrisburg. An undertaking has in fact been given that Parliament will not decide for or against nuclear energy before it has seen and discussed the Harrisburg report. However, we have not yet reached that stage.

The numerous questions — and I do not think even Mr Brunner can answer them exhaustively in the time available to him — will call for some hard work on the part of the Committee on Energy and Research.

Now I should like to take this opportunity to relate to the House my experience of cooperating with the Commission and with Mr Brunner. Mr Brunner has promised on three occasions to make certain important documents available to the Committee *inter alia* the report on energy conservation. This has not been received to date, even though several months have gone by and the Committee is due to deal with this important problem at its next meeting.... My apologies, Mr Müller-Hermann! If you have the report then I don't know where you got it; I at any rate have not

yet received it. We need not discuss this further now; the chairman of our Committee can make a statement.

To continue, at the meeting of 11 September Mr Brunner promised to provide us with the text of his speech; we have not yet received it although a press release, an abridged version of it is available; and finally, the Committee still has not received Document 79/527 final, the Energy Programme of the European Community — an important issue, I would say — and we will be discussing this in the Committee.

As regards the questions before us today, let me say also that we will be hearing a utilization of funds in 1977. The question of the utilization of funds in the field of energy and research is likewise very interesting. This will also have to be discussed here.

Now to the document on 'Energy Policy Objectives'. The aim of the energy policy must be to secure adequate supplies of safe energy at reasonable cost. This objective is in jeopardy because in my view nuclear energy is not safe. Existing knowledge is inadequate and indeed I think it is doubtful whether the present state of knowledge on the operation of nuclear power plants and the disposal of nuclear waste should be used to allay the misgivings of large sections of the population; I myself share these misgivings.

There is no such thing as cheap energy; neither oil nor nuclear energy are to be had cheaply at the moment and prices will continue to rise, so that here too we face a difficult situation. It is not easy to determine the quantity needed as long as we have differing estimates and as long as we are overwhelmed daily with new reports. Only one thing is clear: without energy savings, supplies cannot be guaranteed or financed in the long term. We will be returning to this point in the report on energy conservation.

We therefore need an energy policy based on a clear view of the situation; this means that we need to acquire more definite information about the appropriate and possible degree of coal utilization, about realistic conservation targets with due regard for employment policy needs, about the contribution which can be realistically expected from alternative energy sources, and we need decisions on the safety, economic and political aspects of the medium and long-term use of fuel cycles and reactor types and on the future pattern of the whole energy supply system — whether, for example, one should decentralize more or what competition policy measures should be introduced.

Against this background the motion presented by Mr Gallagher on behalf of the Committee takes on particular significance. As far back as September, we in this Parliament pointed out that the Council of

Linde

Energy Ministers had failed for two years to reach a decision. This procrastination is still continuing and on this count we must give the Council a stern warning. One cannot say on the one hand, 'we want to save oil, we want a safe energy policy', and on the other hand not take the necessary steps within the Community.

My Group support Mr Gallagher's motion with the exception of paragraph 5. We propose deleting this paragraph so that the motion concentrates solely on coal policy, since we do not think it appropriate that Parliament should act as a propaganda machine for a particular type of energy technology — as, for example, if it were suddenly to support nuclear energy here in a resolution on coal.

I now want to look at the particular problems of coal policy. We discussed these on 27 September, and it is our opinion that more coal should be made available for power stations at acceptable prices, because this means using less oil and also less natural gas — in other words we will be concentrating on indigenous energy sources.

The advocates of a rapid expansion of nuclear energy in particular should also support this coal policy, because only if it has been proven that coal has precedence as a source of energy and that coal cannot cover our requirements, can we discuss nuclear power stations in the context of security of energy supplies.

Consequently, those who see the need to meet an energy deficit and believe that this deficit can only be covered by nuclear energy should, in their own interest, support this coal policy.

Subsidizing power-station coal helps all Member States, both coal producers and non-coal-producers, and countries importing coal should not be discriminated against. Coal is the Community's strategic energy reserve and this reserve must be used and developed. We cannot ignore the need to provide Community funds on a generous scale to sink new pits and to support coal upgrading programmes. It is clearly in the Member States' own interests to maintain, expand or resume their coal production.

The characteristic feature of the next few years will undoubtedly be a trade war surrounding energy supplies and for this reason we must plan and regulate coal imports. It is foreseeable that coal imports from low-priced countries will no longer be available on the scale to which we are accustomed. If one considers President Carter's decision or the statements by leading American politicians, as for example Senator Kennedy, it is clear that the United States will itself be using more coal than previously and will therefore be able to export less.

The policy of cheap imports also has its negative side. It is clear from Article 59 of the ECSC Treaty that in

periods of crisis European coal is to be managed on a Community basis, which means a Community coal policy, although only in times of crisis. We regret that fact that a European coal policy should only be introduced, in a crisis, because crisis measures are never the wisest measures.

Dependency on coal imports sometimes also means being dependent on abhorrent regimes. This means in particular South Africa. Cheap South African coal is mined by workers who are treated like slaves. That is despicable and we cannot support a policy which means in France, for example, neglecting one's own coal industry while buying in 66 % of total South African coal exports to the European Community.

I am about to conclude. In my view the world coal market must be put in order. A World Coal Conference with the participation of the United States, Canada, Australia, Poland, the Soviet Union and the European Community would be welcome.

Discussions on price, trade flows, the safety of miners and the future of coal are urgently needed. The Commission, the Council and Parliament should demand, prepare for and sponsor such a World Coal Conference. For coal can also be a unifying factor. The Schuman Plan succeeded in easing tensions between France and Germany. Would it not be wise to use coal to further *détente* between East and West? A clear and safe joint energy policy is essential to ensure a better future for Europe.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR : MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Herman to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD).

Mr Herman. — (F) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, recent events — especially the situation in Iran — not only indicate how serious the oil crisis is but also illustrate the uncertainty of Europe's energy supplies and, as a result, the vulnerability of our general economic wellbeing.

The decisions — if they can be called decisions — which were taken at the recent European Council meeting in Strasbourg and at the meeting of the Energy Ministers in Luxembourg might be considered fairly suitable if the crisis were to develop so to speak, gradually. But they immediately become inadequate if we have to cope with a sudden worsening of the situation, which might be the outcome if things get worse in Iran, or if the Straits of Hormuz are accidentally or deliberately blocked, or if the political situation gets

Herman

out of hand among other major producing countries, or if there is a violent upsurge of the general political tension in the Middle East, to say nothing of renewed hostilities between Israel and certain Arab States.

All this is more than mere surmise, and yet the Community's preemptive or contingency plans, and even national plans, have stayed at the level of mere theory and are in any case quite inadequate.

This gives even more cause for concern when you consider that firstly Europe is neither willing nor able to sway events in the Middle East while secondly the United States, with election year at hand, seems incapable of making any radical short-term changes in the pattern of its oil imports. The only option left open to Europe is to reduce as drastically as possible our reliance on OPEC supplies. This can be done by means of energy savings — which can be considerable — by boosting our sadly limited coal production, by exploiting natural gas and our own oil reserves — which are also limited — and by developing nuclear energy and other substitute forms of energy, whether you want to call them soft, renewable or alternative energy sources. All this has been said before, it is what the Commission is proposing or will propose, and it is what the Council will no doubt accept. So what is the fuss about?

There are several reasons. Firstly, because most of our objectives as regards energy can be accomplished only in the medium and the long term, whereas the supply situation can deteriorate overnight. You wondered why the matter was urgent, Mr Linde, and there is your answer. While we spend months in committee debating the pros and cons of developing or continuing our nuclear programmes, events could happen tomorrow or next month which, by cutting off our energy supplies, would plunge us into a far worse crisis than anything you could imagine in connection with nuclear energy.

Another cause for concern is that it could be a long hard road with many pitfalls between establishing the objectives of our energy policy and actually achieving them, especially when the implementation of such a policy depends in the main on nine national governments which have differing energy problems, which take a different view on priorities, and which act and respond in a very different manner.

There is also the fact that each of the Member States — to a greater or lesser degree, of course — has to cope with the problems of inflation, unemployment and budget deficits. This means that they find it difficult and even impossible to set aside the new resources which are essential if each of them is to make a successful response to the tremendous challenge which will come when the oil begins to run out.

Lastly, whenever the representatives of the nine Member States have met in the Council of Ministers

over the last five years, they have never managed to show enough insight or to achieve enough agreement even to give the nod to the numerous proposals submitted by the Commission with the unanimous support of Parliament, let alone to lay the groundwork for a genuine common energy policy, which was agreed and provided for by the signatories to the ECSC Treaty.

I now come to my questions. Why did the Energy Ministers at their last Council meeting not approve the Commission proposals on the use of coal in power stations? Which countries were against and why? When could there be agreement and when are the next meetings scheduled? Has Coreper already considered this question?

Then I should like to know what actual measures the Council of Energy Ministers is able and willing to implement to ensure that the limits on oil imports which were fixed in Tokyo and Paris are in fact observed. It is not enough to say that we are going to keep our imports down to so many millions of tonnes. What actual measures are going to be taken to ensure that we keep to these limits? How are we going to cope in the immediate future with a worsening shortage if our oil supplies are cut off?

My third question follows from the fact that national policies have proved inadequate and ineffective. Are the Commission and the Council, each in its own area of competence, ready to thrash out the basis of genuine common energy policy, with all that this means in financial, administrative and institutional terms? Article 235 of the Treaty of Rome is there, with provision for common policies. Why do we not use this article to work out the basis of a common policy? It has already been said by other speakers, and I am sure it will be said again during the debate, that our whole policy for restructuring the economy and our use of energy is going to cost vast sums of money. What means can the Community employ — and it does have a number of options — and what concrete measures is it going to take to raise these sums, and how will they be used for the objectives which have been or will be determined by the Community? These are the questions we want to ask. The problem is urgent and emphasizes the importance of this debate. The Energy Council is soon going to meet, while here in Parliament we shall of course carry on with our work. There will be other debates in Parliament, but there is one pressing problem which recent events have highlighted. I really do hope that both the Commission and the Council will at last do something about it.

President. — I call Mr Seligman to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Seligman. — Mr President, this resolution has a note of desperation about it. Why are we so worried? It is because the oil crisis is getting more and more urgent every day and we see no sign of any concrete steps to implement a European Community energy policy. We see no concrete steps to harness the financial resources of the Community and we see no concrete steps to pool our resources in a crisis. What we do see is an indecisive Council tickling at the problem, setting oil import targets which we cannot hope to achieve and generally dealing with the symptoms rather than the cause.

Mr President, the need for a Community spirit is nowhere more important today than in dealing with the energy crisis. While each country is obsessed with *juste retour* every initiative is being blocked. Take, for example, the last meeting of the Research Council: I understand that France and the United Kingdom came to that Council determined to block or cut out any specific projects which they regarded as against their own national interests. And so they blocked the Supersara project, which is a safety project designed to simulate the Harrisburg accident and to try and find solutions to the control problem of light water reactors. In retaliation, the Italians blocked a proposal to put more funds into the nuclear fusion project, which is absolutely vital to the whole Community — and smaller countries cannot hope to finance a fusion project. There is a similar situation in the Council on the question of coal. I agree entirely with the Socialist speakers that we must increase our imports of coal, but Italy wants Community funds to convert their power stations from oil to coal, and they then want to use cheap imported coal. Britain, on the other hand, wants Community grants to support the modernization and automation of coal production, in order to exploit the vast reserves of coal that we have so as to make them cheaper for use in the Community and thus reduce coal imports. Now I understand that each initiative by the Italians or by the British at the Council is being blocked, and that the Commission is absolutely powerless to arrange a compromise between two completely negative positions. I fervently hope that after the Dublin Summit on 29 November there will be a new constructive atmosphere in Council meetings. I hope the spirit of compromise will replace the spirit of narrow national self-interest — and this goes for my country as much as anyone.

We must be clear on what our objectives are. Mr President, whatever we say against the common agricultural policy, it has at least achieved its main aim of making Europe independent with regard to food supplies. No one can blackmail us by threatening to cut off our food supplies. Surely we need the same independence in energy? This must be our number one energy objective, and I agree with Mr Müller-Hermann on this. Yet if you look at the report on

energy objectives for 1980, you will find that we now depend on imports for 54 % of our energy: more than half of our energy has to come from abroad. But in 1990, the best improvement we can hope for is to reduce this to 49 %. This is absolutely hopeless. It is because we have been taught by the oil companies to squander oil when there was no need to; now it has become a habit and we are really hooked on oil. The report shows that oil imports will rise from 470 million tonnes in 1978 to 572 million tonnes in 1990, and when Greece, Portugal and Spain join the common market, oil imports will rise to 661 million tonnes a year. Where in the name of heaven is all this oil going to come from? Where is the money going to come from to pay for it? If we go on like this with these objectives for 1990 the West will be broke.

So we have to change course, we have to change the whole scale of our energy policies and our financial requirements. As Mr Müller-Hermann said, the Community must find funds to modernize coal production, to build coal-fired power stations, to launch fast breeder reactors, which are 60 % more fuel-effective than the thermal reactors, to invest in coal gasification and liquefaction and to bring forward substitute fuels. Let us hope that after the meeting in Dublin at the end of the month there will be a real turningpoint. If the Council decides to make a fundamental change of direction in the energy policy and work as a team, it can rely on the full support of this Parliament and the 265 million anxious people whom we represent.

President. — I call Mr Veronesi to speak on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Veronesi. — (I) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we feel that we have all the information necessary to allow us to form a calm, accurate and objective assessment of the problems raised in this debate.

In the first place, we are aware of the problems in the coal industry, which have been discussed more than once in this Chamber, and by the old Parliament, too. We have had talks with the European producers and the appropriate unions, who have expressed their legitimate concern.

Secondly, we are fully aware of the serious tensions on the oil market, tensions caused by the uncontrolled spiralling of prices and by political events in some supply areas which have become so unstable that an interruption of supplies is to be feared.

Thirdly — although this is not a major concern at the moment — we are mindful of the difficulties with regard to nuclear power. There is strong resistance to nuclear energy in many parts of Europe, and there are also problems with respect to the supply of enriched uranium. Our relations with Canada and the United States over this have at times been strained.

Veronesi

Fourthly, it is clear that the alternative energy sources of the future are not just around the corner, but that it will be a long time before they make any noticeable and significant contribution towards satisfying our energy requirements. In this connection, perhaps, the Community could be encouraged to show more initiative and drive in developing alternative sources.

In view of all this, it might seem natural and logical to vote in favour of the Gallagher motion, nevertheless we shall be voting against it. This may seem like a poor echo of Antony's speech over the body of the slain Caesar. There are no bodies here, of course, but the fact is there are several reasons — consistency for one, since we have always voted against these measures — which induce us to vote against the motion. There are general statements in Mr Gallagher's motion which we would not quibble with, but where it falls short in our view is in its specific proposals and indeed in its overall approach.

First, we are convinced that we must make more use of coal. We have to reverse the trend which has cut the use of coal in electricity generation from 80 % to around 20 % in the last 25 years. However, if we look at market trends — and I am taking these data from Community reports — we see that American coal 30-35 dollars at the dockside while coal from the United Kingdom costs 45 dollars per tonne, and coal from Germany and Belgium comes at 75 and 100 dollars per tonne respectively. Transport costs account for roughly another 10 dollars on top of that. With costs like these, where are we going to get our supplies from? What should any country do which needs to replace its oil-fired power stations with coal-powered stations? The answer is rather obvious, I feel and there is no need to produce convoluted arguments to justify the answer.

Secondly, the coal market is free of problems, at the moment anyway, and this means that there seems as yet to be little danger of any disruption in supplies from the world's coal-producing areas. It is true that the prices of other fuels will rise in the wake of spiralling oil prices, but there is no evidence of this yet.

Thirdly, we do not feel that the various proposals put forward by the Commission at various times, and also considered by the preceding Parliament, amount to a policy on coal. They are stopgap measures of a strictly financial kind. What is more, there is a risk that these temporary measures could become permanent — consider the proposals to extend the measures on coke through 1980 and 1981 — and end up as a kind of aid or guarantee scheme with features similar to those in the agricultural sector — which are not so much perverse as dangerous. What it would all boil down to is a net transfer of resources from the poor countries to the rich ones. We are on the verge of setting a precedent which may be a bad and

dangerous example for other industrial and economic sectors in the Community.

Parliament also risks contradicting itself. Only last week we voted on the Dankert resolution on the 1980 budget. Paragraph 2 of the resolution, which was adopted unanimously, states :

The European Parliament recognizes the existing imbalance in the budget which entails an undesirable transfer of resources from certain less prosperous region to more prosperous ones thus hindering economic convergence.

If you ask me, we have here a precise case of this happening.

Fourthly, as I have said, we do not think there is a genuine coal policy. The Commission constantly stresses production and not consumption, and with it the market. An international conference has been proposed here. Of course, even a European conference would be a good thing, but an international one would be even better. Anyway, we support the idea. However, we need a Community plan which reconciles the two requirements and which takes account of all the factors affecting consumption. You cannot just say: Let's switch all our power stations over to coal! We need to plan and modify all the infrastructure — the ports and the railheads — since it is hardly likely that with a large coal-fired power station — and not even a particularly big one but one of 500 megawatt, for example — we can find a solution just like that to the problem of coal, pollution and the slag heaps.

None of this is covered in any of the Commission proposals. What is more, there is a lack of any coherent and forward-thinking approach to the use of coal, by changing production from oil to coal, for example, in the brick and cement industries.

Finally, I think it is shameful that there has been no adequate Community action in the field of technological research. In question No 494/1979 Mr Glinne pertinently asked why the Community, and on its behalf the Commission, did not have the foresight to cooperate with the United States and other appropriate parties on an industrial plant to convert coal into gas and liquid fuels. The Germans did this on their own, clearly because they considered that this was a national problem for coal-producing countries. If this is the proper approach, I fail to understand why certain financial aid must then be given at Community level.

Lastly — although Mr Ippolito will go into this point — I want to say that I have drawn up a file of authoritative statements from unimpeachable sources on the lack of a Community energy policy. The question is not who is to blame. But the conclusion which must be drawn after all these years is that there is no sector in which the Community energy policy has made progress. I shall refrain from repeating yet again the weary example of Euratom, but there is no doubt that in many other sectors and with many other schemes

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we have — as the saying goes — missed the boat. What all these measures lack is a general framework in which to set the contributions by various countries. The Italian Communists, at any rate, are ready to carry their share of the burden provided there is general and coherent approach which genuinely means something to the general public, and which will really help us to solve the problems.

To sum up, Mr President, the Italian Communists are in favour of a joint policy of full cooperation in every field, including coal of course. When we speak of policy, we do not mean piecemeal, disjointed measures which are not grounded in any forward plan. We have no desire to defend narrow national interests; we want to champion closer cooperation within the Community.

This is why we have decided to vote against the motion. A number of amendments have been tabled and we shall abstain from voting on these, because we believe there is a vital need for a general debate on energy problems since many groups have tabled questions in this area.

President. — I call Mrs von Alemann to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs von Alemann. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, energy policy is too important a subject to be discussed every month or two in plenary session in a bitty fashion as a result of oral questions. It is quite beyond me what kind of coordination there is at the moment between what goes on in the committees and in plenary session. I myself am a member of the Committee on Energy and Research, and I know that we shall be having a debate next Tuesday and Wednesday on the Fuchs Report on energy objectives for 1990 and the Linde Report on energy conservation measures, with the aim of formulating a proposal to put before Parliament. Quite honestly, I just do not understand where the coordination is in all this. I am not saying that energy policy and the recent developments in Iran are not sufficiently serious to warrant repeated discussion, but I share the fears expressed by some of the previous speakers that fragmentary discussions like today's do not, in the final analysis, help matters much, especially when the Chamber is not exactly over-populated and even if we do agree in principle that we must oppose the Council's delaying tactics. I shall have more to say on this point later on.

We need a common energy policy. That is something we have said over and over again, imploring and beseeching, but no such policy has yet materialized. We must maintain and strengthen our common position *vis-à-vis* the OPEC countries. In view of the fact that the Member States' degree of self-sufficiency in energy — including coal — varies widely, we must have Community solidarity. And, as I said on 26 September, we urgently need to hammer out a

common coal policy, and that policy must be approved by the Council.

My third point is that it is only by collective action that we can sufficiently improve and give effect to safety standards for existing nuclear power stations so that our people — who we know are very anxious about this point — can finally learn to live with this energy programme.

But this jointly formulated energy policy must find expression in a special form of action. When all is said and done the events in Iran, which have been referred to on a number of occasions here today, affect only a small part of world trade. So long as we agree on joint action, we need fear no lasting repercussions from this situation. On the other hand, we should resist the temptation to rush into an ill-considered policy of *dirigisme*. The strength of our Community is the common market and our free market economy. We cannot support the free market economy in one particular sector — such as the trade in goods — and, in the same breath, reject it in the energy sector. There is no need for rationing yet, although we should avoid any sudden leaps in prices and remember that our current level of stocks could not justify any such rises.

Yesterday's edition of the 'Times' — which I am glad to see back — contained an article on this subject by Ulf Lantzke, the head of the International Energy Agency. What he had to say is worth noting. On the one hand, he thought that oil supplies could never be relied on and that emergency plans had to be kept ready, and he went on to say: talk about the need to 'develop instruments for cooperative action in order to counter the effects of such disruptions'. On the other hand — and this is something I should like to come back on — he said that each and every one of us could reduce energy consumption by 10 % without making any real difference to our standard of living. As I said, that is something I shall be coming back to in a moment.

Mr Pintat has on a number of occasions set out here the main points of the Liberal and Democratic Group's approach to energy policy. These are energy saving, the development of — and financing of research on — alternative sources of energy, a coal policy and the use of nuclear energy to cover our remaining needs; but this latter point only if all the appropriate safety precautions really exist.

We have had a number of debates in the past on the subject of energy saving and wastage. This is a subject which is a particular hobby horse of mine, and I should just like to draw your attention briefly to a few points.

The Saint Geours report which we, or rather I, received at the end of last week — you may not have been able to pick up your mail, Mr Linde, because of the double part-session — says that up to 15% of

Von Aleman

energy used by industry, 25-35 % of that used in the transport sector and 50% of energy used in households can be saved, and the report goes on to point out that the job situation could be improved if measures to save energy were taken more seriously. Let me give you an example.

As you all know, conference facilities and offices are being built for the European Parliament in various cities. You are probably also aware of the existence of a study showing that air conditioning equipment uses something like 50% more energy than a normal heating system. In my opinion, air conditioning is not essential in our central European climate but these conference facilities are of course being built with air conditioning. I believe this is one concrete example of the habit of merely paying lip service to the principal of energy-saving. The practical aspects of energy saving and wastage ought to be given a little more serious thought before a construction programme of this kind is drawn up. This is a problem which comes up again and again in the Federal Republic of Germany.

I believe that each and every individual measure can be genuinely effective, so long as it is applied in a serious manner.

Mr Burke once alluded in a speech to the problem of consumption in the transport sector. It is important that consideration be given to the fact that public transport obviously uses less energy and less petrol than the use of private vehicles. Such things as the seminar organized by Mr Brunner are encouraging signs that the Commission really is taking the problem seriously and is trying, in a considered way, to do something positive. So much for the oral question tabled by the Group of the European People's Party.

I should now like to say a few words on Mr Gallagher's motion for a resolution. I deplore the fact that the Council of the European Community has got into the habit of ignoring the European Parliament's resolutions, as was shown by the attitude it adopted on 9 October. Why were only three delegations present at the meeting on 9 October when it is common knowledge that the energy supply situation in Europe is difficult to say the least, and could well develop into a crisis of major proportions? Why was the Energy Council not present in full at that meeting? Why has the Council taken no decision or adopted no specific measures on the coal problem? Why has the resolution which we approved on 27 or 28 September been referred back to the Committee of Permanent Representatives? All we can expect from that will be that the attitudes adopted by the Ministers from the individual Member States will be confirmed without any further progress being made on the matter.

This is something I really do not understand. All the experts throughout the world agree that coal will even-

tually take over oil's current role, thanks in particular to the newly developed techniques for the liquefaction and gasification of coal. By 1982, we shall be able to produce petrol and other fuels by these two methods, although they will probably only become really viable once we have reached the objective set for 1990: coal production throughout the Community at a level of 200 million tonnes petroleum equivalent. We still have a long way to go before that much is achieved because, as you know, production of coal in 1978 amounted to only 130 million tpe.

As I said recently about the development of coal policy, we must think of the long term. The Community's coal programme is a long-term programme, and we must keep pressing the Council to act accordingly. Other countries outside the European Community — such as the USSR, China and the United States — have now realized that coal consumption must be encouraged. According to the Commission, 75% of electricity should come from nuclear and coal-fired power stations by 1990. The development of nuclear energy depends on the problem of handling and storing radioactive waste. Whether we are for or against nuclear energy — and this is not intended as the opening shot in the great debate on nuclear energy which has been called for from various sides of the House — there are nuclear power stations in existence, and that is a fact we shall have to live with. That being so, we must take steps to deal with the waste produced by those power stations. So far, however, the Council has not turned its attention to the Commission's proposal. Here again, I wonder whether the Council can really claim that disagreement on whether this problem should be dealt with by the Foreign Ministers or the Energy Ministers is the reason why no concrete plans have been forthcoming in the last two years.

To conclude, this subject is in my opinion so important that we should first of all have worked out in committee a common attitude to the two reports I mentioned earlier.

We intend in December to re-table Mr Pintar's question — which we decided to withdraw — on financing the Community policy, and to have a proper debate on it in specific terms. That will be after the meeting of the Committee, so that one will follow on better from the other.

I should like to say on behalf of my Group that we shall be voting for Mr Gallagher's motion for a resolution in the hope that it will help to force the Council to come to a decision.

President. — I call Mr Druon to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Druon. — (*F*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, like the sea eternally pounding the shore, here we are again debating energy in the wake of a Council meeting of Energy Ministers.

Druon

It is the same old story. The Council's inability to take decisions in this field means that here in this House we make appeal after appeal which goes unheard, one Summit gives way to the next and the meetings of the Energy Ministers slip by one after the other. There is never any concrete result. For years now the same proposals, whether on coal policy or oil prospecting or other measures, have been lying on the Council's table.

Yet energy problems are still — indeed, increasingly and more urgently so — at the heart of world diplomacy and strategy. Quite apart from the shock of spiralling oil prices, the very structure of the industrialized world has been deeply and permanently shaken. We have seen the 1973 oil crisis turn into an energy crisis, and then into a world economic conflict which is taking a dramatic turn. There is a hurricane of change blowing in the world.

While not wishing to apportion blame for this crisis, we can at any rate say that the countries of Europe have to a large extent been the victims. As a result of the rapid expansion of the European economy since the Second World War, the whole of Western Europe has become one of the world's major importers of crude oil, while domestic oil production in Europe has remained of marginal consequence.

In these circumstances the effects of the energy crisis are much more complex, more telling and more harmful in Europe than elsewhere. Since Europe's energy resources cannot be compared to those of the United States or the Soviet Union, the crisis has hit Europe hard and we have to ask ourselves about our future strategy. Persistent inflation, increasing unemployment and the economic crisis are already posing a grave threat to the very basis of our democratic way of life in Europe.

An even greater threat is the terrifying thought of a Europe without oil and energy as a result of natural developments, or more particularly of political conflicts, and subject to pressures, or even extortionate demands, which could seriously threaten the sovereignty, and indeed the very existence, of the nations of Europe.

To repeat what people have been saying for a long time, Europe must therefore map out a joint and forward-looking energy policy of its own, so that our future and our place in the world can be guaranteed. We are forced to admit that a genuine common energy policy of this kind is still wishful thinking, lost in the misty world of noble thoughts and utopian dreams.

I grant you, the Commission has worked out several energy plans designed to reduce the Community's dependence. It has established objectives, but these have been constantly modified as a result of all the delays that have built up. It has even gone as far as to propose *ad hoc* measures, selective measures, which

have not met with any greater success. The finest ideas have led to nothing of substance.

This apathy is alarming. It means that we are at the mercy of come what may. We can never emphasize enough this one fact, that this energy crisis is threatening every last sector of Europe as we know it today, with its high standard of living. The whole structure could crumble from one day to the next. This is why this Community of ours ought at last to come up with a real energy policy. This is why — in view of the swift and steady rundown of the earth's energy resources and because of growing world tension — the Community should waste no time in introducing and implementing an energy programme specifically designed for the countries of Europe.

There is no miracle solution which will quickly replace fossil fuels with other sources of energy. What we need is an energy policy in which the Community pulls out all the stops: elimination of waste, building up emergency stocks, encouragement of prospecting and research work in all possible energy fields, use of nuclear energy and efforts to develop new sources of energy.

Where oil is concerned, the reduction of our dependence on others requires a better organization of the oil market in order to clamp down on the disruption caused by the spot market in Rotterdam, for example, which only serves as an excuse to boost prices. Mr Debré hit the nail on the head in an earlier debate when he said there can be no question of a common consumer front unless this spot market is controlled, there are at least some rules to govern competition, and there are no under-the-counter deals.

Finally, the Community must expand and diversify its sources of energy supply other than oil. Diversifying our sources of supply is vital for the preservation and independence of Europe.

These are a few underlying principles of this common energy policy which has been hankered after so much but which has never got off the ground, and for which our Group once again declares its wholehearted support. In the final analysis — and this is the crux of the matter — Europe must decide between servitude and freedom. And for this there is another form of energy, moral energy. This is the most basic of all, and it is this which in the long run will provide the solution to our problems. It is perhaps time that we showed that the sources of moral energy in Europe will not be the first to run dry.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Dekker.

Mrs Dekker. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to make a few comments on the motion for a resolution that has been tabled on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research, and particularly to criticize the rather modest and limited nature of the views

Dekker

expressed in the motion for a resolution. Let us take a look at what tactics the committee has adopted. Mrs von Alemann complained just now on behalf of her Group that purely incidental pretexts were being used to present proposals and motions for a resolution to the whole House in an attempt to reduce the whole energy question to a mere piece of paper.

On a number of occasions here in this House, I have pleaded the case for a thoroughgoing energy debate. Given the status and the potential contribution of the European Parliament, it is rather too modest merely to urge once again, as the motion for a resolution does, that the Council should take decisions on the basis of the Commission proposals. We know by now what the Council will do — or rather, what it will not do. Because of the Council's reluctance to take decisions, especially in the energy field, there is practically no prospect of the problem being tackled in any decisive way at European level in the near future.

This being so, I call on the European Parliament to follow its own course, both at this present time and in the future, especially in such an important question as energy, which so directly affects the people of Europe. It is essential that the European Parliament should have a more thoroughgoing debate on all the aspects of this problem, giving everyone's views an airing, including minority opinions. If we carry on as we are doing now, that is if we continue to take one aspect of the energy problem and then talk all round it, the European Parliament's position on this problem will eventually come to resemble a highly intricate jigsaw puzzle. Let us not forget that it is precisely the European Parliament which can act as the stick which is apparently necessary to prod the Council into finally taking decisions.

The European Parliament is duty bound to state its position as regards Community policy; after all, the final decision on energy policy does not rest solely with the Council.

I therefore feel that the Committee on Energy and Research's motion for a resolution does not really go far enough. It reads as if we feel we have done our bit if we get things organized for this part of the world. In this respect, I have a higher opinion of the document produced by the Christian Democrats because of the conclusions they have drawn from our energy situation. Let me add straight away though that I certainly do not agree with all aspects of the Christian Democrats' conclusions. The energy problem is of a global and structural nature. It is not just a passing problem. The era of abundant, cheap energy is past, at least for the Western nations, including our own. We must adopt a different approach to energy matters.

I should like to conclude by commenting briefly on a few specific points. Let me begin with coal, which gets people so worked up, even in this House. Here, the major point at issue is the granting of aid to

encourage production. Here, the major point at issue is the granting of aid to encourage production. I should like to repeat the plea I made before the Committee on Energy and Research that we should pool our resources to improve coal technology right across the board, from coal-winning through the import and storage of coal supplies to measures designed to prevent the harmful effects of our increased consumption of coal. This latter point mainly means, at the present time, the problem of desulphurizing flue gases. I should like to ask the Commission what steps it is taking to ensure that people do not get as worried about this question as they have about nuclear energy.

I should also like to comment on the use of an energy price policy as an instrument of energy policy. Unfortunately, the various documents we have before us now all persist in regarding our main aim as being access to cheap energy. This is certainly not an attitude I can subscribe to, because price policy can be an extremely useful instrument of energy policy. Thirdly, I should like to ask the Commission why the Community programmes for the development of alternative forms of energy still rate little more than a token entry in the budget. This point was raised during the debate on the budget and the chapter on energy.

One final comment on paragraph 5 of the committee's motion for a resolution, which contains — you will notice — the statement that we, as a Parliament, the representatives of the people, should foist a particular opinion on the people we are supposed to be representing; I am referring here to the use of nuclear energy. Thankfully, I am not alone in thinking that we are living in a looking-glass world if we think that we, as a Parliament, as representatives of the people, should be trying to steer the people who elected us down a particular path. What we should really be doing is to encourage people to think of using energy economically. It seems to me extremely premature, however, for this Parliament as such to make a far-reaching statement on the use of nuclear energy when we know that discussions on this subject are in progress in our national parliaments and throughout our countries.

IN THE CHAIR : MR JAQUET*Vice-President*

President. — I call Mr Brunner.

Mr Brunner, Member of the Commission. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I cannot enter into a discussion about energy today without first making what amounts to a very undiplomatic remark. I must express the Commission's solidarity with the people who are being held hostage in the

Brunner

American Embassy in Teheran. The behaviour of their captors flies in the face of every standard of civilized behaviour...

(Applause)

It also runs counter to the traditions of Persian culture to which we Europeans owe so much. I do not think I am upstaging Mr Muntingh's urgent debate — nor would I wish to do so — by doing what I think is my duty in declaring that it is absolutely essential for these people to be freed.

(Applause)

We must take a cool and clear-headed view of the new situation which has arisen following the United States' ban on deliveries of oil from Iran. We are not now facing an emergency simply because 3 % of the OPEC countries' oil production is no longer bound for the United States. That is not true. We can keep the situation under control so long as we keep a clear head. We have the means to deal with this situation. We have proven commercial procedures and we shall make use of them. We have sufficient stocks here in Europe to enable us to face the winter without concern. At the moment, we have 115 days' supplies, which should enable us to overcome any acute problems. So there is no reason for us to hit the panic button. But one thing is essential, and that is that consumers and producers should pull together. The time has now come for solidarity among all those involved in the world economy. Now is the time for the OPEC countries to eschew any temptation to raise their prices on the strength of short-term disturbances. That is something we cannot say loudly and clearly enough. Now is the time for producers and consumers to sit down together to consider ways of guaranteeing regular supplies at reasonable prices over the coming years. It is high time we made a start on this. After all, this is directly connected with the questions you have put to the Council and the Commission.

There is one thing, though, we must be clear about right from the outset. The fact that we are not in an acute crisis and that there are no grounds for hysterical reactions does not mean that we shall not be facing enormous problems with our energy supplies in the long term. The era of cheap energy is gone for ever. That is something we shall have to come to terms with. It is high time we realised that the moment of truth has come: we are now facing the greatest upheaval in the energy sector since the end of the Second World War. We are facing an enormous structural upheaval in our industry, our system of transport and our entire way of life. That is the central point of the reports you have in front of you now. It is the central point of the Saint Geours Report, which you have now received. It is also the central point of our programme of objectives for 1990, which is also before you.

(Protests)

We must get used to the idea that we are on the threshold of a decade of increasingly expensive energy. That is something we must all realize. We must get used to the idea that, by the year 2000, we shall very probably have a world-wide shortfall of 35 million barrels of oil a day. We shall have to do whatever is necessary to cope with this situation. Have we the means to do so? Of course we have! Is our industrialized society to collapse simply because 2 % of our gross national product — representing energy imports and energy supplies — is coming under pressure? Of course we shall be able to cope, but not without enormous efforts. We must first of all mobilize the necessary resources. This will require a massive reallocation of resources from consumption to investment in energy. We, the Commission, have already presented proposals on this point. We have pointed out that whereas 2 % of gross national product is now needed to provide us with energy, that figure will be much higher, in the region of 6 to 8 %, in the next ten years. That is an enormous amount of money. In the next ten years, we shall have to find 50 000 million dollars each year to finance the necessary investment. It can be done; we simply have to get down to it. There are clear priorities here. There are some things we can do quickly and others which will take a little longer. What are the things we can do quickly?

We know that there are only three possible solutions to the problem of the forthcoming shortfall in supplies of oil. We can try to find new oilfields somewhere in the world, in which case we would have to come up with a new Texas every six months or a new Kuwait every three months, and that is out of the question. The second alternative is to go staggering into a recession, the like of which the world has never seen before. In that case each barrel of oil would be very expensive indeed.

We have worked out that, given the low utilization of capacity in a recession and the high social costs arising from the resultant level of unemployment, if there were an acute recession a barrel of oil would cost Europe 325 dollars. Just compare that with today's reference price of around 25 dollars. Does it make sense to let ourselves slide into that kind of situation? Are we still at the stage of thinking that a recession — with its appalling consequences for millions of people — is the only possible starting point for a new economic upswing? Surely we have got past that stage by now.

So we are left with the third alternative, which is to save energy. That is something we can do. Since 1973, we have saved between 7 and 8 %. We have worked out that we can make savings of 3.5 % in a single year, in which case consumption can then be cut drastically. We can reach a stage by 1990 where our consumption will increase by only 2.5 % per year, going down to only 2 % from the year 2000.

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All this can be done, but we have to make a start now. We cannot simply say that we need time to think about it. Nor can we say that we would prefer this or that alternative energy source. We simply do not have enough time, ladies and gentlemen. The crisis that we were all expecting in 1990 has in fact materialized in 1979. But we can cope with the situation if we invest enough in those major areas where things take longer and which, for that reason, cannot be given short-term priority. We can, though, make a start here by investing in the coal industry, in nuclear energy, and in alternative energy sources, solar energy and geothermal energy.

I hope that in the next few days the Council of Ministers will, at long last, approve the Euratom loan. We have called for a substantial increase here, and our demand has met with a very favourable response. I hope that, within the next few days, we shall be able to make available 1 500 million units of account for this Euratom loan, compared with the 500 million currently available.

But we cannot then simply rest on our laurels. We must do a great deal more for projects designed to demonstrate ways of saving energy. The results so far in this respect are good. In only a few months, we have received over 300 applications from industry, but the funds we have available are inadequate. We must increase those funds by a substantial amount and then, of course, the big song-and-dance will begin. The Finance Ministers will then warn us that if we carry on like that, we shall exceed the 1 % ceiling on VAT earmarked for the Community budget. Let me tell you that we are bound, sooner or later, to break through this magic barrier, not simply for the fun of it, but because it is essential to the people of Europe. We should be realistic and accept this fact now rather than failing to take the necessary measures simply because of this financial ceiling. Let us be quite clear about this: the Council of Ministers is inhibited not by the quality of our proposals but by the cost factor. That is why the coal package is still gathering dust in the Council's in-tray.

The Council said on 9 October that it would increase the aid for coking coal by the end of the year. I look forward to seeing what happens in December. The Council also said it would give urgent attention to the Commission's coal package. That is something else I look forward to seeing in December. I put forward the proposal that we should use the ECSC budget to make rapid progress toward boosting investment by way of interest subsidies.

I should like to see the reaction of the Member States with regard to increasing the ECSC budget for this purpose. I am getting sick and tired of taking part again and again in debates in this House, in which we all shed tears over the deplorable energy situation in Europe and then nothing — but nothing — happens.

Let me, however, warn you against adopting a false approach to these energy debates. Do not take the line

that we have no energy policy at all. That is simply untrue. We do have an energy policy although it is not a centralized policy in which prices and taxes are dictated from Brussels. It is a policy which takes account of the free market economy, as Mrs von Alemann said earlier. It is a policy which works on the assumption that we can only make progress by cooperating with the Member States on a decentralized basis, the necessary financial support being provided partly by the Community and partly by the Member States.

This does not mean to say, however, that we shall take no notice of prices and taxes. The Commission is currently engaged in examining this whole question, and I shall be speaking about this before the Committee on Energy and Research. Nor does it mean to say that we shall stop asking for more money whenever we need it. We shall continue to point out what is needed for the future and where the Member States need to take political decisions.

The year 2000 is just around the corner. We shall have to make enormous efforts between now and then, and it is time the Member States got together to agree on future prospects. It is time the Member States developed a clear view of what we shall need up to the year 2000. This is the path that was taken at the last European Council in Strasbourg, and the same path was taken at the Tokyo Summit. We need political agreement on certain quantified objectives, even if they are bound to include a number of uncertainties.

That is something we can achieve. This 1990 programme, which you now have before you, sets out in detail everything we shall need up to 1990: the objectives, the means and the timetable. No one can say that we do not have a European energy policy. What we need is a political decision on this policy. Once the decision has been taken, we can proceed systematically and draw the necessary financial conclusions. I do not share the view that the Commission can do everything better than the Member States. However, I do believe that the Commission needs the means to give the necessary impulses and that the Commission must compare the efforts undertaken by the Member States and have the right to criticize the Member States wherever necessary, when things do not work properly. That is our role. It is a role we regard as important, and that is why we have put forward this document.

In the year 2000, we shall be confronted with enormously increased costs. Using hydrogen or methanol as a source of energy will cost us between 10 and 15 times as much as oil. Investment in the insulation of houses in the Federal Republic of Germany alone, for instance, will cost DM 15 000 million, or something like 7 000 million dollars. The United States alone would need to invest 250 000 million dollars to produce a large part of its oil requirements by coal synthesis. This money has to be made available gradually.

Brunner

We have now reached a watershed in our economic and social development. This is not only the end of the society of conspicuous consumption; we have now reached a stage where all of us will have to take a systematic look at every aspect of life — in industry, transport and in the home — and save, save and save again. We Europeans have coped with much more difficult situations in the past. I believe we have the ability to make these changes. I also believe the people in Europe are prepared to make them. But they must be given a sign! Do not leave everything up to market forces. The market on its own can only produce a short-term reaction. Give the market the guidance it needs. It is up to you to ensure that the politicians work together with economic and market forces so that the people can make the necessary effort. I believe we can win through, but we must all do our bit.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Mr President, I am amazed to hear the Commissioner state that he can solve the energy problem by exacerbating the already existing problem within the Community and suggesting that one would have to increase the budget in order to solve this problem. I do not think it is necessary, and I am afraid that he should not be mixing the issues like this. I am also very surprised that he comes up with such strong statements in support of nuclear energy. I would just put to him this question: if nuclear energy is so safe, why does it have to be built in outlying regions of the Community? Why not build your nuclear power stations in the middle of Paris or London or Rome? And as you well know, scientists lie. There is no such thing as safe nuclear energy. We as a Community cannot sacrifice the lives of unborn children on the altar of our present selfish and greedy needs.

Mr President, I should now like to turn to the statements in the rapporteur's report referring to discrimination against the coal sector in the Council's policy. It seems incredible that a community with ample reserves of indigenous fuel can follow policies which can only lead to the rundown of a vital industry. Unfortunately time only allows me to illustrate this by a British example. But it is a problem that faces the Community as a whole. In Britain today the Conservative Government has said to the steel industry: balance your books, import your coal in order to solve this problem. It is the only government in Europe that is doing this. Other countries in the Community are subsidizing their coal industries. In Germany, for instance, the subsidies are 12 times greater than those provided by the British Government, in France 15 times and in Belgium 25 times. What a farcical position it is for any government in the Community to

adopt. The steel industry, responding to this ridiculous free market and the policy of devil take the hindmost, now has to import 1 million tonnes of coal a year.

This has led to the closure of five collieries. In South Wales alone this has cost 5 000 jobs. This is the problem that has arisen from a Tory dictate, and you cannot close a colliery the same way as you can close a tap or an oil well. If you live in London you should come and see how the coal industry works. You cannot tell the miners to go away, come back in five years' time, we might need you then, or Europe might need you. If you close a colliery, you close a community. Believe me, these miners will be needed in five years' time because coking coal is being imported from the United States of America: the one country that is about to fall into the black hole of an energy crisis or down its own dry oil wells. And what will the Americans do then? Will they honour their contracts with the British Steel Corporation? Will they honour their contracts with Britain? Will they honour their contracts with Europe? Anyone who believes that is a political idiot, but unfortunately the present British Government does believe it. Or is it that the capitalists of Europe find that there is more profit in other areas of the world? Let us not play games or delude ourselves by talking about market forces and freeing the economy. The energy field is a managed economy, and if you do not believe it — and the British Government does not believe it — go and ask the OPEC countries.

I am told continually that one of the major arguments for the retaining of the common agricultural policy is self-sufficiency. If we are to strive for that, then we must also follow the same logic in the coal industry and in the steel industry. Community investment is needed: as aid for sales of coal between member countries in refurbishing and modernizing our coal mines; in refurbishing and modernizing our coal-fired power stations and in conversion from oil to coal. As the Commissioner has said, although there is an energy crisis we have the resources to meet this. We do not have to invest huge sums of money in nuclear energy. We only have to be realistic, plan our energy future on a coal industry where there is security of supply in the short medium and long-term.

Parliament has asked for action. The Commission has made proposals, but the only one that the Council has implemented is to carry out a surveillance of imports. It is standing aside while the ship is sinking. It is not good political sense in the British context it is diabolical to play off two basic and vital industries against the other. It is diabolical to play off the trade unions in the steel industry against the trade unions in the mining industries. When you sit in your comfortable offices, remember there are men who have to go down into the bowels of the earth to get this coal out for

Rogers

Europe, and it is about time that Europe put some money into the coal industry in a proper manner.

(Applause from certain quarters on the left)

President. — I call Mrs Walz.

Mrs Walz, chairman of the Committee on Energy and Research. — (D) Mr President, certain honourable Members seem to be confusing the European Parliament with the British House of Commons. Let me remind them that this is the European Parliament, not the House of Commons.

(Applause)

As Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Research, I should like to thank Mr Gallagher most sincerely for his presentation of this motion for a resolution and to draw the attention of those Members who were against the increased use of coal to paragraph 4 of the motion, which :

Urges the Council to speed up its deliberations on other outstanding Commission proposals in the energy sector...

The motion for a resolution is quite explicit on this point, which means that the other types of energy — besides coal — are automatically included. This and the other proposals contained in the motion are what we are talking about here today. I have a feeling that many of us have only seen the first version of this motion for a resolution, not the final text. Paragraph 4 shows quite clearly why we have been talking about other types of energy besides coal.

I just wanted to make that point to clarify the motion which has been tabled on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research.

On the motion itself, all I really have to say is that we discussed all the aspects at our last meeting last week, and there is really nothing more to be added. Our sole concern is that the Council should long last give its approval to the coal package if it wants to avoid being accused of dereliction of duty, which is something we should otherwise have to consider. The Council ought to take an example from President Carter and the US Congress. With Teheran casting its shadow, the 20 million dollars for the Synthetic Fuel Program were approved by Congress without any further ado.

An interesting feature of the last debate — and the same applies to this one — was the more or less visible difference of opinion between the Council and the Commission in the coal sector. I did not quite follow you, Mr Brunner, when you said that the Council would take a decision at its next meeting. Having heard what the President-in-Office of the Council said to us then, I very much doubt that. It

was quite clear from his remarks that there is some disagreement between the Council and the Commission. As Mr Andrews said at the end of his remarks — and despite Mr Davignon's contradiction — the Council is expecting to receive fresh proposals from the Commission before it can come to a decision. The Commission, on the other hand — as we heard from Mr Davignon — intends to make a few minor adjustments; after all, the proposals have been awaiting the Council's attention for so long now that some amendments are inevitable. The Commission is, however, certainly not prepared to submit new proposals, although this was the condition laid down by the President-in-Office of the Council before a decision could be reached on the coal package.

We agree with the Commission on this. There is no need for new proposals. The proposals are there and all we need is a decision from the Council. We were very pleased to hear Mr Davignon — speaking on your behalf — say in very clear terms at the end of his speech — and despite the very restrained tone he adopted to begin with — that, in this case, the Commission is in disagreement with the Council. We should like to thank the Commission for stating this so clearly, and we feel that here the Commission is really acting as a driving force behind the Community, as opposed to a simple secretariat-general. In the last debate this was not so clear.

An equally important aspect of the last debate — and here I would refer you again to paragraph 4 of our motion for a resolution — was Mr Davignon's statement on the Euratom Treaty, which you also referred to, Mr Brunner.

This treaty lays down in unequivocal and binding terms the Community's responsibility for questions of nuclear supplies, both within the Community itself and in its external relations, as was confirmed by Decision 1/78 from the European Court of Justice. The Commission, we have been told, is still investigating the situation in this sector. Under the terms of the Treaty, the Commission must submit its findings to the European Parliament, and I cannot imagine — in view of the Court of Justice's decision — that there can be abandonment of the monopoly position of the IEA in Paris, the Commission's exclusive right to conclude treaties on behalf of the Community, the fundamental right to equal access and the right to balance supply and demand. Under the terms of the Treaty, these four points cannot simply be abandoned, and I assume that the newly elected European Parliament would under no circumstances agree to the resultant inevitable restriction on its own rights.

So what kind of general energy policy should we be pursuing? Energy saving, better utilization of energy, which — according to say — would require something like 4% growth to generate the investment necessary for making any effective savings. You have

Walz

also calculated that these energy-saving measures could create between 300 and 500 000 jobs throughout the European Community.

I should like to come back on one last point which is always cropping up here, and which I have heard in particular on a number of occasions from the left of the House. It is not true that the United States has made no savings. They have adhered to the decisions taken in Tokyo, requiring them to cut their consumption by 5 %. I would say, then that we ought to follow the Americans' example and cut our consumption by 5 % as well. That is something we have so far failed to do, despite the commitment we entered into in Tokyo.

President. — I call Mr Müller-Hermann.

Mr Müller-Hermann. — (*D*) Mr President, I wanted to exercise my right as author of the question of speaking again in this debate, because I would like to thank Mr Brunner for his comments and at the same time ask him to clarify his position on two points.

I was very impressed, Mr Brunner, with the way you drew attention — following basically the same line as I took at the start of the debate — to the pressing time factor and the need for us politicians to explain to our constituents that in the future, adequate energy supplies will call for a reallocation of the gross national product, both in terms of individual spending and in the national budget.

We thank you for this. Our position as politicians makes us responsible for the well-being of our citizens and calls upon us to show courage. It is above all up to the national governments to display this courage.

This oral question on behalf of my Group asks the Commission among other things for information as to the extent to which and at what expense, we can realistically expect contributions to the energy supply from solar energy, tide power and wind power. You have not adequately dealt with this issue, Mr Brunner. You said that there was also a need for much research in this field. Our group entirely agrees. I ask, because our citizens are continually being persuaded by well-meaning people, not to mention pie-in-the-sky idealists, that if only we could save enough, if only we could produce enough coal, if we had enough solar energy at our disposal, and so on and so on, then we could do without nuclear power. I therefore hope you will say something about this.

Secondly, today we have seen our Socialist colleagues provoking yet another confrontation and putting up more resistance as soon as nuclear power was mentioned. In the final analysis, this refusal is aimed at playing for time. This particularly applies to the Social Democrats from my own country, because the Social-Democratic Party is split and the government itself is therefore incapable of action in this matter.

Once more therefore, I appeal to Mr Brunner to reiterate as clearly as possible, on behalf of the Commission, that with due regard for the need for safety regulations and for a nuclear waste management system — if possible a Community waste management system — meeting stringent requirements, the Community cannot solve its energy problems without a limited, but indispensable supply of nuclear power. I think we must be honest with ourselves on this. Further, in order not to lose our credibility in the eyes of the electorate we cannot afford to waste any more time. Therefore, Mr Brunner, I would ask you to make your views on this matter clear.

President. — I call Mr Purvis.

Mr Purvis. — Mr President, I am grateful to Mrs Walz and Mr Müller-Hermann for returning us to the sober consideration of Europe's energy policy and strategy, which will in the end be as much to the advantage of South Wales as to anywhere else. No doubt having made a suitable impression on his friends from Wales in the gallery Mr Rogers has now retired for an early lunch.

(*Laughter*)

The growing prominence which energy is attaining in this Parliament is no more than evidence of the concern now existing among the people of Europe on this issue. Their future prosperity and even their democratic and free way of life depends on a satisfactory solution of the energy supply problem. Europe must move towards independence in energy supply, and coal will play a major part in this. It therefore behoves all those concerned with energy policy in Europe to put aside legalistic and political niceties in order to get down to the development and concerted adoption of a meaningful energy strategy. Having agreed on the broad lines of the strategy we must then draw up and agree upon the practical policies that are necessary in order to achieve the aims of such a strategy.

I find the present procedures for arriving at such a concerted strategy and its dependent policies less than effective or efficient. There are too many players working at cross purposes or in separate compartments in a sort of multi-sided badminton match. This results in racquets clashing, misunderstandings as to who should play the shot and in the end the shuttlecock lies on the ground while we discuss who should have played or who should pick it up. It seems to me quite illogical that the Council, the Commission, the Parliament and the Member State governments do not cooperate practically to develop this strategy and to implement the policies for which each of them may be deemed responsible. That is what has happened with the coal policy. Time and again we see signals that demand action. Time and again reference to the participants' legalistic prerogatives or a lack of polit-

Purvis

ical will impede such action. We have laudible declarations of the highest level of the European Council. The Commission puts forward implementing proposals. Parliament supports these and the financial implications. But the Council of Finance Ministers throws them back with swingeing cuts. Now Parliament puts it back to the Council. What happens next? Meanwhile the poor old shuttlecock of energy policy lies on the ground faced with a political impasse or a financial one. The Council tends to sweep things under the carpet rather than confront the problem.

Can anyone explain to the people of Europe why something they see as so vital to their future should not be dealt with in a common-sense way and with a sense of urgency? We must make this priority number one and summon up the political will to make meaningful progress through cooperation. Certainly the financial implications will be daunting but these must be faced and not just avoided and postponed. The people of Europe demand action, and they will not wait long. They will not accept for very much longer these petty jealousies between the participants. They expect us all to come up with solutions, with firm plans, and to define the finance required. They want to be able to measure our progress against a defined strategy. I therefore call on the Council of Ministers, on the Member governments, on the Commission and Parliament, to devise a way to achieve concerted progress. I am sure this House will make evident in this debate its willingness to cooperate and to help in a positive spirit. We therefore look to the other participants to respond positively because we must go forward now.

President. — I call Mr Ippolito.

Mr Ippolito. — (*I*) Mr President, we shall be voting against the Gallagher motion for the reasons outlined by Mr Veronesi, and with this vote we want to show that it is time the Commission got around to working out an overall energy policy which is not merely limited to some sectors. On the other hand, we support the oral question tabled by Mr Müller-Hermann and his colleagues in the Group of the European People's Party because the authors of this document are urging the Commission to implement a varied and overall energy policy. It is our view that the serious energy situation in the Community cannot be tackled in the haphazard and piecemeal fashion which the Commission has adopted until now, with special treatment mainly for coal producers. We all realize that we are going to have to generate more electricity using coal, but we are also convinced that in the medium term Europe's energy problems cannot be solved by coal alone but that we shall also need nuclear energy, although of course all the proper precautions will have to be taken. In the long term — by which I mean 30 or 40 years from now — the only

acceptable alternatives will be the renewable or virtually inexhaustible energy sources, such as solar energy, nuclear fusion, biomass technologies and, in areas where it is feasible, geothermal energy with high and low heat content. All these are sources which require a tremendous effort of scientific research and technological development. For these reasons we hope that this oral question will spur the Commission to greater activity in the energy sector. We have criticized its work in this area in the Committee on Energy, because we feel that it has no clear aims in the medium and long term, and that it lacks a basic plan. Furthermore, our support for the question by Mr Müller-Hermann and his colleagues should also be seen as urging the Committee on Energy to take a wider and more comprehensive approach to the Community's energy problems, and to discuss with the Commission all the other motions and questions which have been tabled in a somewhat haphazard fashion, without the political groups consulting among themselves in order to achieve a more systematic approach.

In our opinion, both the plenary Assembly and the Committee on Energy of this Parliament must pay a lot more attention to the appalling energy situation in the Community in order at least to foster the development of an energy policy for the optimum and varied use of all sources of energy both in the medium and in the long term and to coordinate Community efforts in research along these four fundamental lines: energy saving, role of the various sources, technological advances in the use of coal and nuclear safety, and research and development with regard to natural and alternative sources.

Lastly, I should like to urge Parliament not to get caught up in the irrational and false debate on the pros and cons of nuclear energy, but to consider all available sources of energy, taking an overall view on a sound economic and technical basis and with the utmost concern for the environment and public health.

President. — I call Mr Seligman on a point of order.

Mr Seligman. — Mr President, can you tell me why, when this oral question is addressed to the Council, there is no Member of the Council here for the debate? There may be some very good reason, but I think we should know what it is as this is rather important.

President. — The Council appears to be represented. I call Mr Adam.

Mr Adam. — Mr President, it is pleasing to know that the Council is represented, although it would not be surprising, I suppose, given the circumstances of the debate, if they had chosen not to be here this morning.

Adam

The Commissioner spoke about the energy crisis, but there is also, Mr President, a political crisis, because quite clearly there are forces at work dictating energy policies which this Parliament seems unable to penetrate.

I make no apology for returning to the problem of coal, because that was the mainspring of the original motion put forward in the Committee on Energy and Research. I want to say a very few words, Mr President, about the technical position of the coal industry, because its technical position is such that I believe it can show a clean pair of heels to the other sources of energy that we talked about so much this morning. The coal industry has machines for developing the coal seams, it has machines for working coal, it has machines for supporting coal faces which are very efficient and very reliable. A remarkable revolution has taken place in the industry in the past 25 years. The application of micro-processors has not bypassed the industry in the past 25 years. The application of micro-processors has not bypassed the industry either. Remote operation of machines, remote working of coalfaces and remote monitoring of underground conditions are all part of the everyday mining scene. All these technical developments have produced an industry which is extremely well able to exploit the new coalfields which are there waiting for us. They can do it cheaply and productively.

The essential point of my argument is that electricity generated from those sources is every bit as competitive as electricity generated from any other source. It would be an absolute tragedy if we allowed historical financial costing to interfere with this very simple economic proposition. I spoke earlier of the impenetrable forces that seem to be at work. In the 1950s, the same forces said: there is plenty of cheap oil, we can forget about the coal industry. The same forces, in my opinion, are at work today to try and write off the coal industry against a so-called abundance of cheap imported coal or cheap nuclear energy. Costs and availability are, of course, two very different factors, and neither of them can be guaranteed. But we do know that technically we are in a position with our own coal industry to provide the coal, and to do so at competitive rates.

Ultimately, Mr President, this question is one that concerns the people of Europe themselves. But the people involved in the coal industries of the Community are waiting for a sign. This Parliament gave a sign in September; we are now waiting for a sign from the Council of Ministers that they are prepared to take practical measures. I would make a prediction, Mr President, that if the Council of Ministers were prepared to give that sign, we would see a big increase in Community output and productivity, because the industry is willing and able to respond to the energy

needs of the Community. I hope, Mr President, that a very large majority in favour of this resolution today will at last convince the Council of Ministers that they have got to respond to our call and release this potential within the Community.

President. — I call Mr d'Ormesson.

Mr d'Ormesson. — *(F)* Mr President, we have heard stressed this morning the tremendous effort needed to find new energy supplies for the Community but even this will not be enough to restore the shaky balance that exists at the moment. World oil consumption will exceed 3 000 million tonnes this year, with the requirements of the Community totalling something like 470 million tonnes.

But let us not fool ourselves. Take a look at a map of the Middle East and you will be struck immediately by the whole interplay of events, correlations and similarities. We must not overlook — no matter who is calling the shots tomorrow in Tehran although the Russians are most likely to benefit if there is continued disorder — is that Iran has a common 1 500-mile border with the Soviet Union, which has already pushed its influence strongly into Afghanistan, South Yemen and the Horn of Africa. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates are isolated in the centre of this ring of Soviet influence. The point is that more than half of our oil comes from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. In the middle of October the Soviets used 22 large Antonov transports to airlift two brigades of men and equipment to South Yemen and Ethiopia. They were back in 36 hours, with Kosygin there to welcome them on the tarmac.

In view of this, there is one question I should like to ask Mr Brunner. I have already asked it in committee, but I was not entirely satisfied with his answer. I should like to know if Soviet and Comecon oil requirements are covered for a long time yet.

My second question is closely linked to the first. The only wars that can be avoided are those that are not dictated by the logic of the situation. All of us here want to avoid war. But if we are going to prevent war in the Middle East, I am convinced that one of the prime objectives of the European Community must be to combine our resources and efforts to deter further Soviet expansion in the Middle East. This is what my second question is about.

I do not know if Mr Brunner is in a position to reply to my second question. It is perhaps, indeed, probably a question for the Council. But, certainly, none of us will make it on our own. Only a combined effort will save us, and if we are ready to make this effort it will provide new impetus and new hope for the European Community.

4. Agenda

President. — I should like to put to the House two proposals from the enlarged Bureau, which met this morning :

- tomorrow's vote on the motion for a resolution on world hunger should be held without debate ;
- the oral question by Mr Romualdi and others to the Commission on the taking of hostages at the United States Embassy in Teheran should be included in the debate on Iran to be held tomorrow.

Are there any objections ?

That is agreed.

The proceedings will now be suspended until 3 p.m.

The House will rise.

(The sitting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : MR JAQUET

Vice-President

President. — The sitting is resumed.

5. Question Time

President. — The next item is the third part of Question Time. We continue with the questions addressed to the Commission.

At the author's request, Question No 5 by Mr Debre is postponed to the next part-session.

I call Question No 6 by Sir John Stewart-Clark :

Is the Commission aware that many inshore fishermen are extremely worried about the threat to their livelihood resulting from the damage caused to fish stocks, their fishing equipment, and the sea bed itself, by beam trawlers ?

Mr Gundelach, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(DK)* From the purely biological point of view, it is strictly speaking irrelevant whether the amount of fish which can acceptably be fished from our stocks is caught by large boats with a particular type of equipment — in this case beam trawlers — or smaller boats with smaller equipment. However, it does matter from the point of view of inshore fishermen whether or not there are regulations limiting the extent to which the biggest vessels and the most efficient equipment may be used in restricted coastal waters which local fishermen depend on for their livelihood. In view of this social and regional consideration which has been one of the main principles underlying all the proposals and statements made by the Commission, Council and Parliament regarding a common fisheries policies, the Commission has always proposed that large

vessels fitted with beam trawls should be excluded from fishing for flat fish within twelve nautical miles of large stretches of the Community's coast, i.e. in areas which serve as spawning grounds for sole and where large numbers of small sole and plaice are found.

Sir John Stewart-Clark. — I am very glad indeed to hear from the Commissioner that he recognizes the vital interest of the inshore fishermen. Would the Commission not agree that it is high time a Community law was enacted providing for a coastal zone within which only inshore fishermen would be allowed to fish and including a ban on trawlers which exceed 25 metres and 300 horsepower ? Can the Commission also take heed from those countries which have already enacted legislation to protect inshore fishermen and provide information concerning such legislation ?

Mr Gundelach. — *(DK)* As I said in my original answer, the Commission has tabled the proposals mentioned by the honourable Member. I do not think we can expect proposals of this kind to be adopted except as part of an overall fisheries policy. As far as an overall fisheries policy is concerned, it is my conviction that reasonable account should be taken of the interests of local fishermen who are extremely dependent on local waters by means of legislation of the kind we are discussing. However, I must draw attention to one more principle, namely that legislation of this kind must naturally be non-discriminatory in character. We must not create a situation whereby in certain waters in various parts of the Community, the local fishermen are protected out of social considerations — in accordance with Article 39 of the Treaty — but this protection does not also apply in the case of larger vessels or particular equipment used by fishermen of the same nationality. If there is to be a ban on the use of boats above a certain size or power or on the use of equipment of a certain kind, this ban must apply regardless of nationality, as this is the only way in which the desired effects could be achieved, i.e. the protection of local fishermen in certain areas.

Mr Kirk. — *(DK)* Is the Commission aware of any scientific studies which indicate that beam trawling is more harmful to fish stocks and the sea bed than other methods ?

Mr Gundelach. — *(DK)* Yes, this has been established and is one of the reasons why we have made these proposals and must perhaps consider going even further.

Mr Hutton. — Mr President, I should like to invite the Commissioner to reconsider the first part of his answer where he said that it did not matter whether a few large boats or a large number of small boats operated. I should like to invite him to reconsider that

Hutton

answer in view of the fact that a lot of small boats would provide employment for a lot of small people who otherwise, as in parts of my constituency, are now out of work.

Mr Gundelach. — (DK) That was exactly what I said, Mr Hutton. This may well be another case of an interpretation problem. I said that, from a biological point of view it was irrelevant whether a given permissible amount of fish is caught by means of a big vessel or a small one. I then went on to say, however, that this was not irrelevant from the point of view of the local fishermen. This is why we have proposed the measures under discussion, i.e. not out of biological considerations but out of consideration for the local fishermen. I therefore wholeheartedly agree with the honourable Member, as I said in my original answer.

Mrs Ewing. — I am grateful to Commissioner Gundelach for the thoughtfulness and the concern for the fishermen shown in his answer.

In the light of the philosophy contained in his answer, will he give an assurance to us all that he will look again at the EASSF system proposed for 1980 which seems to be designed to give grants for additional new boats, thereby adding to the tonnage of the fleet rather than giving grants to modernize the boats we already have?

Mr Gundelach. — (DK) I shall be only too glad to look into the point made by Mrs Ewing. The situation in general is that, as long as there is no common fishery policy, there will be no common structural policy, since no Member State will accept a structural policy — which is something we need — in the absence of the other necessary elements. However, in view of the major changes in conditions in the fishing industry and the pressing needs, particularly in the case of the inshore fleet, the Commission has succeeded in persuading the Council to make certain funds available in 1979-1980 for the modernization and adaptation of the inshore fleets. Unfortunately, these funds are limited, but some money is available and it must naturally be used in such a way as to help the inshore fishermen to adapt as well as possible to present-day conditions.

President. — I call Lord Douro on a point of order.

Lord Douro. — I should like to raise a point of order on Rule 47A and the guidelines attached to it. It says, and I quote

The President shall rule on the admissibility of supplementary questions and shall limit their number so that each Member who has put down a question may receive an answer to it.

I should like to ask you, Mr President, if you would call fewer supplementary questions with each question that has been put down so that the approximately 50

remaining questions to the Commission have some chance of being answered.

President. — I do not think it will be possible to deal with all the 50 or so remaining questions in three-quarters of an hour anyway.

We will try and proceed as quickly as possible and I hope you will help me in this respect.

I call Question No 7 by Mrs Chouraqui :

Has the Commission carried out studies to determine the effect a reduction in weekly working hours might have on unemployment? What conclusions does it draw from these studies?

Mr Vredeling, Vice-President of the Commission. — (NL) Mr President, the Commission has, through the Economic Policy Committee, examined the studies carried out in the various Member States into the economic consequences of redistribution of work, and we received the results of this examination only this week. As far as we can judge from this report in the short time we have had to study it, the Economic Policy Committee agrees that it is not possible, on the basis of the information available, to indicate exactly what effect reduction in the weekly working hours would have on the employment situation. In addition, as has already emerged from previous analyses carried out by the Commission itself, the methods used to reduce hours also greatly influence the effect on the employment situation.

Important factors which might determine whether or not this would have a positive effect on the employment situation include developments in productivity, mobility — in particular the ability to adapt to a new job — the organizational flexibility of the companies and, last but not least, the extent of wage increases and the improvement of other working conditions which might result from negotiations between the two sides of industry. Sectoral and regional differences must also be taken into account.

Mrs Chouraqui. — (F) The organization of working hours is an important issue. My question dates from October and was originally coupled with a motion for a resolution with a request for urgent procedure which was referred to committee.

Thus, we are awaiting with impatience the report of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment. However, since the European employers' organizations will soon be holding a meeting within UNICE starting on 22 November, and the trade unions, particularly the European Trade Unions Confederation are having a campaign on this subject in the week from 26 to 30 November, could the Commissioner give us some idea as to which of the various proposals which are to be studied, such as the cutting of overtime, lowering the retirement age or reducing the number of hours worked per year, are likely to be taken up by the Commission?

Mr Vredeling. — (NL) May I remind you that the document you have received outlines a number of subjects in the field of the redistribution of work. We discussed this matter on 8 October, under the chairmanship of the President of the Commission, with the representatives of UNICE and of the European Trade Unions Confederation, with the result that the participants agreed to continue their talks.

As regards the honourable Member's question concerning the subjects which the Commission intends to select from this list, I can inform you that we are looking into all the subjects mentioned by the Council on 22 May this year, from hours worked per year through early retirement to part-time work. All these subjects are currently being studied and are included in a draft resolution to be discussed by the Council on 22 November, and which was produced at the Council's request so that it would be in a position to pronounce on these matters.

Mr Marshall. — Would the Commissioner not agree that employment in export industries depends upon their being competitive, and that if we have a shorter working week, these industries will become less competitive rather than more so, and that if we insist on paying ourselves more for working less, the sole result will be greater unemployment, not less?

Mr Vredeling. — (NL) Our investigations show that there is no direct connection between working hours and labour costs per unit produced. Thus, I cannot give a general answer to the honourable Member's question. I should nevertheless like to point out that in my first answer I explicitly drew attention to the connection between measures involving reduction of working hours and possibilities in the field of basic wages.

Mr Albers. — (NL) In connection with this question of the effect of reducing working hours on employment, I should be grateful if Mr Vredeling could tell us how the employment situation in the Community is likely to develop if no measures invoking a reduction in working hours are introduced in the coming years.

Mr Vredeling. — (NL) I can answer this question very briefly. The Commission has come to the conclusion that, on the basis of the economic analyses and forecasts for economic growth in the 1980s, it appears that if the present trend in economic growth continues, we cannot guarantee full employment if no ancillary measures are taken.

For this reason, the Commission has included the redistribution of work on its agenda as an essential complement to the measures aimed at bringing about a more equitable distribution of the available work among those persons who wish to work.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Since Mr Vredeling has stated that the Commission is currently preparing a draft resolution for the Council, can he tell us to what extent the representatives of the trade union movement in the Community, and perhaps also employers' representatives, were involved in the preparation of this resolution?

Mr Vredeling. — (NL) As I have just explained, we held a sort of hearing, under the chairmanship of the President of the Commission and in the presence of Mr Ortoli and myself, on this draft resolution which the Commission intends to forward to the Council for its meeting of 22 November. The result of this discussion with the two sides of industry resulted in the Commission modifying a number of points in its draft resolution.

President. — I call Question No 8 by Mr Seal.

Could the Commission state when the results of their enquiry into possible dumping of electrical motors into the EEC from Eastern Europe will be known, and is it possible to give any advance information on this subject in view of the number of jobs threatened by it in the Community as a whole, and in West Yorkshire in particular?

Mr Jenkins, President of the Commission. — Although this investigation is now well advanced, the Commission is not yet in a position to set a date by which the results will be known. This is necessarily a complex matter involving the investigation of imports from seven countries as well as significant variations, both in the types of electrical motors involved, and in the prices and conditions of sale of these products in the different Member States. It is not the practice of the Commission to publish details of an investigation before the facts are finally established or until provisional protective measures are envisaged.

Mr Seal. — Whilst I accept the explanation from the President of the Commission, could we be told whether the complaint was justified or not justified, in order to reassure manufacturers in the UK?

Mr Jenkins. — I do not wish to prejudice the result of the investigation. What I can say to the honourable Member is that the investigation, which, as I said, is necessarily a very complex matter, is fairly well advanced. So far visits have been made to 32 firms or organizations, both in the Member States and abroad, to obtain and verify information. At least nine more visits will be required. The obvious suggestion here is that we are 75 % or 80 % of the way through the investigation. It is clearly an investigation which is well founded to the extent that it is necessary to carry it out properly. This is being done, but it would be quite wrong of me to prejudice the outcome.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Will the President of the Commission accept — and I am sure he will — that these enquiries have got to be quick? From the experience of this previous existence as a Minister in one of the Member States, he will know that nearly always, by the time these enquiries about dumping have been concluded, the damage has been done to the importing country. Will he please see to it that all these enquiries really move very quickly indeed, now that the Commission has taken over this task from Member States, because frequently it is too late after the initial investigations have been done? Particularly in this case, although I do not know the details of it, will he make certain that it is done quickly?

Mr Jenkins. — We are aware of the need for speed in these matters. It is of course the case that, where preliminary examination shows that dumping is taking place, and there is sufficient evidence of injury, a provisional protective duty may be imposed pending completion of the investigation. This is an important and complex matter. It involves imports from the whole range of Eastern European States: Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, the GDR, Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union itself. Also, the quantities involved, which underline the importance of the question, are quite significant: 20 million u.a. of trade are concerned here. This cuts both ways: it means that this can have an important impact within the Community; it also means that it can have an important impact on our trade with this wide range of East European countries. We will certainly endeavour to proceed as expeditiously as possible, but no one should be in doubt that there are significant repercussive factors which might here be involved.

Mr Provan. — Will the Commission conduct an enquiry and set up some monitoring process as regards imports into the EEC of material that is being dumped? It has recently come to my notice that a industry in Dundee could very well be ruined by the dumping of Christmas cards which have got no nomenclature whatsoever on them. There is no reason to believe that they have come from a State that professes any religious affiliation whatsoever, and I think it is intolerable that Christmas cards should be dumped on our Community in such circumstances.

Mr Jenkins. — I am not sure that one should enquire into the religious affiliations of Christmas card manufacturers, whether they be internal to the Community or external to it. None the less, if the honourable Member feels, as he clearly does, that he has a case in point, and can furnish us with information, we will look at it with, may I say, our usual expedition — or might that be misinterpreted?

(Laughter)

President. — Since the author is absent, Question No 9 will receive a written reply.¹

Since they deal with the same subject, I call Question No 10 by Mr Seefeld:

Does the Commission share the view that the task of ensuring implementation of the social provisions for road transport, which have already been harmonized, and efforts to expedite adoption by the Council of the 'second stage' of this programme and of the corresponding provisions in the inland waterway sector must be given high priority by the Commission in order to promote better working conditions and traffic safety and eliminate distortions of competition within the framework of a coherent transport policy?

Question No 11 by Mr Key, for whom Mr Enright is deputizing:

May it be assumed that the Commission continues to attach great importance to the harmonization of social provisions in the transport sector and in particular to the drawing up of relevant provisions for the rail, air and sea transport sectors, despite the fact that Commissioner Burke did not specifically include this among the seven priority issues he enumerated in a recent meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Transport?

and Question No 18 by Mr Albers:

In view of the amount of work still outstanding in connection with the harmonization of social provisions in the transport sector, can the Commission state whether this work is combined within a single department of the Directorate-General for Transport and whether sufficient staff are available to carry it out?

Mr Burke, Member of the Commission. — The Commission believes that the harmonization of social legislation in the transport sector constitutes an essential part of the development of the common transport policy, and has every intention of pursuing the work already undertaken. This of course includes work to ensure the adoption by the Council of proposals already on the table.

The further development of policies in relation to railways, maritime transport and civil aviation includes, in each of these sectors, an examination of working conditions. As work proceeds and further requirements for harmonization are identified, the Commission will make appropriate proposals.

As far as staff resources are concerned, I should like to make the following points: the Directorate-General for Transport includes a specialized service which deals with social harmonization in relation to road, rail and inland-waterway transport. In the same Directorate-General the Division dealing with maritime transport covers social legislation in that area. The same approach is adopted in the Division dealing with civil aviation. The Directorate-General for

¹ See Annex.

Burke

Employment and Social Affairs includes the unit dealing with the social partners in the transport sector.

I do not believe that our staff is adequate to carry out all the tasks which we consider necessary. Honourable Members will be aware that the numbers of new posts provided each year for the Commission by the budgetary authority have consistently been less than the Commission's requests. This House itself recognized in its resolutions of 16 January 1979 that the resources available for work on transport policy were seriously limited.

Mr Seefeld. — (D) Mr Burke, do you really think on the one hand that the individual Directorates-General of the Commission are really working on this subject with the necessary emphasis and coordination? Do you really believe that the importance of social policy in the field of transport is generally recognized, and do you on the other hand think that monitoring by the Commission will in any way ensure that the relevant regulations are observed by the authorities of the Member States?

Mr Burke. — I would say that I consider that, within the limitations which I have already explained, emphasis is placed on the importance of this aspect of the common transport policy.

In regard to the second part of the supplementary I would say that its importance is recognized widely across the Commission services, and, in so far as our limited resources allow us to do so, we are reasonably happy that the guarantees which fall to Member States are sufficiently carried out. But I would again stress, as I did in my original reply, the difficulties of having so few people working in this area.

Mr Moreland. — In the context of promoting better working conditions, as the question states, could I ask the Commissioner if he will again emphasize that the introduction of the tachograph and uniform driving hours are in the best interests of those working in the road-haulage sector in the Community, and will he emphasize this point, particularly for the benefit of those in the United Kingdom who need to face up to some subversive objections on this subject?

Mr Burke. — In so far as my personal emphasis will aid in this direction, I gladly give it, but I would point out that it is incumbent on the Member State authorities to do their part in enlightening public opinion in this matter. I know that they have exerted quite a lot of effort in this regard, and I gladly subscribe to the general thrust of the honourable Member's supplementary.

Mr Enright. — If the Commissioner's answer is right, can he then explain why it is that transport policy so often comes across as very much a technical

matter and not one which concerns human beings? This is largely responsible for the adverse publicity that the tachograph has received.

Mr Burke. — I would say that I am not entirely convinced that the technical difficulties of the matter are in fact responsible. I should think that the honourable Member is better placed than I to appreciate that there are other difficulties, such as those caused by the way in which certain trade unions present these regulations to their members.

I agree with him that technical matters have human implications. I have done my best as Commissioner, with the help of a number of groups, including Parliament, the media and so on, to make this transport policy intelligible. Difficulties still remain. However, my services, like those of Parliament, are available to enlighten public opinion so that this long drawn-out affair can be brought to a happy conclusion.

Mr Albers. — (NL) When the Commissioner said that we should be reasonably happy about the measures taken as regards social structure in the transport sector, was he not to some extent overlooking the fact that it has taken three years to prepare a proposal for the modification of the social legislation governing inland waterways? Is this not in fact a good reason for extra efforts in this sector, including an increase in the number of staff working on these matters.

Mr Burke. — Apart from the fact that it took us some time to get the opinions of Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, further difficulties must be laid at the door of another institution. I can assure the honourable Member that, as he is well aware, it is not possible for me to pass the legislation. I have to await the decision of certain other bodies. In so far as our efforts to achieve these ends are concerned, I can assure him that we welcome any support we can get and we hope to achieve some results in the very near future.

President. — Since the author is absent, Question No 12 will receive a written reply.¹

At the author's request, Question No 13 by Mr de la Malène is postponed until the next part-session.

I call Question No 14, by Mr Maffre-Baugé :

In the light of the increase in French imports of Italian wine during the 1987/79 marketing year, does the Commission intend to take energetic measures to regulate and limit these imports in volume, ensure a guaranteed minimum price, intensify supervision of the production and movement of wine, harmonize priority rates between the green currencies, ensure the effective elimination of fraud and monitor the quality of wine, and stop planting in EEC countries rather than encourage the grubbing up of vines?

¹ See Annex.

Mr Gundelach, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DK) This is an extremely wide-ranging question and, if I were to go into it in all its details it would involve a debate on both the existing and the future wine policy within the Community and would require me to give a far more substantial answer than is possible within the limits of Question Time. If, therefore, I am to keep within the limits fixed by Parliament itself, I will have to answer only that part of the honourable Member's question which appears to be the heart of the matter, and which is the first point made, i.e. what does the Commission intend to do with the large wine harvest for the 1978/79 wine growing year? The answer is simple. The Commission will, with the necessary energy and effectiveness, apply the means available under the existing wine regulation, i.e. aid will be granted for the storage of wine, or *bonne fin*, as it is known. If necessary, some of the wine will be distilled. This is unfortunate, since it entails considerable expense and the production of more alcohol for which it is difficult to find outlets under present conditions.

However, these are the rules and they will be applied. Finally, some of the available funds will be used to aid export. In fact, this has already been done. I am convinced that these measures will enable us, as in previous years when production has been so high — not, for example, the last two or three years — to maintain a reasonable price level and hence reasonable incomes.

I must make it quite clear that the Commission does not intend to propose any measures to be applied to the borders between Member States. This is not in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty. There is no point in resorting to proposals for measures which are fundamentally at variance with the Treaty.

Finally, I should simply like to say as regards the future wine policy — which is, however, more properly a matter for a debate in this Parliament at a later date — that as soon as we have managed to establish it, we will be able to avoid situations of this kind, since a restructuring of our wine policy, with the emphasis on quality wines, will ensure a better income on the basis of producing less wine which is difficult to market and which is most likely to end up being distilled.

Mr Maffre-Baugé. — (F) Mr President, I should just like to ask the Commission the following question which follows on directly from the preceding one which he answered in, to say the least, a fairly evasive manner. How does the Commission intend to eliminate fraud — since this could not only be desirable but is also provided for in the Community regulation on wine production with a view to eliminating irregularities in intracommunity trade — and to monitor imported wines and thus protect the consumer?

Mr Gundelach. — (DK) Under the existing system, the Commission must naturally see to it that trade in wine takes place in accordance with the relevant regulations, and that the regulations regarding monetary compensatory amounts are not used to give the wine of any one country an unfair advantage. Naturally, it would be simpler if these monetary compensatory amounts were smaller than they currently are. However, I must nevertheless point out that the difference in the monetary compensatory amounts between, for example, Italy and France is considerably smaller today than a year ago. Under the proposed new wine arrangement, which will involve a different structural policy and a more cohesive trade policy, it will be appreciably easier to ensure that the regulations are observed than under the present arrangement. Finally, I should like to add, in my answer to the question as to what we intend to do with this year's harvest, I was not evasive but quite clear and positive on the three points regarding the means we have at our disposal.

Mr Maffre-Baugé. — (F) My question has not been answered!

President. — You are no longer entitled to speak. The Commission is free to reply as it sees fit.

Mr Prag. — Mr President, considering the French criticisms of United Kingdom imports of New Zealand lamb and remembering that the Community is far from self-sufficient in sheepmeat, would the Commissioner tell us to what extent the Community's wine market problems are caused by French imports of North African wine for blending purposes?

Mr Gundelach. — (DK) As regards the first point made by the honourable Member, which was not a question but a comment, I should like to refer back to what I said before, i.e. that temporary problems in a market cannot be solved by introducing restrictions which affect free marketing and free trade. This is contrary to the basic provisions of the Treaty. The monitoring measures which will be introduced with a view to ensuring that the monetary compensatory amounts are not misused are of a different nature.

The current wine problem does not result from the import of wine from North Africa. Our imports of wine from North Africa have been steadily decreasing over the last five or six years in spite of the cooperation agreements we have concluded with the Mediterranean countries in question. One of the reasons why it is so difficult to solve, for example, certain fishing problems in these regions is that they have suffered from a reduction in their exports of a traditional commodity. The reason why there has been a surplus this autumn — unlike in the three previous years — is climatic.

Mr Deleau. — (F) Can the Commission tell us what progress has been made in drawing up a general European wine register, particularly as regards Italy?

In addition, in view of the surpluses in Charente, how does the Commission intend to guarantee reasonable incomes for the wine producers in that area?

Mr Gundelach. — (DK) Here we are getting onto a question which does not concern this autumn's wine harvest, but specifically concerns the new wine policy, i.e. the structural and trade policy as regards wine, as a whole. A new wine policy of this kind, which involves restructuring, requires a reliable system of registration which can be checked not only by the authorities of the individual countries but also by the Community authorities. Otherwise it is not possible to carry out the restructuring on an equitable basis and observe the agreements on equality concluded between the two main producing countries. However, the proposals, work on which in the Community institutions is approaching its conclusion, provide a basis for a wine registration system which will permit the effective monitoring required.

President. — I call Question No 15 by Mrs Roudy:

Has the Commission carried out a retail price survey for 1978 and 1979?

Mr Brunner, Member of the Commission. — (D) The Commission can confirm that a price survey was carried out in the years 1978/79 in cooperation with the Statistical Offices of the Member States. This analysis covered a total of 130 articles from various sectors, including 45 from the footwear and textile sector and 60 from the furniture sector. The Commission intends to publish an exhaustive survey covering 1 000 articles in 1980 as soon as the survey is completed and the approval of the Statistical Offices of the Member States has been given.

Mr Weber. — (D) May I ask whether the survey will be published in such a way that the information will be made available to the consumers as a whole and not simply to a few insiders?

Mr Brunner. — (D) The survey will receive the same publicity as all Community documents. It will be widely accessible to the public.

Mrs Roudy. — (F) In what form, to be more precise?

Mr Brunner. — (D) In the form of a European Community document. Copies of this document will also be sent to all the Community's Information Offices in the Member States so that the public can consult them.

Mr Sherlock. — Can the Commissioner put a price on his price survey? Increasing concern at the cost of certain of these investigations, when balanced against the probable welfare they will induce, causes me to ask this question.

Mr Brunner. — (D) The price will be low since the data will be provided by the Statistical Offices of the Member States. The 1980 survey will cover private consumption, public consumption and gross fixed capital formation and will thus be of great interest for the economy.

President. — I call Question No 16 by Mr Provan:

Is the Commission satisfied that the research programme into the conditioning, treatment and storage of nuclear waste, carried out by the Community and the national governments, is progressing at a satisfactory rate?

Mr Brunner, Member of the Commission. — (D) The Commission regards the research programme on nuclear waste as useful and is satisfied with its progress. We have been able to triple the sums available for this programme over the last five years to a current 23 million u.a. We have established very efficient coordination between the national laboratories and made considerable progress in the disposal of waste in glass. Drilling in geological formations has been delayed, however, as a result of delays in the granting of permission to drill. Overall, progress to date is satisfactory.

Mr Provan. — Will the Commission agree that it must be wrong to dump nuclear waste at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean where it is not recoverable, and that urgent research must therefore be carried out into the storage and conditioning process so that further treatment, if required, may be carried out at a future date? I think it is essential that we try and ensure that this material is stored in such a form that we can relocate and reprocess it if necessary.

Mr Brunner. — (D) I share this view. We must avoid waste being dumped in the sea in the future, and for this reason we have considerably accelerated this programme and substantially increased the funds allocated to it.

Mr Veronesi. — (I) Have the Commission's technical and scientific consultative departments never suggested taking a completely different approach and studying the possibility of putting radioactive waste to some specific use as has happened in the past with waste in other sectors?

Mr Brunner. — (D) A Commission document on reprocessing techniques is currently before the Council, and I hope we will soon be able to discuss this document. I think this is the type of thing which Mr Veronesi has in mind when he speaks about recycling waste.

Mrs Roudy. — (F) In view of the accidents which have recently occurred during transport of nuclear waste, particularly by air, does the Commission think that all the precautions necessary to ensure the safety of the population are in fact being taken, and does it not think that the current speeding up of the nuclear programme is inappropriate in view of the available reprocessing facilities which are currently far from adequate?

Mr Brunner. — (D) We cannot draw general conclusions from specific difficulties which have arisen. It is true, however, that the question of the transport of nuclear waste must be looked into thoroughly, and we are doing just this at the present moment. We have set up a committee to look into all the aspects of this problem and draw up a report. This committee consists of highly qualified European technologists. I share the view that it would be sensible, from the point of view of making better use of the fuel rods, if the Council were able to conduct a debate on reprocessing techniques and their improvement in the near future.

Mr Moorhouse. — To what extent is the Community coordinating its research effort with that of the United States? One presumes that there must be a great deal of work going on in this particular field over there.

Mr Brunner. — (D) We cooperate very actively with the United States in this respect and have developed, under the auspices of the International Energy Agency, a series of specific projects in this field in consultation with the United States.

Mr Weber. — (D) Mr Brunner, you have just said that the Council intends to deal with this second five-year programme. However, I heard to my consternation that the Council of Energy Ministers has already discussed this five-year programme on 9 October this year, and declared its general approval of it without waiting for the opinion of the committee and this Parliament. Is this correct?

Mr Brunner. — (D) There has been some confusion here. The Council held an initial debate discussion on these programmes on 9 October and approved a partial programme on indirect research programmes. This had been the subject of a debate here in Parliament.

President. — The third part of Question Time is closed.

6. Votes

President. — The next item is the vote on the motion for a resolution contained in the *Lange report* (Doc. 1-512/79): *Convergence and budgetary questions*.

I put the preamble and paragraphs 1 to 3 to the vote. The preamble and paragraphs 1 to 3 are adopted.

On paragraph 4, I have four amendments:

— Amendment No 13 by Mr Diana, Mr Bersani, Mr Giummarra, Mr Ligios and Mr Travaglini:

This paragraph to read as follows:

'4. Considers that the slowness of the Community in attaining its goal of economic convergence can be made good *inter alia* by

— increasing own resources by raising the VAT rate among other things,

— reorganizing the agricultural policy so as to restore the balance between the production given to agricultural products from the continental and Mediterranean regions respectively,

— and that such measures must be taken resolutely and urgently.'

— Amendment No 6 by Mr Ansquer:

This paragraph to read as follows:

'4. Notes further that the slowness of the Community in adapting its own resources, in developing common structural policies in *all economic sectors* and in restoring the balance of its common agricultural policy, *both as regards the conditions of production and the adaptation of production to internal and external markets*, may well be a serious obstacle to its development and is rendering the attainment of convergence even more difficult; this leeway must be made up in a decisive manner and as a matter of urgency.'

— Amendment No 16 by Mr Notenboom and Mr Klepsch:

The first phrase to read as follows:

'4. Notes further that the slowness of the Community in *raising the ceiling of its own resources...* (remainder unchanged)'

— Amendment No 10 by Mr Bersani, Mr Adonnino, Mr Giavazzi, Mrs Cassanmagnago-Cerretti, Mr Barbi, Mr Colleselli, Mr Ghergo, Mr Barbagli, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Costanzo, Mr Ligios, Mr Giummarra and Mr Antoniozzi:

In the first line of this paragraph, replace the word 'adapting' by 'increasing'.

What is Mr Lange's position?

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to begin, if I may, with a fairly general remark. All the amendments which have been tabled, with the exception of Amendment No 11, were discussed in the Committee on Budgets where they were all more or less rejected. The outcome can be seen in the resolution. Therefore, as

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rapporteur for the Committee on Budgets, I can only advise the House to reject these amendments to paragraph 4, thus leaving the text in the version adopted by the Committee after very difficult and detailed discussions. I therefore recommend rejection.

President. — The authors of Amendments Nos 6, 10 and 13 have informed me that they are withdrawn.

I therefore put Amendment No 16 to the vote.

Amendment No 16 is rejected.

I put paragraph 4 to the vote.

Paragraph 4 is adopted.

After paragraph 4, I have Amendment No 17 by Mr Notenboom and Mr Klepsch :

After paragraph 4 insert a new paragraph 4 a :

'4a. Emphasizes the urgent need for a decision on an increase in the Community's own resources, and reminds the Commission that it has undertaken to submit a proposal on this subject before 31 December 1979.'

What is Mr Lange's position ?

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, this matter was also discussed in committee, and it was decided to reject it because the majority view was that this question had already been dealt with in the debate on the 1980 draft budget and in the resolution on the 1980 draft budget, and that a corresponding decision on the matter had been taken. Anyone who now proposes that own resources be increased — and this is reminiscent of what the Commission once promised — must realize that in order to overcome the difficulties he must first ask those countries which are beset by these difficulties, and thus consider themselves to be unjustly treated, for additional funds before anything can be given back to them. In its deliberations, the Committee did not think this was very sensible and therefore decided not to reiterate this idea, which was perfectly appropriate in the budget debate, in this resolution. Therefore, in view of the situation in committee, I would ask the House to reject this amendment.

President. — I put Amendment No 17 to the vote. Since the result of the show of hands is not clear, a fresh vote will be taken by sitting and standing.

Amendment No 17 is rejected.

I put paragraph 5 to the vote.

Paragraph 5 is adopted.

On paragraph 6, I have two amendments :

— Amendment No 2 by Mrs Cresson, Mrs Charzat, Mr Josselin and Mr Moreau :

This paragraph to read as follows :

'6. Considers that the financial imbalances caused by the present situation and the burdens which they place on certain Member States are a serious problem

which calls for a *(two words deleted)* solution ; considers that a system of financial cooperation among Member States which takes account of all the factors that contribute to these imbalances, including the effect of MCAs, and also of the advantages acquired by certain Member States in obtaining supplies on the world market, can effectively contribute to the furtherance of the efforts at convergence made through the common policies ;'

— Amendment No 7 by Mr Ansquer :

This paragraph to read as follows :

'6. Considers that the financial imbalances caused by the present situation and the burdens which they place on certain Member States merit consideration and should be corrected by specific measures that do not impede the smooth functioning of Community mechanisms ;'

What is Mr Lange's position ?

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, I can only refer to my original remark and ask the House to reject this amendment.

President. — I put Amendment No 2 to the vote. Amendment No 2 is rejected.

I put Amendment No 7 to the vote.

Amendment No 7 is rejected.

I put paragraph 6 to the vote.

Paragraph 6 is adopted.

On paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, I have eight amendments :

— Amendments Nos 3, 4 and 5 by Mrs Cresson, Mrs Charzat, Mr Josselin and Mr Moreau, which seek to delete these paragraphs and which form a whole ;

— Amendment No 8 by Mr Ansquer :

Replace paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 by the following new paragraph 7 :

'7. Considers that a new kind of resources to supplement own resources, such as a system of financial equalization among Member States, would require a modification to the Treaties that would be subject to the unanimous agreement of the Council and to ratification by the national parliaments ;'

— Amendment No 1 by Mr Motchane :

This paragraph to read as follows :

'7. Considers that, until such time as the conditions required to achieve a minimum degree of convergence of national economic policies are created, the achievements of the Community must be preserved by means of special financial equalization measures ;'

— Amendment No 14 by Mr von Bismarck :
Paragraph 7 to read as follows :

'7. Considers that convergence cannot be achieved without a new and lasting system of financial equalization between the Member States within the Community — based on the concept of *per capita* gross domestic product and organized within the framework of the Community budget ;'

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- Amendment No 11 by Mr Bersani, Mr Adonnino, Mr Giavazzi, Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Mr Barbi, Mr Colleselli, Mr Ghergo, Mr Barbagli, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Costanzo, Mr Ligios, Mr Giummarra and Mr Antoniozzi, seeking to delete the word 'only' in the first line of paragraph 7;
- Amendment No 12 by Mr Bersani, Mr Adonnino, Mr Giavazzi, Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Mr Barbi, Mr Colleselli, Mr Ghergo, Mr Barbagli, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Costanzo, Mr Ligios, Mr Giummarra and Mr Antoniozzi:

This paragraph to read as follows:

- '9. Considering that this component should be invested in those Community policies which allow Member States whose *per capita* gross domestic product is lower than the Community average to make good their backlog, concentrating in particular on the elimination of current imbalances';

What is Mr Lange's position?

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would refer the House to my original remarks based on the discussion and decision in committee and recommend rejection of Amendments 3, 4 and 5. The committee has already rejected the idea behind Amendment No 8 to paragraph 7, and I thus ask the House to reject this amendment also. Amendment No 1 is the exact opposite of what was agreed and should therefore be rejected. Amendment No 14 is basically a different wording, but I would prefer to advise the House to leave this paragraph in the version adopted by the Committee on Budgets. I should be grateful if Mr von Bismarck could withdraw this amendment. As for Amendment No 11, in view of what has emerged from the discussion in the House, I can agree to it since the word 'only' as it stands may give rise to misunderstandings; to obviate any such misunderstandings, the word 'only' can be deleted since its German equivalent doubtless has more meanings than in the other official languages of the Community, so that it is open to misinterpretation. Thus I am in favour of Amendment No 11. That takes care of everything relating to paragraph 7. May I leave it at that, Mr President?

President. — I call Mr von Bismarck.

Mr von Bismarck. — (D) Mr President, I must make one point. My amendment is wrongly worded. There are a few words too many, and I think this should be made known. There is a mistake in the middle, where the words 'based on the concept of per capita gross domestic products and' are wrong. The amendment must therefore be read without this phrase.

But I do not withdraw it.

President. — Thank you, Mr von Bismarck, for this correction, which I note.

I put Amendment No 3 to the vote.

Amendment No 3 is rejected.

I call Mr Notenboom on a point of order.

Mr Notenboom. — (NL) Mr President, I would ask you to put to the vote all the amendments concerning paragraph 7 before you deal with paragraph 8.

President. — I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Mr President, I should be grateful if you would do as the rapporteur suggests and let the house vote on all the amendments to paragraph 7. Amendment No 5 concerns paragraph 8 and Amendment No 5 relates to paragraph 9, and so after we have voted on Amendment No 3, I would ask you to put Amendments Nos 8, 1, 14 and 11 to the vote, since these refer to paragraph 7, and then pass on to paragraph 8, on which we have Amendment No 4.

President. — I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, let us not get tied up in knots over this. It is true that Mr Ansquer's Amendment No 8 is headed paragraph 7 — in fact paragraph 7 (new) — but the authors or author intended to replace paragraphs 7, 8 and 9. If we wish to proceed as suggested by Mr Notenboom, we must also wait before voting on Amendment No 8, since the other Amendments Nos 4 and 5 are basically the same as Amendment No 8 with regard to their aims, namely to delete paragraphs 8 and 9. Thus we would now vote on Amendment No 1 if we are to vote as I have just recommended, and then Amendment No 14; after that we would vote on Amendment No 11 if the other two were rejected. Thus I advise the House not to vote on Amendment No 8 immediately, but to deal with it at the same time as Amendment Nos 4 and 5 in conjunction with the other amendments which then remain.

President. — I put Amendment No 1 to the vote.

Amendment No 1 is rejected.

I put Amendment No 14 to the vote.

Amendment No 14 is rejected.

I put Amendment No 11 to the vote.

Amendment No 11 is adopted.

I put paragraph No 7 thus amended to the vote.

Paragraph 7 thus amended is adopted.

I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) We must now vote on Amendment No 8, because it seems to introduce a new paragraph on condition that paragraphs 8 and 9 are deleted. If this is adopted, the other amendments will become void. If it is rejected, we must vote separately on the two other amendments seeking to delete

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paragraphs 8 and 9. This is the order in which I would advise the House to vote.

President. — I put Amendment No 8 to the vote. Amendment No 8 is rejected.

I therefore put Amendment No 4 to the vote.

Amendment No 4 is adopted.

I call Mr Nielsen on a point of order.

Mr Brøndlund Nielsen. — (DK) Mr President, I should like to ask you whether I am right in thinking that I voted in favour of deleting paragraph 8, and that this was adopted. Is that correct? Another reason I ask, Mr President, is that I had already wanted to raise a point of order to ask for a clearer lead from the Chair so that I know what we are voting on.

President. — I put Amendment No 5 to the vote. Since the result of the show of hands is not clear, a fresh vote will be taken by sitting and standing.

Amendment No 5 is adopted. Amendment No 12 therefore becomes void.

On paragraph 10 I have two amendments:

Amendment No 9 by Mr Ansquer:

Delete the last phrase:

'...; calls on... convergence between the economies';

Amendment No 15 by Mr von Bismarck:

Paragraph 10 to read as follows:

'10. Regards the Commission's communications as unsatisfactory, based entirely as it is on a mechanism involving refunds of Community resources: calls on the Commission instead to put forward a formal proposal for a lasting system of financial equalization';

What is Mr Lange's position?

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, in the Committee on Budgets — as here in the House — there was quite an argument about convergence, after which the Committee realized that it should make not only proposals for overcoming the financial difficulties but also suitable proposals for promoting convergence between the economies. Both amendments seek to delete this reference, and since the Committee considered it important to include and maintain it, I must express, on behalf of the Committee, disagreement with both amendments, which I ask the House to reject.

President. — I call Mr von Bismarck.

Mr von Bismarck. — (D) I withdraw Amendment No 15.

President. — Amendment No 15 is thus withdrawn.

I put Amendment No 9 to the vote.

Amendment No 9 is rejected.

I put paragraph 10 to the vote.

Paragraph 10 is adopted.

I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, since we are about to vote on paragraphs 11 and 12, I should like, in connection with paragraph 12, to take the precaution of repeating what I said when introducing this report. When the text states 'forward... to the Commission and Council', this means the Council as normally understood, including the European Council, which the Committee considered to be a Council like any other. But we must prevent the President of the Council from confining the matter to this Chamber and failing to pass it on to the President of the European Council, i.e. the Council in all its forms. I just want to make it clear to whom the resolution is addressed. We confine ourselves to the term 'Council', as it appears in the Treaties, but the European Council is a Council like any other and must therefore be prepared to receive documents and opinions from Parliament and must also face the fact that in due course it must enter into consultation with Parliament.

President. — I put paragraphs 11 and 12 to the vote.

Paragraphs 11 and 12 are adopted.

I call Mr Klepsch.

Mr Klepsch. — (D) Mr President, on behalf of my Group I should like to request half an hour's adjournment before the final vote.

President. — Are there any objections?

The House will rise.

(The sitting was suspended at 4.30 p.m. and resumed at 5 p.m.)

President. — The sitting is resumed.

I call Mr Ansquer to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Ansquer. — (F) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, no one fails to realize the importance of the subject being debated by Parliament, least of all its Members.

This is why, in view of the circumstances in which we have discussed Mr Lange's report and in view of the fact that several of our committees — among others the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs — have not had time to debate it thoroughly, I think that it would be wiser, for the sake of Parliament's image and its credibility, to refer this motion to committee.

President. — What is Mr Lange's position?

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, Parliament has now voted on the final form which this motion for a resolution is to take. It may well be true that the whole process was conducted to some extent under pressure of time, but that is Parliament's own fault, since it wanted to express an opinion on the question of convergence before the meeting of the European Council, and this part-session is our last chance to do so. Thus if it is now proposed to refer the report back to committee so that we have more time to deal with it, this means in practice that it will be impossible for Parliament to adopt a position for the benefit of the European Council before the Dublin Summit, which is contrary to its own wishes.

(Applause)

I can thus only warn Parliament not to act inconsistently and would urge you to take a decision immediately, i.e. vote on the motion for a resolution. This does not mean that the debate on the subject is closed, but that new debate has begun. We really must have the courage to introduce into the debate a few new ideas with which one or other of you may well not be very familiar, so that the appropriate results can be obtained, since we will subsequently have to debate the Commission's proposals in the House. It is one thing if the Commission now draws up special proposals for short-term solutions, but it is another thing if it goes further and proposes solutions to cover medium and long-term requirements. Whatever happens, Parliament has the opportunity of continuing its discussion and forming its opinion on how best to deal with these financial difficulties. Assuming that the Committee would meet again this evening, that would alter nothing, since what could it discuss now that Parliament has voted in plenary sitting on the form which this motion for a resolution now takes. So I would once again urge the House to vote on the motion now and then consider the matter closed for the moment.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins, who wishes to speak against the proposal.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Mr President, I am against the proposal that this item should be referred back to committee. I would hope now that we have had time to think about this issue, that we would be able to put it to the vote. I do not believe anything can be achieved by doing what has been proposed. I entirely accept what Mr Lange, our rapporteur and chairman of the Committee on Budgets, has said. It would be, I think, a great mistake for this House not to reach a conclusion now on the resolution. The Heads of State

are meeting at the end of this month. If we refer it back to committee it will not be possible for it to come before Parliament until too late. There is no question of the Committee on Budgets meeting tonight and being able to propose something tomorrow. The House will be very empty, anyhow, tomorrow, and there will be nothing that the House or the committee can really do other than what the House has already done, so I see absolutely no point whatever in sending this back to committee. I hope that the House will deal with the resolution now, and vote overwhelmingly in favour of it.

President. — I call Mr Notenboom, who wishes to speak in favour of the motion.

Mr Notenboom. — (NL) Mr President, personally I feel that there is a lot to be said for referring the report back to committee. There is no doubt that some confusion has arisen, since paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, which in the rapporteur's view belong together, have been separated. As a document can no longer be called satisfactory. And when the rapporteur — for whom I obviously have the greatest respect, as he knows — says that, if we refer the matter back to committee, we have not expressed our opinion. I must contradict him. We discussed the matter for a whole day, and at the end of the debate Mr Jenkins said that the Commission had noted the important points raised in the House yesterday and would take them into account when submitting its proposals. The President of the Council, who was here all day, also stated that the Council would be meeting soon and would take account of the important points raised in this debate. Thus you cannot say that, without a document and without a resolution, Parliament has not made its voice heard; Parliament has held an important debate, and that seems to me sufficient.

President. — I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, rapporteur. — (D) I should just like to point out to Mr Notenboom that his interpretation of what I have said is not correct, since paragraph 7 has been maintained with the principle of financial equalization, and paragraphs 8 and 9 outlined possible methods of financial equalization. This means that the matter is completely tied up.

(Applause)

President. — I put to the vote the proposal to refer the report to committee. The proposal is rejected.

(Applause from various quarters)

Before I put to the vote the whole motion for a resolution contained in this report, explanations of vote may be heard.

I call Mr Fernandez.

Mr Fernandez. — (*F*) Mr President, we adopted the amendments deleting paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, which seek to remove the most negative aspects of the resolution.

This being so, and since the report is not to be referred back to committee, nothing has basically changed. The Commission's move and its fundamental approach remain extremely negative, and the debate in the House confirms this determination to aggravate the situation still more.

A majority in this House wants to go even further! In fact, the frontiers of the Nine are too narrow for the multinational companies which dominate the EEC, and the attack against the Common Agricultural Policy is totally in keeping with the desire to speed up the restructuring of industry by transferring appropriations from the CAP to facilitate the redeployment of the big concerns.

It is clear that the whole thing hangs together. And this text on the subject is a masterpiece of hypocrisy! On the one hand, it panders to the nationalist demands and claims of the British Government to the detriment of the CAP and, more particularly, of French farmers; on the other hand, it introduces political and financial mechanisms which are basically supranational in character, thus seeking to deprive our national governments of their independence.

It can be seen that fundamentally this text is indeed very coherent: it is in keeping with the policy and the very nature of Community mechanisms, and accepting it means accepting a further build-up of this European policy which is so hard on the workers and totally at the service of the multinational companies. The French Communists will therefore vote against it!

President. — I call Mr Bonaccini.

Mr Bonaccini. — (*I*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, you are very well aware, from the way that these proceedings have gone, that the final text of the resolution by no means contained all our opinions on the subject. We nevertheless felt that we should share in the positive effort which everyone ought to make to help solve a crucial problem — as someone said in yesterday's debate — and we announced our intention to vote for the resolution.

The deletion of paragraphs 8 and 9 not only involves the removal of two examples, Mr Lange, but also introduces inconsistencies and ambiguities for which we do not wish to share the responsibility, since they are likely to distort the basic objectives of our joint debate on this subject. This throws a very unfavourable light on the concept of solidarity, on which many Members spoke at length at yesterday's sitting, and introduces features of which the European Council will make

careful — and, we hope constructive — use, but it will definitely be without the backing of our opinion.

It is for this reason that, while reiterating our appreciation of the effort made by the Committee on Budgets, we cannot conceal our criticism of this final stage of our debate. So that we can express our views more fully and more freely on the forthcoming proposals on the subject, we shall abstain from voting on the resolution as a whole.

President — I call Mr Kirk.

Mr Kirk. — (*DK*) Mr President, I should like to make an explanation of vote. We recognize the extremely serious problem posed by the imbalances in the Member States' contributions to the Community budget. However, as far as I can see, the proposal on which we are now being asked to vote will rapidly lead to discrimination between the individual countries' contributions, since the entire basis for the calculations varies considerably from country to country.

I also think that Parliament was under pressure of time with a view to the European Council at the end of the month, and that this was why the proposal was dealt with so quickly in the Committee on Budgets and we are being asked to vote on it today. It is obviously essential to find a solution to the serious problem I mentioned above, but I do not think we are going about it the right way. I therefore announce that, in order to demonstrate my readiness to find the right European solutions, I shall abstain from voting at the moment, since I hope the European Council will find a more balanced solution to the Community's problems with the budget contributions.

President. — I call Mrs Scrivener to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Scrivener. — (*F*) Mr President, I should first of all like to ask Mr Lange whether he does not think it more appropriate, in view of the difficulties which have arisen, to refer this document to committee.

I should now like to make two brief remarks and to explain why we shall vote against the motion. Firstly, because Mr Von Bismarck's amendment to paragraph 7, which sought to delete the reference to gross domestic product, was not adopted. Secondly, because we feel on reflection that in such an important matter it would be a good thing to have the opinion of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.

President. — I call Mr Dankert.

Mr Dankert. — (*NL*) Mr President, I should also like to state why I intend to vote against the motion.

Firstly, I feel that the time available to prepare a debate on such a fundamental matter was too short. A Parliament which takes its duties seriously cannot deal with such important questions in a few days.

Dankert

Secondly, I should like to say that the preparation was too restricted. This is not only a budgetary matter, but also an economic, monetary and political one. All the different aspects should have been balanced against each other before Parliament adopted its position.

Thirdly, in my view the resolution is based too much on the assumption that the situation in Europe is comparable to that obtaining in the Federal Republic. In the Federal Republic it is possible, in an integrated entity, to set up a system for transferring national funds from one federal State to another without jeopardizing the unity of the Federal Republic as a whole. Unfortunately the situation in Europe is different. I feel that, despite all the good intentions which I know the author to have, the resolution runs a number of political risks of which the consequences may be so serious that I cannot accept responsibility for them.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Cresson.

Mrs Cresson. — *(F)* Much of what I wanted to say has just been said by Mr Dankert. What I wanted to stress was precisely the extreme haste with which we had to study a text which questions very important concepts and mechanisms.

Apart from this, some amendments were adopted and others rejected. I am not sure whether everyone fully realizes what the final outcome of our deliberations is and that it probably contains some inconsistencies.

I said yesterday, although my speaking time was very limited, that we wanted to stress that we felt there were serious disadvantages in setting up a permanent system, even though we French Socialists were wholly in favour of immediate aid to any Member State that happened to be in difficulties.

Furthermore, it seems to us that such a permanent system goes against the very spirit of the Treaty, introduces the concept of a 'fair return' and might have adverse effects on the economy by encouraging certain Member States to increase their purchases outside the Community rather than to do the opposite, which is what we should all like to see.

Lastly, in order to judge the unfavourable situation in which any country might find itself at a given moment, account must be taken of all the existing imbalances, compensatory amounts, purchases outside the Community etc. For all these reasons, we shall vote against this motion.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — I call Mr Scott-Hopkins.

Mr Scott-Hopkins. — Mr President, I do not want my speech to be regarded other than as an explanation of vote; I am not entering into the debate on the issues — on which we spent several hours yesterday — but I do find it extraordinary that we now hear

from two or three honourable Members that there was not sufficient preparation for this debate. Why did not they say this on Monday?

(Applause from several quarters)

They knew full well it was coming up on Monday, it is not something that has just come up out of the blue. The whole of Europe has been talking about this situation for weeks; I think it is important that this House should express a view on this matter. Of course we would have liked more time, and we might have had it if the Council had been meeting at a later stage, Mr President; but it is not, and I think it is right that we should be able to express our view as a House.

Now it is a fact that we have not heard the opinion of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, but honourable Members from that committee haven't made their speeches — we have even had the chairman of their committee sitting in on this debate, and he could have made a powerful intervention had he so wanted. So I do not think that that can be used as an argument against proceeding with this vote. Obviously, I and my group are unhappy that two particular paragraphs have been deleted; nevertheless I think the House should express its view on the rest of the resolution, and I sincerely hope that the House will support it. I believe it is taking a step in the right direction, dealing with the inequalities which exist. I do not intend to go further into those details, but I believe that paragraphs 6 and 7 as they stand are alone worthy of this House's consideration and approval. My group will therefore vote in favour of this resolution, and I hope there will be an overwhelming majority in favour of it.

President. — I call Mr Diana.

Mr Diana. — *(I)* Mr President, I am giving this explanation of vote solely on my own behalf. It seems to me that we have all been complaining about the haste with which the debate has been conducted both in the House and in the committees. Few have mentioned, however, that the Commission's reference document is dated 7 September, that on 17 September the Council of Ministers dealt with it, and that immediately afterwards, as far as we know, it was forwarded to the President of this Parliament. I asked the President in writing to place the question on the agenda as soon as possible. If we are having a hurried debate on it today, I do not think that it is the fault of the Commission or the Council, but probably that of the President of Parliament.

Secondly, Mr President, it seems to me that yesterday we had binding statements from the President of the Commission, Mr Jenkins, who is now present. He told us that the Commission did not express any opinion before the Dublin summit because it was anxious to hear Parliament's opinion. We in this House have a

Diana

strict duty to express our opinion and to do so before the Dublin summit. Personally, I am not satisfied with the deletion of two paragraphs which seemed to me essential for giving some practical meaning to the resolution. However, I think that in any case it is better to say something than nothing at all, otherwise we risk sending Mr Jenkins to Dublin empty-handed. I shall vote for the resolution if it is moved as it stands. I apologize for my inexperience, Mr President, but I wonder whether it is necessary to vote on the resolution as a whole or whether, since we have already voted on the individual paragraphs, we can dispense with the vote on the resolution as a whole.

President. — I call Mr Balfe.

Mr Balfe. — British Socialist Members who are here will be voting in favour of this resolution.

We feel that the fact that Parliament has been consulted on this vital matter is in itself a great step forward; and whilst we take into account the fact that many things in the process of government have to be done hurriedly, we feel that this issue has been debated within the EEC long enough for most people to have acquainted themselves with the broad details.

We are indeed indebted to Mr Lange for putting forward his report. We are sorry we could not agree with it completely, but we are indebted also to the French Socialists for enabling us to remove paragraphs 8 and 9, to which we particularly objected because we believe that the operation of the financial mechanism is the best way of solving the short-term crisis.

This vote is a test of the maturity of Parliament, insofar as it will show whether, as a group of people sent here for a purpose under a European treaty, we can come to a decision in the interests of equity within that treaty. We believe that this resolution as now amended enables us to give support to that and to the principles which are enshrined in the resolution.

(Applause from several quarters)

President. — I call Mr Prag.

Mr Prag. — Mr President, I shall be voting for this resolution for three very simple reasons. The first is that I believe it is clear and coherent; it does not need paragraphs 8 and 9 — as Mr Lange said, they are points of detail and the resolution stands perfectly without it.

The second reason is that I believe this Parliament must be able to give an opinion on a matter which is absolutely vital to the future of this Community and certainly to two of its Member States. Thirdly, I think that this Parliament must be able to act quickly in

case of need. If we do not do so, Mr President, I believe we shall not really be showing ourselves to be a true Parliament and that is not the sort of impression we would want to give.

(Applause from several quarters)

President. — I call Mr Nyborg.

Mr Nyborg. — *(DK)* Mr President, since I do not consider an explanation of vote to be the same as a speech, I shall be brief. There are two principles which I should like to uphold. The one is that the report does not take account of the principle of cutting one's coat according to one's cloth. The other is that a parallel is drawn between gross national product and ability to pay. These two things should not have anything to do with each other and in many cases are totally unrelated. Therefore I intend to vote against the resolution.

President. — I call Mrs Focke.

Mrs Focke. — *(D)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I also regret that the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs was not asked for its opinion. And I also feel that we were pressed for time. But I do think that this Parliament, meeting once a month as it does, will often be faced with having to deliberate and decide quickly if it wants to avoid lagging behind the timetable of European events.

(Applause from various quarters)

And I also feel that what we have discussed here and what we have to vote on now is worth voting on and voting on positively. I shall vote in favour and hope that as large a majority as possible will also do so. Otherwise we shall be failing in our own role as a European Parliament.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — I call Mr Delors.

Mr Delors. — *(F)* Mr President, I had intended to remain discreetly in the background, as is my wont, but since Mr Scott-Hopkins mentioned my name and referred to my capacity as chairman of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, I would like to clear up a few points, especially since yesterday evening I spoke at a time when neither Mr Scott-Hopkins nor, I believe, Mr Jenkins was able to listen to me. In that speech I advocated a realistic Europe, and on certain points, I admit, my ideas were not far removed from those expressed by Mr Tindemans. But, unlike me, Mr Tindemans had the good fortune to speak earlier on. This only goes to show that even a genuine European can be pushed into the sidelines when he comes from a country that is not very popular.

Delors

And now for the points I wanted to clear up. Firstly, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs was, according to all the agendas, the committee responsible. I was anxious to know whether this was indeed the decision of the President and the enlarged Bureau and consulted the office of the President, which did not even have the courtesy to reply. Thus I was not able even to warn my colleagues of what was afoot. If I had been consulted, I would have requested a joint meeting of the Political Affairs Committee, the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, with the opinions of the other committees. I believe that, since this is a problem which threatens the future of Europe and challenges the basic principles of the Treaty, the Political Affairs Committee had a right to be heard.

I ended my short speech yesterday by saying that there was something behind this inconspicuous shift from the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, responsible for convergence, to the Committee on Budgets, responsible for bringing about a budgetary compromise. Today I can see, unfortunately, that I was right and that there is something behind it.

Secondly, I warned my colleagues in the Socialist Group against any rushed proposals. Furthermore, I praised the report by the Commission which in its wisdom, with Commissioners from nine countries, had put forward a range of solutions enabling the governments to come to a settlement and to find a temporary solution to the problems — I hope temporary ones — of the United Kingdom. I would remind you that we acknowledged the existence of these problems and that we were also prepared to enter into a discussion, conducted without undue haste, on the Common Agricultural Policy. I warn you: do not tempt fate! If the few genuine Europeans in this House are constantly subjected to the crossfire of the piecemeal tactics of compromises between countries, soon there will no longer be any Europe.

(Applause)

Thirdly, we must not debase the fine idea of convergence. We must all together learn the lessons of 22 years of European history. We are faced not simply with problems of distortion between countries but with a very difficult intellectual and political problem. It is the task of this Parliament to solve it. How proud I would be to belong to this House if, in a year from now, we could prepare the way for convergence and show how it is possible to break the deadlock of interminable Council meetings on energy, while the price of oil in Rotterdam is increasing by 10 %. Or these interminable meetings on the length of working hours. How proud I would be if we could make some headway! This is the work that this Parliament should be doing!

Fourthly and lastly, I shall not vote against the motion for a resolution. I shall abstain because I am a genuine

European and out of solidarity with the majority of my group.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — I call Mr Marshall.

Mr Marshall. — Very briefly, Mr President, I reject quite firmly the view that, by taking a positive decision this evening, we are acting with undue speed. The report by the Commission was available at our September part-session, and if this House cannot take a decision after having a report for some two months, then when the hell is it going to take a decision? This is a matter of extreme urgency, and if we do not come to a decision before the Dublin Summit, we shall be abdicating our responsibility to the people of Europe. This is a most vital issue. The people of Europe are looking for us to come to a decision, and if we do not do so, we fail not only them, but also ourselves.

President. — I put the motion for a resolution as a whole to the vote.

The resolution is adopted. ¹

I call Mr Griffiths on a point of order.

Mr Griffiths — Mr President, I have waited patiently to make this point of order. I wish to point out that in many parts of this building and the offices connected with it it is impossible to hear the division bell indicating that a vote is being taken. I was in this Chamber at 3.45 p.m. today when voting was supposed to take place and Question Time continued. I had an urgent matter which had to be discussed in relation to the next meeting of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, and I was assured that there would be a bell to warn me when to return to this Chamber. However, that bell did not ring — or, at least, I did not hear it. I wish to ask you, Mr President, to ensure that wherever Members may be in this building or the offices connected with it, we will know when a vote is going to be taken.

President. — Thank you for raising the point, Mr Griffiths. We shall carry out a check.

7. Energy problems (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the joint debate on energy problems.

I call Mr Hutton.

¹ OJ No C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

Mr Hutton. — I would like to continue with this energy debate briefly, and with feeling, for in one of my former lives, before I came into this House, I was a thermal insulator, a lagger; that is, I was one of those grubby individuals who sweat away putting thermal insulation around pipes and boilers. If my friends the polytechnic lecturers on the other side of the House would come to see me afterwards, I can explain to them what the work is about. Indeed, Mr President, if you or they had seen me in August they would have noticed that I had the overalls on and was covering some old steam pipes in Glasgow. So what I know about the waste of energy is particularly pertinent and up-to-date. This debate ought to be—and I think it is—about the proper use of energy. If every operator of a factory or a commercial premises properly insulated his boilers and pipes and valves, Britain alone would save six and a half million tons of oil a year. That is more than 10% of the oil that Britain imports. But sadly they do not, and sadly, a great deal of oil-generated heat goes to waste. Just a little jet of steam hissing out of a two-inch valve costs £60 or £80 a year—and it is not even as if that lost heat is doing anything; it stays up near the ceiling, and does not even warm the workers on the factory floor.

The commonest form of industrial heat is steam-generated in oil-fired boilers. Coal boilers are pretty nearly extinct now, and gas-fired boilers are still a comparative rarity. So for the reasonable future, that heat will go on being generated by oil; alternative fuels are not a practical answer right now for most operators.

The trouble is generally that the owners and the operators of commercial properties just have not caught up with reality. Ten years ago the cost of raising steam was low, and the pay-back period for insulation was perhaps as long as ten or fifteen years. Insulation was always good value, but it was not very significant in terms of cost. Now that position has changed dramatically. The pay-back period — the time it takes to get your money back — has dropped to something like a year. In Scotland, where I come from, the pay-back period for insulating a warehouse is now down to eight months. The cuts in production costs are dramatic, and the cuts in insurance premiums can be amazing. The premium for a properly insulated warehouse can be 10 % of the premium for one without insulation — I repeat, 10 %.

Nor, Mr President, is there any serious shortage of good insulators to do the work either. Among the many men who are now being affected by the drop in demand for ships are experienced insulators whose skills should be seized on and used before they are lost to the industry. Now, the Americans have got us licked at this game. They insist on insulation going on as a building goes up; that is one good lesson we can learn from them. As Mr Brunner stressed, energy will never be cheap again; like any precious commodity, we must make the saving of it urgent.

There are two things, I would suggest, that we as a Community can do to help. We can produce — or encourage each Member State to produce — a clear, simple leaflet with a graph demonstrating the amount of heat — and therefore the amount of money — which can be lost from just one metre of uninsulated pipe, and see that that goes to everyone who operates any kind of commercial premises. The second is to encourage architects and local authorities at least to reach a common standard economic thickness of insulation. In this decade we have been badly rocked by an energy crisis. Let us, as a Community, show that by simple common sense we can get up again and lead the world in energy survival.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Lizin.

Mrs Lizin. — *(F)* Mr President, let me draw attention first of all to two significant absences, on the one hand on the part of the Council — you may tell me that it is adequately represented, but we do not agree — and, secondly, on the part of the Commission, where the Commissioner responsible is no longer present. These absences are regrettable.

In the brief time remaining to me, I simply wish to point out to the Members present in the House, and also to some who are absent, the importance not only of stepping up coal utilization but also of making significant, indeed massive, appropriations available in the Community research budgets for research into new techniques to exploit and utilize European coal. Let me sum up briefly for you the several objectives of these research policies to which we must give priority.

First of all, we must improve the mining of European coal. Indeed we do not yet know our real potential, because the figures which we use when defining our reserves take account of traditional methods of mining only. In this respect the underground gasification method is promising, and if it had received more substantial European appropriations, it might by now have taken concrete shape instead of remaining in the twilight which marks this research at present. In the case of Wallonia, for example, this method holds forth the only hope of reopening the mines and exploiting the region's coal energy potential. While it is currently being commercially exploited in the United States, it is the subject of bilateral research contracts in Europe. Surely the part played by the European institutions, in particular the Commission, in promoting this policy has been far too limited.

Secondly, alongside research into mining techniques, it is necessary to stimulate research into utilization techniques. There are three such techniques, which are accorded no significant appropriations in the European budget. Europe has a particular interest in the production of this lean gas which could be used in gas turbines, in small power stations, and for district

Lizin

heating. Here also the appropriations came solely from national budgets, with no coordination at European level. Liquefaction or hydrogenation are also techniques which are worthy of a greater interest than Europe takes in them at present.

The same is true of a technique such as pyrolysis which is likewise supported only by national research budgets. While mining and utilization merit greater interest at European level, there are two other aspects of increased coal use which must be considered, in view of the fact that Europe's dependence on imported coal will remain substantial for many years. First of all there is research into methods to obtain clean combustion, and in particular combustion on a fluidized bed, which reduces the pollution caused by using coal. If this method were encouraged at European level it would be possible to utilize the tips which still too often form the traditional landscape of the old coal mining regions of Europe.

Finally, and this is the more important aspect, there is research on coal transport. This is a fundamental problem for the producer countries, because transport remains the major obstacle to the large-scale growth of coal imports. By sea, it is twice as costly to transport coal as to transport oil, while by land it is twelve times as expensive. Research on ways of improving these methods of transport, in particular pulverization and liquefaction, deserves, in its own right, to be accorded priority in Europe's energy research policy.

In conclusion, Mr President, I should like to emphasize the advantages for Europeans of exploiting this indigenous resource. Research in this area is our only real hope of making Europe coal viable in the long term. Our Group is of the opinion that it should be given priority in European research budgets.

President. — I call Mr Fuchs.

Mr Fuchs. — (*D*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen! I should just like to consider a few of the points made during this debate, which in my opinion are either based on incorrect assumptions or take a completely false line which leads nowhere. Such an important energy debate can only be really meaningful if we remain realistic. First of all, let me make an observation on which I believe there is general agreement.

The Council has, and with good reason, been sharply criticised for its obvious inability to take decisions over the years, as for example in the matter of the package of coal measures. I believe this situation must change. Repeated calls for solidarity must at some point also be followed by joint action. If in fact we do succeed in acting in concert in this very important field of energy, this will be a great boost to our Community. I am convinced that other concerted

actions would follow. However, we must beware of making the mistake of thinking that this alone would overcome the difficulties, because the real difficulties reside in our Member States where the energy programme has to be implemented. I deeply regret that in some Member States, for example in the Federal Republic of Germany, the government has a worthwhile energy programme, but is unable to enforce it. We know the reasons: opposition within its own party and its own parliamentary group. If this situation persists, we will miss the boat. It will leave without us. We in the European Parliament can only bring our influence to bear indirectly, but this we must do very vigorously, both here and at national level.

There is a further false assumption which I should like to refute. Coal was mentioned again just now and there I fully support what was said. However, a member of the British Labour Party seems to think that coal alone can solve the problem. That is certainly not true — such an approach would lead nowhere. We simply will not be able to develop the mining capacity nor will we for example in the Federal Republic of Germany, be able to provide the necessary manpower. To obtain all our energy from coal by converting it to electricity would place an insupportable burden on the environment, and above all we would be repeating the fundamental error which we have already made with oil. We would irrevocably burn our last really major source of raw materials for industry. This we must also consider, in particular those who think that alternative energy can help us out of our dilemma. Undoubtedly we must develop alternative energy sources, but these can make only a marginal contribution. Mr Muller-Hermann asked Mr Brunner what percentage of energy requirements alternative energy was likely to meet, and we will get the answer in committee — we appreciate that Mr Brunner has had to leave before the end of this very long debate. However, it is equally erroneous to think that the problem can be solved by conservation alone. Mr Brunner made this clear: no matter how much we conserve, we will have a growth rate of about 2.5 %, and for this we will need additional energy. Whoever evades this issue is refusing to face the future and in ten years it will no longer be possible to catch up the ground lost.

For this reason our motion for a resolution also contains a declaration on nuclear energy, since we do not want to be accused of permanently evading this issue. However, I simply do not want to concern myself with those who are inveterate opponents of nuclear energy, because that would be pointless. Today, indeed, it was suggested that we defer this whole question until the public debate has ended. That's as brilliant a suggestion as I've heard yet! It would mean that we should stop voting in favour of nuclear energy altogether. That would be more honest. Then, of course, there is the argument that we really

Fuchs

only want to cover residual requirements. Here again let me warn you that this is a very vague and elastic concept. Residual requirements can mean anything. They can be 80 %, 20 % or 3 %. However, what those advocating this approach are really saying is ; Let's wait until we know what needs to be covered by nuclear energy. Well, that is not possible, because it takes at least ten years to make the required investment and actually to get electricity from the power-station. This is not a way out. Let us be more courageous. We are facing an immense challenge, but mankind has always been adept at answering challenges, when it has had the will to do so.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Beazley.

Mr Beazley. — I should like to support the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Gallagher, on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research, together with the Oral Question by the European People's Party on the same subject.

Referring to the comments of my respected colleagues on the Energy Committee, Mrs Alemann and Mrs Dekker, I must admit that I had similar difficulties in deciding whether to speak today, or to reserve my energy for the debate which I believe it is essential for this Parliament to hold in January or February. In that debate this House should express its view on the Commission document on the energy objectives for the Community for 1990 and the convergence of policies of Member States. I decided to speak because our committee was very concerned that the Council did not make any pronouncement on coal after its meeting of 9 October, and our committee, knowing the seriousness of the energy situation and the vital part which must be played by coal, must press the Council for an answer, as well as responding to the committee's support for the Commission communication on the need to adopt the draft resolution on energy objectives for 1990.

In its attitude towards the energy problem, however, I believe this Parliament must be positive rather than negative, active rather than passive, and constructive rather than unconstructive. Furthermore, I believe we should congratulate the Council on the way it handled the need for the Member States to fix targets for the limitation of oil imports and its success in forcing the USA and Japan to do likewise. My concern is to use this opportunity to assure the Council our support for the draft resolution, and to emphasize the urgent need of adopting a common policy on energy.

We have spoken at length in this Parliament about convergence, and we have learned with regret of the

increasing danger of divergence in the Community. Convergence is a good policy in normal circumstances because it is difficult to bring nine Member States together into a common policy without the time which convergence normally provides. But I submit that in the case of energy there is very little opportunity of providing this amount of time, and in the circumstances it is my belief that, as soon as they have been approved by this Parliament, the energy objectives for 1990 should be formally adopted by the Council. I appreciate that there is concern in some people's minds about the safety of nuclear energy, and the necessity to include it in our objectives.

Here I must draw attention to the Commission's document, No 211/79, on these energy objectives. This makes quite clear the position of coal within the energy balance. I and my group believe that we must be solidly behind the use of coal, and fully share the views of Mr Gallagher and Mr Adam on this subject. I must, however, express some confusion about the comments of Mr Rogers. The considered view of the Commission and the committee is that the energy gap is so great that there is no chance of closing it without nuclear energy. Were it possible to do so with coal alone, there would be no necessity to put such vast investment into this most important nuclear project. I do not know whether Mr Rogers has read the documents concerned. If he has not, I will tell him that despite all efforts to utilize the coal assets of the Community fully, and to increase production to the maximum, the forecast increase in coal between 1978 and 1990 is only 11 1/2 % ; and that imports of coal have to be increased as well.

The proposals are therefore based on utilizing our coal reserves within the Community to the maximum, and even so there is no possibility of closing the gap. Meanwhile, nuclear energy has to be increased seven-fold to fill this gap, a gap equivalent to 204 million tonnes of oil, itself a figure rather bigger than the total forecast production of Community coal. I believe there is no one in this House who would not support the replacement of any part of that nuclear energy by coal, were this possible ; and, I sincerely hope that Mr Rogers will do everything in his power to optimize coal production at appropriate prices. I must therefore ask the Energy Commissioner to inspect his figures, and to confirm them to this House and to Mr Rogers, so that we may be assured that the figures we have in the report are correct.

In conclusion, therefore, I would like to suggest that we in Europe should bear in mind that we have the technological skills to support the programme which has been put forward, and that it will be an inspiration to our industry to be given the circumstances in which to utilize them fully in conquering this problem.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Charzat.

Mrs Charzat. — (*F*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as outlined in its preamble, the oral question asked by Mr Müller-Hermann and others is based on the assumption that the securing of adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost is essential if the European Community is to maintain present living standards.

We agree with this of course, but we consider it to say the least, urgent, that in the context of European cooperation the Member States of the EEC, which today are faced with their second oil crisis, once again and once too often without being adequately prepared for it, should take steps not only to control the quantities of oil imported but also to regulate prices. On this initial decision to act in concert on the prices of imported oil will depend the European Community's ability to implement a comprehensive energy policy.

Between 1974 and 1978 the reaction of industrialized countries was twofold. First of all there was an increase in exports of manufactured products. A look at the terms of trade of OPEC countries reveals that these fell from the base of index 100 in 1974 to 81 in 1978, i.e. a drop of 20 % in five years. The second counterstroke has been the drop in the real price of imported oil owing to the depreciation of the dollar against the strong currencies. Thus, between January 1974 and December 1978, the Deutschmark price of imported oil dropped by 19 %. Since the eruption of the Iranian crisis, the producer countries appear to want to be paid in real prices and not in falling currencies. In the present economic climate a new element in international dealings lies in the fact that the monetary illusions of the OPEC countries have been dispelled. This will have serious consequences both for the countries of the European Community and for the United States. The countries of the European Community, which are less competitive economically than the United States, have to ensure that, in the international division of labour they do not end up being the major losers in a new industrial confrontation. Henceforth the free play of oil market forces will be very damaging for the importing countries. These forces favour the distribution of marginal supplies between the EEC countries, the consequences of which will be threefold:

Firstly, using escalating prices on the free market as a justification the producer countries will raise their official prices, their reasoning being that consumers can pay the price which they already pay for small quantities for all their supplies.

Secondly, the European Community will have exceeded the oil import targets set for 1979.

Thirdly, deflation, unemployment, monetary crises will be aggravated.

Consequently, in conjunction with a policy on import levels, we in the countries of the European Community must, firstly, introduce import price controls, secondly bring in consumer price controls to cut out market speculation, and thirdly, cooperate with the United States to control the consumer prices of oil products.

In our opinion, these are the most basic protective measures needed to ensure energy supplies to the European Economic Community.

IN THE CHAIR : MR ROGERS

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I shall confine my remarks to paragraph 5 of the motion, which I proposed in committee. It asks Members of Parliament to urge public opinion to recognize the realities of the energy problem, and the need to develop coal resources, nuclear energy capacity and alternative sources of energy.

Our first job as leaders and representatives of public opinion must be to get the facts across. Fact 1 is that, by 1990, oil will be available only for premium uses. Fact 2 is that, unless policy is changed, imports of coal into the Community may rise from the current 46 million tons to 200 or 300 million tons by the year 2000. Fact 3 is the nuclear energy is the only other source of energy that can be developed in sufficient quantity to fill the energy gap which will occur in the year 2000 — and, indeed, the energy gap may well occur before 2000. These are the facts available to Members, though some Members seem to avoid them.

I must say, Mr President at this point in my speech, I am in a dilemma. I had wanted to be critical of a speech made on the other side of the Chamber, but I have a conflict between that and my respect for the Chair. I shall only say at this point that I do think it remarkable that certain speakers should suggest to us that it is wicked to import, from outside the Community, coal which happens to be cheaper, yet at the same time they tell us how wicked it is for the Community to insist that we buy European food, when we can buy it cheaper from outside the Community. I think a bit of consistency ought to come from that side.

Of course, Mr President, the Council needs a kick up the backside. But there are others, I think, who also need a kick up the backside. For example, there are those who, with the best of intentions, would prevent the development of highly productive coal. As you know, Mr President, in my own country this includes not just ordinary people like you and me, but people like dukes and other such, who are I think, thwarting the development of productive coal.

Moreland

More seriously, there are those who regard the words 'nuclear energy' as synonymous with sin. Of course we must be deeply concerned about safety and safeguards. I hope the Commission has read the recent official report on the Three-Mile Island disaster. It was mentioned a number of times today, but nobody seems to have read it. I would appreciate it if the Commission would comment on this report and its implications for policy in Europe. But let us not forget that this report, published two or three weeks ago, emphasized that the health effects of that disaster were — and I quote — 'negligible'. Nobody died or was seriously injured. The small doses of radiation released would not have added to the cancer-risk of those affected. It would have been more dangerous to have a chest x-ray than to have stood at the gates of Three-Mile Island.

Our task, Mr President, is not a light one. There is still much to be done to make public opinion fully aware of the facts and the difficulties we face. Unless that happens, by 1990 we might as well forget about having electric light in our homes, or even having enough aircraft to bring Members to Strasbourg or anywhere. The lights would indeed have gone out all over Europe — and that would include some of our leading lights.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Linkohr.

Mr Linkohr. — *(D)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, later speakers face the disadvantage of wanting attention but have, on the other hand, the advantage of being able to take up many arguments and statements put forward earlier in the debate. I should like to consider very briefly what some Christian Democratic Members said about the Socialist Group.

You said, Mr Fuchs, — and here you were referring to the Socialist Liberal coalition in Bonn but undoubtedly also to our Group here in Parliament — that we were unable to enforce our energy policy because of opposition within our own ranks. You said you would not concern yourself with those who were opposed to nuclear energy, as that was pointless. This morning Mr Müller-Hermann spoke of a conflict of opinion within the Socialist Party.

Now, if today we have been looking at Europe's energy policy in a realistic light, we should take an equally realistic look at the crisis of conscience in Europe. We cannot, for instance, ignore the fact that hundreds of thousands of people — mainly young people — are taking to the streets in various countries because they are afraid, and concerned, not only about nuclear energy but also about many developments in our society.

In my view, this newly-elected European Parliament must speak also for those many people in Europe who do not share your opinion, and wish instead to develop alternative ways of life or who are sceptical about or opposed to nuclear energy.

I welcome the fact that the Socialists have accepted the challenge of this great battle, that this debate is taking place within our ranks and that we remain open to discussion with these people. The struggle for a new, resolute and safe energy policy must be seen in the context of the campaign against pollution and for the protection of the environment.

I should like to touch on a second aspect which is raised in Mr Müller-Hermann's question, namely financing. This morning Mr Brunner said that we would probably have to find 50 000 million dollars annually for energy investment in Europe, and that is an enormous sum. I fear that the consequences for Europe will be disastrous should the policy adopted prove false. Let me raise just one point. Yesterday we discussed convergence in Europe and established that, since its inception, the European Community has done almost nothing to bring Community countries closer together, and that instead the gap between rich and poor regions in Europe has increased, not decreased.

If these enormous investments are wrongly placed, it is to be feared that unemployment will increase and that multinationals in particular will, as the saying goes be in clover. I think it is important that we in this Parliament discuss the use of funds and the multinationals, because it is these companies who are at present investing most in Europe in the energy field, and we cannot silently accept a situation whereby tomorrow the major portion of the energy market in Europe may be controlled by a few large companies. Already we read that in America 25 % of coal mines are controlled by multinational oil companies. I would not like to see a similar situation tomorrow in Europe.

To conclude, energy savings should not be the result of recession, as has necessarily been the case in recent years, but rather the product of a policy, and this is the challenge facing Parliament.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Damette.

Mr Damette. — *(F)* Mr President, we are resuming a debate we have had before, and are doing so in the same atmosphere of hypocrisy. The Commission proposals are not designed to promote coal production, as is seen from the continued closure of pits which are far from exhausted. Last year the French Government and the Commission agreed to eliminate one million tonnes of production capacity in France, and this

Damette

trend is continuing. After Faulquemont, after No 6 pit at Bruay, there are now plans to close the Sabatier pit. In reply to my colleague Mr Ansart, Mr Brunner repeated the arguments put forward by the French Government, claiming that the profile of the Centre-Midi and Nord-Pas-de Calais collieries was not technically or commercially satisfactory.

The semi-official Agence Europe wrote on 9 November 1979, and I quote: 'In France and in Belgium the closures already decided in previous years are continuing and will probably not be called into question because of the oil crisis'. This is the real problem facing coal production. However, what the Commission proposes is quite another matter: it is to subsidize German coal by means of aid to intra-Community trade and, by the same token, to accelerate the run-down of the French collieries. Item 3232 of the budget introduces veritable coal compensatory amounts in favour of the Federal Republic of Germany. These measures will be ineffectual against imports from non-Member countries, but will make it possible to free the market in continental Europe for the benefit of the principal producer and sole exporter of coal. In a word, and I will conclude on this point this resolution in support of the Commission has very little bearing on the real problems of coal. It is a scheme designed to redistribute the European coal market by accelerating the decline of French collieries. Obviously we will vote against this motion, but above all we oppose such a policy.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at tomorrow's sitting together with the amendments which have been tabled.

8. Social aspects of restructuring in the iron and steel industry

President. — The next item is the interim report (Doc. 1-465/79) by Mr Peters, on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, on the

Communication from the Commission to the Council on the social aspects of restructuring in the iron and steel industry, and draft decision.

I call Mr Peters.

Mr Peters, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, what we are concerned with here is an interim report, Document 1-465/79, drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment. This report relates to two Commission documents — firstly, the Communication from the Commission, COM (79) 199 on the social aspects of

the restructuring of the steel industry, and secondly, the revised draft Commission Decision COM (79) 436 final. The Committee on Social Affairs and Employment has drawn up a motion for a resolution which is hereby submitted to the European Parliament for its decision. The background to this motion.

The steel industry in the European Community is in a state of crisis. Something like 40 000 jobs were lost each year in 1977 and 1978. That makes a total of 80 000 jobs in the space of two years, and we must expect something like another 80 000 jobs to be in jeopardy in 1979 and 1980. The most serious threat hangs over jobs in areas with a one-sided economic structure, where heavy industry is predominant and the steel industry is a crucial factor in the industrial landscape. This is true of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and certain parts of the Federal Republic of Germany, like the Ruhr. The loss of jobs in the steel industry inevitably results in the loss of other jobs, because there are jobs in the metal and construction industries and in the trade sector which depend on the healthy state of the steel industry. And there are other jobs that are under threat or have already been axed. Moreover, in the regions I mentioned — like Lorraine and the British steel areas — there is already a relatively high level of unemployment the loss of further jobs in the industry will only exacerbate the situation.

Let me state quite unequivocally that the steel industry in the European Community can, in the final analysis, only survive and only remain competitive if it is modern and efficient. But efficiency must not be bought at the workers' expense, by means of higher and higher levels of unemployment. In other words, the process of modernization must go hand in hand with social and welfare measures for the workers affected. The workers' confidence in the European Community will depend on whether or not we succeed in preventing higher levels of unemployment in these crisis-hit areas and in safeguarding existing jobs. What opportunities have there been so far for taking action and what measures have been applied? Let me just go through the main points.

Under Article 54 of the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty, loans to promote the creation of new jobs have been granted for various investment programmes. In 1976, for example, something like 1 000 million units of account were paid out, and in 1977 another 700 million.

In addition, paragraphs 1b and 2a of Article 56 provide for the financing of new activities and the

Peters

reabsorption of redundant workers. These loans have created or saved something like 15 000 jobs over a period of three years. Thirdly, there are the classic measures provided for under Article 56 (2) of the ECSC Treaty: retraining and conversion aid, tideover allowances and the like. Funds from the ECSC budget have also been used in recent years to finance early retirement schemes. This is at least a start, but all in all, ladies and gentlemen, it is not enough. It is too little and it takes too long to apply. Even the temporary recovery in the state of the steel industry is tailing off again, and the latest reports and statistics show quite clearly that we are still on a slippery slope in this sector and that more needs to be done, with more comprehensive measures. Bearing in mind that the funds set aside for these measures — particularly the last ones I mentioned — in the ECSC budget are inadequate and depend essentially upon a levy raised from the undertakings concerned, it is obvious that the levy cannot be increased because then we should simply be robbing Peter to pay Paul.

We therefore need additional money and additional financial instruments if we are to implement more ambitious social measures quickly and comprehensively. Let us not forget that the European Parliament, during its discussion of the Community budget last week, added 100 million EUA to the general budget to cover these measures.

What we must do in today's debate is to create the legal authority for these 100 million EUA to be spent. The European Parliament last discussed this crisis in the steel industry on 16 February 1979, when it adopted a resolution calling on the Commission to provide for action over and above the classic measures covered by Article 56, to develop an additional programme and to make more money available.

The Commission has drawn up a draft decision and submitted it to the Council, and this document has been discussed on a number of occasions by the ECSC Consultative Committee — most recently on 6 July 1979 — which has now given its approval to the revised draft. In the course of these discussions, certain doubts were raised, some of them by the employers' and workers' representatives, to the effect that the planned measures should not violate the principle of free collective bargaining and should not adversely affect the competitiveness of undertakings.

These doubts have been explicitly removed in the Commission's revised draft, and both I and the Committee feel that the Commission's draft decision now deserves our full support. The important thing now is to get it accepted unanimously by the Council, so that there is legal authority for spending the 100 million EUA on social measures.

The conditions for the granting of this new aid in the Commission's revised draft decision — based on

Article 95 of the ECSC Treaty — are firstly, that the government of a Member State must apply for the aid. Secondly, the country concerned must undertake to match the fund forthcoming from the European Community, although exceptions could be made to this rule. Thirdly, the aid must benefit the workers concerned, not the firms or undertakings, i.e. it must be used for appropriate social measures. Fourthly, it must not affect the principle of free collective bargaining between trade unions and management; in other words, the two sides of industry must agree to whatever measures are taken. For that reason, we very much welcome the fact that the Commission has laid down two general principles for the kind of measures — I shall be coming back to these in a moment — and that the different wage, social and employment structures in the Member States can be taken into account without anyone being bound to detailed provisions. Fifthly, this aid must have a positive effect on the employment situation, for instance, by enabling some workers to leave their jobs so as to safeguard other people's jobs. However, the competitiveness of the undertakings must not be affected in any way.

This interim report is designed to fulfil two purposes. Firstly, the European Parliament should be given the chance to vote for the Commission's revised draft decision and secondly, we should have the chance to take a general decision of principle before the final report is available at the beginning of next year. In the final report, we shall set out in detail what differences exist between the Member States, what various social measures are applied, and what the situation is with regard to early retirement, a shorter working week, the time worked in a year, overtime, additional shifts, and so on. Today's decision is not concerned with such details. That is something we shall discuss in the framework of the final report, and we can argue about it then.

I repeat: today's decision is a general one of principle.

The Council is dragging its heels. Despite the fact that the Heads of Government came out in favour of social measures in the steel industry at their meeting in Paris in March, the specialist ministers have still not given their approval. Perhaps the views of their Heads of Government have not yet filtered down to them. This House should now help to make it clear to these ministers that we want this decision to be adopted. We want some legal authority for paying out the 100 million EUA that we voted into the budget last week.

I originally wanted to express my views on the amendments that have been tabled to this motion for a resolution, but I would suggest that I leave that until just before the vote tomorrow.

President. — I call Mr Van Minnen to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) Mr President, the rapporteur has already pointed out that Parliament discussed this matter last February, when anguished appeals for something finally to be done about the social abuses in the steel sector could be heard live outside the building, when the entrance was besieged by demonstrating steelworkers. I do not know from personal experience whether the Chamber was as empty as it is now, but I fear the worst. These steelworkers were making a dramatic appeal to this Parliament, a demonstration such as we had only experienced from the farmers up to that point, and pictures were transmitted throughout the Community on the eve of the first European elections. And Parliament, i.e. the old Parliament, decided on that occasion that money must be found for a programme designed to give social support to the workers in the steel industry.

The time has now come to turn these words into deeds, and to act upon what was decided last week, when we earmarked 100 million EUA for this purpose in our budget.

The chairman of one of Europe's major steel companies recently said that we were faced with the need for fundamental changes in European economic relations. He was referring to what is known in these circles as 'rationalization'. In my view, however, we are faced with a much greater need for fundamental changes in European social relations. You can restructure whatever you like wherever you like, but the value and acceptability of such measures depend, in the long run, entirely on the accompanying social measures.

By virtue of the provisions of the ECSC Treaty, it has been possible for a number of years already for the Commission to subsidize both early retirement and the retention of older workers, but the articles concerned are too restrictive to cover the extra structural measures which cannot be put off any longer, i.e. measures designed to humanize the living and working conditions of workers in this particular sector, since if there is one sector in which we can and must make a start on humanizing the work it is the steel sector. These extra structural measures — and fortunately a majority here in Parliament reached a decision to this effect at the beginning of this year — must clearly tend towards reducing working hours as a means of guaranteeing jobs for as many people as possible for as long as possible. This is for us the most important aspect of this Commission programme. The additional shift and the 35 hour week, early retirement or extra holidays are all variants which this tender young plant can develop into.

Naturally, this will have to be fostered by the two sides of industry and the form it takes can and will differ from region to region and from sector to sector. However, the Council is labouring under a misapprehension of it thinks that the adoption of this package

will automatically result in its application in its entirety and without differentiation to all the Member States. At least, this is what we understood the Commission to say, and we would be grateful if — to make certain — Mr Vredeling would confirm this.

The two sides of industry will have to go into the details of this programme. It will not, and of course must not, interfere with their autonomy, but they will be stimulated to take the next step.

However, this programme will also provide a unique opportunity to go beyond the traditional measures provided for by the ECSC Treaty, in order to restructure the industry and, by taking a new approach to the distribution of work, maintain as many jobs as possible — which, in the final analysis, is what we are concerned about. Thus this is a programme which, although stemming from the misery of the closure of factories and the scourge of unemployment, is at the same time inspired by the wish to introduce a social element into this Community which at present is so economically biased in all respects.

Mr President, the Netherlands Minister for Social Affairs, who is — at least at the moment — anything but a Socialist, recently referred to our Community's social policy as a trimming. All I can say is that not only will the Council of Ministers now have a chance in December to weave a piece of basic policy out of this trimming but we as Parliament have an opportunity right now to make this priority quite clear.

The proposals for which the Commission is requesting our approval, are to a considerable extent disappointing for the Socialist Group. They are in fact far too non-committal for our taste. We would have greatly preferred to congratulate Mr Vredeling on the original proposals he put forward at the beginning of this year, before they were watered down in consultation with the Consultative Committee. Quite honestly, we would have been much happier if the extra shift which was outlined so clearly in the original proposals had not subsequently become so vague. I can assure you that the Socialist Group will keep a close eye on how these plans — which we hope still exist and are at any rate still perfectly feasible, — are finally put into practice. We should also like to ask the Commission to keep us informed of the content of any agreements resulting from the negotiations between the Commission and national governments. We ask this in view of the fact that it is part of our duty as Parliament to keep an eye on the use made of funds.

Thus, although we find it a little odd that the Commission should have let itself be persuaded to tone down its original proposals, despite the fact that, as far as we are concerned, the present proposals do not go far enough, although it is surely obvious to everyone that 100 million is far from sufficient and although we have reservations on various points, we regard the proposals and hence the recommendation contained

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in the motion for a resolution by Mr Peters as a piece of pioneering work in the field of social policy which we must support as an initial step towards a genuine European approach to this problem without which no plans on this scale would be possible. Fortunately, we can finally see signs here of a new policy which need not and should not be restricted to the steel sector, but can serve as an example for other sectors. Moreover, although we realize that the major German steel companies are opposed to this policy, it is nevertheless evident that in this same country, i.e. the Federal Republic, there are small undertakings which will no doubt be only too pleased to latch on to it. An example which springs to mind in this context that we heard about recently, is the Maxhütte in Eastern Bavaria, a structurally weak region with the same unemployment rate as Southern Italy or Ireland, where this programme for 6 000 jobs may be of vital importance. This is one example taken at random to demonstrate that we must not direct our attention to the traditional steel centres.

What, finally, we can and indeed must direct our attention to is the question of what needs to be done next. If, as the Socialist Group recommends, hopes and assumes, this motion for a resolution is now adopted, if this decision is combined with last week's budgetary decision earmarking 100 million EUA for the implementation of this programme, it would be intolerable for the Council to obstruct this then further. If we in Parliament see to it that money is included in the budget — money which is covered by our own margin — and if, because of indecisiveness, on the part of the Council, it does not prove possible to actually spend this money, then we will not take this lying down. If that were to happen, Parliament's budgetary powers — indeed, the work of this Parliament in general — would be seen to be just a piece of window-dressing.

The Socialist Group thus assumes that if Parliament now gives its support to this Commission programme, the Council will not oppose it. Otherwise, in this new European set-up which has only recently come into being we will have much more than just a steel crisis on our hands.

President. — I call Mr Nordlohne to speak on behalf of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Nordlohne. — (*D*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like first of all on behalf of the European People's Party to thank the rapporteur, Mr Peters, for his interim report on the communication from the Commission of the European Communities on the social aspects of the restructuring of the steel industry and for the motion for a resolution which he submitted to the committee responsible, i.e. the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, at its

meeting of 30 October and which is now before Parliament. I should particularly like to thank him for the remarks he made at the beginning of this debate.

As Mr Peters has already explained, the interim report and motion for a resolution were adopted with one vote against, in other words the European People's Party also voted in favour. The creation of special temporary allowances to assist workers in the steel industry as part of the Community restructuring programme has already been discussed in depth in the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Budgets and, as had already been mentioned, in this House as part of its basic debate on the draft budget for 1980.

I should like to refer here, on behalf of the European People's Party, to the contributions made by our colleague Konrad Schön from the Committee on Budgets. So as to avoid repeating the view of our group's position — in view of the lateness of the hour, among other reasons — I would refer you, on behalf of our group, to what he has said regarding the problems in hand. Furthermore, as the rapporteur has already pointed out, we shall be having a broad debate on this subject at the beginning of next year, so I need only make a few basic comments here today. Firstly, the European People's Party emphatically affirms the need for the creation of special temporary allowances to assist workers in the steel industry as part of the Community restructuring programme, for the reasons which Mr Lange, as rapporteur, has already explained.

The central element in the Commission proposals is the granting of aid for the adaptation of working conditions and working hours and for early retirement. I am very grateful to Mr van Minnen for stating very clearly in his speech that the autonomy of the two sides of industry should naturally not be interfered with — I made a note of this point — but he went on to say that in his view a social Community should be established instead of an economic Community. Our views differ on this point and we will have to discuss it further.

Secondly, we are grateful to the Commission for amending its original draft decision of 4 May 1979 in the light of the opinion of the Consultative Committee of the European Coal and Steel Community and submitting a revised version on 20 July 1979 according to which the above mentioned aid is to be granted only on condition that the autonomy of the two sides of industry is not affected.

We in this House appear to be agreed on this point. A further reason why we support this amended Commission proposal is that it aims at making greater use of the existing possibilities provided for by Article 56 of the ECSC Treaty.

Nordlohne

Thirdly, we oppose the proposal for reducing working hours, and I should like to make a few points on this subject on behalf of my Group.

What the draft proposes is the phased introduction of a 35-hour week and not a reduction in the number of years in employment, which is a very different thing. The proposal raises problems of employment policy, and our group has grave reservations as to how they can be solved. As we see it, a phased reduction in weekly working hours will not provide a solution to these problems.

The Commission itself shares these doubts insofar as, for example, it states in its economic guidelines for 1980 that reducing working hours cannot be regarded as an overnight cure to all our employment problems. As we see it, this must also apply in the case of the steel industry and its problems. It is not, however, for us to go into this question in greater detail now. We will be going into the matter further in the discussions in committee. These questions were also intentionally left out of account when the report was drawn up and unanimously adopted.

Fourthly, in my group's view the decisive point is rather that the proposed measures as set out in the amended Commission draft should have some effect on the employment situation without adversely affecting competitiveness of companies, since they constitute the main guarantee for the long-term availability of jobs and the creation of new ones. Mr Peters has already drawn attention as rapporteur to the situation as it has been over the last two years and as it will probably continue over the next two.

Fifthly, the fact that the Group of the European People's Party also supports the measures mentioned by Mr Peters in the present interim report, was clearly reflected in last week's discussions on the budget by the fact that we ourselves tabled a draft amendment to the proposed new Chapter 54 to the effect that we too are in favour of a payment appropriation of 30 million EUA with a commitment appropriation of 100 million EUA. As you will remember, and as has already been mentioned in this debate, the House adopted this proposal.

Finally, I should like to say on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party that we intend to vote in favour of this interim report on the creation of special temporary allowances to support workers in the steel industry as part of the Community restructuring programme.

Of the amendments submitted this morning by Mr Sarre and Mr Oehler, we intend to vote in favour of No 1 but to oppose Nos 2, 3 and 4. If a debate is held on the individual amendments, my colleagues Mr van der Gun and Mr Verhaegen will explain why we intend to reject these amendments.

President. — I call Miss Brookes to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Miss Brookes. — I thank Mr Peters very much indeed for his report, which I have read with interest. It is an extremely good report, but I feel that it is a pity that it does not go into more specific details. The serious problems of the steel industry throughout the European Community are well known. The Community must face those problems and accept responsibility for them, as, indeed, it does, as stated in this interim report.

But it is not the fault of those who are made redundant that too much steel is being produced in the European Community and throughout the world; it is not the fault of young people who face a jobless future that the principle of state-run steel works has proved unsuccessful. This European Parliament must accept the realities, and be generous in its attitudes. The reorganization of the steel industry is of vital importance to all categories of people involved. They look to the European Parliament to provide special measures to help them.

The difficulties of steel production, as I have said, exist throughout industrial Europe. But it is with anger and concern that I speak of Shotton Deeside, in North Wales, an area that I know well, because I live there and it is my home. The British Steel Corporation has decided to close Shotton Steel Works in March 1980 — and do not forget East Moors, I say that to my opponents across the floor. Labour relations in Shotton Steel Works are excellent, and the work force is known for its stability; good reasons for its non-closure. But there we are: the closing of Shotton Steel Works means that some 5 850 people will be made redundant. Shopkeepers, traders, garage owners will all suffer from this decision. But what is even more frightening is that 989 school leavers in Deeside have no job to go to. Those young people want to go to work, and they have a right to go to work. I call upon ...

(Protests)

... Listen to my following sentence: take your time, don't be in a hurry — I call upon the European Parliament and the united national government of Britain to give financial aid to the Deeside area. As well as the financial allowances, supplementary allowances, early retirement measures, and redundancy payments, I want to see special fund to cover housing costs, particularly for the young married couple with young children. I want to see special training schemes for those young people who have not been employed in the steel industry, funds made available to carry these schemes through. I want to see further training opportunities for those young folk who find their jobs in the steel works coming to an end. I call on the British

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national government to show encouragement to the private sector. In line with this, Mr President, there is the lack of advance factories being built in the Deeside area — let the blame fall where it may, no prospective industrialist visiting Deeside can be expected to provide jobs and investment when the factories are just not there — neither for rental nor for purchase. In fact, the future factory building programme has come to an end. The European Economic Community — and indeed the Iron and Steel Community — must help, because, after all, the Iron and Steel Community was the industrial beginning of the European concept. This Parliament, when it votes tomorrow morning has a moral duty to the people of Deeside, a responsibility to the young people of Deeside to help in the provision of jobs and a working environment.

President. — I call Mr Frischmann.

Mr Frischmann. — (F) Mr President, as we said during a recent debate in this Parliament on the working week and the harmonization of social legislation, we wish first of all to reaffirm our categorical opposition to the policy put forward by Brussels, a policy which has caused great hardship to many people, especially in the iron and steel sector.

We stand by the French workers in their bitter struggle to maintain their jobs, to keep alive the major industries which are the guarantee of our national independence. We find this particularly important since the background documents for this session show that between December 1975 and April 1978 staff reductions affected more than 60 000 people in the European iron and steel industry, and according to some recently revised estimates, a total of some 118 000 jobs could be lost between 1977 and 1980. These additional figures should add some weight to those Mr Peters gave a moment ago.

The Brussels policy is therefore a recipe for disaster, revealing a desire literally to smash the iron and steel industry, and to use all possible means to facilitate structural reorganization and redeployment.

Up to now, it has been only the efforts of the workers which have held back these plans and it is due to the workers and the workers alone that some plants have been saved. The reason that there is talk this evening of accompanying social provisions of a few minor measures to make the burden of the workers a little easier to bear, is simply fear of their discontent and possible reactions.

There is thus certainly no question of our opposing any social measure, however limited, which might help the workers, the victims of a policy which is contrary to their interests and in which they had no part. We cannot disagree with the proposals made by

Mr Peters in his report on this particular point, but we cannot support them either. We will abstain, because the report also contains some statements of which we do not approve.

In the Committee on Social Affairs and in this House, we have repeatedly opposed the *de facto* acceptance of a policy which increases unemployment, devastates entire regions and threatens our national economy. We do not think that the granting of special temporary allowances or inadequate loans, which by the way, the Council has scrapped from the budget, can really do anything to alleviate the social repercussions of restructuring in the iron and steel industry. Furthermore, this Parliament must quickly hold a thorough debate on the present situation and on some immediate solutions, solutions which must not be limited merely to a 'social' policy which in fact is a relief programme. The plight of the workers of Lorraine and the North needs to be understood, as does the situation of workers in other regions and other countries, and in all the other occupations which have been disrupted by the same policy. Their struggle will continue, and we will support them in their fight for a policy which will really create employment, a policy which will really boost reproduction by meeting legitimate needs and claims, in other words a policy which is the opposite of the absurd, disastrous approach which we have had up to now, and which must be ended as quickly as possible.

President. — I call Mr Calvez to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Calvez. — (F) Mr President, at the meeting of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment on 30 October, the Liberal and Democratic Group voted in favour of the interim report presented by Mr Hans Peters. Times are hard for all employees in the steel industry and things are likely to get worse in 1980, a year which could bring even greater difficulties than 1979 for the iron and steel industry as a whole, in view of the growing economic crisis. We must therefore do everything we can to protect the personnel in this sector.

I was pleased to see that Mr Davignon, in his exposé on the steel plan, placed particular emphasis on the need for more to be done in 1980 to protect iron and steel workers affected by the restructuring. The coordination of economic, industrial and social policies on a Community level is all-important, as the report submitted to Parliament points out. Further, we are so well aware that management and labour, who are represented not only by the Employers' Union and the European Trade Union Confederation but also by other representative bodies, have negotiated and signed conventions for the social welfare of iron and steel personnel affected by the restructuring.

Calvez

This Parliament is duty-bound to confirm the resolution voted on 16 February 1979, because it is not our function here to be social stretcher-bearers. The talking has got to stop; the time has come to carry out the wishes of those who put European social and regional policies high on their list of priorities. Is not the greatest inequality that which deprives a man of his job, obliging him to join the ever-swelling ranks of Europe's unemployed?

Last week, this Parliament began the budget debate by asking for the provision of special funds, independent of the ECSC budget, and the inclusion of 100 million units of account for the financing of social measures as part of the iron and steel policy. This is not playing to the gallery; on the contrary it is highly realistic, since the situation is becoming extremely serious in the regions affected by the crisis. It is this same spirit of realism which prompted the Liberal and Democratic Group to suggest through Mr Pininfarina, that Parliament should invite the Committee on Social Affairs to formulate an opinion for Parliament to endorse on the harmonization of social legislation. It is this Parliament's duty and privilege, ladies and gentlemen, to urge the European Council to decide rapidly on the proposals put forward by its Committee on Social Affairs regarding such matters as early retirement, internal and external transfers of staff in the iron and steel industry, reduction of the working week, special temporary allowances and occupational training for new jobs.

The Liberal and Democratic Group is confident that the proposals contained in Mr Peters' report will be accepted by the Commission and the Council, given that the workers in the iron and steel sector are not responsible for the crisis which they are going through and which is depriving several thousand of them of their livelihood. It is an urgent matter, for one of the main objectives is to guarantee employment for the workers in the iron and steel industry by maintaining in this sector or by creating in other sectors as many jobs as possible, and by adopting vigorous measures to help different groups of people affected by the restructuring or retrenchment.

In conclusion, a comprehensive approach is required to this problem of the restructuring of the iron and steel industry. Over the last few years there have been many areas of tension marked by social unrest in the iron and steel industry. The welfare side of the iron and steel industry needs to be developed a stage further, and we therefore ask Parliament to adopt Mr Peter's report.

President. — I call Mr Griffiths.

Mr Griffiths. — Mr President, I would like to address myself to this interim report and to take one or two points on the motion for a resolution.

There is one, I understand, which might be a problem in translation but I feel I need to point it out to the House because paragraph 2 of the motion for a resolution implies that the only way to overcome the crisis in steel is through coordinated Community policy. I do not think that it is the only possible solution but I am convinced that coordinated Community policies can help to solve the crisis in the steel industry. I did not put an amendment down to this effect because I understand that in German the resolution reads slightly differently.

I would like to draw the House's attention to two aspects of the interim report, particularly paragraph 5, because I believe that here Mr Peters has highlighted a very important aspect of the problem of the steel industry and that is, of course, that in many parts of the European Community the steel industry is to be found in the regions. This is probably nowhere more true than in the United Kingdom. We therefore have to bear in mind that these steel closures, which are happening now and which will continue to happen in the future, are taking place very largely in areas which are already feeling the cold winds of economic recession, job losses and high unemployment.

This, Mr President, brings me to the sorry but indisputable fact that, however good — and there are many good sides to what the Commission is proposing — their proposals are, they do not go anywhere near far enough. We must, I think, implore the Commission to do much more with regard to extra shifts, with regard to shorter working hours, because there is no doubt that if we are going to save jobs in the steel industry we are going to have to move to a much shorter working week. Now, we saw earlier this year that the German steelworkers failed, after quite a long strike to get real concessions on the shorter working week. We saw, too, how in Britain, after quite prolonged action by the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, they failed to get really big decisions in their favour on the shorter working week, although some short steps were made in the direction the trade union movement would like to go.

I should finally like to point out to this House that there are in fact in the United Kingdom two crises with regard to the steel industry. There is the general crisis of capitalism, the worldwide economic recession, if you like, but there is also the crisis of a Conservative Government. We have to face the fact that British Steel Corporation is closing the Shotton Steelworks, because of the cash limits policy of a Conservative government. Now, I am not disputing the fact that a steelworks in my own constituency was closed by a Labour Government. But this only serves to underline the fact that, whether there are Conservative governments or whether there are Labour governments, there is an underlying problem in steel and other industries brought about by the crisis of capitalism. The pallia-

Griffiths

tives so often offered, and the carrot so often given to get steelworkers to give up their jobs, are just not good enough. We have to have real planning, we have to have the real direction of capital into the regions if the steel industry is really going to be saved.

President. — I call Ms Clwyd.

Ms Clwyd. — Mr President, when we talk blandly about the social aspects of the restructuring of the steel industry, we sometimes forget the devastating effects massive redundancies can have on whole communities. In the last 10 years the problems of one of the three poorest regions of the Community have become increasingly obvious and acute. In 1975 there were 50 000 fewer jobs in the coal industry in Wales than there were in 1965. In the six years, 1964-70, a coal mine closed every 7 weeks in Wales. In the same period unemployment in agriculture dropped by 30 %. More, Mr President, was involved than just a loss of jobs for individuals, though these were serious enough, because whole communities were swept away: a situation which we saw in the twenties and thirties and hoped never to see again. The redundancies in steel will take unemployment in one community, Shotton, to nearly 20 %. The closure decision is an injury to the whole community in an area where there is no alternative employment and in a nation where a higher percentage of men are employed in steel than in any other industry.

The social consequences of putting so many men on the dole are terrible to contemplate. Announcements of further redundancies across the breadth of British industry, particularly the steel industry, are likely to come at any moment. Shotton and Corby have been described as one-industry, one-employer and one-class towns. Two-thirds of the men in Shotton work in steel. What will be the consequences for that town if the closure, bringing with it over 6 000 redundancies, goes ahead without discussion just on the say-so of the management forced to do that by the suburban bank manager attitude of a stoney hearted government? A prominent socialist warned us what will happen when the axe falls on a one-industry town. When the industry of a town has been killed, it seems as difficult to apply artificial respiration as on a human corpse: all the traditions of the area seem to cling to the dead industry. It is socially indefensible, Mr President, for any management to close a vital industry in a one-industry town, on a particular date, without negotiation, when it is told that the facts and the figures are demonstrably false, but does not even have the decency to consult the people concerned or examine those facts and figures.

It is a pity Miss Brookes has left the room. She professed to be passionately concerned about the future of the steel industry. She professed to be passionately concerned about the welfare of the people in

her town. She professed to be passionately concerned about the young unemployed. It is a pity she is not here for me to remind her that last week she voted against measures in the Social Fund which would have helped the young unemployed in her town and in Wales as a whole.

Mr President, the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment is conscious of the havoc wreaked on human beings by the so-called restructuring of the steel industry. That is why it insists that there must be proper measures to assist workers who, through no fault of their own, are being thrown on the scrap heap.

President. — I call Mrs Nielsen.

Mrs Tove Nielsen. — (DK) Mr President, I should like to add a few remarks to those made just now by Mr Calvez on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group. Speaking as a Danish Parliamentarian, I should like to say that, on the one hand, I agree that this House should discuss questions of social policy, particularly in connection with structural reorganization and unemployment and other issues in this field. On the other hand, I feel that the purpose of these discussions must never be to achieve harmonization in the field of social legislation. As you all know, the individual Member States have opted for widely varying systems and it is my view that we must therefore not aim for harmonization. At any rate, that is what I think, and it is also the attitude of the Danish Liberal party, Venstre.

I also wish to make a few points in connection with the specific problems of the steel industry. We must appreciate that, all too often, individual regions or areas are hit particularly severely by the depressed economic climate. In Denmark, the scale of the problem is of course limited, but a number of communities are very nearly 100 % dependent on this industrial sector, as is the case with the Frederikværk rolling mills.

We cannot expect the number of people employed in the Community steel industry to remain unchanged in the future. We ought therefore to be concentrating on retraining people in other trades, and on encouraging the movement of new undertakings to the regions affected, at the same time ensuring that enough rationalization and modernization take place to guarantee their competitiveness. It is clear that certain countries in the Third World are now just entering the first phase of industrialization which we went through in the 19th century. This is evident from developments in the steel and textile industries. That is something we must accept without resorting to protectionist measures, which are bound to fail in the long run. Instead, we must try to find jobs in other industrial sectors for the large number of people

Tove Nielsen

baing made redundant in the steel industry, and we must provide social security for them during the transitional period, which they are bound to find extremely difficult.

President. — I call Mrs Baduel Glorioso.

Mrs Baduel Glorioso. — *(I)* Mr President, Mr Vredeling, ladies and gentlemen, it takes mass movements of revolt — like the fully justified one in Lorraine which we have all followed on our TV screens — before the Commission takes action and produces a special programme for this particular sector which has seen 150 000 jobs lost in four years, while only 15 000 new jobs have been created in other sectors by means of social measures. Nevertheless, I do feel that this Commission programme deserves support, even if 100 million EUA is inadequate, even something could really have been done a little earlier when the problem of restructuring emerged, and even if it is to a great extent something of an aid scheme.

The Italian Communists support the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Peters. But there are three points, three questions, I wish to raise. Firstly, how are these funds, meagre though they be, to be allocated among the Member States? We agree that there are countries and regions in Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and even in the Ruhr which are in a worse plight than Italy, which has managed to restructure its steel industry — I say this with a certain pride — and which has no great needs in this sector, except in the south and especially at Bagnoli, near Naples. If I may be allowed an aside, it would be extraordinary if at a time when the Commission is drawing up an integrated plan to tackle the problems of unemployment in Naples, there were to be no aid for the restructuring which is currently being put into effect at Bagnoli. The first question and the first issue here are therefore how this special fund is to be divided up.

The second question is whether we shall have adequate means to help and to find new jobs for the other sectors which will not benefit from this special programme. We have to keep in mind the ship-building industry, the textile industry and many other sectors.

The third question is perhaps the most vital one. On this point I agree with much of Mr Frischmann's remarks, and echo what was said more than once by Mr Leonardi. Why did the need for restructuring arise at all? On several occasions this Group voted against the ECSC budget because the companies which were supposed to give the ECSC 1 % of their turnover did not do so.

They contributed 0.29 or 0.30/0.31 %, and as a result the ECSC never carried out the research which was needed if Europe was to produce high quality steel products and special steels. All this is part of the

reconversion scheme now, and this reconversion and restructuring could have been avoided.

Mr President, we shall not tire of saying that unless we learn to make proper use of our financial and human resources, our professional and management skills and our capacity for research, and unless we get all this together as part of a general plan based on clear objectives, we shall end up by restructuring everything but having to buy everything from others because we shall have become incapable of producing anything at all.

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I had not intended to say anything controversial, but I really do think it is a disgrace on the part of Ms Clwyd to attack my colleague.

I would like to welcome this report, and particularly paragraph 4. I have a steel-mill in my constituency, and it is called Shelton. Since 1971, about 2 500 jobs have been lost; last year, production was virtually terminated and 1 500 jobs lost. Now there are a number of programmes available from the Community to assist in dealing with redundancies, and I think this particular one adds another useful tool; but I would ask the Commission, when looking at this programme, just a couple of questions. The first is, Will all the programmes dealing with redundancies in the steel industry be properly coordinated? We do not want one directorate doing something that another directorate ought to be doing, we want coordination between them; indeed, we need coordination between Commissioners on this major steel problem. Secondly — and I speak from my experience with Shelton — could the Commission act a little more speedily? In my particular constituency, although the steel-mill was closed down eighteen months ago, all we have had from the Commission so far is a couple of studies, we have not had very much action on this particular problem. What has happened, for example, to loans to help industry in that area? And of course, I do not want just studies, I want action, particularly when 2 500 people have lost their jobs in an area which is presently dominated by one major industry, which happens to be the pottery industry, and if anything happens to that there will be a major unemployment problem in the area.

I am particularly appalled to read that the Community has recently given £ 3 million to help the British Steel Corporation give aid to its employees — where? In the regions? No — at its head office in London, and at its divisional offices, which have been affected by rationalization! It seems to me shocking that employees in London, which is hardly a depressed area, should come before outlying areas of the United Kingdom. I think it is a shame that bureaucrats should have been given priority over the workers.

Moreland

Consequently, Mr President, although I welcome this programme, I stress the questions that I put earlier and hope for an answer.

President. — I call Mr Sarre.

Mr Sarre. — (*F*) Ladies and gentlemen, in order to understand the crisis in the steel industry, we must first of all analyse the far-reaching changes that have taken place in the capitalist system and the redeployment of its industrial apparatus, which have led to 70 000 redundancies in less than three years. In Lorraine alone, 30 000 jobs have been lost in four years. Are we going to sit back and allow Europe's production machine to be run down when at the same time the multinational companies are using cut-price labour in Australia, South Korea, South Africa and Brazil? Are we prepared to accept the consequences of the industrial strategies of the multinationals?

A resigned acceptance could lead us to turn to social measures to palliate the dire consequences of this crisis. Social policy would be kept separate from industrial policy, and the Community would be seen as a kind of social worker responsible for giving a little help to tide the workers over during the period of restructuring. Our job would be to make the workers in this sector readier to accept the relocations of industry which condemns many of them to the dole queue.

In our view, this is the wrong approach. Our aim is not to make the winding-up of the steel industry socially tolerable. On the contrary, it is to challenge this industrial policy, or to be more precise, the lack of it. We do not accept that the steel industry should today be condemned to die a slow death after so much public money has been pumped into it. What we want is public control of the industry, so that a modernization programme can be carried out and production diversified. This calls for a different policy. This is why, unlike Mr Peters, I do not consider that a policy of coordination at Community level will be an effective means of combating the crisis. We are not going to emerge from the crisis by increased integration of the policies of deflation and austerity in Europe. Further, among the social aspects of the restructuring of the iron and steel industry, it surprises me that the reduction of working hours has not been discussed. There can be few who still doubt the impact on job creation of reducing working hours. In France, the Official Institute of Statistics, — to the great embarrassment of the government, by the way — has confirmed that reducing the working week by one hour would bring down the number of unemployed by between 60 000 and 115 000. Needless to say, this effect does not follow mechanically or proportionately; a whole series of factors come into play, such as higher productivity, machinery use ratios and improved working conditions. Nevertheless, nobody can deny the important role to be played by the

gradual introduction of a 35 hour working week, the lowering of the retirement age or the introduction of an additional shift.

A resolution by this Parliament relating to the social aspects of the crisis in the iron and steel industry will not have any effect on this problem. In a nutshell, social policy cannot be divorced from industrial policy. We should not be trying to make the winding-up of the steel industry more acceptable. The way of the crisis is not to be found in the convergence of austerity policies. This Parliament must realize the urgent need to reduce the working week. For these three reasons, and many others — and I should like to call Parliament's attention to the amendments we have submitted — in the present state of affairs, I cannot approve the resolution before us.

President. — I call Mr Spencer.

Mr Spencer. — Mr President, it gives me great pleasure to do a great deal of welcoming. I would like to welcome the Commission's revised proposals, to welcome the fact that the room for national variation still continues, that such proposals will not — and it specifically says this — be applied in a way that interferes with the competitiveness of the undertakings; I welcome the strictly temporary nature of the proposals and that three years will be the maximum — let us see how they work and, if necessary, revise our ideas later —; I welcome the proposals for encouraging earlier retirement. But I would be contributing to a false consensus if I suggested that my vote for this report implied approval for what I regard as ill-thought-out schemes for the fifth shift and for work-sharing in this industry. I am not saying that I reject the case as put, but I am saying that I have not yet seen the figures sufficiently worked out to prove that case. My group will vote for the report, and it will vote for Amendment No 1; it will not vote for the other, substantially unhelpful, amendments.

I do not know whether Ms Clwyd is in the room. I think it is unfortunate if she is not, after her attack on Miss Brookes. Surely what is sauce for one gander is sauce for another.

(*Laughter*)

It is a pity, because she made an emotional appeal the force of which it would be difficult to resist — an appeal on behalf of a dying town. Unfortunately, we have to deal with the situation as we find it; we did not deal the hands that we have picked up; we have to work with the situation as it is. To use her terms, we are not engaged in artificial respiration; we are engaged in proving that there is life after death for these industries that, for reasons outside our control, are in decline. That should mean that we are talking about retraining, about growth: that should be an area for consensus and agreement and not a political football.

President. — I call Sir David Nicolson.

Sir David Nicolson. — Mr President, like so many of us here in this new Parliament, I would like to see it adopt a proper leadership role. I would like to see it act both as a voice and a conscience for the Community. We all know that our regional and social policies are too small a part of the budget and therefore what we need are specific proposals and plans to do something about it.

Now we wringing our hands over the sad plight of the steel industry in Europe today, but I think we should look back a little as to why this has come to pass. Firstly, it is a crisis which is due to over-capacity in a period of growth euphoria. Between 1946 and 1974 world steel output increased 6 fold. That is a fantastic figure, and now when we have got into a period of over-capacity Europe occupies the lowest place in the league of the big producers, with only 60 % utilization. In four years prior to 1978 we have seen over 100 000 redundancies. Now this is not a very clever tale. Why did we not see this coming? Why was there no warning and no forecasts? And I say this because this has occurred irrespective of the colour of governments or the type of industry involved.

We in the Community had a suggestion some time ago for a Community institute for economic analysis and research. These proposals were made, but nothing was done about them. Therefore we have had no forecasts on which to work. no publicity for these forecasts, and we have had no objectives because we have not had the political will to give the leadership which is necessary in this Community. This applies not only in steel, Mr President. It applies in shipbuilding and in textiles and in other industries which no doubt we shall be talking about later on.

Let me make just a couple of points in beginning our analysis of these problems. Firstly, let us differentiate between structural change and short-term help. The creation of new employment, new jobs, is the real first priority. Shorter hours, early retirement, less overtime and things like this can help temporarily. But they do not tackle in the longer term what we need. We need a Community industrial policy and that means an overall policy. We need an overall EEC plan in other words.

I had the privilege for some years to be chairman of British Airways and we transferred all our big engine maintenance down to South Wales and we did all that maintenance with re-trained redundant Welsh miners. If you can turn Welsh miners into aircraft engine fitters, I venture to say you can do almost anything in the field of retraining. This was extremely successful, and very competitive, I may say as regards cost. So I think that we have got to be far more positive and specific in our suggestions. We have got to look at the infrastructure proposals also. Perhaps we have got to

create industrial estates and encourage new industries to be set up, smaller industries perhaps. We need innovation, research and forecasting, special temporary allowances as suggested in this report — I support the idea. It is a useful contribution, but I would beg that it be part of a much wider policy which embraces the longer term too. I think we must learn, and must learn soon, to think big in this Community, because we may believe in a social market economy which creates wealth, but we must also believe in protecting the people who create that wealth. We must reach out and take hold of the future and not wait until misfortune overtakes us.

President. — I call Mr Boyes.

Mr Boyes. — May I first say to my colleague at the back there, that if that is his judgement of what a very beautiful woman is like, then I cannot trust his judgement about what the steel industry is all about. I have never in all the time that I have been an elected representative on any body at all, heard such hypocritical speeches as I have this evening from the people here. The only thing that I might ask is that those who used an odd word of progressive nature in their attempt to get some salvation out of this debate, when they get back to the UK, campaign for some of the things that they have said. And Miss Brookes might shout very loudly to the Conservative Cabinet about the problems that have been created in Wales.

I rise this evening to support the Peters report calling for aid to offset the social effects of restructuring the steel industry, and to say that the workers are shouting very loudly to us that they will take no further job losses in that industry. We must also think very seriously about the kind of things that Mr Sarre said in his speech earlier this evening.

Could I illustrate the problem by considering one small town — Consett in County Durham. Now, let me say to my comrades on this side of the House that I am not making any special claims for the United Kingdom, or for Consett in particular, because I think the struggle against unemployment is transnational. When I talk to steelworkers, I say quite clearly that it must not be plant against plant, it must not be country against country, but the workers must unite to resist any further cuts in their industry and must inform the national governments that the end has come for such measures. But Consett is typical of many areas in the United Kingdom in that it is a one-industry town.

It has not suffered through a blunt surgeon's knife in the hands of the Tories like other places, but it is being slowly bled to death. It has lost 1 500 jobs; a month ago it lost 400 more jobs; and it is forecast very strongly that in the near future it is going to lose another 700 jobs. We do not know for certain whether it is on the Tory death list or not; but then when the

Boyes

Tories are in power you do not know very much until it is too late, because they do not believe in negotiations with the unions the way that the Labour Government did. Consett is an area of high unemployment, and there are no alternative jobs for the people in that area if that steel plant loses any more jobs. There is a small outfit in Britain, British Steel Corporation Industries, but that has got about £10 million to spend, and, as we all know, in the hands of the political butchers that are ruling the United Kingdom at the moment.

(Protests from the right).

You cannot be sure how long £10 million will last. It is a fair forecast that it will be cut out along with many other things that they seem to be cutting out.

So I say to the Council of Ministers who cut this 100 m. units of account recommended by the Commission — and I echo what some of my comrades have said — 100 m. units of account really is a small drop in the ocean where this particular measure is concerned. I say it particularly to the Conservative Member, and I hope all other people will say it to their own government representative on the Council of Ministers. We have a problem with the Conservative minister because, as most of you know, we have the most reactionary government that has been known in the United Kingdom for half a century, a government that is trying to take the workers back to the 1930s, a government led by an Iron Maiden. But I might in this debate in particular remind the Iron Maiden, that iron has a tendency to rust, and I think that she too is on the way out. Sir Keith Joseph as her co-partner is making slashes into industry like a blind man in an abattoir. Those are the people that we have to deal with. But the steelworkers of Britain must not be condemned to further unemployment by profitability tables, financial gymnastics, inaccurate forecasts. When the upturn comes there will be no industry left to compete; only steel deserts and unemployed steelworkers who wish to work, who wish to have the dignity of earning a living for their families, to use the special skills handed down in the steel industry from generation to generation. National governments must be forced to do all they can to prevent any further job losses, and the Council of Ministers must not stand in the way of measures which might save this serious situation from deteriorating further.

President. — I call Mr Collins.

Mr Collins. — I should say at the beginning that I understand the background of this particular debate, the proposed cut by the Council of 100 million units of account, and I appreciate that 100 million units of account, frankly, does not amount to a great deal. But it is nonetheless an important amount because it signifies the attitude of the Council to the problem that is confronting us. I rise, like Mr Boyes before me, to

support the motion for a resolution, simply because it will establish the right, the authority and the ability of this Community to begin to deal reasonably adequately with the drastic consequences of its own policies.

Unfortunately, however, I am a little bit sad when I read the report because, frankly, I think it is bland. I am sad because this is a report which is essentially about unemployment. It is about redundancies caused by industrial change and by international competition, and about our reaction to it; and I do not think that we should ever, in any circumstances, be mealy-mouthed or bland when this particular problem is discussed. In my part of Europe, Mr President, unemployment is unacceptably high. Other Members of this Parliament complain when unemployment reaches 7 %; in my area, and in Scotland generally, 7 % is a level that we would almost regard as full employment. Insofar as the steel industry is concerned, I am afraid it very often seems to my constituents that this unemployment is almost the deliberate and very cynical creation of those who do not, and perhaps because of their background cannot, properly understand the debilitating, long-term effects of unemployment on individuals and indeed on whole communities. When I used to work in the steel works of my constituency in Motherwell and in Cambuslang some 20 years ago, there were nearly two dozen open-hearth furnaces and several electric-arc furnaces. They gave employment. They provided incomes, and perhaps more than that, they gave dignity to the people and the families that were associated with them.

Now you travel round my constituency and you simply see empty shells: of open-hearth melting shops that were once workplaces; and in place of people going purposefully to work, you find groups of men standing idly on street corners.

I acknowledge the economic difficulties and I know that there are problems of overcapacity. I understand all that. But if an industry and whole towns are being killed off, like Corby, or in Roland Boyes' words 'bled to death', like Consett or like a great many in my constituency, then alternatives must be found there must be efforts at every level to alleviate and combat the changes, to direct the changes into channels that will bring life back into these areas; and perhaps we ought to consider what kind of action is needed. I do not think you can see this in isolation. You cannot simply say, 'steel redundancies — let's take action', because in recent weeks, in the area around the Scottish division of British Steel, 1 500 jobs have been lost at the Talbot plant; 3 000 jobs have been lost at Singer; Monsanto want 800 jobs lost; Massey-Ferguson are about to close their factory and lose us another 1 500 jobs, and the catalogue could go on. And they are all multi-nationals, Mr President.

Collins

Yes, we need more funds. Yes, we need action ; but one of the actions that we might reasonably take is to demand a legally binding code of practice for multi-nationals, to make sure that they do not play one area of Europe off against another in the blatant search for cheap labour. We have got to join in that fight as a Parliament, as a Community, if we are ever to make any inroads into the difficulties that arise. We do not need policies that are merely economic calculations. We need policies that are infused with human values and that are concerned with real people and their families.

President. — I call Mr Vredeling.

Mr Vredeling, Vice-President of the Commission. — (NL) Mr President, I shall try to be very brief but I must nevertheless make a few points. Firstly I should like to thank Parliament, the Social Affairs Committee and, in particular, its rapporteur for the general support which the directly elected European Parliament has now given to the Commission's proposals. We always had the support of the old Parliament and we have now translated the measures we envisaged into specific proposals. These too have received your approval, for which I am sincerely grateful. The nearest thing to a negative reaction was a threat to abstain and I think it is politically significant that this is only an abstention and not an actual vote against.

Mr President, I do not intend to comment on the motion for a resolution by the Social Affairs Committee. We have consulted the Consultative Committee, which includes representatives of the employers and employees and must be consulted by virtue of the procedure laid down in Article 95 of the ECSC Treaty, which we used as our basis. This Committee too was practically unanimous in its support for the policy outlined by the Commission in its proposals. I realize that what is involved today is an interim debate in Parliament, but we will have ample opportunity to discuss the details of these measures at a later date, as the rapporteur, Mr Peters, has already pointed out. For this reason, Mr President, I do not think at this stage I need go further into the points raised by, for example, Mr Spencer. I should like to have more figures at my disposal before answering him. This will be possible when we come to discuss the matter in greater detail. The same goes for certain observations made by Miss Brookes and Ms Clwyd. Unlike Mr Spencer, I am not so bold as to get mixed up in an argument between the two ladies. In any case, I think that to get involved here in disputes with each other on the basis of national conflicts is a fairly pointless exercise. In my view, we should be above this sort of thing. We are not here to discuss matters of national politics, at least, this is not what I come here for. Imagine if I had to defend here the policy of my country's government. I would find this difficult and therefore have no intention of doing so. As

regards Mr Moreland's observations concerning the need for coordination, speed etc., I should like to point out very briefly that he must take this up with his own government as the body responsible for applying what we have agreed. It is up to the government concerned to see to it that these measures are introduced swiftly in its own country. The same applies in the case of coordination between various measures. All we can do is conclude the agreement and then pass it on to the various national governments, in cooperation with the two sides of industry.

Last week we discussed the budget and I am grateful to Parliament for reinstating the 100 million u.a. which the Council had deleted. This amount has in fact been reincorporated slightly different terms than we had originally proposed and we must therefore draw the appropriate conclusions since a number of adjustments will be required.

As I have already said, we took as our basis Article 235 of the EEC Treaty and Article 95 of the ECSC Treaty. This is a point I would like to make for the benefit of Mr Nordlohne, since Article 56 is too restricted to serve as a basis for implementing our measures. Naturally, as Mr Schön rightly points out in his amendment, Article 56 can be used to give additional support to these measures, but taken alone it is inadequate, for formal and legal reasons which I need not go into in detail here.

As regards the observations made by other honourable Members, I should like simply to say this. We are opening up a range of options, and in so doing are naturally suggesting a general framework, but we do not regard some measures as preferable to others.

I must point out to Mrs Baduel Glorioso that — fortunately — we do not have a distribution key. If I was responsible for a generally applicable distribution key in the field of social policy, and had to apply it in the case of your country, Mrs Baduel Glorioso, your country would come off rather badly as regards, for example, the Social Fund. Italy in fact gets much more than it should according to the official key — which, of course, is a good thing, since its social problems are far greater than in other countries.

Then there is the point about alternative employment. Naturally, this is one element in the whole package of measures for the steel sector which Mr Davignon placed in a broader context in the document he recently submitted to the Council and to Parliament. This is clearly one aspect of this much broader issue and I go along with what Sir David Nicolson said when he put the case for an overall Community plan that means something in a broader context. I have rarely heard a better argument in favour of a system of State control. If Mr Boyes suggests that things are taking a different course in the United Kingdom, this is a matter which must be settled between Mr Boyes and Sir David and which I had better not get involved in.

Vredeling

I must stress one thing. Mention has been made in various quarters of the autonomy of the two sides of industry. Mr Nordlohne said that he was pleased that the Commission had amended its proposals in such a way as to guarantee this autonomy. The autonomy of the two sides of industry has always been one of our guiding principles and we have never been in favour of interfering with it. We merely felt that we should make this point more explicitly since this is what the two sides of industry themselves want. We have never been in favour of anything different. This also clearly answers Mr Van Minnen who, I think, also raised this question.

Naturally, should the Council take a decision on this question, which I still hope it will, we will keep Parliament informed of developments. We shall also continue to keep Parliament and its Social Affairs Committee informed of any conventions concluded with the individual governments. This may be at a later stage than before, but should be done better than has sometimes been the case. I can give you an explicit assurance on this point.

Mr President, I do not wish to go into Mr Griffith's remarks concerning shift work, shorter working hours etc. now. We will be able to discuss these matters in the debate on the final report which — as Mr Peters has pointed out — will go into greater detail.

I should also like to thank Mr Calvez for the support he has given our proposals on behalf of his Group.

It has indeed been said by various quarters — and I agree — that many people in Europe expect this sort of thing from us. We must realize that the proposals we have made are of considerable significance to great sections of the population. If you, as directly elected representative of the people, now give your firm support — as I hope you will — to the appeal which we have made to you, Mr President, the Commission will be extremely grateful.

Finally, I should like to say a further word of thanks to the Social Affairs Committee, which has done considerable work on this matter, and to the rapporteur for the constructive manner in which he has dealt with our proposals.

(Applause)

President. — Time is up. The debate is closed.

Mr Peters, as rapporteur, will speak on the amendments before the vote is taken at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

9. Urgent debate

President. — I have received a request for urgent debate, pursuant to Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure, on a motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Schwartzberg, Mr Glinne, Mr B. Friedrich, Mr Lezzi and Mr

Estier on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Blumenfeld, Mr Seitlinger, Mr Penders, Mr Herman, Mr Ryan and Mr Antoniazzi on behalf of the Group of the European Peoples Party (CD), Mr Scott-Hopkins, Lady Elles, Lord O'Hagan and Mr Kellett-Bowman on behalf of the European Democratic Group, Mr Bettiza and Mr Damseaux on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, and Mrs Dienesch, Mrs Chou-raqui, Mr Ansquer, Mr Lalor, Mrs Ewing and Mr Druon on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the seizure of hostages and occupation of the United States Embassy in Teheran (Doc. 1-527/79).

The reasons supporting this request for urgent debate are contained in the document itself.

I shall consult Parliament on this request for urgent debate at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting.

10. Agenda for next sitting

President. — The next sitting will be held tomorrow, Friday, 16 November 1979, at 9 a.m., with the following agenda :

- procedure without report
- decision on urgency of a motion for a resolution
- voting time
- vote on the motion for a resolution on world hunger
- Aigner report on the discharge for the 1977 budget
- Pearce report on generalized tariff preferences
- Hoffmann report on international action on air transport
- motion for a resolution on the meeting of the Council of Education Ministers
- joint debate on four motions for resolutions on the situation in Iran
- joint debate on four motions for resolutions on political kidnapping in Spain
- motion for a resolution on the attack on the Israeli Ambassador to Portugal
- Ferri report on intervention by the European Parliament before the Court of Justice
- joint debate on the Ligios and Enright reports on fisheries
- Kirk report on fisheries
- Quin report on fisheries
- Pranchère report on crawfish catches
- Caillavet report on the marketing of aubergines
- Welsh report on products from Malta
- voting-time

The sitting is closed.

(The sitting was closed at 8-05 p.m.)

ANNEX

Questions which could not be answered during

Question Time, with written answers

Question No 9, by Mr Glinne (O-79/79)

Subject : Ratification by the United States of the GATT Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN)

The Commission gave the European Parliament an undertaking not to implement the MTN agreements until it was satisfied that their incorporation into American law (Trade Agreement Act) was in conformity with the provisions adopted by the GATT member states in Geneva in July 1979. Can the Commission give the European Parliament an assurance that this condition has been fulfilled?

Answer

The Commission holds the view that American legislation on multilateral trade negotiations will enable the government to fulfill its obligations under the agreement concluded in Geneva.

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Question No 12, by Mrs Krouwel-Vlam (H-185/79)

Subject : Legislation on abortion

Could the Commission give details as soon as possible on the current situation with regards to legislation on abortion in the Member States of the Community?

Answer

Although the Commission has no specific competence with regard to abortion and legislation on abortion, it cannot deny that throughout Europe women are faced with certain problems. Owing to the differences in legislation between the various Member States, problems arise within the Community particularly for women who have to seek help in a country other than their country or residence. This involves certain psychological problems, not least because those concerned have insufficient or no knowledge of the language of the other country.

The Commission very recently granted financial support for the publication of the results of a Paris seminar mainly devoted to all the problems surrounding the termination of pregnancy in the nine Member States. If the Members of Parliament are interested, the results of these deliberations can be distributed to them.

In the chapter on family matters in its annual report on the development of the social situation in the Communities, the Commission has included a number of references to new legislation passed in the Member States in this field. In the report for 1980, the Commission will give a summary of existing legislation in the Member States. On the basis of this summary, the Commission looks forward with interest to a possible closer discussion with Parliament on this sensitive issue of such extreme social, medical and humanitarian importance.

Question No 17, by Lord Douro (H-174/79)

Subject : The Community's relations with Zimbabwe

In view of the need to pursue an even handed Community approach to Zimbabwe, why did Mr Cheysson on 20 September receive one of the terrorist leaders, Mr Nkomo, at the Commission in the presence of Commission staff while at the same time rejecting contacts at all levels with the *de facto* Government of Zimbabwe ?

Answer

Mr Joshua Nkomo asked to meet Mr Cheysson on the 20 September, during a visit to Brussels to meet the Socialist and Christian Democrat Groups of the European Parliament. The meeting between Mr Cheysson and Mr Nkomo did not take place at the Commission and included members of the European Parliament. The Commission has received no requests for contacts at any level from Bishop Muzorewa or his representatives.

Question No 20, by Mr Aigner (H-187/79)

Subject : Safety provisions for the transport of dangerous substances by road

What steps has the Commission taken so far to harmonize, as far as possible on the basis of the strictest standards in force, the safety provisions required in particular for the transport by road of dangerous substances such as liquid gas ? Have analyses been made and conclusions drawn as a result of the disastrous accident in Los Alfaques in Spain ?

Answer

As already mentioned in the replies to written questions Nos 509/78 from Mr Müller and 652/78 from Mr Seefeld, the Commission considers that the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), which entered into force in 1968 and of which seven Community Member States are contracting parties meets the main safety requirements for international transport of dangerous goods by road.

With the exception of Denmark and Ireland, which are not contracting parties to the ADR, but in general observe its provisions, the Community Member States apply the agreement for transport operations both between themselves and with third countries. Furthermore, the regulations applied within Member States are generally based on the provisions of the ADR.

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Question No 22, by Mr Davern (H-200/79)

Subject : Disadvantaged Areas Directive

In connection with Directive 75/268/EEC,¹ the Irish Government sent a communication to the Commission early in 1979 about changes in disadvantaged areas in Ireland including the Slieve Felim area in Cos. Tipperary and Limerick.

Will the Commission state what is the present position in this matter ?

Answer

The Irish Government has only now furnished all the detailed data demanded and these are being studied by the Commission. If the justification of the request for extension is established, the Commission will take the necessary steps to respond to it. If necessary, this will be in the form of a proposal to the Council which would then make a final decision on it.

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¹ OJ L 128, 19. 5. 1975, p. 68

Question No 23, by Mr Michel (H-203/79)

Subject : Iron and steel industry in the South of the Belgian province of Luxembourg

With reference to its active role in the adoption of the restructuring plan for the Belgium-Luxembourg iron and steel industry, can the Commission indicate the present situation in this sector, above all in the South of the Belgian province of Luxembourg, and state what practical aid has been granted by the Community ?

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*Answer**1 Development of the iron and steel industry in the South of the province of Luxembourg*

As part of the restructuring of the Société Metallurgique et Minière Rodange-Athus (MMRA), the Athus Division has ceased all its iron and steel manufacturing activities. The Rodange works closed down its steel plant in December 1979.

2. The problem of reconversion

The personnel made redundant by these measures have been given alternative employment as follows : for the South of the province of Luxembourg, in the Société de Diversification Belgo-Luxembourgeoise (SDBL) ; for the Rodange works, in the anti-crisis division of the Arbed Company.

3. Community aid

(a) The following readaptation aid was paid under ECSC Article 56 (2) (b) :

- for Athus, at 23 December 1977, 2 550 750 EUA (Bfrs 105 000 000) to 1 539 workers
- for Rodange, at 16 October 1979, 76 000 EUA (Lfrs 3 100 000) to 46 workers

(b) Under Under ECSC Article 56 (2) (a), the following two reconversion loans with interest rebate were granted, permitting the creation of 425 new jobs :

- an overall loan of 2 490 000 EUA (Lfrs 100 000 000) to the Société Nationale de Crédit et d'Investissement (SNCI), with interest rebate of 373 000 EUA (20 November 1978)
- a loan of 1 690 000 EUA (Lfrs 68 000 000) to Villeroy & Boch with interest rebate of 255 000 EUA.

(c) Under ECSC Article 54, a loan of 6 200 000 EUA (Lfrs 250 000 000) was granted for the construction of a walking-beam furnace at the Métallurgique et Minière de Rodange. This loan has an interest rate subsidy of 372 000 EUA (Lfrs 15 000 000).

(d) Under the European Regional Development Fund, the Belgian authorities have not submitted to date any request for aid concerning industrial or infrastructure investments made wholly or partly on the initiative of the SDBL.

The Commission's desire to assist the reconversion of the Athus region was reaffirmed in the proposal for a regulation instituting specific Community action to help to remove obstacles to the development of new economic activities in certain areas affected by the restructuring of the iron and steel industry (ERDF, non-quota section). Under this proposal for a regulation recently forwarded to the Council, this specific action is to be directed mainly at the province of Luxembourg.

It will give the SDBL the possibility of obtaining under this scheme funds which may be released by this Community instrument.

With regard to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the following two projects are currently being drawn up under the ERDF :

- financing of an unloading station for blast-furnace slag
- construction of a container terminal at Bettembourg.

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Question No 24, by Mr Collins (H-204/79)

Subject : Weed killer 245 T

Is the Commission aware of the allegations linking the use of weed killer 245 T with abortions and miscarriages in animals and humans that have subsequently eaten the sprayed plants, when this chemical is banned in the United States ?

Answer

Yes, the Commission is aware of these allegations. The US action is only limited however to the *suspension* of forestry, right-of-way and pasture uses of 2, 4, 5-T ('two, four, five T') pending the outcome of cancellation proceedings, which are currently in progress and which, I understand, may take one or two years. Meanwhile its other authorized uses, notably on range land and on rice, remain unaffected. It should be noted, moreover, that the studies on which the US suspension was based have been subject to criticism on scientific grounds.

Legislation providing the Community with the means to prohibit, if necessary, the marketing and use of hazardous or environmentally harmful plant protection products already exists.¹ The Commission is keeping the current uses of 2, 4, 5-T within the Community actively under review.

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Question No 25, by Mr Seligman (H-205/79)

Subject : Energy conservation

In view of the importance of energy conservation to the attainment of the Community's energy objectives, what is the Commission's view of the appropriateness of nominating 1980 as Community Energy Savings Year ?

Answer

The Commission is conscious of the importance of action to make the public and industry more aware of the various possibilities of energy conservation and rational use of energy.

By proclaiming an 'Energy Savings Year' the European Community could contribute to greater public information, and therefore this suggestion is definitely worthy of consideration.

It should be noted, however, that the International Energy Agency in Paris has just celebrated, in October 1979, an 'International Energy Conservation Month', during which it organized a large number of public lectures, seminars and symposia. The Member States of the Community which belong to the International Energy Agency were very actively involved in these events.

The results of and response to this action are now being analysed and evaluated in depth. It would be advisable to await the outcome of this analysis before discussing a similar initiative at Community level.

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¹ Council Directive of 21 December 1978 prohibiting the placing on the market and use of plant protection products containing certain active substances. OJ L 33 of 8. 2. 1979, p. 36.

Question No 26, by Mr Battersby (H-206/79)

Subject : The Community's relations with China

Following the announcement that the US firm McDonnell Douglas is to assemble airliners in Shanghai, what is the Commission's policy for promoting the Community's aerospace industries in the People's Republic of China ?

Answer

In their bilateral discussion with Member States and third party countries the Chinese have frequently raised the subject of civil aircraft purchase and collaborative development. The internal market for air transport in China is potentially enormous and as they have shown in the past by buying both USA and European civil aircraft and equipment, they are unlikely to satisfy that market by just linking themselves to a single supplier. Talks have been held with the Chinese by the main European manufacturers including Airbus industries, and the Commission's policy is to support all such contacts.

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Question No 27, by Mr Purvis (H-208/79)

Subject : Community gas-gathering pipeline

What are the Commission's views on the technical, commercial and financial feasibility of a Community gas-gathering network in the North Sea ?

Answer

A 'Community' North Sea pipeline system for natural gas is not really feasible, since natural gas reserves in the North Sea are located not only in the territory of the Member States but also, to a large extent, in the Norwegian sector.

In recent years, companies with a stake or an interest in North Sea natural gas development have built a number of individual pipelines, which currently transport just under one third of the Community's total natural gas requirements. The bulk of this gas comes from British fields ; the remainder — in order of importance — from Norwegian and Dutch reserves. Danish North Sea gas is due to come on stream from 1985.

There are, however, a number of deposits of natural gas and petroleum gas in the North Sea which — it was thought — could not be connected economically to existing pipeline systems because of the small individual quantities and the excessive distances involved.

For some time, therefore, a study has been under way into the feasibility of constructing a suitable gas-gathering pipeline network in order to exploit the greater part of these isolated reserves. The Commission has already had numerous contacts, in particular with the UK and Norwegian Governments, on this question. The governments and industries involved also have regular exchanges of views. The UK Government has already commissioned two studies and a third is being prepared.

Because of the circumstances at that time (i.e. comparatively small quantities of gas, high costs, relatively low gas prices) the initial findings were not encouraging, but the technical problems appeared far from insoluble.

The situation now looks distinctly more favourable. The quantities involved have increased appreciably — especially as a result of recent Norwegian finds — and the rise in oil prices ought to allow the charging of economic gas prices.

From the Community's point of view the carrying out of one or more such projects would mean a significant improvement in its energy supply situation. It is therefore extremely interested in these projects. Although the capital cost involved would be considerable — amounting to several thousand million EUA — the Community is prepared to examine favourably the possibility of using available funds to participate in the financing of such projects.

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Question No 28, by Mr Radoux (H-209/79): withdrawn

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Question No 31, by Mr Donnez (H-213/79)

Subject: Creation of a European iron and steel research unit at Denain (France)

The north of France has been particularly hard hit by the iron and steel crisis. However, the Denain plants could be made viable if they were used for other purposes. Can the Commission give its opinion on the proposal to use these industrial units for iron and steel research and on the possibility of creating a European research centre at Denain?

Answer

Through its financial participation under Article 55 of the ECSC Treaty with funds deriving from the levy, the Commission maintains a Community iron and steel research programme representing 17 % of all research carried out in the European Community. The sums involved since 1976 are as follows:

17.4 million EUA in 1976
12.5 million EUA in 1977
16.0 million EUA in 1978
20.0 million EUA in 1979

The national research centres, which possess sophisticated equipment and highly specialized staff, work in close collaboration with each other, with the iron and steel industries and with the Commission.

The Commission therefore sees no need to set up an additional iron and steel research unit.

Question No 32, by Mr Harris (H-214/79)

Subject: Investigation of Herring landings in France

In view of the current ban on herring fishing in Community waters and in the light of the report in The Daily Telegraph on 23 October that several tonnes of herring were landed in Boulogne on 22 October what action is the Commission taking to check on the source of herring landed at EEC ports?

Answer

The Commission has taken note of the reports of some papers alleging that French and British fishermen defy the ban for various herring stocks submitted by the Commission to the Council and agreed by it.

The herring ban for certain areas means, however, no complete ban on herring catches. For some stocks, in particular West of Ireland and in the Irish Sea, limited possibilities for the herring catch still exist. In addition, by-catch of a small percentage of herring in the fishery for other species is permitted.

The Commission has no means to control the origin of landings in Member States' ports and must rely on Member States authorities to supervise Member States' regulations based on Council deci-

sions. As regards the specific case mentioned in the Daily Telegraph, the French authorities have informed the Commission services that 20 tonnes of herring from the North Sea had been landed in excess of the bycatch permitted and that the fishermen concerned will be prosecuted at the Cour Correctionnelle. The Commission hopes that similar action will be taken by other Member States concerned.

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Question No 33, by Mr Cecovini (H-215/79)

Subject: Closure of British consulates

Given that consular representatives constitute a vital link between Community Member States, the Commission is asked whether it intends to approach the United Kingdom Government with a view to its reconsidering its decision to close by 31 March 1980 a number of consulates abroad, including the 200-year-old British Consulate in Trieste, bearing in mind that the latter has a purely honorary status and thus involves less public spending, provides a valuable service for hundreds of resident British citizens, commercial operators and harbour personnel, and assists former Commonwealth countries.

Answer

No. The Commission does not intend to intervene in this matter.

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Question No 34, by Mr Beazley (H-216/79)

Subject: Heat and power schemes

In what circumstances is combined heat and power by the Community's electricity undertakings economically viable?

Answer

1. For many years the Commission has paid particular attention to the expansion of combined heat and power production in the Community. This technology opens up the possibility of doubling power station efficiency and thus constitutes an important contribution to the rational use of energy.

At present, some 20 million EUA are saved in the Community through the combined production of power and heat, and this figure represents 2 % of the Community's gross energy consumption. Combined power and heat production in the industrial sector accounts for around 70 % of this saving. The remaining 30 % is accounted for by the operation of district heating systems. Very rough calculations show that considerably more energy could be saved in the Community — up to 200 million EUA — if optimum use were made of combined heat and power production. District heating would provide two thirds of this saving and industrial applications one third. If this immense potential could be realized over the next twenty to thirty years, the gross energy consumption of the Community could be reduced by some 10 %.

The importance attached to combined power and heat production by the various Member States of the Community has always differed. Views also differ, even today, on its future prospects. One of the determining factors is the relative cost of using forms of energy which compete with electricity (e.g. natural gas) to produce heat. The particularly favourable climatic conditions in some regions of the Community also represent an obstacle to the wider use of district heating networks.

2. *Industrial* production of power and heat has a longstanding tradition in the Community. The varying extent of its development in the individual Member States has depended largely on the degree of cooperation between industrial and public electricity producers and the state policy with respect to the development of industrial power stations. The desirable objective of further extending the use of combined power and heat production is still being held up in some Member States by difficulties in supplying reserve power and disposing of surplus power at suitable prices, and by unsolved problems of power transmission. However, cooperation between public and industrial power station operators has improved considerably in recent years. In some cases public operators changed their originally negative views because they lacked sufficient generating capacity of their own.

3. So far, there have been very few cases in the Community where industry has left the production of power and heat for its consumption to *public* utilities. This would naturally be the ideal solution to the problems of reserve and surplus power. However, few public undertakings have shown an interest in adopting such a role. They confine themselves to covering their own power requirements and are reluctant to take on the task of supplying heat to industry. There is also the problem, in the case of existing power stations, that heat can only be supplied economically to industrial users if the distance between the power station and the potential user is not too great.

Some public utilities have been operating district heating networks for many years. With rising oil prices this method of supplying heat will grow in importance. However, since the cost of a district heating network is extremely high, plant operators cannot expect to see a profit until, at best, after a long period of operation. The extension of district heating is therefore dependent in most cases on the granting of state subsidies.

4. On a proposal from the Commission the Council adopted a Recommendation on 25 October 1977 to promote combined power and heat production and the utilization of waste heat. The Recommendation provides, *inter alia*, for the creation of advisory bodies and expert committees in the Member States. In line with the Council Recommendation the Commission organizes a regular exchange of information between these national bodies. Where this leads to the identification of common problems which can be solved at Community level, the Commission will submit appropriate proposals.

The Commission already has the possibility, in the framework of its programme of aid for demonstration projects in energy saving, to provide financial aid for particularly interesting projects involving combined power and heat production in industry and in the district heating sector. Initial contracts are currently being negotiated.

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Question No 35, by Mrs Ewing (H-218/79)

Subject : Additionality

When will the Commission issue clear Directives on the failure of certain Member States to recognize that the principle of additionality in connection with Regional Aid is adhered to?

Answer

1. Council Regulation (EEC) No 724/75 of 18 March 1975 establishing a European Regional Development Fund, amended by Regulation (EEC) No 214/79 of 6 February 1979, provides in its Article 4 (2) (a), that, for industrial projects, the contribution from the Fund may either supplement aid granted to the relevant investment by public authorities or remain credited to those authorities and considered as a partial repayment of such aid.
2. The Commission has outlined the situation in this regard in the annual reports on the activities of the European Regional Development Fund. In the fourth annual report, for 1978, it pointed out that it did not have the information needed to assess how far the action of the Fund was really added to national regional development efforts. It also emphasized once again, in this report, the political and economic importance of the principle that Fund assistance should be treated as additional, regardless of the type of investment in question.
3. In order to find a gradual solution to this problem the Commission put forward a proposal, in the framework of the review of the Fund's operations, as approved by the Council, that 'Member States shall adopt the necessary measures to indicate separately, according to the special characteristics of national budget systems, the sums received from the Fund' (Article 19 of the amended ERDF regulation). In addition, Member States must provide the Commission, at its request, with information on the allocation of the amounts received from the Fund.
4. In order to ensure the strict application of this new provision of the Regulation, the Commission sent a letter to the Member States in February 1979 insisting that they observe the new provisions.

The Commission is waiting for the Member States to provide it with the necessary information by the end of the year

Question No 38, by Mr Lalor (H-224/79)

Subject : Effect of oil price increases on electricity and gas in the Member States. For each of the nine Member countries of the EEC, can the Commission state what effect oil price increases have had on gas and electricity charges for private consumers and for industry since 1977 ?

Answer

1. It can be said that by and large, nominal retail prices for gas and electricity in the European Community have followed the increase in oil prices, albeit to a varying extent and in some cases with a considerable time lag.
2. However, the situation as regards both gas and electricity differs considerably from one Member State to another. While practically all Member States apply some form of indexation to the retail prices of gas and electricity, the way in which the indices are calculated varies from case to case. The importance attached to the trends in prices of crude oil and petroleum products, in particular, varies significantly. The share of fuel-oil in electricity production also varies appreciably from one Member State to another : in 1978 it was approximately 70 % in Ireland, 56 % in Italy, but only 9.3 % in Germany. Lastly, there are fundamental differences within the Community between the gas and electricity charges, both for private households and industrial users. Internal studies have shown price differences of more than 100 % in individual cases.

Any general statement for the Community as a whole must therefore be extremely limited in scope.

3. A detailed evaluation of the impact of oil price trends on retail prices for gas and electricity presupposes complete transparency of costs and prices in a situation where hundreds of different rates are applied. Work is in progress on this aspect within the Commission. The Commission is also prepared to let Members of Parliament have the statistics which it has available although they are highly technical.

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Question No 40, by Mr Geurtsen (H-227/79)

Subject : European Foundation

Can the Commission say why there has not yet been any sign of activity from the European Foundation proposed in the Tindemans report ?

Answer

Following a decision in principle by the European Council in December 1977, it was agreed at the European Council in Copenhagen on 7/8 April 1978 that a European Foundation should be set up by means of agreements concluded by the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council. The responsibility for giving effect to this decision rests with the Council which is still examining the matter. For its part, the Commission has provided the Council with many suggestions and proposals to enable it to resolve the principal problems that are still outstanding.

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Question No 41, by Mr de Ferranti (H-229/79)

Subject : Trade across the Channel

What plans does the Commission have to simplify the regulations and procedures involved in roll-on roll-off trade across the Channel ?

Answer

Roll-on, roll-off traffic between the Continent and Great Britain should not be considered as different from a movement across an internal frontier by road. The Commission is making every effort to reduce the formalities to the minimum possible. But it is evident that progress in this direction can only be achieved to the extent that legislation in fiscal, economic and monetary fields which requires these formalities is harmonized within the Community.

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Question No 42, by Mr Leonardi (H-230/79)

Subject: Eurodollar market

In view of possible restrictions on the Eurodollar market, what is the Commission's assessment of the volume of Eurodollars in the Community Member States?

Answer

It is difficult to assess the volume of Eurodollars in the Community owing to the lack of statistical information. Even with regard to the Community market in all the European currencies, statistics relating to the assets or liabilities of non-banking residents are not reliable enough, and statistics on resident banks are only available in the form of overall figures. Thus in March 1979 the total amount of European currencies of all sorts issued by banks resident in the Community was estimated, in terms of dollars, at approximately 460 000 million. However, no conclusions can be drawn as to the uses to which these amounts of European currencies were being put, i.e. whether they were made available to non-banking residents of the Community or to economic agents in the rest of the world.

As for the proportion of Eurodollars in the total of European currencies in the Community — a total which, as I have just said, has been estimated at approximately 460 000 million dollars — it is unlikely to differ greatly from that recorded for a group of European countries comprising the EEC, Switzerland, Austria and Sweden, i.e. approximately two-thirds of the total. For the purpose of comparison, Euro-Deutschmarks make up almost a fifth and Euro-Swiss francs just over a twentieth. Although the rapid growth of the European markets has undeniably contributed to the smooth running of international trade, various features of these markets have been a cause for concern. The most important of these is that exchange rates may be considerably disrupted by rapid and sudden movements of funds in non-European currencies which do not follow basic economic tendencies.

The current technical work is to be continued at the Bank for International Settlements and basically concerns transparency and macro-economic control.

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Question No 44, by Mrs Cresson (H-238/79)

Subject: Common energy policy

Does the Commission regard the sale by the United Kingdom of part of its North Sea oil to the United States as compatible with the introduction of a common European energy policy?

Answer

1. In the Commission's view, the sale of part of the United Kingdom's North Sea oil to the USA is not incompatible with the energy policy of the European Community. Even though the overall aim of this policy is to reduce dependence on energy imports, this does not mean that energy sources produced in the Community are only intended for consumption in the Member States.
2. As an internationally marketable commodity, oil must fulfil widely differing quality requirements depending on the needs of the individual consumer country concerned. It does not seem appropriate for the Commission to intervene in these trade relations. In this connection, the exclusive use of United Kingdom North Sea oil in the Community would be no more of an ideal solution than its total consumption in the United Kingdom itself.

What is more, the destination of exports is a matter for the oil companies. The Community, for its part, is responsible for ensuring that the Treaty provisions on the free movement of goods within the Community are complied with. The United Kingdom oil exports to the USA do not constitute an infringement of these provisions.

3. I should like to add that United Kingdom oil production is already making an increasing contribution to reducing the Community's net balance of imports. This contribution is an important factor in our efforts to achieve the Community import objective of 472 million tonnes between 1980 and 1985.

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Question No 45, by Mr Enright (H-240/79)

Subject: Polyester imports from the USA

What steps has the Commission taken to safeguard the textile industry in the Community against polyester imports from the USA?

Answer

1. The Commission has been examining closely for some months the circumstances and causes of the increase in Community imports of polyester and other man-made fibres from the United States, as well as possible steps which could be taken to counteract this.

This matter is being studied in close cooperation with the relevant Community industries, Member States' governments and the United States authorities. The stage has now been reached where the Commission will shortly be able to draw conclusions.

2. As far as acrylic fibres, in particular, are concerned, the Commission initiated an anti-dumping procedure on 8 June 1979, which was implemented without delay. The necessary enquiries in American companies were made between 5 and 9 November 1979. The Commission is currently evaluating the results of these investigations.

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Question No 47, by Mr Welsh (H-243/79)

Subject: Contact between the Commission and local and regional authorities

Is the Commission satisfied with the provision for contact between the Commission and local and regional authorities contained in the regulation on the Regional Fund as regards applications for quota and non-quota grants?

Answer

1. The Commission has always welcomed and been open to initiatives taken by local or regional authorities aimed at ensuring better mutual information on the problems of the Community's regions and on the possibilities available to the Commission within the framework of the regional policy.
2. In this connection the Commission already has informal contacts with a number of organizations representing regional or local authorities at Community level and with leading representatives of these authorities.
3. The Commission would like to see these contacts intensified and better organized. However, in view of the large number of regions in the programme (114) and sub-regional administrative units (approximately 670) on the one hand, and given the Commission's staff situation on the other hand, it is not considering institutionalizing these contacts.

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Question No 48, by Mr Flanagan (H-244/79)

Subject : Production of turf and peat in Ireland

Is not the Community aware of the considerable importance Ireland places, in terms of energy needs, on the production of turf and peat and in view of this what measures is the Community taking to aid this important sector of the Irish economy?

Answer

The Commission is aware of the importance of peat and turf as part of Ireland's energy supply. Peat and turf production accounts for approximately one sixth of Ireland's total energy consumption. The Commission estimates that peat and turf production will increase from its present level of 1.25 million tonnes to 1.5 million tonnes in 1985.

In the framework of its policy of increasing the share of solid fuels and nuclear energy in electricity generation, the Commission proposed measures to the Council in 1976 to provide financial aid for the construction of new power stations fired by solid fuel instead of oil and for the modernization of existing power stations. A total amount of 100 million EUA was set aside for this purpose.

The granting of aid applies to all types of solid fuel, peat and turf included. The proposal in question is currently under discussion in the Council.

* * *

Question No 49, by Mrs De March (H-247/79)

Subject : New Community plan for the shipbuilding industry

Can the Commission confirm that the new 'demolition — construction' plan for shipbuilding and ship repair work will lead to further reductions in Community production capacity, particularly in France, causing increased unemployment in this industrial sector and greater dependence on external supplies of vessels?

Answer

1. Measures to promote the demolition and construction of sea-going ships should help guarantee a basic workload for the Community industry and prevent productive capacity being reduced to a level incompatible with the fundamental interests of the Community.
2. With this in mind, and more especially with a view to maintaining a reasonable level of activity and employment in the industry, the Commission is now suggesting that action be taken to encourage the demolition and construction of ships. For this reason the measures, which consist principally of stimulating demand — the industry could receive additional orders in the order of a compensated gross registered tonnage of 1 million tonnes per year — would have the effect opposite to that implied by the honourable Member. The Commission believes that the measures could help keep 35 000 people employed in the industry and an equivalent number in associated industries.

The proposed measure is an inducement to Community shipowners to place orders with Community shipyards and would, moreover, result in the Community fleet being placed in a very competitive position owing to the modernization resulting from old ships being replaced by modern ones.

3. On the social level, provided the conditions for the full implementation of their objectives are met, the measures would help maintain employment in the industry and in associated industries.

The trade union organizations consulted have warmly welcomed the Commission's initiative.

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Question No 50, by Mr Boyes (H-251/79)

Subject: Combating poverty in the Community

What steps will be taken to ensure that the results of, and experiences acquired from the Programme of Pilot Projects and Studies to Combat Poverty, will be thoroughly assessed, with a view to preparing concrete policies based on them, for combating poverty in the Community?

Answer

In January 1977 the Commission submitted a first progress report on the programme of pilot projects and studies to combat poverty. A second progress report was submitted in October 1979.

As soon as the programme is completed and, pursuant to the Council decision, at the latest by 30 June 1981, the Commission will submit a final report with an evaluation of the results obtained. Work has already begun on the drawing up of an evaluation report.

In December 1978 the Commission also decided to draw up national reports on poverty. The relevant work is being supervised at national level by the competent authorities and at European level by the Commission and the anti-poverty working party.

In the light of the discussion of this point by Parliament in its budget debate, the Commission will shortly submit a draft decision to the Council on interim measures to combat poverty aimed at ensuring the funding of a number of projects during 1981 and 1982.

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Question No 52, by Miss Brookes (H-256/79)

Subject: Road networks

Will the Commission arrange for an urgent survey of Wales, particularly North Wales, with the object of providing monies under the Social and Regional Fund for improving the inadequate road network?

Answer

The provisions of the European Regional Development Fund Regulation specify that it is the Member States which apply for Fund contributions. The selection of projects to be submitted for aid therefore falls in the first instance on the Member States. If road infrastructures in North Wales are particularly deficient, it is up to the UK Government to emphasize the fact in the development programme for this region and to make consequential application for Fund assistance.

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Question No 53 by Mr Nyborg (H-257/79)

Subject: National protection measures pursuant to Article 115 of the EEC Treaty.

How does the Commission intend to limit the number of authorizations granted for the introduction of national protection measures pursuant to Article 115 of the EEC Treaty, given that these authorizations may have the effect of distorting competition?

Answer

The Commission is aware that every authorization granted to a Member State pursuant to Article 115 of the EEC Treaty is a deviation from the principles of the free movement of goods within the Community.

The Commission therefore applies very strict criteria to the application of this article and examines in particular every single reason put forward by the Member State concerned to justify an authorization for special measures.

The Commission's departments are currently drawing up new rules for the application of these provisions. These rules are intended to guarantee maximum legal security while complying with the principles of the Treaty.

* * *

Question No 54, by Mr Kavanagh (H-258/79)

Subject : Forestry Policy

What progress has been made to date on the proposal for the establishment of a Community policy on forestry, approved by Parliament in May 1979 ?

Answer

The Commission's proposals concerning forestry policy received the support of the Economic and Social Committee in May 1979 at about the same time as they were approved by Parliament. They have also received the unanimous support of the Central Committee of the Forest Ownership in the EEC which represents over two million private woodland owners. The Council working party on agricultural structures began its examination of the proposals in March 1979 ; since then there have been no further discussions at the Council on the subject.

* * *

Question No 55, by Mrs Desmond (H-259/79)

Subject : Women and the Social Fund

Is the Commission satisfied that the optimum benefit is being derived from the Social Fund under Decision 77/804/EEC for action in favour of women, or does it not agree that there is a need to change the existing rules which are too rigorous and limited in scope ?

Answer

Earlier this year, I drew the attention of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs to the fact that applications for aid from the Social Fund for specific programmes for women for 1979 amounted to approximately 4.5 million EUA, although 18 million EUA had been set aside in the budget.

Since then a substantial number of applications has been received, amounting to a little over 31 million EUA for 1979, while for 1980 applications totalling 55 million EUA have already been announced.

The purpose of applying stricter criteria to the granting of aid, is, as stated in the Council decision, to ensure that only the most suitable projects are assisted by the Fund.

However, judging by the large number of applications received so far — which is an indication of the growing importance of the Fund and as such is welcomed by the Commission — these criteria do not appear to have had a curbing effect.

I would prefer to see this larger number of applications, coming from all parts of the Community rather than predominantly from one Member State, as is the case at present.

* * *

Question No 56, by Mr Hume (H-260/79)

Subject : Aid awarded in Northern Ireland

Would the Commission please state by county the number of projects to which aid was awarded in Northern Ireland with the amount of money in each case from the Guidance Section of the EAGGF from 1973 to date under Regulations 17/64/EEC and 355/77/EEC ?

Answer

With regard to aid under the agricultural structure policy, the Guidance Section of the EAGGF has financed since 1973 several projects in the counties of Northern Ireland under Regulations 17/64/EEC and (EEC) 355/77. In the period 1973-June 1979, the Guidance Section of the EAGGF granted aid for the financing of 107 individual projects in Northern Ireland to the amount of £1R13 528 278. The breakdown by county and the individual amounts concerned are as follows : Fermanagh, 1 project, £1R425 575 ; Antrim 29 projects, £1R3 913 997 ; Tyrone, 15 projects, £1R1 615 582 ; Londonderry, 9 projects £1R1 078 850 ; Armagh, 11 projects, £1R1 960 046 ; Down, 39 projects, £2 758 236. In addition, three projects involving several counties received aid of £1R1 775 992.

* * *

Regulation 17/64/EEC

Year	Fermanagh		Antrim		Tyrone		Londonderry		Armagh		Down		Multi reg.		Total	
	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL	No of proj.	Aid granted IRL
1973	—	—	5	456 828	2	64 443	1	208 422	2	603 332	—	—	1	410 115	11	1 743 140
1974	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	170 958	—	—	16	705 700	1	1 321 793	18	2 198 451
1975	1	425 575	5	1 550 069	1	33 958	2	127 440	4	760 093	2	88 876	—	—	15	2 986 011
1976	—	—	6	1 098 687	2	108 605	1	355 363	2	26 716	2	103 486	—	—	13	1 692 857
1977	—	—	3	196 743	6	1 309 781	2	125 326	2	321 083	1	235 795	—	—	14	2 188 728
1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June 1979	—	—	1	29 375	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	858 408	—	—	14	887 783
Total I	1	425 575	20	3 331 702	11	1 516 787	7	987 509	10	1 711 224	34	1 992 265	2	1 731 908	85	11 696 970

Regulation 355/77/EEC

1978	—	—	7	421 154	4	98 795	—	—	—	—	3	566 301	—	—	14	1 086 250
June 1979	—	—	2	161 141	—	—	2	91 341	1	248 822	2	199 670	1	44 084	8	745 058
Total II	—	—	9	582 295	4	98 795	2	91 341	1	248 822	5	765 971	1	44 084	22	1 831 308
Total I + II	1	425 575	29	3 913 997	15	1 615 582	9	1 078 850	11	1 960 046	39	2 758 236	3	1 775 992	107	13 528 278

Question No 57, by Mr Denis (H-262/79)

Subject : Food aid to Vietnam

Does the Commission not consider it a matter of urgency to immediately resume food aid to Vietnam, which it disgracefully suspended last July, on a scale commensurate with the considerable needs of the Vietnamese people ?

Answer

I have nothing to add to what Mr Cheysson told Parliament on 25 October in answer to a similar question from Mr Denis and others.

The United Nations Secretary-General Waldheim is presenting his report on Vietnamese refugees to the General Assembly on 15 November. The Commission will reconsider the position of the Community's aid in the light of that report.

* * *

Question No 58, by Mr Diana (H-263/79)

Subject : Surcharges imposed in Switzerland

What action does the Commission intend to take in order to persuade the Swiss authorities to withdraw protectionist measures, such as surcharges on fruit which, although temporary, form a hindrance to Italian exports to Switzerland. Repeated recourse to this practice, which has already been applied to fish and table grapes, is causing considerable concern prior to the commencement of the citrus fruit marketing year.

Answer

The Commission is also very concerned by the measures adopted in Switzerland with regard to certain agricultural products. For this reason the Commission, as long ago as June, entered into and is still maintaining very close contacts with the Swiss authorities.

The Commission hopes to be able, by all of the means at its disposal, to prevent a repetition of such measures.

Lastly, with regard to table grapes, I am pleased to inform you that this measure was abolished on 10 October last.

* * *

Question No 59, by Mr Clinton (H-266/79)

Subject : Regional Fund

Will the Commission confirm that a provision of 20 million EUA in the budget for 1978 for industrial restructuring and conversion operations cannot be used unless the Council adopts a Regulation on the subject before the end of this year and, if so, and, in the event of no such Regulation being adopted, whether it is possible to transfer the appropriation to the Regional Fund so that it will not be lost and can be used for allied purposes ?

Answer

In order to make use of the 1978 budget appropriations for Article 375, the Commission has decided on an *ad hoc* solution which will result in financial aid to part of the textile industry, which is in a state of crisis, before the end of 1979.

Question No 60, by Mr De Pasquale (H-268/79)

Subject: Investment in the Italian Mezzogiorno

Recent information confirms that there has been a renewal of activity to invest in the Mezzogiorno both in Italy itself and also on the part of the non-Community countries. Does the Commission agree that a policy of encouraging and stimulating productive investment in the Mezzogiorno (a notorious European problem) would be desirable, and can it say what measures or initiatives to this effect have been adopted or are envisaged?

Answer

The Commission is convinced that, in order to achieve Economic and Monetary Union in the Community, it is necessary to pursue a policy of aid to promote economic activities in its less-favoured regions, the Mezzogiorno in Italy being one of them.

The Commission feels that, through aid granted under the European Regional Development Fund, the aim of which is to correct the main imbalances in the Community, it has contributed in part to the renewal of activity in the Mezzogiorno to which the honourable Member refers.

In fact, with regard to 'Community action to support the regional policy measures adopted by the Member States', the Fund has granted aid to 1 800 projects in the Mezzogiorno to the amount of almost 730 million EUA. 534 of these projects, which received aid of almost 160 million EUA, concern industry or craft trades and are intended to create or maintain jobs.

Furthermore, integrated operations, which involve the simultaneous application of various Community financial instruments in a limited zone and which will be widely used in the Mezzogiorno, are also geared to promoting fresh activity in problem regions. The same applies to the Fund's quota-free section, under which a specific action is planned for the Mezzogiorno in the context of Community enlargement.

* * *

Question No 61, by Mr Bonaccini (H-269/79)

Subject: Dumping of synthetic fibres

There are indications of huge quantities of United States exports of synthetic fibre products being dumped in the European Community. Since this situation is damaging to the establishment of a common industrial policy of the Member States, by what instruments does the Commission intend to counteract it?

Answer

1. The Commission's departments have for some months been closely examining the conditions and causes of the increase in exports of polyester and other synthetic fibres from the United States into the Community, as well as any steps which might be taken in this context.

This examination is being carried out in close cooperation with the Community industries concerned, the Governments of the Member States and official American departments. It is now at a stage where the Commission can draw its conclusions in the immediate future.

2. With regard to acrylic fibres in particular, as long ago as 8 June 1979 the Commission instituted an anti-dumping procedure which was rapidly conducted. The necessary investigations in American undertakings took place between 5 and 9 November. The Commission's departments are at present evaluating the results of these investigations.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

(The sitting opened at 9 a.m.)

President. — The sitting is open.

1. Approval of the minutes

President. — The minutes of proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any observations?

I call Mr Fuchs.

Mr Fuchs. — (D) Mr President, during the debate on energy problems it was not Mr Croux who spoke, as it says here, but a certain Mr Fuchs, in other words myself. So I can be quite definite about that. I am also rather surprised to see that the Bureau's list of

speakers contained Mr Früh's name rather than mine. I asked for this to be corrected, and Fuchs was entered, and now I see Croux there. Perhaps one might say that is the crux of the matter.

(Laughter)

President. — I take note of your statement, and the necessary corrections will be undertaken.

Are there any other observations?

The minutes of proceedings are approved.

I call Mr Griffiths on a point of order.

Mr Griffiths. — Mr President, since we are dealing with mistakes made in procedure, I wish to draw the House's attention to a very serious mistake which was made in a debate on the 13th of this week, when we had before us an urgent motion on possible British Government proposals in relation to immigration controls. During that debate one of the speakers uttered these words: 'Madam President, on behalf of

Griffiths

the European Democratic Group, I ask the House to vote against urgency in respect of this particular resolution.' Contrary to what the speaker said, some of our colleagues have been in touch with the British Government, which assured them — and this is very important, Mr President — that, in the first place, this matter had not yet reached the stage of a positive government proposal and, secondly, there were absolutely no circumstances under which it was likely to be debated by the British Parliament before Christmas. Mr President, I wish to inform this House that on the very next day the British Parliament did discuss proposals contained in a White Paper on immigration. I am prepared to accept that the honourable Member who made this statement did so genuinely, feeling that he was not misleading the House. But as it turns out, he did seriously mislead the House...

President. — What is your point of order, Mr Griffiths?

Mr Griffiths. — What I want to know is: can this motion be brought back to this House today? Because we know that one of the reasons why it was not debated...

President. — Mr Griffiths, your statement will be published in the Report of Proceedings, but a debate on urgent procedure which has been closed cannot be re-opened immediately on the initiative of a Member or even of the Chair. I advise you to table a new request for urgent procedure before the next part-session.

2. Documents received

President. — I have received:

a) the following motions for resolutions:

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Ceravolo, Mr Didò, Mrs Castellina, Mr Ferri, Mr Arfè, Mr Gatto, Mrs Squarcialupi, Mrs Baduel Glorioso, Mr Cardia, Mr D'Angelosante, Mr De Pasquale, Mr Papapietro and Mr Bonaccini, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on the statute for migrant workers (Doc. 1-516/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment as the committee responsible and to the Legal Affairs Committee for an opinion;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Hume, Mr Balfe and Mrs Desmond on behalf of the Socialist group, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on Community regional policy and Northern Ireland (Doc. 1-517/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Müller-Hermann, Mr Herman, Mr d'Ormesson, Mr Sassano,

Mr Fischbach, Mr Vergeer, Mr Jonker, Mrs Walz, Mr Fuchs, Mr Rinsche and Mr Sälzer on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), and Mr Seligman on behalf of the European Democratic Group, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on energy policy (Doc. 1-518/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Energy and Research;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Cronin, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on coastal erosion (Doc. 1-522/79),

Which has been referred to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning as the Committee responsible and to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection and the Committee on Budgets for their opinions:

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Berkhout, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on pollution of the Rhine (Doc. 1-523/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Mrs Maij-Weggen, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, Mr Bersani, Mr Beumer, Mr Estgen, Mr Herman, Mr Ligios, Mr Michel, Mr Narducci, Mr Penders, Mr Seitlinger and Mr Vergeer, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on South Africa (Doc. 1-525/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Development and Cooperation for an opinion;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Debré on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on the proposal to reduce the sugar-quota in the French overseas departments (Doc. 1-529/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Development and Cooperation;

- motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Schmid, Mr Vetter, Mr Van Minnen, Mr Michel, Mr von Hassel, Mr Penders, Mr Nord, Mr Pelikan, Mr Hänsch, Mr Schinzel, Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul, Mr Irmer, Mr Schieler and Mrs Weber, pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, on the protection of human rights in Guatemala (Doc. 1-530/79),

which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee;

b) oral question, without debate, by Mr Romualdi, Mr Almirante, Mr Petronio and Mr Buttafuoco, to the Commission, on the seizure of hostages at the American Embassy in Teheran (Doc. 1-526/79);

c) from the Commission on 15 November 1979

- proposal No 32/79 for the transfer of appropriations between chapters within Section III (Commission) of

President

the general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1979 (Doc. 1-524/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Budgets ;

Since this transfer concerned expenditure not necessarily resulting from the Treaties, the President stated that he had consulted the Council on behalf of Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Regulation ;

- *aide-mémoire* on the fixing of the ECSC levies and the drawing up of the ECSC operational budget for 1980 (Doc. 1-531/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Budgets as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Energy and Research and the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment for their opinions ;

d) from the Council :

- an opinion on proposal No 26/79 for the transfer of appropriations between chapters within Section III (Commission) of the general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1979 (Doc. 1-79) (Doc. 1-528/79),

which has been referred to the Committee on Budgets.

3. Petitions

President. — I have received from Mr De Kok a petition on the right of establishment of doctors.

This petition has been entered as No 21/79 in the register provided for in Rule 48 (2) of the Rules of Procedure and, pursuant to paragraph 3 of that same Rule, referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

At its meeting of 30 October 1979, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions examined Petitions Nos 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9/79.

Petition No 2/79 was referred to the Political Affairs Committee, the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport for their opinions.

Petition No 4/79 was referred for an opinion to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

Petition No 5/79 was filed without further action, as Parliament had already given an opinion on the subject.

Petition No 6/79 was referred for an opinion to the Political Affairs Committee.

Petition No 7/79 was referred to the Political Affairs Committee and the Legal Affairs Committee for their opinions.

Petition No 8/79 was referred to the Political Affairs Committee, the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, the Committee on Regional Policy and

Regional Planning, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport for their opinions.

Petition No 9/79 was referred to the Political Affairs Committee and the Legal Affairs Committee for their opinions.

4. Decision on urgent procedure

President. — The next item is a decision on the request for urgent procedure for the *Schwartzberg et al. motion for a resolution: Occupation of the United States Embassy in Teheran* (Doc. 1-527/79).

I call Mr Penders.

Mr Penders. — (NL) Mr President, as we now have a joint motion for a resolution with a request for urgent procedure, I wish to withdraw the separate motion, No 1-507/79, tabled by the Group of the European People's Party. I expect the other groups will also be withdrawing their various resolutions.

President. — I put the request for urgent procedure to the vote.

The adoption of urgent procedure is agreed.

I propose to the House that this motion for a resolution, together with the other motions for resolutions on the same subject, be placed on today's agenda.

Are there any objections ?

That is agreed.

5. Procedure without report

President. — I announced on Monday the title of the Commission proposal to which the *procedure without report* laid down in Rule 27A of the Rules of Procedure was to be applied. Since no-one has asked to speak on this proposal and no amendments to it have been tabled, I declare this proposal to have been approved by the European Parliament.

6. Votes

President. — The next item comprises the votes on those motions for resolutions on which the debate is closed.

We begin with the *Gallagher motion for a resolution* (Doc. 1-472/79): *Meeting of the Council of Energy Ministers*.

I put the preamble and paragraphs 1 to 4 to the vote.

The preamble and paragraphs 1 to 4 are adopted. On paragraph 5, I have two amendments :

- Amendment No 1, tabled by Mrs Bonino, Mr Capanna, Mr Coppieters and Mrs Dekker and deleting the words 'nuclear power and, as soon as feasible, and

Gallagher

— Amendment No 2, tabled by Mr Linde on behalf of the Socialist Group and deleting this paragraph.

What is Mr Gallagher's view?

Mr Gallagher. — Mr President, the matter is quite simple: I do not believe that there was any great difference of opinion in the committee on this particular question. It was more a financial question than anything else. In actual fact the voting was 9 to 8, with several abstentions, when this particular amendment was moved in the committee. It was felt by some members that, since we do have facilities for the press and, as almost every speaker in the debate mentioned yesterday, it is high time the general public was made fully aware of the energy position anyway, it was a matter for the free press to inform the public of the workings of this Parliament and its intentions. The reticence shown towards adopting this item by some members was due to a feeling — and I think this goes for every member of the Committee on Energy — that there is not enough money in the budget now to cover the action in the energy field with which the committee wishes to deal. If this were to involve the committee in a large financial undertaking, then some members were against it.

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I think the objection of certain Members to paragraph 5 was to the words 'nuclear energy'.

President. — I call Mr Gallagher.

Mr Gallagher. — No, I do not think that is correct at all. I think the argument centred around the question of offering help in informing public opinion. It was felt that this may well delay the decision by the Council of Ministers, who may say: Go away for a year and establish what public opinion is on the matter. There was no difference of opinion on the question of the resolution, it was merely a question of getting public involvement and a difference of opinion on how to get the Council of Ministers to act immediately, rather than to hold up this process any longer.

President. — I put Amendment No 2 to the vote. Amendment No 2 is rejected.

I put Amendment No 1 to the vote.

Amendment No 1 is rejected.

I put paragraph 5 to the vote.

Paragraph 5 is adopted.

I put paragraph 6 to the vote.

Paragraph 6 is adopted.

I put the motion for a resolution as a whole to the vote.

The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — We proceed to the *Peters interim report (Doc. 1-465/79): Restructuring the iron and steel industry.*

I put the preamble to the vote.

The preamble is adopted.

On paragraph 1, I have Amendment No 1, tabled by Mr Sarre and Mr Oehler and rewording this paragraph as follows:

1. Emphasizes that the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment of the directly-elected Parliament is fully conscious of its direct obligation to workers and the general public and expresses its profound desire to see an improvement in the social situation of social groups affected by the economic crisis;

What is the rapporteur's view?

Mr Peters, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I suggest that we say something about all the amendments straight away. Amendment No 1 should be adopted; it makes the text submitted more precise. We should not adopt amendment No 2, because for one thing there is a misunderstanding as regards the wording in the various languages. I would therefore ask the President to declare the German text to be binding and to have the other versions adjusted accordingly. The German text — and I am referring to what Mr Griffiths said yesterday — says, with the aid of a common coordinated policy'. And coordination here means coordination of European policy, not of national policy.

As regards amendment No 3, this paragraph must at all costs be retained. We should not therefore adopt the amendment. For in paragraph 2 we refer to the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 16 February and endorse that resolution. We refer to the Commission's communication and endorse that communication. Paragraph 3 must therefore be retained, otherwise Parliament would be going back on its endorsement. With regard to amendment No 4 I would suggest that we should not add anything to the text. For one thing, reference is made in the European Parliament's resolution of 16 February to the various measures for reducing working hours. We refer to this. Secondly, the Commission's communication refers to 'aids to early retirement' and 'aids to the reorganization of working conditions and of working hours'. The communication thus points the way, and with this interim report we want to see Parliament taking a decision that points the way rather than getting bogged down now in the details, over which there would be controversy. My suggestion is therefore that nothing should be added to the text and that the amendment should therefore be rejected.

President. — I put Amendment No 1 to the vote.

Amendment No 1 is adopted.

¹ OJ C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

President

On paragraph 2, I have Amendment No 2, tabled by Mr Sarre and Mr Oehler and replacing this paragraph with the following text :

2. Refers in this connection to its resolution of 16 February 1979 concerning Community measures in the iron and steel industry; considers that a major social effort is required in the Community; therefore instructs the Commission to elaborate social measures in the framework of the iron and steel policy and to provide special funds for their implementation outside the normal ECSC budget;

I put Amendment No 2 to the vote.

Amendment No 2 is rejected.

I put paragraph 2 to the vote.

Paragraph 2 is adopted.

On paragraph 3, I have Amendment No 3, tabled by Mr Sarre and Mr Oehler and deleting this paragraph.

I put Amendment No 3 to the vote.

Amendment No 3 is rejected.

I put paragraph 3 to the vote.

Paragraph 3 is adopted.

I put paragraphs 4 and 5 to the vote.

Paragraphs 4 and 5 are adopted.

On paragraph 6, I have Amendment No 4, tabled by Mr Sarre and Mr Oehler and adding the following to this paragraph :

..., particularly as regards the reduction of working hours and the creation of an additional team for shiftwork ;

I put Amendment No 4 to the vote.

Amendment No 4 is rejected.

I put paragraph 6 to the vote.

Paragraph 6 is adopted.

I put paragraph 7 to the vote.

Paragraph 7 is adopted.

I put to the vote the motion for a resolution as a whole, as modified by the amendments that have been adopted.

The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — I put to the vote the *motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Development and Cooperation (Doc. 1-480/79): Hunger in the World.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

¹ OJ C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

7. 1977 budget discharge

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-463/79) by Mr Aigner, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on :

I the accounts of the European Parliament and the discharge in respect of the 1977 financial year ;

II the discharge to be granted to the Commission on the implementation of the budget of the European Communities for the 1977 financial year and the report of the Court of Auditors (Doc. 500/78) ;

III the discharge to be granted to the Commission in respect of the utilization of the appropriations of the fourth European Development Fund in the 1977 financial year (Doc. 188/79) ;

IV the comments accompanying the decisions granting a discharge on the implementation of the budget of the European Communities for the 1977 financial year (Article 85 of the Financial Regulation of 21 December 1977) ; and

V the discharge to be granted to the Commission in respect of the activities of the first, second and third European Development Funds for the 1977 financial year

(Doc. 1-463/79).

I call Mr Aigner.

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to begin my report by thanking the members of the newly created Committee on Budgetary Control, because within a very short period of very intensive work they have had to draw up and submit a report that has consumed a great deal of their time and energy.

My thanks also go to the European Court of Auditors. Mr President, this report is the first to be drawn up in accordance with the new provisions of the Financial Regulation and also the first by the new European Court of Auditors. I should like to point out to all Members that it is worthwhile studying this document. In a relatively short time and with relatively little effort an insight and general picture can be obtained of the European Community's financial activities.

Mr President, the European Court of Auditors has used illustrations, also for the first time, and it is therefore really very easy to obtain a general picture.

Mr President, I should also like to thank those Members who are no longer among us, above all Lord Bruce and also his helpers, Mr Hansen, Mr Dalyell, Mr Cointat, Mr Shaw and Mr Würtz. I would ask the Bureau to pass on Parliament's thanks to these former Members, because without their work we could not have completed this report in so short a time, and I feel it would be appropriate to thank former colleagues of ours in this Parliament ...

(Applause)

President. — Mr Aigner, the Bureau joins you in expressing appreciation of the work of your distinguished colleagues and undertakes to carry out your request.

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) ... Thank you, Mr President. I should like to make another suggestion to the Bureau. We have a new European Court of Auditors, without which and without whose intensive work the political control Parliament exercises would not be possible. I feel it should be a matter of course for the members of the Court of Auditors to be invited to attend at least the introductory statement of this debate. We have here the first report by the new European Court of Auditors, and I consider it right and proper for the members of the Court of Auditors, a quasi institution, to have the opportunity of following Parliament's debate from an official seat in this Chamber ...

President. — In reply to your second request, I can state that it will be conveyed to the Bureau, where we shall have to discuss it. I therefore cannot give a reply.

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) ... Mr President, that is precisely the reaction I expected. Thank you. With this very bulky document — I hope its size does not frighten Members — I should like to submit to you four decisions. This is document PE 59.535/fin. On pages 5, 6, 9 and 16 you have the four decisions that Parliament has to take and then a motion for a resolution on pages 10 to 15.

I would point out that this decision on the granting of a discharge represents the only occasion on which Parliament has the full and sole power to take a decision. There is no other area where Parliament must decide alone and bear the responsibility alone. I would therefore ask — and perhaps I should be quietly protesting about this — that in future these debates no longer be held on a Friday, but moved to the middle of the week.

Control of the Community has become one of Parliament's basic tasks. I repeat: this is the only decision which Parliament takes entirely on its own responsibility. You will see that in only one decision, that concerning the discharge to be granted in respect of the first, second and third Development Funds, do we invite the Council to grant a discharge to the Commission. In the case of all the other decisions it is for Parliament alone to decide. We do, of course, call for a recommendation from the Council, the Council should also express its views. But we are not bound by the Council's view: we alone have to decide.

Now, Mr President, to the most important points. As it is Friday, I shall be very brief. We shall, of course,

be starting work on Report No 478 of the European Court of Auditors at the next part-session, so we shall in fact be having a continuous debate on parliamentary control.

Let me begin with a remark on our work, on our report. It represents a request to all the institutions to submit reports to the committee and Parliament as soon as possible pursuant to Article 85(3) of the Financial Regulation. These reports must indicate — even if we are today granting a discharge — what measures have been taken to remedy the complaints of the various institutions. At this point I should like to repeat a request to the Commission the urgency of which has again been stressed this week. We are asking that Parliament's budgetary rights should not again be placed in jeopardy as a result of the implementation of the budget by the Commission. I need hardly recall the debates we have had on this problem. This Parliament will also defend its budgetary rights against the Commission, and in the forthcoming debates we must above all look into the question of the extent to which the Commission has respected the will of Parliament as a budgetary authority, in other words whether the budget has been implemented in accordance with the will, the political will of the European Parliament.

My last general, preliminary remark, Mr President, concerns the question of greater transparency of accounting as such. Let me give an example in this respect. We have agricultural stocks in the Community to the value of almost 3 000 m units of account. From a legal point of view it is completely unclear to whom these stocks belong, but we cannot, of course, say that 3 000 millions' worth of agricultural stocks do not belong to anybody. This is the first time we have taken up this question. In the dialogue with the Council and Commission we should like to achieve clarification and a definition, because considerable legal consequences are, of course, involved.

And now to the various headings of our motion for a resolution. As regards revenue, we want stricter control, since the Community's revenue represents the basis for its development and its activities. That is why we should also like — and I am saying this to the Council — to see the regulation proposed by the Commission to combat irregularities — COM (79) 111, final — adopted as quickly as possible.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have undoubtedly been following the Press reports on the committee's special investigation into the entertainment and travelling expenses of Members of the Commission this year.

Aigner

But this will concern the reports granting a discharge in coming years, not this year's report. That is why this subject will not be discussed at this stage.

Mr President, your Parliament and your committee would, however, particularly like to stress that what the Commission has done as regards administration through the work of a 'screening group' should be taken as an example by the other institutions. I believe this must be done.

Then, since we do not have the right to discuss the question of Parliament's seat, the administrations of the institutions should at least attempt to reduce the high cost of renting premises at three places of work by introducing, if possible, new methods, for example leasing. With leasing more favourable conditions and costs can be achieved without the question of the seat being prejudiced.

I am speaking here in my capacity as rapporteur, and I do not know whether I should not at least say something about the main issues. There are, after all, four decisions.

I will just say a few words about all the problems connected with research, investment and energy. We ask the Commission to carry out a more detailed evaluation in the field of research, because we have the feeling that some research appropriations are used without there being a proper relationship between input and output.

Regarding the Social Fund, the Committee feels that the Member States are, of course, primarily to blame if the programmes are not adopted, but that the programmes cannot be attractive enough if, for instance, Community funds are not accepted to combat unemployment. Efforts must therefore be made to make the programmes more attractive to the Member States.

On the Regional Fund, I should like to say that the committee reacted very strongly to the fact that various Member States are attempting to use Community Regional Fund monies as a substitute for their own monies. Where this is done, I feel that Parliament, if there is no alternative, should one day call for the repayment of money which has simply been used to save money at national level. At any rate I believe that this Parliament will not agree to such a policy in the future.

(Applause from various quarters)

I should now like to say a few words about storage costs, the cost of the agricultural policy. The Commission should be asked to simplify agricultural legislation. But money can be saved even as the agricultural regulations stand if these things are subject to some-

what stricter controls. Efforts must therefore be made to achieve coordination of the various controls — internal control, external control, controls carried out by the Community and those carried by the national authorities.

A final word to the Commission on development aid. On the question of food aid I would appeal to the Commission to do everything to ensure that the money concerned does not flow along the wrong channels. Mr Tugendhat, I would refer you above all to paragraph 46 of our motion for a resolution:

Recommends that the Commission should only implement aid through non-Community organizations when the necessary controls are available.

This Parliament at least will no longer tolerate the continuing suspicion that weapons are being bought with Community money and then used as a decisive factor in various conflicts.

Mr President, we shall be drawing up a separate report on the STABEX system. I can therefore keep my comments brief. My request is that Members appreciate the work done by the committee and put their full weight behind that work. In other words, controls must be efficient and future-oriented, so that the Commission may overcome the complaints and adopt a more transparent procedure.

(Applause)

President. — At the conclusion of his remarkable *exposé*, the rapporteur asked us to give our support to the work of the Committee on Budgetary Control. On your behalf, I thank the entire committee once more and assure the rapporteur that, together with him, we shall continue the struggle for greater justice with regard to the budgets, in particular with regard to the Community's own resources.

I call Mr Tugendhat.

Mr Tugendhat, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, I would like to begin by taking up the point which you have just raised, and which Mr Aigner made at the beginning of his speech. Quite clearly, the report of this committee, and I do not simply mean the report that we are discussing today, I mean the annual report of this committee, is a major event in the parliamentary calendar, a major event in the budgetary year. Now all of us who are concerned with this Parliament, whether we are members of it or of Institutions connected with it, such as mine and such as the Council, are of course, engaged in a learning process: Parliament in its present form is very young. But I would, if I may, as a member of one Institution to another, say that if we are to give reports

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of this kind the importance which they deserve; if they are to be understood, by the general public outside and by the other Institutions, to be as important as I believe they are; it really is desirable that they should not be handled in quite the way which has occurred this year: tucked away in the middle of an agenda, postponed for 24 hours, and eventually dealt with after, of necessity, a great many Members have gone home. I really don't think, from the way in which this report has been treated this year, the outside observer could possibly perceive that we are dealing with a matter of some importance. So, as a friend, if I may put it that way, of Parliament and as a supporter of the work of the committee which Mr Aigner chairs, I do hope we can find a way of treating this kind of report with the emphasis that it deserves.

Now, so far as the report itself is concerned, I too would like to express words of appreciation to the former members of the committee who are no longer here, some of whom are personal friends, and all of whom, I think, have devoted a great deal of service to the Community as well as to the Parliament. They of course, expected to complete the work by 30 April, and normally this report would indeed be dealt with during the first part of the year. But for reasons which most of us are familiar with and which, I think, Mr Aigner touched upon in his speech the circumstances surrounding this report are rather different from previous ones and the work has been held over for this Parliament to deal with.

Now, this is the first decision relating to a discharge taken by the elected Parliament, and the first time that such a decision has been based on the findings of a report by the Court of Auditors. I should like to stress that the work carried out in this connection was exceptional in scope in all its stages. Lord Bruce of Donington to whom I would like to pay particular tribute, was at pains to produce an extremely informative and very wideranging report before Mr Aigner, chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, took on the task of identifying the main guidelines from all the discussions and past documents.

Mr President, I fear that if I were to attempt to comment point by point on the various issues raised I would prolong the discussion far beyond the possibilities that we have before us this morning, which is one reason why I made my introductory points about the handling of this matter. Moreover, as I have already pointed out, these issues, so far as this report is concerned, have been extensively discussed within the committee itself and by the various parties to the documents which are now laid before you.

The documents show, and there is no point in hiding this particular matter, that the Commission does not agree on all the points made in the report. It follows, therefore, that there is little more that I can add at

present concerning the discharge itself. Since these problems were raised, the Commission has endeavoured to address itself to them as thoroughly as possible. Proposals have already been made and improvements are being prepared with regard to certain matters, such as, for instance, the presentation of accounts paragraphs 5 and 19 in the report; the deadlines for the rendering of accounts; and in particular, the additional period for the EAGGF paragraph 30 in the report; and the methods of financing projects by the EAGGF (Guidance Section) paragraph 32. I note however, that the proposal concerning the additional period for the EAGGF has not been favourably received by the Court of Auditors. It did, I think receive a favourable reception in the Parliament before the direct elections, but we note the opinion of the Court of Auditors on this matter. We have therefore received slightly conflicting advice, but the Commission will endeavour to take account of what we have now heard from the Court of Auditors.

Other matters, such as our administrative expenses in general and our real estate policy in particular paragraphs 13, 14 and 15; the sluggish utilization of appropriations for payment earmarked for certain funds, a topic already broached on many occasions and indeed a very important one paragraph 21; the operation of STABEX paragraph 36; and borrowing and lending activities — paragraph 37, still require extensive discussion, and I hope very much that we are going to be able jointly to carry this work forward. At all events, in the coming months we shall be explaining to the Parliament, though sometimes through the appropriate committee, *in writing*, the steps taken in response to your comments. In so doing we shall be complying with the request formulated in paragraph 1 of the motion for a resolution which is before you, and in accordance with previous practice we shall abide by the obligation imposed by the Financial Regulation, in the third paragraph of Article 85.

Now although this decision on a discharge is being dealt with later in the timetable than normal, this has enabled Parliament to take account, during its first examination of the draft budget for 1980, of one of the basic questions referred to in the report. That is the ability of the Commission to spend the appropriations voted by Parliament a point to which Mr Aigner referred in his speech a few moments ago. The approach adopted by your rapporteur in the Committee on Budgets, Mr Dankert, in placing the emphasis on whether it would actually be possible to spend the appropriations proposed, was, I think, inspired directly by the discussions on the discharge report for 1979 which were being held at the time that that report was being prepared by the Committee on Budgetary Control. This had the advantage, as far as I can see, of making people aware of the difficulties the Commission may have to face because of the need for a different legal basis for certain types of expenditure.

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I would, if I may, like to take up a point made by Mr Aigner. As I have stated on a number of occasions, and I hope I have made the point quite clear, the Commission takes an extremely strong view of the budgetary rights and powers of both arms of the budgetary authority. I have emphasized the fact that, to use a German phrase, we do not believe that this is a question of an eagle and a hare, we believe that it is a question of a double-headed eagle, the two heads having equal responsibilities and equal duties. But we do have to emphasize when we can spend money and when we cannot. I welcome the fact that the Parliament should have put these direct questions to us, and we have attempted to answer them as clearly as possible. If the Parliament chooses, as it has a perfect right to do, to enter sums in the budget which we are unable to spend, we can tell you that we are unable to spend them, but if the full budgetary process has not been completed then we remain unable to spend them. Now I think that that draws attention to a point we need to study and to work on and develop together, but I do not want there to be any misunderstanding. We shall always do our best to be as clear and as straight with you, but we are all of us, we just as much as you, bound by the Treaty that established the Community of which we are a part. Certainly we shall seek to develop that Community, but we must, I think, face up to realities. That was a digression just to deal with a particular point raised by Mr Aigner.

I should like to say in conclusion, Mr President, that the cross-fertilization between the various stages of budgetary activities illustrates, in our view, the importance of Parliament's budgetary powers at all stages of the budgetary process and the significance of the discharge decision which, since the Treaty of 22 July 1975 came into force, has been taken by Parliament alone simply on a recommendation from the Commission. That is why, as Mr Aigner said in his introduction, this is an important debate, and I hope very much that we shall be able to find ways of holding the debate and of insuring the cooperation of other Community institutions that make the public at large understand that, while there are occasions where the Council has powers that Parliament lacks, there are also occasions when Parliament has powers that the Council lacks.

President. — To take up Mr Aigner's line of thought, I wish to express my thanks for the positive response expressed by Mr Tugendhat to a number of our proposals. I hope that in the months to come he, together with Mr Aigner and together with us all, will pursue this desirable course yet further. In view of his reference to the eagle, we count on his help in overcoming the great difficulties that lie ahead.

8. Agenda

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, in view of the large number of names still on the list of speakers, I

now propose that this list be closed. That also applies to all other items on the agenda.

Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

9. 1977 budget discharge (contd)

President. — I call Mr Colla to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Colla. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the fact that Parliament has many new Members has certainly not made it any easier to examine this question of granting a discharge in respect of the 1977 budget, since it is difficult to work satisfactorily without having been personally involved in the development of the budget. We will be faced with the same situation when we discuss the 1978 budget in the near future, but after that our difficulties will, I hope, be over.

On behalf of my group I should like to express a word of thanks firstly to the Court of Auditors for the remarkable work it has done, as the rapporteur has already said. Secondly, our sincere thanks go to Lord Bruce for his original report, which no doubt gave the new Members an initial insight into this rather complex material. We should also like to thank the chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control and the committee itself for the sound work they have done despite the difficult circumstances.

The four amendments we have tabled to the motion for a resolution are not therefore intended as an expression of a lack of confidence in the work which has been done but rather the consequence of the rather difficult situation and the shortage of time with which we were faced. I quite understand that such situations do arise, but I think everyone will agree that they must be prevented in the future.

On behalf of the Socialist Group I will now discuss a number of central issues, without going into detail.

One of the first issues I must raise — and we will be coming back to it again and again — is that the accounts and the granting of the discharge for 1977 again reveal that this Parliament's budgetary powers are being at least partly eroded. This is evident from very specific examples: from the distortion that is the consequence of the major movements of appropriations, from the fact that appropriations resulting from amendments tabled by Parliament have not, or only partly, been utilized. It is also evident from the delay in essential areas: I am thinking of food aid, aid to non-associated developing countries, and the Social Fund.

Colla

I should then like to draw attention to a much discussed point, on which I am still not completely clear, this being the question of whether the budget does or does not represent an adequate legal basis for implementation by the Commission. It is, of course, contended that in a number of cases it is clear whether or not this is possible. But I have the strong impression that there is a large grey area between the two, where much depends on the political will whether or not what Parliament wants and decides is in fact done. And I really do not want us to continue in the position of Parliament sometimes being the plaything of the Council, and of the Commission too.

Another point is that we feel controls must definitely be strengthened. This should be clear from a number of factors: firstly, greater transparency. We cannot accept that a budget or set of accounts should be a labyrinth in which the few initiated know the way. The need for stricter controls should also be evident from the fact that democratic controls must also be more exhaustive.

And here we are again, talking about budgetization. We are also talking about the value of the enormous reserves that must be annexed to the accounts, and also of the fixed assets. And this, Mr Aigner, is, in our view, something which has been forgotten in the motion for a resolution, and that is the reason for the first amendment tabled by my group. Nor indeed do I understand why the Commission was so hesitant at the meeting of the Committee on Budgetary Control with regard to the inclusion of such annexes, reserves and fixed assets. The Court of Auditors itself points out that the present situation does not comply with the Financial Regulation, and the question of ownership is in my opinion secondary, if we know that we have here a reflection of fiscal expenditure on an important sector of Community policy.

The third main point is that we should combat any form of fraud with all the means at our disposal, because fraud represents a fundamental injustice and because it can in itself result in a distortion of trade. What I find particularly striking in this is the variation in the number of frauds detected from one country to another, and I can only assume that people are rather more honest in one country than in another. It is clear to me that some countries are more anxious to detect fraud than others. A second factor is the enormous delay in the repayment of sums obtained fraudulently. But I am surprised that the Commission did not answer the fairly simple question put to it in the Committee on Budgetary Control regarding the countries guilty of infringing Article 28 of the Treaty, and to what extent that article requires a unanimous decision on the part of the Council before autonomous alterations may be made to the duties in the common customs tariff. We did not receive an

answer to this straightforward question, and I hope to receive that answer today. Our amendment to paragraph 9 must be seen as an attempt to improve controls: we are asking for supplementary controls or at least an investigation on the basis of statistical analyses. The Court of Auditors has told us this will be difficult, but we feel it must be possible. We are not asking for these supplementary controls to be introduced immediately, but that consultations should be held with the Member States with the aim of working out a supplementary method of control for the Community.

In line with these considerations we are also very much in favour of rational management, the emphasis here being on one aspect, the enormous cost resulting from this Parliament being in fact saddled with three seats. I believe that the figures as they stand point to the need for one seat to be found for this Parliament at the earliest possible opportunity.

(Applause from various quarters)

The fourth important point, and one which is really very close to my heart, is this: efforts have been made in the past, and I appreciate that, but I believe we must continue on a larger scale. We shall remain in the dark until we can bring about an evaluation, especially of the essential points of the budget, which tells us not only that money has been spent but also, and above all, what results have been achieved by the Community with the money as shown in the budget and the accounts. And this concern has led us to table too amendments to the motion for a resolution, which concern the Regional Fund, where the results for each region can be measured separately, simply because the discrepancies between the regions are increasing despite the Regional Fund. The aim of this amendment is to draw specific attention to this regrettable state of affairs.

The fifth point we should like to raise is that it is crucial for this Parliament and for the Community as a whole that publicity should be given to what the Community achieves. I can well imagine that the national governments like to take the credit. That is understandable and to a certain extent perhaps acceptable, but this does not alter the fact that the Community must be able to prove itself, that the European idea must be able to prove itself, that we must ensure that this publicity is in fact given.

To conclude, a few comments to the Commission and the Council. We as a Parliament and the Socialist Group as well, and I believe the whole of the Committee on Budgetary Control too, will be concentrating our attention on a number of matters on the immediate future.

I am thinking, for example, of the excellent report by Lord Bruce, which tells of a ship with a cargo of rice simply disappearing at a given moment. That may

Colla

seem to be an interesting little story, but when we realize what needs are to be met with such consignments, it becomes an appalling event.

Secondly, we must insist on the Commission informing Parliament immediately, especially when Parliament's amendments are concerned, when problems arise with the implementation of important items of the budget.

Thirdly, we wonder whether in view of the control activities the procedure for conciliation between the Council and Parliament should not be improved.

The fourth point concerns procedures for such things as supplementary budgets and the question of whether the system of three-monthly reports, as we have now, is adequate, seeing that there is frequently considerable delay in such reports being drawn up.

Finally, a suggestion to the Commission: would it not be possible and worth the effort to draw up not only the involved documents on the accounts and the budget but also a simple document for the man in the street, based on policy lines rather than on figures and providing a general picture of the political and actual importance of a set of accounts and of a budget?

We are sure that we will have to repeat many of these remarks, especially when we shortly discuss the granting of a discharge in respect of the 1978 financial year.

President. — I call Mr Notenboom to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D).

Mr Notenboom. — *(NL)* Mr President, it has been said a number of times that this is the first report by the new Committee on Budgetary Control, which has just been set up. This report concerns, among other things, the first annual report of the Court of Auditors. The Court of Auditors has been referred to as this Parliament's brainchild, and to some extent this is true, since Parliament fought for the Court of Auditors for many years. In this respect I should like to commend Mr Aigner, chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, because it was he in particular who for years called for the establishment of a European Court of Auditors, and the fight is now beginning to bear its first fruit. This is extremely important, and I too would like to say that I place great faith in the expansion of the activities of the new Court of Auditors. For me it was a relief to see that the Court of Auditors has adopted a very open attitude towards Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control. I was not used to this in my own country. Although we have an excellent Court of Auditors in the Netherlands, it is afraid its independence will suffer if it cooperates too closely with Parliament, but this does not

need to be the case. A Court of Auditors can be independent and yet quite openly cooperate with Parliament.

And that is what is happening in Europe, and that is a positive development. Parliament must avoid repeating the work of the Court of Auditors. The Court is the external controller, the accountant, we are the political controllers. We do not need to repeat everything, that is duplication of effort, and that duplicates the costs. We must carry out the political controls, seize on the items which must be evaluated in political terms, and that is why we must not repeat everything or go into every point made by the Court of Auditors again. We must proceed from what the Court has done, extract from it the political issues and evaluate them and present to the Court those items which are not quite clear to us with a request for an explanation so that we can carry out our political controls. And this has been done several times. It works extremely well. That is how the relationship must be. It must also be realized that costs and revenue are weighed against each other in such controls. After all, we have three control phases: there is a preliminary phase of internal control at the Commission and the institutions, then the external control by the Court of Auditors and only then political control by Parliament. I therefore hope that the newly established Committee on Budgetary Control will be able to perform this function satisfactorily.

I should also like to pay a tribute to Lord Bruce, whose work in the old Parliament has been a great help. Lord Bruce is a man who is independent and has an enquiring mind. He is himself an accountant. Such people are always very critical, both of themselves and of others, and we owe him a great deal of thanks because Mr Aigner has built on his report, as has our Committee.

Exercising political control is somewhat different from expressing the desire for a given policy, and I therefore think it would be a good thing if we the members of the Committee on Budgetary Control forget our party-political hobby horses and raise our control activities to the level where they belong, that is at as high a level as possible, so that Parliament may enjoy a good reputation in the eyes of the whole of the outside world — including the Council. And for this reason the committee will perhaps have to work rather differently from other committees and leave aside party-political differences, which are quite justified in politics, and do the job we have been given, to which the Council too has attached considerable importance, that is political control by Parliament itself.

I am sorry to say that I do not find the Aigner report a good one. I hope Mr Aigner will not take this amiss. I feel it has come too late and that it is too cumbersome. It could in my view be rather more concise, and

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it could have been published earlier. It should be more concise, because it contains any number of points that I do not consider necessary, but we did this to reach a quick compromise, because we thought the discharge should be granted during the November part-session. We are after all expecting to receive the report of the Court of Auditors on the 1978 budget in a few days' time, and we will therefore be able to tackle that report with fresh courage and with this discharge behind us. To reach the compromise I have just mentioned, we, or at least I, have made a number of concessions on items which I personally do not think need to be in the report, because in my view these reports should not be longer than necessary. We shall therefore endorse this report. But I also find that time is getting short: the report on 1978 must appear more quickly. The controls must be carried out as soon as possible after the end of the year they concern. And that is why it is a good thing that the report on 1978 is now on its way and that we will be able to grant the discharge for that year in the early months of next year. When controls take place too long after the year they concern, they lose some of their effectiveness, interest and force. That is what has happened this year, and probably for the reason already referred to by the Commissioner, the elections, but the elections are not entirely to blame, because we could have finished before that time. The point is that we had a problem before the elections. We were not quite sure whether the discharge should be granted. My opinion from the outset was that it should be granted. But the problem was a major one, and I feel I should explain: it was the problem to which Mr Colla has referred, as have the rapporteur and the Commissioner, regarding the spending by the Commission of amounts entered in the budget through Parliament's doing. Mr Colla spoke of a grey area, and he was right. I am not one of those people who say that if the items are correct and if they are in the budget, the Commission can spend them. This is not true to the same degree of every item, and that is why we must look at this more closely. We must go into this question in greater detail with the Commission, and in consultation with the Council we must decide of which items this is in fact true and to which other rules apply. We have not yet done this adequately. But when we have done so, it should be quite clear that the items concerned must be taken in hand by the Commission immediately.

Mr Commissioner, I am quite sure that this new Parliament has a great many more teeth than its predecessor, and Lord Bruce himself felt that the discharge should not be granted. I did not therefore share his opinion. Nor does the present Committee. But if the old Parliament inclined to that view, it is all the more likely that the new Parliament will adopt this stand when it is dissatisfied with the Commission's activities in this field. So in this area Parliament and the Commission and Parliament and the Council still have to get a number of things straight. But once this

has been done, you can take it from me that this Parliament will be very hard-hearted. Whether refusing to grant a discharge will be the right weapon or the motion of censure — I feel the latter — we shall be looking into in greater detail, but that will also be at issue. I do not mean to make any threats in this connection but simply to underline the importance of this aspect.

(Applause from various quarters)

I do not have any more time to go into the contents.

Then there are the controls carried out by the Member States. This is particularly important where own resources are concerned. You need only think of the customs duties, which constitute own resources. This is also connected with the Commission's control activities. They can be effected more flexibly, but a great deal of good work has been done, and that is the way it should be, because we are concerned here with organized crime, which has become highly proficient in these movements of money, levies, refunds and customs duties. Organized crime, not just a few small smugglers, but organized crime. And the checks made by the Court of Auditors and above all by the Commission's internal control service must be adequate to the task. The best people must be in the right place to make these checks satisfactorily and to get to grips with this crime. Stringent measures will frequently be required, the Court of Justice will sometimes have to be involved and the police too, to help Europe to keep its good name. Taxes are high in the Member States, and many of us want an increase in own resources. There is all the more reason, therefore, to ensure that every penny is well spent and that finances intended for Europe are not used fraudulently. I must leave it at that, although I would have liked to speak about the Social Fund, of which I have made a particular study, but that can wait until another time. My thanks to the first rapporteur, to the present rapporteur and to the committee which has done the work. My group will agree to the granting of a discharge and endorse the reports.

President. — I call Mr Kellett-Bowman to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr E. Kellett-Bowman. — Mr President, the 1977 budget is being put to bed for the last time. Fortunately, Mr Aigner's experience of this Parliament goes back that far, and the Committee on Budgetary Control is grateful to him for the work he has done so diligently, efficiently and tenaciously. The new committee is also fortunate — and I would also like to stress this — in having the European Court of Auditors to prepare the ground for its work. Their objective advice is very much appreciated.

Edward Kellett-Bowman

The Committee on Budgetary Control has not spent as much time on the 1977 budget as it would have wished. We feel that it is vital to get down to 1978 and do some current work ; otherwise, we shall look a bit like a committee of financial archivists. Nevertheless, all Institutions should please note that we shall be taking a more thorough look at everything in the future. One of the interesting aspects of the committee under Mr Aigner's control is his ability to deal with a collection of people with different national accounting disciplines. The glossary is not always the same. As well as serving as a monitor to check on all the transactions of the Community's work, the discharge process also enables us to put forward political recommendations on the future conduct of our affairs.

The 1977 discharge is qualified by more than 50 recommendations. These concentrate mainly on the Commission's budget. Time permits me to comment on only a very few. Agriculture is clearly the hole in the Community's pocket. My colleague Mr Prout will talk about the legal aspects of this, and Mr Battersby wants to talk about fraud. But just let me give you an example of the abuse which does not help the image of the Community. On television, pictures have been shown of pigs being taken across the Irish border, collecting the dues and finding their own way back ! That is not good for our name.

We must keep in mind in this debate Mr Lange's report on convergence. Now this can be greatly helped by several of the Committee on Budgetary Control's recommendations. The sound management of funds is the mortar with which we can cement the building-blocks of Europe's future which Mr Jenkins often refers to. The promises made to Europe's people must be fulfilled in their lifetime. We can do this if we use our resources to raise the standard of living and the quality of life of all the people, so as to compare with that enjoyed by the wealthier Member States at the present time. A thin layer of widely spread aid will not do this. The principle of additionality has been mentioned and remains yet to be solved. Nor does it help us if our various agencies and funds act independently. We must seek out the weak spots and inject aid at a level which will bring about rapid development. This itself will bring about rapid development. This itself will generate new wealth for the whole Community. If we coordinate our efforts, Mr President, economic convergence can be a reality and not just a dream.

The European Democratic Group support Amendments Nos 1, 2 and 4. We cannot support Amendment No 3, because we feel that this matter has not been sufficiently discussed in the committee. We also support Mr Aigner's report as a whole, with renewed thanks to him for his work.

IN THE CHAIR : MR VONDELING*Vice-President*

President. — I call Mr Irmer to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Irmer. — (*D*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group I should also like to begin by thanking the Court of Auditors and the rapporteur, Mr Aigner, and also his predecessor, Lord Bruce.

We shall be voting in favour of the proposed decisions and of the motion for a resolution submitted by the Committee on Budgetary Control. We are thus in favour of the Commission being granted a discharge on the implementation of the 1977 budget. But we should like to stress that this discharge should not be taken to mean that we fully agree with the way the Commission has implemented the 1977 budget. Quite the contrary. We consider the remarks made in the motion for a resolution to be extremely serious. In the motion for a resolution the European Parliament criticizes the fact that appropriations have not been utilized, which affects the new policies in particular and that the non-utilization of appropriations is a constant and structural feature extending to major parts of the budget and resulting in a reduction of the European Parliament's budgetary powers. We regard this as a very serious danger. I believe this also raises a central issue with regard to the future development of the Communities and the relationship among the institutions. We are all aware that Parliament has only a few powers. Among the most important of these is its power as part of the budgetary authority. We must not and will not tolerate a situation in which Parliament's budgetary powers are partially undermined by the Commission's ignoring Parliament's political will, which has, of course, found expression in Parliament's developing certain ideas and taking certain decisions as part of the budgetary procedure. If the Commission does not then use the money that has been approved when implementing Parliament's decisions, we feel there is a grave danger of Parliament's rights being undermined. We also feel that the Commission should give a great deal of thought to how it will in future justify not implementing Parliament's decisions in the budgetary sector. If it is said there have been technical difficulties — that can always happen. But then the Commission should come to Parliament and consider with it how these technical difficulties can be overcome. If the Commission says an additional legal basis is required, then I feel we should devote particular attention to this problem. For it can be argued that the entry of appropriations in the budget by the two parts of the budgetary authority represents, in many cases at least, an adequate legal basis.

Irmer

If the Council, the other part of the budgetary authority, has agreed to the entries made by Parliament, it is difficult to understand why, if it considers an additional legal basis necessary, it has not created this additional legal basis, because we of the Parliament do not have any legislative powers. So there are two possibilities. Either the Council makes it clear from the outset during the budgetary procedure that it feels these appropriations cannot be utilized without an additional legal basis, and then Parliament can go and make use of its budgetary room for manoeuvre and approve appropriations somewhere else, or the Council commits itself and creates the additional legal basis it considers necessary or — and this would be the conclusion I would draw — thus gives expression to its conviction that an additional legal basis is not required.

What conclusions should Parliament draw from the fact that we unfortunately find with the 1977 budget that not all the additional appropriations approved by Parliament were spent? One alternative, which was recently used during the 1980 budgetary procedure, is simply to say if appropriations were not spent last year or in earlier years, we will delete these appropriations in the sector concerned for the coming financial year. But each case should then be very carefully examined on its merits, and I feel that we cannot leave it at that because it is a kind of resignation. If I simply say that Parliament approved appropriations in a given year, the Commission did not spend those appropriations, so I will not approve them for the next year, that would be resignation, because Parliament wanted to achieve something by approving the appropriations in the first place. It is not therefore enough to say the next time, all right, that could not be done, so we will leave it at that. What we should do is to look at the second alternative of applying a sanction. In this I am taking up what Mr Notenboom has just said. My view — and that of my group — is that it is by no means inconceivable that Parliament should one day refuse to grant the Commission a discharge, since the fact that we can grant discharges implies that we can also refuse to grant them. This would not have any immediate consequences from a legal point of view, but it would, I believe, be a move of quite considerable political importance.

This newly elected Parliament is different from the old Parliament. We must account directly to our constituents for what we do. We must account for what happens to the budgetary decisions we have taken here. If we want to be taken seriously, we must ensure that the political will we express during the budgetary procedure is complied with.

The new Parliament has taken account of this new quality by raising the former Control Subcommittee to the status of a full committee. I consider this very significant and would like to state at this point that I welcome this decision.

Secondly, we must take our control function far more seriously in future than has been the case in the past. I was happy to hear Mr Tugendhat say he was a friend of this Parliament and a supporter of the idea of control. I regard this statement as a positive, constructive basis for satisfactory cooperation in the future between the Commission and Parliament within its Committee on Budgetary Control, and I very much hope that when we come to the next report, we will find that many of the complaints we have unfortunately had to make in the motion for a resolution will no longer have any foundation. I hope therefore that we will continue to cooperate closely.

President. — I call Mr Bonde.

Mr Bonde. — (DK) Mr President, as representatives of the People's Movement against Membership of the EEC, we cannot vote for a set of accounts containing entries for which there is no complete legal basis. I shall not repeat our arguments, but would refer to our speeches during the budget debate last week.

Today I wish to deal with other matters. I should like to draw attention to a number of peculiarities revealed in these accounts, as it is important that Danish taxpayers should know where their money goes. In this connection, I should like to thank Lord Bruce of Donington for his working document, and express my appreciation of the annual report by the Court of Auditors. These two documents are very useful in showing up the kind of organization we have got ourselves into. We read that, in 1977, frauds on the Guarantee section of the Agricultural Fund amounted to 8.5 million units of account — about 60 million Danish kroner; and these were only the recorded irregularities, not an estimate of the total being taken by people with imagination and knowledge of what they can swindle out of the agricultural system. How many unrecorded cases there have been we can only guess. We also read that only about 1.5 million units of account have been recovered so far. More will probably be recovered later, but we shall make the point that the EEC's agricultural arrangements are an invitation to fraud at the tax-payers' expense. We shall be drawing attention to the slovenly organization of food aid, where a ship sailing to the Comoro Islands with a cargo of rice can sink and the Commission cannot be sure whether the rice was on board or not, and where 1 520 tons of rice sent to Chad were still not distributed five months after unloading. Then again, there are the huge delays in the provision of food aid. It is quite scandalous that people needing help in a starving world should suffer as a result of the Commission's inefficiency.

From the figures in Lord Bruce's document, it is clear that the Regional Fund has not been operating as intended either. Regional disparities in the Community are steadily widening rather than narrowing. I

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shall not bore the House with further examples; the Court of Auditors' report gives more than enough.

The 1977 report confirms what we were saying before Danish accession to the Community, which was that this huge organization, this Eurocracy on which the EEC has been built, is totally unsuitable as an instrument of international cooperation. There is no critical European public corresponding to the critical public eye on national affairs. The system seems to us to be inefficient and we hope to stop Danish tax-payers' money being used to finance it. We shall therefore abstain from voting on the discharge.

President. — I call Mr Battersby.

Mr Battersby. — Mr President, the discharge report on the 1977 accounts fell well outside the normal time-limits set out in the Financial Regulation. I would like to emphasize this point.

As Mr Aigner has said in paragraph 2 of his explanatory statement, Article 85 of the Financial Regulation requires that the discharge be given before the end of April of the year following that in which the Court of Auditors reports on the accounts for the preceding year. In other words, the discharge report should have been presented within 16 months of the end of the financial year to which it refers — in April this year. It was not.

This did not happen for many reasons. The new Court of Auditors had to work itself into the job during its first year; the Council came forward too late with its recommendation to Parliament, and no part-session of Parliament was held in June because of the direct elections. This, of course, was an unavoidable delay, but I submit that it was very worthwhile: the substantial report that we have before us, with its extremely well-worked out detail, justifies the thorough and lengthy examination made of the 1977 accounts.

I shall be the rapporteur for the 1978 discharge, and I intend to see that the deadline of the end of April is respected. In this, I am sure I shall get the support of the Commission and of the Court of Auditors. I do hope, however, that the Council, for its part, will transmit its recommendation in good time so that Parliament may deliver its opinion in accordance with Article 85 of the Financial Regulation.

The section of the report dealing with the implementation of the budget amendments is particularly interesting. In voting the amendments to the budget, Parliament, usually by a large majority, endorses particular policies to which it attaches a high priority. Moreover, Parliament votes the necessary tax increase to finance these policies. It is then a matter for the Commission to implement the budget. But when we find, as we do in the case of the Bruce report, that only a very small percentage of the money set aside by Parliament has

been utilized, then I consider we have a serious situation. Of course it is true that the position in 1977 was rather special, but I do feel that the Commission should have tried harder to give effect to amendments. This is not a question of encouraging the Commission to go on a spending spree, but when Parliament endorses amendments, usually for modest sums and for essential purposes, the Commission should make a special effort to respond to the democratic wishes expressed by this Parliament.

Applause)

Another aspect of the report which I am sure we all have found very interesting was the irregularities section. These arise primarily in agriculture. Of course, with the complex ramifications of the Common Agricultural Policy, it is inevitable that certain individuals will find scope for fraud and irregularity. I am not at all convinced myself that the Member States are doing everything in their power to diminish the opportunities for fraud, to pursue irregularities, and to recoup money which has been paid out irregularly. The figures quoted in paragraph 66 of the annex to the document before us illustrate my point. If you look at these figures, you will find that the average number of frauds brought up in any one year is about 100, from some 50 of which money is recovered. But you will also notice that detected fraud is increasing. Whether this is due to efficiency on our part, or to a natural progression in human ingenuity, is for each individual to decide. But we must tighten up considerably in this area, because it makes a very large hole in our pocket.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation of the work done by Lord Bruce and his colleagues, which I think is a magnificent effort. I strongly recommend that the House adopt Mr Aigner's report.

President. — I call Mr. Prout.

Mr Prout. — I should like very briefly, Mr President, to comment upon three issues touched upon in this excellent report. Each in its different way concerns the failure of the Commission to implement the annual budget passed by the joint budgetary authority.

Firstly, in a number of important instances the Council has, in contravention of the Treaty, severely diluted the power of the Commission to fulfil its executive obligations. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of the management committees. Many regulations of questionable status have established representative committees of Member States with power to amend decisions taken by the Commission on what expenditure should be incurred. This is a matter of considerable constitutional significance for Parliament, because it is only the Commission which is politically accountable to it. To the extent that the Council usurps the Commission as an executive

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agency, Parliament loses its power to control budgetary expenditure.

There is also the question of the gap in appropriations made by Parliamentary amendment — a matter which has already been alluded to by a number of speakers in today's debate. A large number of Parliamentary appropriations are not spent — because, it is claimed by the Commission, the legal basis for such appropriations simply does not exist. That is to say that the Council has not provided a legislative framework outside the budget to authorize such expenditure. I respectfully submit that no such framework is required. The budgetary authority is joint, involving both Parliament and Council. The Council is fully engaged by the budgetary procedure in all decisions made, and cannot escape the consequences of this engagement. *Volenti non fit iniuria*, as we still sometimes say. It cannot accept the implications of one part of the budget and deny the other.

Finally, in a large number of cases, the process of implementation is shared between the Commission and the national authorities. Here the problem of uniform application of budgetary policy is extremely complex, and I need do no more than point to Article 28 infringements as a very complicated and difficult example.

I do not pretend that the task of the Commission is easy — far from it. But I do wish they were a little bolder. Article 55 of the Treaty charges them with the duty to see that obligations under the Treaty are fulfilled. I wish they would apply it, in this particular case, not only to themselves, but also to the Council. They would certainly get our support in doing so.

President. — I call Mr Aigner.

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, I should briefly like to thank all those who have spoken. I believe the debate has shown one thing — as Mr Notenboom has said — that this Parliament must have stature in its control activities. In the national parliaments we no longer have the division of powers into three, in which parliament is independent from the government. We know that today the division goes through the middle of parliament. The coalition forming the majority and the government is one factor, and the opposition is another. Here we have the old parliamentary structure, here Parliament must perform its control task as a whole through political groups. And the debate today has shown that this is possible.

Mr President, my thanks to everyone. A final word on what Mr Tugendhat has said. Mr Tugendhat, I should like to thank you and your officials. We have not had any difficulties in performing our control function. And we have so far received all the documents and information we have asked for.

Ladies and gentlemen, it was interesting to hear what Mr Tugendhat had to say at one of the committee's

meetings in the old Parliament, and it is worthwhile reading this speech, in which we discussed the consequences of the rejection of a discharge. Ladies and gentlemen, controls serve only one purpose, even if sanctions may follow. So it was quite interesting to learn that even the Commission has largely accepted our view that a refusal to grant a discharge would for all practical purposes mean a full vote of censure against the Commission and that if the dispute could no longer be resolved, the Commission might have to resign. This is a legal view which in fact underlines the importance of the debate on the discharge and also the responsibility Parliament bears.

President. — I call Mr Tugendhat.

Mr Tugendhat, Member of the Commission. — Just one word, Mr President, at the end of this debate. I think we all made our positions clear during it; I will certainly bear in mind the points which have been made from almost all quarters of the House. As I said in my speech, we do attach importance to the discharge procedure. It is also important to recognize that, while there are many areas in which the Council has powers which the Parliament lacks, this is one area where the Parliament has a power which the Council lacks, and that is what gives this particular occasion its significance. Of course, all of us are bound by the Treaty, and I hope I am right in saying that it is against that background that Mr Aigner and I both interpret the remarks which he made. It is, I think, very important, therefore, that the procedure, adopted this year in the Committee on Budgets, of asking us whether we are able to spend the money, and if not why not, is a matter that should be pursued; but also, that our answers should be remembered if it subsequently emerges that money is not spent. It is a lesson that we have all learned, and must continue to learn if the procedure is to be as effective as I think both of us would like.

President. — The debate is closed. The vote on the motion for a resolution, together with the amendments that have been tabled, will be taken at the end of this sitting.

10. *Regulations on the implementation
in 1980 of the Community's generalized
system of preferences*

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Pearce (Doc. 1-469/79), on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the

proposals from the Commission to the Council for regulations concerning the implementation of the European Communities' generalized tariff preferences' scheme for 1980.

I call Mr Pearce.

Mr Pearce, rapporteur. — Mr President, the report which I have to present to you on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation relates to the Commission's document 1-264/79 on the proposals for generalized tariff preferences for 1980.

I regret that time is short to discuss a matter of such importance, and I would repeat the words of Commissioner Tugendhat that matters which are within the direct competence of this Parliament should perhaps be brought on to the floor of Parliament at a time when more Members are present and when there is a longer time to debate such issues.

On this occasion, the Commission submitted its text to the Council in very good time, and the committee wishes to compliment the Commission on doing so. It is important that Parliament should take a view on my report during this part-session, because legislation to implement the GSP for 1980 must be put in hand very soon if we are to avoid difficulties at our ports and frontiers on 1 January. The Committee and I therefore hope that the Parliament will view this report favourably, to enable the Council to take the necessary action for legislation very quickly.

It might be helpful, Mr President, if I said a few words about what the GSP is, because it is a very complicated subject which is not widely understood. It is a gesture, a unilateral measure, on the part of the Community taken under the terms of UNCTAD measures, and it forms a major part of the Community's policy with regard to developing countries. It is a system which cuts customs duties on certain imports, either entirely or up to certain quantities. In some cases, customs duties are reinstated automatically when a tariff quota is exhausted, and in other cases the Community has a discretionary power to reinstate them if it so decides.

The system applies to something like 120 countries and various dependent territories of Member States. It is an annual system. It has been renewed each year for a number of years, and it is covered, as regards its legislative form, by a number of separate regulations which deal variously with industrial products, iron and steel products, textiles and agricultural products. These regulations, put together, form the package which this report of mine is concerned with.

I mentioned that it is an annual system. Of course, each regulation stands by itself and is valid for one year. This in fact is the tenth of a number of such regulations which the Community has passed following the inception of the GSP scheme. The various measures taken year by year have been broadly the same, and in consequence the reports by the various rapporteurs of the Committee on Development and Cooperation have been broadly similar, because we think that continuity of approach is essential in an operation of this nature. Next year, however,

we shall all be considering together a GSP for the new period. The first ten-year cycle is over, and we are now beginning to reconsider how the thing should be operated for a further period. The committee would urge the Commission to prepare a report reviewing the effectiveness and application of the GSP since its inception in 1971 and its guidelines for future detailed proposals for the coming years. We think this is an essential thing for the Commission to do at a fairly early stage, and I am encouraged to understand that the Commission may take a favourable view of this recommendation.

I think it is also important that this Parliament hold a further debate on this subject when we do have more time — perhaps in January or February, because, quite honestly, neither committee, rapporteur nor Parliament have had the time to give this important subject the attention that it merits; and I know that a number of Members of this House would like to see a further debate on GSP at the beginning of the new year.

The Committee on Development and Cooperation will also be considering whether it should appoint its rapporteur for the next GSP proposals at an early stage, so that the rapporteur can work with Council and Commission in understanding the proposals from the Commission as the year goes by, and it is hoped that Council and Commission would work with such rapporteur to see that Parliament is properly prepared for the new proposals when they appear.

The proposals for 1980 are to be seen against an economic background which is not an entirely satisfactory one. We still live in a crisis in oil prices, which have had such a serious effect, not only on the economy of the EEC but also on the economies of the developing countries. The economic crisis has resulted in unemployment in the Community being maintained at too high a rate, and this, of course, highlights in some people's minds the damage to home producers that increased imports can cause. The general climate is therefore one of a certain amount of restraint, and in these circumstances I think we should take some satisfaction from the fact that the Community has been able to increase its offer yet again in the GSP proposals. The proposed sum of 9 500 m EUA, of which about one quarter is for agricultural products and about three-quarters for industrial products, we think is an offer from which we may draw some satisfaction. It represents a modest increase in real terms. We wish it were more, but we think that in the circumstances it is as good as we could expect. The value of the offer has risen each year over this ten-year period, and we hope that this trend will continue. We think that, by comparison with similar arrangements made by other industrial countries, the Community's offer is quite a good one, particularly as regards certain of the most sensitive products. We are also pleased to see in these proposals certain technical

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improvements which will improve the ability of developing countries to make use of the Community's offer.

Some of these technical improvements particularly concern the agricultural sector. As regards tobacco, pineapples, bananas and palm-oil, there have been various measures proposed, which we view favourably, to increase the use made of our offer. Although they may seem small improvements, we believe that they are significant for the exporting countries concerned.

As regards industrial products other than textiles, there is a general quantitative improvement in the 1980 offer as compared with previous years, and this we welcome.

On the question of textiles, there has been some major adjustment of the offer as compared with previous years. The categorization of products has been brought into line with that used in the Multifibre Arrangement agreements for import limitations. As a consequence of those agreements and of those measures under the MFA, the value of the GSP has been considerably improved in 1980, because the Community finds its market more protected in certain regards by these other measures. This has enabled the Community's offer to include for the first time a kind of guaranteed share of the GSP tariff quotas for each particular country, and the amount that each country can receive is graduated according to its economic need.

I can see that my time is running out. It is highly regrettable that this should be the case with something so important.

I shall therefore have to conclude by commending this report to you, Mr President, and emphasizing that I sincerely hope that next time an adequate amount of time will be allowed for debating such an important subject.

President. — I call Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul to present the opinion of the Committee on External Economic Relations.

Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul, draftsman. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Committee on External Economic Relations discussed this report and the proposal concerning the system of generalized tariff preferences for 1980 at its meeting of 22 October and in principle approved both. I should like to follow up the statement by the rapporteur of the Committee on Development and Cooperation by stressing that although the generalized system of preferences seems to many people to be a very dry and uninteresting subject it does in fact carry greater weight in the question of the relationship between North and South and of the reduction of the difference between North and South than all the general resolutions adopted by this Parliament on hunger in the world. I therefore consider it very important that

we should hold another debate, in which Parliament takes up this question *per se* and discusses the general guidelines for the next ten years, that we should adopt a position and that we should realize that these questions are a decisive factor in the relationship between North and South.

I should like to refer now to two particularly interesting figures in the trade sector, which clearly demonstrate the imbalance between the North and South. The group of countries with the lowest gross national product — below US \$ 500 *per capita* — account for more than half of the world population, but only 8 % of world production and only 4 % of total world trade. This alone illustrates the disparity. Conversely, 15 % of the world population in the wealthiest countries account for 59 % of world production and 63 % of world trade. This second set of figures also reveals the real background to these questions.

It seemed particularly important to the Committee on External Economic Relations during its discussions of these matters — and this has been implied in the report of the Committee on Development and Cooperation and also in the motion for a resolution now before us — that the Committees and Parliament should look more closely at the shaping of the guidelines for the generalized system of preferences over the next ten years. Slight changes are being made to this system — this has been said very clearly about next year — and we were able to put forward only very few proposals and amendments to the content. But as a Parliament we can — and this is my personal opinion — make a contribution in a debate on these guidelines and on the principles involved if we have our say and support appropriate decisions on these questions, for which the national authorities are no longer competent. The generalized system of preferences is after all not subject to national controls; it is decided at European level, and in my view Parliament must be involved when it comes to drawing up these guidelines.

It seemed important to our committee to find out what real effect the generalized system of preferences has had in the ten years since its introduction. The committee wanted to have more information for example on the effect this system has on the production structure of the developing countries, because it is clear — and this is also emphasized in the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Development and Cooperation — that the newly industrialized countries have derived greater benefits from this generalized system of preferences, and the subsequent assessment of these ten years must therefore establish why this is so. We presume that it has something to do with the complexity of the system. But it is undoubtedly partly due to the fact that many less developed countries have problems with the system because of their production structures.

Wieczorek-Zeul

A second aspect we should look at is the effect such generalized systems of preferences have on production structures here, in the industrialized countries. I personally feel that we should also examine this question from the viewpoint of the Committee on External Economic Relations, since this will of necessity result in forward planning for the sectors of industry concerned in the future. This too should be borne in mind during the debate and in connection with the consequences this question will have.

We also wanted to clarify a question regarding past experience. Can the Commission, for example, name the countries which do not observe the provisions of the International Labour Organization but derive benefits from the generalized system of preferences?

And secondly, we should like to state a number of requirements with regard to the future guidelines or questions on these future guidelines for the next ten years. Allow me to make two points in this connection.

There is firstly the question of the industries which derive benefits. We would ask the Commission, for example, about the transnational groups. Would it not be more sensible if the products of such undertakings, which invest in developing countries only because they offer greater advantages, but do not develop the market, simply re-exporting cheap goods to the industrial countries, did not in future enjoy preferences when imported into the European Community? Should they not be subject to the normal Community external tariff? That is a question which must be examined and discussed very thoroughly. It concerns the undertakings that benefit from the GSP.

The second question, to which I have already referred, concerns the beneficiary countries, and I believe a very important start has been made with the textile agreement, and this is also mentioned in the motion for a resolution and the report of the Committee on Development and Cooperation. They refer to the positive aspects of the textile agreement. The plan is that the assistance given to developing countries should depend on their state of development. In other words less developed countries will be granted higher import quotas, while the more developed countries will have a lower ceiling.

In conclusion, I should simply like to give a figure which makes it clear that we must look into the situation of the countries that benefit by this generalized system of preferences. Seventeen newly industrialized countries, seventeen countries benefiting by the system, used 85 % of the generalized preferences for imports into the Community in 1977, the latest year for which figures are available. The other 15 % was divided among the countries which we really wanted to help more with the GSP. This makes it very clear that part of the machinery and concept of this system must be reviewed.

I should like to conclude with the remark with which I began. I believe that these technical questions do more to provide real development aid and to bring about real change between North and South than we realize and that it is therefore for this Parliament to subject the Commission and others to the controls for which the national parliaments are no longer responsible. That is why we should have a general debate on the principles of the GSP for the next ten years.

President. — I call Mr Burke.

Mr Burke, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, I should like to thank Mr Pearce and the Committee on Development and Cooperation for the very comprehensive report submitted to the House. As the report points out, the Commission's proposals for 1981 for industrial products, apart from textiles, and for agricultural products are generally of a routine nature. I shall not go into any detail on these aspects. I would, however, like to make some comments on two innovations in the proposals concerning textiles and the extension of the GSP to China. In addition, I should like to make some remarks on certain of the specific points raised in the motion for a resolution.

With regard to textiles, the Commission has formally re-submitted the proposals originally put forward in October 1978, on which the European Parliament was consulted. At the time, the Member States put off a decision on the grounds that the economic and technical implications were too far-reaching for a quick decision. In the meantime, the existing arrangements were renewed unchanged apart from 5 % increases in the volume of the Community's offer for two consecutive six-month periods. The reason for proposing a radically new GSP scheme for textiles is that, after the successful conclusion of negotiations for the renewal of the Multifibre Agreement and the attendant bilateral agreements with most of the Community's main suppliers of textiles from the developing countries, we can consider that, since the problem of the quantities of textiles reaching Community markets is under control, we can afford to make quantitative and qualitative improvements in the arrangements for preferential tariff imports of textiles from the countries concerned. It is, in any event, necessary to harmonize the two systems by the application to the GSP provisions of the new post-MFA categorization of textile products. The Commission's proposals of October 1978 for a new textile scheme, on which discussion was resumed in February 1979, included, therefore : (a) substantial increase in the quantities of textiles to be admitted under preference from about 90 000 tonnes over the whole to some 162 000 tonnes ; (b) a mechanism for giving beneficiaries a much greater measure of security in using the benefits offered by introducing for the first time the system in which, for all products covered by the MFA, each eligible

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supplier country would receive a guaranteed individual share; and (c) the provision that only countries which signed bilateral self-restraint agreements or gave similar undertakings would be eligible to receive GSP treatment, and a new scale of differentiation in the system of benefits would be applied relating them inversely to the competitiveness in the Community textile market of the country concerned.

Following prolonged discussions with the Council, agreement was reached in principle in May 1979 on the guidelines for a new GSP textile scheme, very much on the basis of the principles I first outlined, subject, however, to the following modifications: (a) the overall quantitative limit for the Community's 1980 offer for both MFA and non-MFA products should not exceed 115 000 tonnes; (b) objective criteria for differentiation on the basis of competitiveness should be refined to arrive at a 'score' for each eligible beneficiary country, taking account of its degree of import penetration in combination with its level of economic development as measured by *per capita* GNP.

Since the detailed implementation of such a scheme still remained to be worked out, the Commission regarded its proposals as being still under discussion and considered that there was, therefore, no need formally to put forward a new proposal along with the other proposals for industrial and agricultural products for 1980.

With regard to paragraph 7, the other significant innovation proposed in the 1980 GSP scheme is the extension of GSP benefit to the People's Republic of China, though on a somewhat selective basis. The Chinese authorities, for various protocol reasons, have not submitted a formal request to receive GSP benefit from the Community, but have expressed interest, notably during the visit to Peking of the President of the Commission in February of 1979. The Commission, therefore, formally proposed to Member States at the end of March that, as a measure designed to give some flesh to the commercial agreement signed at the beginning of 1978, the principle of including China in the 1980 scheme should be agreed, the details to be worked out during the autumn in the course of examining the Commission proposals for the following year's scheme. The Commission's proposal in regard to China resulted from an in-depth study of the implications of such a move.

With regard to the question of eligibility to join the list of beneficiaries, the normal criterion of membership of the Group of 77, adopted by the Community in respect of independent countries, does not apply. An evaluation of the merits of the case shows, however, that on the basis of an accepted criterion such as *per capita* GNP — (estimated at \$ US 410 in 1976, which is comparable with places like Zambia,

Honduras etc.), and taking energy consumption and the percentage of the labour force engaged in agriculture (68 %), China must certainly be regarded as still a developing country.

With regard to the question of economic impact, whatever China's potential as an industrial giant, analysis of the structure of its exports to the Community shows that they are in general concentrated in those sectors which are unlikely to cause serious problems for the Community's own industries. Nevertheless, the Commission has adopted a prudent approach to the proposed offer to China. Firstly, a decision in principle to include China in the 1980 scheme would in no way prejudice the shape of the Community's GSP to be brought into operation after 1980; and secondly, China should be excluded from GSP benefit for products on the European Communities' sensitive lists.

Now I would point out that as the GSP consists of preferential trade access, inevitably the degree to which beneficiary countries actually benefit depends on their capacity to produce and export goods covered by the system. Since 1977, the Community has progressively liberalized the GSP provisions for the least developed countries, all of whose exports of industrial and agricultural products covered by the GSP — apart from textiles and six agricultural products — can now enter the Community, not merely duty-free, but without quantitative limits. Textiles will in fact be liberalized in 1980. I would add that the low level of utilization by some beneficiary countries is not the result of any inherent fault in our GSP, but is an experience broadly in line with that of other donor countries. The Commission fully supports the objective of simplification but I would point out that this is not necessarily compatible with other objectives such as greater differentiation.

With regard to paragraph 10, I would indicate that as far as ILO standards are concerned, the Commission will endeavour to obtain the information required from the ILO.

On paragraph 11, I would point out that the other elements in the Commission's package are entirely standard — for example, the renewal of the existing rules of origin, subject to any modification required by changes in the substantive part of the GSP, and supplementary measures such as the annual programme of seminars in beneficiary countries and publication of a new edition of the practical guides to the GSP to encourage better utilization.

On paragraph 12, the Commission fully supports the objective of bringing the elements of the various preference systems closer together, but I would remind the House that differences between these schemes reflect, in large part, social and economic differences between the donor countries.

Burke

On paragraph 13, I can assure the House that the Commission will continue to ensure, as it always has done in the past, that both the letter and the spirit of the procedure for consulting the ACP countries on changes in the GSP will be fully respected.

On paragraph 14, the Commission states that it will play its part in ensuring that this House plays its proper rôle in the development of policy in this area.

Finally, on paragraph 15, in reply to the request made by the rapporteur, I would state that work has started within the Commission on an evaluation of experience so far of the GSP. It is hoped that this evaluation will be completed early next year, though I would ask the rapporteur not to pin us down to January or February, because that might be a bit too early. I hope you will understand. The results of this evaluation will clearly be important in determining the guidelines of the next GSP.

President. — I call Mr Cohen to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Cohen. — (NL) Mr President, as the rapporteur of the Committee on Development and Cooperation has already said, this Parliament has scarcely had time to study these proposals relating to generalized preferences in 1980. This complaint was made not only by the Committee on Development and Cooperation, but also by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and by the Committee on Agriculture.

It was more or less inevitable. This Parliament, this directly elected Parliament, has only been in action since July, and before that time we did not have an opportunity of discussing the problems that we now find referred to in the Commission's document. This is a pity, because the generalized system of preference is a very complicated system and there has not yet been a satisfactory debate in this Parliament on the system's merits, its effect and what might possibly be improved. Seen in this light, I feel we must offer the rapporteur of the Committee on Development and Cooperation our very sincere thanks for the work he has done. It was not an easy task, and he has performed it to the best of his ability.

The difficulties we have had this year must also be seen as the reason for the request, at least this is how I see it, from the Committee on Development and Cooperation that the rapporteur on the 1981 generalized preferences should be appointed very early next year, 1980, so that he can observe closely the work to be done by the committee from the outset and so obtain a better insight into a number of problems connected with the system of generalized preferences. Lack of familiarity with this system is undoubtedly

the reason why various parliamentary committees have asked for more detailed information on its operation, on the number of countries, on the countries benefiting most and on such questions as: which countries are in fact eligible for the system, and is it absolutely necessary that all the countries belonging to the Group of 77 should qualify for the system?

In this context the report also points out that the United States applies other criteria. Another question — one already raised by Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul — concerns compliance with minimum standards of the International Labour Organization. Such problems must all be examined somewhat more closely, and for this reason too it would be very useful for the rapporteur to be appointed very early in the new year.

The Socialist Group, Mr President, is able to approve this proposal, but this does not mean that we are satisfied in every respect. In a study of this generalized system of preferences it must never be forgotten that the preferences extend to no more than about 5 % of the European Community's external trade, not counting intra-Community trade. Nor must it be forgotten that although the intention is, of course, that all the preferences under this system should be used, in fact only about 60 % are used, one reason being that a large number of countries not yet producing — this is quite understandable — naturally cannot benefit from the system and another reason being that the system is so complicated. It is true that a number of improvements are made every year, but here again we should not, of course, delude ourselves. In 1979 the Commission has put forward a proposal which is not very different from proposals for this year, by which I mean that a number of improvements have again been made to the system for next year, 1980, particularly with respect to the poorest countries. But again these improvements do not mean a great deal.

It must never be forgotten — and this is really the most important point — that the generalized system of preferences is in fact a very restrictive system, with its sensitive products, its quasensitive products, its ceilings, a very restrictive and a very complicated system, which it should be possible to improve where this is necessary. The system is reviewed every year — as I have already said — and every year it is improved to some extent. Preferential trade is increased by a flat-rate amount, but the increase is always less than the growth in international trade, with the result that the preferential part of trade is in fact reduced every year in relative terms.

On behalf of the Socialist Group I have endeavoured to show that we have no cause to congratulate ourselves. Substantial improvements are possible, even necessary, and I hope that next year, if we do manage to appoint the rapporteur early in the year, we can have a proper discussion with the Commission to see

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whether improvements can be made for the years to come for the benefit of the developing countries, who are in such need of our preferential trade.

President. — I call Mr Wawrzik to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D).

Mr Wawrzik. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party I should like to express my sincere thanks to the rapporteur for his work. For us Christian Democrats the generalized system of preferences is an important Community instrument in a policy in favour of the developing countries as a whole. It is the second pillar, along with the Lomé Convention, that supports our efforts to improve the situation in the world. We are aware that we are encountering difficulties on two fronts. On the one hand, we have the developing countries which are allied with us through the Lomé Convention and which naturally fear that their own preferential position is being placed in jeopardy through the granting of advantages to others. I believe we must discuss this point thoroughly with the countries concerned.

On the other hand, we have our own countries, the countries of the Community. We naturally have to justify to our employers a policy of tariff preferences which endanger jobs in the Community. But I believe that if the policy is pursued in its entirety, so that the tariff preferences are not seen in isolation but linked with industrial and structural policy, we shall overcome this problem in the long and medium term.

Over the next nine or ten years we will undoubtedly be faced with a number of requirements, which are also evident from the Pearce report. I believe we must not simply grant tariff preferences and call for a simplification of the system. By explaining, and if you like, educating, we must also help the countries concerned to overcome the bureaucratic hurdles, which cannot always be circumvented, so that their administrative apparatus can cope with the requirements that have to be met before advantage can be taken of the system of preferences.

In view of the lateness of the hour I do not intend to go into detail, but I believe that the European Community with its system of tariff preferences compares very well both with other industrial countries and with what the Soviet Union and the Communist Bloc offer the countries of the Third World in this respect. For the future we expect, as we enter the second ten years of the system, the Commission to submit to Parliament the moment the review is made any information on experience gained in the last ten years, and we expect to be able to join in making our views known and in making advances in the interests of the countries of the Community and of the Third World.

My group approves the report.

President. — I call Mr Welsh to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Welsh. — It is with great pleasure, Mr President, that I congratulate my honourable friend the rapporteur on his report on this difficult subject; it shows all the mastery of the technical details that those of us who know him have come to expect — and may I commend it as an example, with all due respect, to the honourable lady the rapporteur for the Committee on External Economic Relations.

May I first of all pick up a remark which the President of the Commission made in his winding-up speech on Wednesday, when he referred to the enormous necessity of the Community to trade; indeed, most of the problems we have been discussing in the last few days stem from the stagnation of world trade. Honourable Members will recall that the prosperity of our own European countries in the post-war years was built largely on American investments in their economies. The Americans invested in Europe primarily to build up consumption for their own products. It seems to me that in the next decade the Community must take a very similar attitude to the developing countries, in order to break out of the cycle of stagnation in which we find ourselves set. More than half the world's population are hardly significant consumers at all, and we must seek to establish throughout the world a reasonable consumption base. What I am saying, in effect, is that trade and trade expansion are the most effective forms of aid. For this reason, I would heartily support, on behalf of my group, the rapporteur's suggestion that the list of GSP countries should be revised.

Tariffs should be a flexible instrument for the encouragement of trade; it is quite ridiculous that we are, on the one hand, offering preferences to Hong Kong for textile imports, and at the very same time are subjecting them to quotas in order to keep them out. It is this sort of contradiction in Community policy that has to be resolved by our discussions in the next year.

I would also like to point out particularly to the Commission that we must not assume that tariff barriers are necessarily wrong. Tariffs have historically been a very flexible and effective method of controlling trade flows, and I would ask the Commission to consider whether in some cases the imposition of tariffs is not a more effective mechanism than a whole series of complicated and incomprehensible non-tariff barriers.

I would also endorse the rapporteur's view that there is no point in encouraging less-developed countries to invest in industries in which there is already an over-capacity. Too many less-developed countries have been investing in clothing manufacturing at the very

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same time as the Community is imposing quotas to keep the products of this investment out. I myself was concerned with a case quite recently in Egypt where one section of the Commission was actually giving economic support to a clothing manufacturing venture while another section was drawing up a series of rules to ensure that the output of that factory would never enter the Common Market. This is a piece of cynicism that I think this Parliament must be vigilant to stop.

It is important that the Community's trade policy and aid policy should be coherent and cohesive. We would submit to you, Mr President, that, at the moment, they are piecemeal. It is very important for the Parliament to take a long-term view and set a clear framework for Commission activity. I would, however, take issue with two items mentioned in the rapporteur's explanatory statement. The first is this: we have heard a great deal from both the Committee on Development and Cooperation and the Committee on External Economic Relations of the need to penalize companies which invest in developing countries and then export the product somewhere else. I would say to my Socialist friends that they should be very, very careful about this. As I said before, we need to encourage investment in less-developed countries. Investment means capital, and capital has to produce a return. If we say to multinational investors that they will not be allowed to enjoy the advantages of investing in less-developed countries, then we cannot expect them to put their money there. In other words, we shall not be building the sort of industrial base which we can agree that we need. It should be recognized by honourable Members that the attractions of investment in most LDCs are not themselves very great. They lack infrastructure, they lack industrial experience, they lack management, and they lack a sound domestic economy. Anything the Community can do by way of preference to correct these imbalances should be welcomed. We should not try to take these benefits away from the very people we are encouraging to go there. If I may say so, Mr President, this is a case where dogma takes over from common sense.

In the same vein, I would ask the House to consider calmly whether it is really necessary to tack the ILO regulations on to what are essentially trading preference agreements. I question whether the people of Bangladesh, most of whom do not have jobs, and most of whom live below what we would consider subsistence level, are more concerned with the ILO regulations than with investment in their countries. This is not a suggestion that we should exploit the workers. It is simply a suggestion that we should keep our priorities in order.

The most useful thing we can do for the Third World — and indeed for the Community itself — is to provide a climate in which international investment can be encouraged and developed. I trust, and my

group trusts, that this will be a major objective of the Commission's review of the GSP, and, indeed, of the development of a coherent Community trade policy.

President. — I call Mrs Dienesch to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mrs Dienesch. — (*F*) I would like today to highlight a number of problems that we should like to see made the subject of future deliberations.

Before I begin, let me recall that our Community was the first to apply the system in 1971 and was for a long time alone in doing so. Moreover, the Community's action is of far greater scope than any other of its kind. I believe this needs to be said, and it is something from which we can derive some satisfaction.

While having good reason to be satisfied, I think the results up to now do give rise to a certain feeling of uneasiness about the future. That is what I myself feel.

Our system has not been as effective as we had hoped. That much is certain. It has been of the greatest benefit to the semi-industrialized countries, and, despite our every precaution, it has often led to higher imports in the very sectors of European industry — I refer to textiles and footwear — which are at this moment suffering from a crisis, a crisis for which we have tried to find remedies.

In 1968, the Community had a quite understandable and very real desire to implement a world-wide policy on development aid. Of necessity, the system set up at the beginning was a rough-and-ready one, it being understood that the industrial nations would eventually participate in it together and on similar terms. It was also understood that the system was to be applied swiftly and implemented in full. Now, eleven years later, that is still not the case.

Today, at a time when the problem of raw materials supplies demands a reassessment of international economic relations; at a time when the link between competitive balance and the level of social development of Third World countries and the opening up of new markets would seem to be axiomatic; and at a time when the notions of wealth and solidarity are becoming increasingly relative and need to be continually revised, one may legitimately question the desirability, the value even, of these generalized preferences, under-used as they are by the countries concerned. I would remind you that the rate of utilization of the scheme was 65 % in 1974 and 63 % in 1977, and the figure for 1978 is forecast at 60 %.

As some of my honourable colleagues have pointed out, the principal reasons for this under-utilization are the poor understanding of the system by the beneficiary countries and the complexity of the necessary

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formalities. Obviously, we cannot do away with the formalities, which are our safeguard against fraud and abuse. I have in mind, for example, the certificates of origin, which show that the product was indeed made in the given country, or the disparity of the systems applied by other groups of industrialized countries.

It is vital, therefore, that the industrially poorest countries be given additional preferences. Perhaps certain new products could be included which only they could export, but without disorganizing the corresponding industries in the Community, because, of course, the system would then no longer have any sense on the world scale.

One must be careful not to rob the system of its substantive part by the application of customs duty exemptions to all countries indiscriminately, whether industrialized or developing, as is the tendency in the GATT negotiations.

While the holding of seminars and the setting up of documentation, information and advice centres is of some help, we feel that this is not enough and rarely effective.

Our group is not therefore in any sense opposed to the system of generalized preferences, and we have every intention of supporting the motion for a resolution; we do, however, question the manner in which the system is applied. The Community's resources are not infinite, and the needs of the developing countries are such that we have no right to misuse the resources we do have. We cannot do everything at once, so we have to be selective. We say again: so long as we are committed to an ambitious venture like the Lomé Convention, by which we seek to bring financial and technical aid to non-associated developing countries and to increase the level of our food aid in an attempt to solve the problem of raging world famine, we might legitimately wonder if it would not be preferable to concentrate all our resources on achieving these few objectives. It would certainly be more effective and appropriate.

To dilute our efforts would be to risk robbing them of their effectiveness. We therefore need to look at the particular problems of each of the countries of the Third World, with its own peculiarities, and it would be foolish to expect everything to be solved by applying a set of universal and automatic measures.

Before launching the new system, therefore, we must pause to reflect. Firstly, we must reflect on the priority we have given to the objectives of the Lomé Convention, to be careful that we are not overlooking the interests of other developing countries; nor should we unnecessarily add to the list of beneficiary countries. We must, moreover, as I say, continue to give aid and assistance to the poorest countries of the Third World

by conceding them special preferences. The preferences we offer have to be varied according to the level of development and competitiveness of the recipient countries.

We are all aware of the importance of this undertaking, so there is no need for me to dwell on it. What is involved here is not just the technical aspect of generalized preferences, but also the Community's definition of the position of European industry in the world market and its assessment of its external economic relations in the light of the new international distribution of productive capacity, with its impact on employment problems. This has been touched on recently.

As the rapporteur said, we are impatient to know what progress the Commission has made with its promised evaluation and when we can expect to have its report.

One final word on the problem of China, which raises a number of questions, especially now that we are in the final year of the period of application of the present scheme. I believe we should think again about including China in the list of beneficiary countries for the generalized system of preferences and about the detailed rules we intend to adopt in relation to China. In view of the Community's continuing difficulties, particularly in the textile sector, and the fact that the poorest countries are making little use of the system, China's inclusion at this stage does seem to us to be untimely. It might be dangerous, in fact, to expose the Community to a formidable competitor whose exporting potential is on a par with that of Hong Kong. In the circumstances, why not wait until 1981 before taking such a decision?

Incidentally — and this is my last suggestion — I think the Community should think in terms of a shorter period of application. At the rate at which things are changing, we are often overtaken by events. Ten years is a long time. We should take into consideration the rapid rate of political, economic and social change.

I would conclude by echoing Mr Pearce's words: for the system to function smoothly, our Common Market must, of course, be well protected.

President. — I call Mr Pearce.

Mr Pearce, rapporteur. — I should like to be allowed to correct a small translation mistake in paragraph 6 of my motion for a resolution, by agreement with the Socialist Group. With your permission, I will do that with the secretariat and not take up more time on the floor of the House.

President. — That is agreed. The debate is closed. The vote will be taken at the end of this sitting.

11. *Personal statement*

President. — I call Mr Welsh to make a personal statement.

Mr Welsh. — Mr President, may I very quickly say that at the opening of business this morning, the honourable gentleman, the Member for South Wales, called in question some remarks that I made on Tuesday morning when the House was discussing the urgency of a debate on proposals for limiting immigration introduced by the British Government. At that time I said — and I had unimpeachable authority for so doing — that the House of Commons would not be debating this legislation before Christmas. In point of fact, I was wrong, and it was debated on Wednesday. In this case, I have to offer my sincere apologies to the honourable gentleman and to the House in general, and ask them to accept my assurance that the remarks I made were made in good faith at the time. I can only very much regret the misleading statement that was made.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — I thank the honourable Member very much indeed for that assurance, and assure him that we do accept that he made his statement in good faith.

(Applause)

12. *Agenda*

President. — I have to consult the House. If we are to finish the agenda, the sitting will last until 5 or 6 o'clock, and I appreciate that no one is prepared to do this. We shall therefore have to avoid an afternoon sitting and finish by 2 p.m.: that is the custom of this House. Perhaps we shall be able to finish the agenda if everyone agrees to have his speaking-time halved. May I ask if everyone agrees to this?

I call Mr Aigner.

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I agree, of course. But I would ask that, come what may, we vote at the appointed time, because we are pushed for time as regards the submission of reports.

President. — I call Mr Janssen van Raay.

Mr Janssen van Raay. — (NL) Mr President, a proposal has just reached you from Mr Ferri on behalf of almost all the speakers on his report, that we should agree to this item being held over until the December part-session.

President. — I call Mr Ferri.

Mr Ferri. — (I) Mr President, it was with the agreement of all the political groups that I made this

request, given the importance of this subject. I would also like, however, to be assured that the Parliament will be able to deal with this matter at the December part-session, because there is a problem of a deadline for any decision by Parliament on the Commission's proposals.

President. — I am very grateful to Mr Ferri for his cooperation. I cannot say for certain that this item will be on the agenda for December, but we may presume that the Bureau will be prepared to allow this.

I call Mr Ferri.

Mr Ferri. — (I) Mr President, I am sorry, but in view of my responsibilities to the committee, both as chairman and rapporteur, and to the Parliament, unless I can be sure that the question will be dealt with in December, then I must withdraw my request and ask that my report be discussed today.

President. — As Mr Ferri will appreciate, I cannot give any formal guarantee, but I observe that everyone agrees to Mr Ferri's first proposal, so that I think this will have to satisfy him.

13. *International action in the field of air transport*

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Hoffmann, on behalf of the Committee on Transport (Doc. 1-475/79):

on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a decision initiating a consultation procedure concerning international action in the field of air transport.

I call Mr Seefeld.

Mr Seefeld, deputy rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as chairman of the Committee on Transport I am now standing in for the rapporteur, Mr Hoffmann, who is unfortunately unable to be here to present his report on the introduction of a consultation procedure concerning international action in the field of air transport.

May I begin by reminding the House of the following. On 23 October of this year, quite recently therefore, we had in this Chamber a lengthy debate on the Commission's memorandum concerning the European Community's contributions to the development of air transport services. In the meantime the Committee on Transport has appointed Mr Hoffmann as rapporteur on this memorandum, and at the committee's next meeting he intends to make a statement on the procedure which is to be applied. I can tell you today, ladies and gentlemen, with regard to this very important subject that Mr Hoffmann and the chairman of the Committee on Transport intend to subject the memorandum to a very thorough examination and to invite experts to study the various aspects of this document. We also intend to obtain written

Seefeld

opinions from important organizations, and you may therefore rest assured that we will be having a comprehensive discussion on all the problems connected with air transport in Europe.

And now to the proposal which is before us and which has nothing to do with the comprehensive report, which, as I have said, is still to come. For the present, the proposal merely concerns the introduction of a procedure for consultations with third countries on air transport matters. A procedure of this kind, which we already have for sea transport, will enable the Community to take part in the discussions held either during bilateral negotiations or within the framework of international organizations. Consultations will take place at the request either of a Member State or of the Commission. Although the consultation procedure in the sea transport sector was used as a model for this proposal, it goes somewhat further. There are, however, two important differences: where sea transport is concerned, the consultations take place in cooperation with the Council, whereas under the present proposal they are to take place within a select committee composed of representatives of the nine Member States and of the Commission.

The second difference, which I feel is even more important, is that the consultations may be held in advance. This means that a Member State or the Commission may request consultations before a conference is held. At this point I should like to thank the Commission for taking up a suggestion by Parliament and wording Article (3), which concerns confidentiality of information, in such a way that confidentiality will be required only where it is justified. This will avoid an unnecessary blanket of secrecy being imposed.

Provision is also made for the amendment or supplementation of the consultation procedure on the basis of future experience, so that the whole procedure can, if necessary, be adapted to the prevailing situation.

To summarize, I should like to say that when the proposal was discussed in committee, most members who spoke on the subject felt or were convinced that it was also high time for a legislative procedure to be applied in the Community to ensure internal coordination. My mention of this point in no way changes the Commission's present proposal. It is merely a supplementary remark by the Committee on Transport; we considered it important.

Mr President, that is really all I have to say. As chairman of the committee and on behalf of Mr Hoffmann I would ask you all to approve this proposal from the Commission.

I have complied with your request to keep it brief. Mr Albers has asked me to state on behalf of the Socialist Group that it approves the report. He will not therefore need to address the House.

I hope, Mr President, that the motion for a resolution will be approved by the majority that the Commission needs for this proposal.

President. — I call Mr Burke.

Mr Burke, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, since I delivered myself at some length on this subject at the sitting of Tuesday, 23 October, I have nothing further to add, except to thank the committee, its chairman and the rapporteur and to fall in with what I believe to be the wish of the House this morning that we accept the assurance that this will get a favourable hearing.

President. — I call Mr Fuchs to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D).

Mr Fuchs. — (D) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, although we do not have a common air transport policy, we do at least have a proposal from the Commission for a decision initiating a consultation procedure concerning international action in the field of air transport.

I apologize for making this somewhat ironic remark, but it does show how difficult it is to establish a common transport policy. On behalf of the Group of the European People's Party I should like to thank Mr Hoffmann for his report, which expressly states that the proposal represents a step — albeit a small one — in the right direction. We are therefore able to approve this proposal from the Commission.

I should like to add to what Mr Seefeld has said, that the change consists not only in the consultations being held in another body — not in the *camera obscura* of the Council — but also in the fact that the Member States and the Commission will be involved and that the consultations will also be mandatory. The consultations should really take place beforehand, because once the accident has happened, all we can do is start a rescue operation. I believe here too some progress has been made.

I should like to add one more comment. Parliament and the committee in particular should be involved in the various stages in good time so that the process may be a democratic one.

A final remark on the question of confidentiality. It is really very strange that it should be necessary to emphasize in terms of praise that this confidentiality must be relaxed somewhat, and that this should be achieved only through the committee's initiative. Transparency is after all the elixir of the parliamentary system and of democracy. We should keep to this. There are undoubtedly good reasons for confidentiality, but the maintenance of the highest possible level of transparency is, I feel, a really legitimate concern, since speculation and rumours are otherwise encouraged, which is precisely what we are trying to avoid. However, it should not be left to a new body:

Fuchs

we can, I believe, justifiably expect decisions to be taken, because only then can we push ahead with the common transport policy. Against this background I should like to say that the Christian-Democratic Group approves the proposal.

President. — I call Mr Moorhouse to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Moorhouse. — I should like to speak in support of the proposal from the Commission, and to echo the views expressed by the chairman of my committee, Mr Seefeld. I am going, however, to take the liberty of reminding the House of a few of the points which make up the background to this great issue, because I know you will agree with me that air transport services, both within Europe and outside, are of the greatest importance. We would not be here today discussing this proposal were it not for the considerable disquiet that there is about the situation in the air transport field.

As I said in the previous debate, one cannot help feeling that many of the major national air-carriers in Europe and other parts of the world have become rather set in their ways and are no longer putting the consumer, the air traveller, first. They seem much more concerned to protect their own airline interests, and until recently no one has seriously challenged their monopoly of the principal routes, protected as they are by national barriers and bilateral agreements. Mr President, there has not been real competition. The incentive to do better has been lacking. Productivity on the whole has remained low, notably among European airlines, and, as we all know, fares on scheduled routes have gone up, especially since 1973, to such high levels that people are now beginning to question the whole system. I think this in part is a great misfortune, because it has obscured the great job done by national air-carriers over the years in creating their fine network of services on the main air arteries of the world.

But, as the established airlines are now discovering, life does not stand still: the combined action of Freddie Laker, the independent airline operator, and the US Government — both the Republican administration and the present Democrat administration — has bust the system, as they say. We have seen outside Europe — but, alas, not yet within Europe — fares come tumbling down over the Atlantic and the USA, and it cannot be long now before Europe follows suit.

This is where I think this particular consultative procedure is of the greatest importance. I believe that, at the heart of our troubles in Europe, there lies a lack of good productivity. It is the low productivity of the European national air-carriers which stands in the way of lower fares. Some of that is not their fault — but some is. It is interesting to see in the Commission's

Air transport: a Community approach how, after making full allowance for the differences between the United States and the European scene, European airlines are on the average 20 % less efficient than American airlines. All of us must agree that this is an extremely worrying and disturbing feature of the present scene. I think it helps us to argue the case for the consultative procedure. Basically, at this stage, it is a proposal for a consultative procedure. It may be, of course, that some will feel later on that we shall also need the extra leverage of the Community to try and break down the barriers on certain routes between Europe and other countries. I am thinking particularly of the Australian routes, where one has found that the Australian Government has been rather curiously intransigent in its attitude towards bringing down fares and bringing in new operators. It may be that the Community will have a part to play there in any negotiations. But that is all for the future.

Meantime, we in my group should like to support the proposal as it stands, which we welcome very much from the Commission. We are glad that the Commission is taking this initiative, and we are sure that they will be extremely persuasive in putting their case to the Council. Certainly, from this side of the House, Mr Burke can count on our fullest support.

President. — I call Mr Martin

Mr Martin. — (F) Mr President, I have already explained to this House why we French Communists and Allies are opposed to the integration of air transport.

What is happening in France at this very moment serves only to strengthen us in our opposition. The present strike of air-traffic controllers brings home to us that workers of all grades in civil aviation know that they have to fight to defend their incomes, their status and the public service as a whole. On behalf of the French Communists and Allies, I want to declare publicly, here and now, our support for their legitimate and constructive struggle.

Mr Hoffmann's report, presented here by Mr Seefeld, leads me directly on to a second point. Let me say first of all that we are for any form of consultation and cooperation. In fact, much wider cooperation between states — and not just the Nine — together with reciprocal agreements are vital to the future of the air transport industry. Unfortunately, I cannot help having misgivings about the real motives behind the Commission's proposal. The report states quite clearly, moreover, that this proposal is to be seen as a first step, however tentative, towards evolving a common air-transport policy. This policy came up for discussion during the part-session before last, in the debate on the Commission's memorandum. Well, we want nothing to do with it.

Martin

We want nothing to do with it for reasons I have already explained and shall not repeat, except to say that the main reason is that we could never allow France to be forced to surrender her rights and powers to make decisions in the interests of other countries or, as in this case, in the interests of a policy that spells disaster to the earnings and status of workers in the industry and to the safety of airline users. No matter how tentative the steps you take, the road down which you are taking them is not for us.

President. — I call Mr Berkhouwer to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Mr President, I agree with everything that has been said by the previous speakers, except the last, and my group has, of course, no objection to this proposal. Why does my group have no objection? Because the proposal is so very unpretentious. When I hear from Mr Moorhouse about all the things that are going on in the air, then this is indeed a very unpretentious step. Let us not forget that for the umpteenth time the Commission is again abdicating to some extent. What after all does this proposal boil down to? A proposal for the setting up of yet another Committee, and I should like to know some time, Mr President, how many of these Committees we now have in Europe. You need only look at the budget: there are a hundred or so. The Commission says that we are again going to set up a Committee of experts from the Member States, with a few of us in attendance, but the Commission itself, a European institution, is again doing nothing in the field of transport.

I should like to take up what the Commission says in its proposal. Among other things it discusses the problems connected with air traffic control. Something very ominous is likely to happen in this field, and I should like to warn the Commission of this possibility. Perhaps it knows this already, but there is a report from four of the countries belonging to Eurocontrol, and if anything, they underestimate the difficulties. A great deal has come to light, or rather it has not yet come to light, because the report has not yet been published, but I know what it says. I would urge the Commission to be on the alert with regard to what may emerge from this.

In the sixties the Community made a valuable contribution to air transport, the setting up of Eurocontrol. There now seems to be a danger that what has been done so far, the *acquis communautaire*, may be undone. As a reaction to this threat I have drawn up on behalf of my group during this sitting a motion for a resolution which I have already passed on to the chairman of the Committee on Transport, Mr Seefeld, warning of this danger. With your agreement, I should

like to annex this resolution to the present dissertation. That may speed things up. How this is done from a technical point of view, I leave to you, Mr President, with the request that it be included in the proceedings. This resolution, which we have tabled during this debate as a means of doing something really positive for the protection of the airspace by the Community, is aimed at getting Parliament and the Commission together to put up the defences against the threat of Eurocontrol being dismantled at the expense of the safety of transport in Europe's airspace.

President. — I call Mr Burke.

Mr Burke, Member of the Commission. — Much as I respect, indeed welcome, the admonitions given to us by Members of the House, and much as there may be a retrogression from a certain *acquis*, Eurocontrol is not part of the *acquis communautaire*. I just wanted to make this point absolutely clear. While not necessarily disagreeing with Mr Berkhouwer, that in respect of its own constitution and advances it may be moving back from its own point of view, we as a Community have no *acquis communautaire* in that particular area at this time.

President. — The debate is closed. The vote will be taken at the end of this sitting.

14. Agenda

President. — I call Mr Ferri on a point of order.

Mr Ferri. — (I) Mr President, in view of the difficulties connected with the agenda for the December part-session and so as not to create any further difficulties by asking you now for a formal commitment which you are not in a position to make, I would insist that the proposal of the Legal Affairs Committee, for which I am rapporteur, should be discussed at this sitting.

President. — I have given you an almost 100 % guarantee. This guarantee has been given *de facto*, but *de jure* it has to be confirmed. I am sorry, but we cannot go back on a decision that has been taken.

15. Meeting of the Council of Education Ministers

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Pedini, on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on the meeting of the Council of Ministers of Education (Doc. 1-473/79/rev. 2).

I call Mr Pedini.

Mr Pedini. — (*I*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege to introduce this motion for a resolution which, I would add, was approved almost unanimously, with only two abstentions, by the members of the Committee on Youth Affairs, Culture, Education, Information and Sport.

What is the background to the motion for a resolution which, incidentally, is linked with two documents by Mr Gaiotti and Mr Cinciari Rodano? A meeting of the Education Ministers of the Nine in Brussels was scheduled for 6 November last. We were later informed that the meeting had been postponed at the request of one of the Member States, Denmark, and we do not know when a new date can be arranged. Denmark seems to have objected that the Council has no authority to intervene in educational matters. I would like to state categorically, on behalf of my committee, that there is nothing wrong about Council action in this field. Indeed, it is required by Community policy and comes within the scope of the powers laid down in the Treaty of Rome.

It is common knowledge that one of the cornerstones of European construction is the free movement of persons, whether they be manual workers or professional people. The free movement of workers implies a harmonization of training standards, just as the prior harmonization and coordination of academic and professional qualifications is needed for the free movement of professional people. Furthermore, I think it not unlikely, indeed I am convinced, that the further development of the Community can bring about a genuine common cultural policy. This is a point to which my committee is already giving its attention.

But isn't this what the planned meeting in Brussels of the Council of Education Ministers was to be about? What were they supposed to be discussing? Coordinating vocational training for workers and the further development of language teaching, student and teacher exchanges, training for girls and young women and the experimental schemes in progress.

Further confirmation that the Council has legitimate authority in this field can be found in a resolution adopted by the Council of Education Ministers in 1976 — with the approval of Denmark. Amongst other things, this resolution provided for pilot projects to be run nationally, as well as action to assist young migrants; the ministers also agreed to exchange information on educational guidelines, one of the purposes being to help the people of Europe to gain an awareness of their European and cultural identity.

We are not, therefore, breaking any new ground with the resolution that we have tabled with the unanimous approval of the committee, as may have been thought in Denmark. Our aim — to my mind a legitimate and necessary one — is to continue a policy already under way involving measures whose interruption would be detrimental to all.

Lastly, I would like to ask the Commission to try again to ensure that the meeting of the Council of Education Ministers does in fact take place and we call on the Council to report back to Parliament on the implementation of the programme set out in the resolution of 1976. We therefore hope that we can count on the support of the House in this matter.

President. — I call Mr Price to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Price. — Mr President, the importance of this matter is, I think, encapsulated in the reference, in paragraph 2 of the motion, to the fact that we are building the European Community.

If we are attempting to build the Community, that is not going to be achieved simply by bringing the politicians together; we have to bring together the people of Europe, and especially the young people. That, in essence, is what this meeting of the Council of Education Ministers would have been concerned with.

Now if we look at the second page of the resolution, it refers to the topics that would have been covered by this meeting — for example, the question of language-teaching. What could be more basic than that to the job of constructing a united Europe? Because unless we can talk in each other's languages, we cannot communicate with each other. Then there is the question of studying the European Community and Europe in schools. We lack that kind of teaching in most member countries at the moment, and unless there is an understanding of what the European Community is and what it is trying to achieve, the young people of today will not be able to play their part with us in this exercise of building a united Europe. Then there is the question of students in higher education in other Member States. At the moment, the administrative barriers are such that only one in every two hundred students in higher educational establishments within the Community come from other member countries. Some of those barriers must be removed, so that we have an interchange and help to create that understanding.

Now I regret that in the written answer from the Council to the oral question which was not reached on Wednesday, I had a non-answer to the question why there had been a postponement, simply referring to certain undefined problems which had arisen since the meeting was arranged. We know now that the answer which was not given by the Council was that one member government had raised questions of competence, which they did not raise when the Education Ministers originally decided on a basic programme for 1976. I hope that that member government will change its view, because it is not necessary for the argument of competence to be gone into. A formula was found previously referring not only to the Council but also to the Education Ministers meeting

Price

together in Council, a formula which did not bind anyone to say that there was a Community competence in a particular field, but enabled the job to be done. That formula was accepted previously, and I hope that it will be accepted again now so that this meeting can be held; but if it is not, then I would ask the Education Ministers of the other eight countries to get on with the job. If it is necessary to leave an empty seat, that should be done. This programme is far too important to be put on one side. It is essential to our task in building a united Europe.

President. — I call Mr Schwencke to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr Schwencke. — (*D*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I can only agree with the clear protest made by the two previous speakers. It is irresponsible and extremely unwise to ignore the good sense of education policy. For nothing less is signified by the termination of the agreement of the Council of the Education Ministers of the Nine of February 1976 and their decision not to renew and continue their own action programme in the education sector on 6 November of this year. By refusing to participate, one Member State has got us into this mess, which will, of course, be most painful for those directly concerned.

Sooner or later programmes aimed at the integration of foreign workers and their children in the host countries, pilot projects in the teaching of native languages and national cultures, the promotion of the teaching of foreign languages to young workers, primary school children and those in training in the Community, and pilot projects in foreign language teaching by means of a Community system of exchanges of trainee foreign language teachers will be jeopardized. This danger will also extend to programmes to give girls and young women equal opportunities in the Community and to exchanges of school children, professors and students, and so on and so forth. Is it not welcome progress that the Commission's most recent efforts have, for example, resulted in the publication of the second edition of a Community students' handbook in all six languages?

Secondly, is it not progress that we have a programme of scholarships known as 'Learn as your neighbours learn', in which more than 400 people can participate, people of all kinds and of all classes.

I feel it is important that on behalf of our committee we should also thank the Commission for its efforts to save as much of this programme as possible despite the circumstances. It can only be hoped that Mr Brunner and his staff continue and step up their work in this very important area.

What has so far been achieved with education policy in the Community of the Nine? Not very much. But to jeopardize even further what little has been achieved would be foolish and must be condemned by

this House. Our Chairman, Mr Pedini, has already made it clear what other dangers exist if this happens. The programme concerns no less — and this is modest enough in itself — than the concerted coordination of national education programmes with their European counterparts. There is no question of national programmes being replaced by European programmes. Europe will retain, must retain, its multiplicity of educational opportunities, and anyone who like myself comes from a country of pronounced federalism, of excessive federalism in some respects, particularly in the area we are now discussing, will surely be opposed to such things happening in the European Community.

During the election campaign many of us made it clear that this Community should not simply be an economic affair, but have another solid basis. The attempt has been made here in accordance with the Treaties the ECSC Treaty, the EEC Treaty, the EAEC Treaty and so on. On behalf of the Socialist Group I appeal once again to the Commission to find ways of convening the Council of Education Ministers as early as possible, so that these action programmes may be continued and also supplemented.

President. — I call Mrs Le Roux.

Mrs Le Roux. — (*F*) Mr President, I would like to give you the opinion of the French Communists and Allies on the motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport. It is an opinion I voiced at the committee's last meeting.

I have on occasion said how desirable it was to develop exchanges and cooperation between young people and promote national and regional languages; but we are radically opposed to any meeting of Education Ministers. There is, in fact, a big difference between the intentions expressed by the Committee on Education and the true intentions of the EEC governments. What has been in preparation over the last several years can do only harm to our young people, especially to the children of families on the lowest incomes, who are doomed by the employers to swell the ranks of the semi-killed workers. Indeed, all the statements of the governments point the same way, the main aim being to adapt young people to the needs of the employment market and to get away from general and theoretical subjects, which, according to these statements, bring with them serious problems of adaptation.

The second thing to emerge from the EEC documents is the desire to harmonize systems of education. We know just what that means, too. Harmonization always tends to be biased in favour of the employers. Thus, we have the spread of apprentice-training centres in France, which have direct links with chambers of commerce and industry, standing in contrast with the

Le Roux

public technical schools on the model of Germany's Berufsschulen.

In France, many of our democratic traditions are being daily undermined by the government. Harmonization is a phenomenon that will allow the various governments to abdicate their responsibilities and to say to teachers and parents: don't come to us, get on to Brussels or Luxembourg. I repeat, we want none of it. I could take other examples, like the Berufsverbot applied in West Germany, which hit German teachers worst of all.

We know what the Community's political conception of Europe really is. It is of a Europe from which are excluded countries that, from a cultural and human standpoint, have a rightful place in exchanges with us. European integration, the way it is presently envisaged, seeks to put human and economic resources ever more emphatically in the service of big business. As the Community itself proudly proclaims, its first choice was coal and steel. And are the teachers in northern France and Lorraine supposed to get their pupils to accept this policy by which an entire region is sacrificed in the name of a European ethic? In most European countries, there is a quasi-institutional private educational sector. Our country has, as I say, a democratic tradition which is unique in Europe and which it had to fight for to establish. We cannot let this tradition simply vanish.

Finally, my last point, what the EEC is doing now in the name of coordination is based on a very broad interpretation of the Treaty of Rome. Education does not come within the Community's sphere of activities. Much as we are in favour of cultural exchanges and cooperation, the kind of integration that you are proposing seems to us to be a denial of European cultures. All that goes to make up the roots of a nation — history, geography, cultural traditions — should remain at the basis of education in each country. Educational problems are first and foremost national problems and should be left to the elected national assemblies to resolve. That is the position we take in rejecting this motion for a resolution.

President. — I call Mrs Agnelli to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Agnelli. — *(I)* Mr President, I am taking the floor on behalf of Mrs Nielsen, who is unable to be with us.

In 1974, after lengthy negotiations, Mrs Nielsen, then Education Minister of Denmark, and the other Education Ministers of the Nine decided to meet at regular intervals to discuss matters within their area of responsibility, such as the mutual recognition of diplomas etc. Unfortunately, owing to a decision by the Socialist Government, the discussions were blocked, which left matters where they were before.

Mrs Nielsen wishes me to stress that the object of the discussions was not to harmonize the various educational systems, but to look at matters and problems that were dealt with differently in the various Member States. Mrs Nielsen believes that we can learn from each other and perhaps trade ideas on ways to improve our own education systems. She also thought that within the Council of Education Ministers, we could try to find ways of encouraging the 'free movement' of students. It is of great importance that there should be wider opportunities for study abroad. Unfortunately, the Danish Social Democrats, a few of whom are Members of this Parliament, have been numbed by fear at the reaction of the Danish People's Movement against the Common Market. As a result, these subjects were not even discussed with the other countries of the Community, while the same Social-Democrat ministers went instead to China to discuss similar problems. All this is absurd.

Mrs Nielsen has asked me to stress that if she had been present, she would not have voted for this resolution which refers to decisions which the Council of Education Ministers is supposed to have taken, although it is clear from what I said a moment ago that this is not the case. Although she agrees with the substance of the resolution, Mrs Nielsen would have abstained, hoping that consultations could be resumed as soon as possible.

Lastly, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, I should like to announce that we shall vote for the resolution, which we consider of fundamental importance.

President. — I call Mr Coppieters.

Mr Coppieters. — *(NL)* Mr President, for the sake of clarity, I must begin by saying that Mr Bonde has had to leave, but that he would have spoken against the resolution on behalf of his Danish colleagues in the coordination group.

If I make a few comments on this motion for a resolution, I hope that Mr Pedini and the other Members will not interpret this as an attempt at deprecation. Although I have a number of reservations about some of the wording, I in no way want to deprecate this resolution, but I feel it is my duty to make a number of distinctions.

I should first of all like to place the difficulties in a wider context and point out that the Community's powers in the field of education are limited as regards social and economic situations and free movement.

My second comment is that however much one may contend — and rightly so — that we are dealing with aspects which come under the Treaty and which Mr Schwencke has just enumerated, education always has deeper roots. I come from a country where people are particularly sensitive about this aspect. Such feelings are not always rational and are sometimes very

Coppieters

emotional. However good your intentions, however clear your definition, you are bound to touch on more than just sensitive structural aspects. This is regrettable, but it is a fact — as is apparent from Mrs Le Roux's statement — that we are now in a very sensitive area.

It is also true that all these elements, the position of women with regard to employment, the teaching of languages to the children of foreign workers, are connected with an economic situation and — no one will dispute this — with a certain cultural situation. And whenever deficiencies in education are discussed, the waning lights come on, because then, like it or not, you are talking about education systems, views on education, the sensitive areas of education in the various Member States. That concludes my remarks in the wider context.

I should now like to make a brief comment on a limited political aspect. At the time when it was in fact decided that this Council of Education Ministers should not meet, there was considerable tension in one of the Member States in view of national elections. I feel we should make things quite clear. This undoubtedly influenced the cautious approach of the Danish Government. And that is why I was in favour of not protesting so sharply. I accept the text, although to say the least it does surprise us, but, and I wish to emphasize this, we should not pretend to be self-assured for the sake of it, because that will not get us any further. If we want to make progress — and the previous speakers have eloquently said why we must make progress — then we must overcome the obstacles — and sometimes pretending to be self-assured is an obstacle to real progress. What I am saying is that we must be able to remove all the doubts from all the governments, and I therefore request Parliament not only to protest sharply or to express its surprise or sorrow, but to take all the necessary steps to eliminate the misunderstandings over some aspects of the text.

President. — I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — (D) Mr President, although very little time is available to this House, the Commission feels it should not allow this debate on the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport to pass without at least outlining in, I hope, the prescribed time the principles and aims of the development of its education policy, if only to give due emphasis to the fact that it attaches very great importance to the subject of this debate.

As you know, the Community's activities in the field of education were until 1976 devoted entirely to vocational training; for which the Treaties provide a basis. Then, in February 1976, it developed an Education Action Programme. We were aware that we should have to proceed carefully and circumspectly in this area. Above all, the Community's activities in the

education sector had to take very careful account of national powers. The Commission was fully aware of this and was anxious to take the differences in national education structures and systems into consideration as far as possible. Furthermore, we have always regarded these differences as a particular source of enrichment for the Community, as a source of innovation and a means of calling for new impulses from the roots. Education is, as the Commission sees it, firmly anchored in the social and cultural spheres of the Communities and regions. And that, I believe, is the way it must stay. That is why we have always rejected such concepts as harmonization or standardization in this sector.

In 1976, when we adopted our education programme, we managed to reach a political compromise which enabled us to find a common denominator for national and Community interests. This formula was reflected in a resolution in which both the Council and the Ministers meeting in Council were in evidence. This idea made it possible to prevent long drawn out theoretical arguments on where and to what extent there were limits to Community action. This decision was a kind of protective shield behind which we hoped we would at last be able to make a start in the Education Committee, to which the nine Member States and the Commission belong, and to do some thorough and fruitful work.

We also needed this formula at that time in order to finance education projects with the Community.

Thirdly, this double-headed mixed formula of February 1976 enabled us to adopt a 22-point programme, which covered a wide range of education questions and towards the end of 1976 resulted in a second resolution on the transition of young people from school to working life.

The four subjects which were to have been discussed by the Council of Education Ministers on 6 November are all the outcome of these two resolutions of 1976. They therefore represent, as it were, a second stage in the implementation and consolidation of the 1976 programme of work, which at the time was supported by all the Member States. Eight Member States and the Commission are again prepared to participate in the second stage. They are prepared to adopt the resolutions in the same form as then. Only one Member State has raised objections. The Commission would like to stress in this connection that the four subjects on the table for adoption will in no way mean that national responsibilities for education are prejudiced by Community action. These measures should in fact inspire national policies and for all practical purposes provide Community aid for them. The Commission has also made it clear to the Member State that is still hesitating that the adoption of a mixed formula for the resolutions in the four areas I have mentioned would not subsequently be used to justify the application of legal, binding instruments in this field.

Vouel

For all these reasons, Mr President, the Commission regrets very much that the Council's meeting has been postponed. It feels, however, that with the help of the one Member State that still sees problems it will soon be possible to find a practical solution. It also believes, and it is grateful for this, that with the help of this House and jointly with the nine Member States it can make progress in this important area of education policy.

To conclude, I should like to emphasize that the Commission is prepared to provide Parliament with the written information requested in paragraph 4 of the motion for a resolution.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the end of this sitting.

16. *Occupation of the US Embassy in Teheran*

President. — The next item comprises

— a debate on the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Schwartzberg and others on behalf of the Socialist Group, the Group of the European People's Party (C-D), the European Democratic Group, the Liberal and Democratic Group and the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the seizure of hostages and the occupation of the United States Embassy in Teheran (Doc. 1-527/79), in favour of which the motions for resolutions 1-506/79, 1-508/79 and 1-519/79/rev. have, I am informed, been withdrawn; and

— oral question, without debate, by Mr Romualdi, Mr Almirante, Mr Petronio and Mr Buttafuoco to the Commission (Doc. 1-526/79):

Subject: Hostages held at the US embassy in Teheran

Can the Commission state how it intends to give practical expression to the deep sense of shock and outrage felt by the European Community at what has now been going on for several days at the US embassy in Teheran, and which is the work of a group of dedicated fanatics under the orders of a government which, by authorizing these actions — as would seem established —, has placed itself once and for all beyond the bounds of every international law, social convention and civil or political morality?

I call Mr Schwartzberg.

Mr Schwartzberg. — (F) Mr President, with the withdrawal of the resolutions previously tabled by the various groups in favour of a joint motion for a resolution, it is on this motion that I now wish to address you.

No one here can be under any misapprehension concerning the purport of our *démarche*, as I am sure everyone remembers the resolution put forward by the Socialist Group and the subsequent initiatives of the last Parliament. Indeed, it was after hearing the report of our colleague Mr Jean-Pierre Cot that Parliament adopted the resolution of 18 January 1979 formally condemning the violations of human rights under the Shah's régime. We have, in fact, on many occasions denounced the infringements of human rights under the former régime — that is actually the inference behind the fourth recital of the joint resolution — and so it is from all the more unassailable a position that we condemn the unacceptable and recall a few fundamental principles.

The first principle is the inviolable respect for the human person. Every individual has a natural right to his life and dignity, neither of which may be bargained away or made subject to blackmail. That goes without saying. The taking of hostages, from whatever motives, is a violation of essential humanitarian principles and an infringement of the most basic human rights. The world cannot permit such horrors to become routine, it cannot permit violence to become commonplace. Furthermore, such violence contravenes not only essential humanitarian principles but also fundamental principles of international law and international relations. Since ancient times, since the dawn of international relations, the personnel and premises of an embassy have been held inviolable by the state that gives them shelter on its soil. The origins of this rule are lost in the mists of time because the rule was born from the wisdom of Nations and from their need to preserve the very basis of communication and intercourse between states having different political and social systems.

Until now, all the states of the world have considered it their duty and their privilege to respect, and to demand respect for, this sacred obligation of hospitality. But now we see an embassy being stormed by demonstrators, we see a hundred or so foreign citizens being seized as hostages, we see a government not only acquiescing in, but actually giving its encouragement and approval to, these acts. Iran is a highly cultured country with long traditions. How could it have countenanced acts that take international relations back into prehistory? We are faced with a particularly serious violation of international public law which is without precedent throughout many decades of the history of diplomacy. The State of Iran is violating not only the most ancient customs but also an international convention that formalizes these customs.

I refer, of course, to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which Iran signed on 27 May 1961 and ratified on 3 February 1965. Article 22 of the Vienna Convention states:

Schwartzenberg

1. The premises of diplomatic missions are inviolable ...
2. The accrediting State has the special obligation to take all appropriate measures to prevent the premises of the mission being invaded or damaged, to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity.

It is vital, therefore, that we remind Iran of its most imperative international obligations. We are, as we can all see, at a turning-point where everything could so easily crumble and collapse. Civilizations are mortal: we have known that for a long time, but never, I think, have we felt it with such clarity and with such immediacy. It has taken centuries to create, nurture and stabilize the international community. In only a few months, a few days or — who knows? — even just a few minutes, it could all disintegrate and dissolve into chaos and violence. We are, in fact, being threatened on all sides by the forces of terror, death and hatred.

This Parliament can take it upon itself to counter these forces, to speak for the forces of life, peace and brotherhood. We realize, of course, that none of the hostages is a national of any Member State of the Community, but I believe that solidarity transcends frontiers, I believe that the internationalism of our faith can carry the idea of brotherhood to all corners of the world. This Parliament, which has, after all, been elected by universal suffrage, cannot abandon these hostages to their fate. It must formally demand their immediate release, and it must demand respect for the fundamental principles of human rights.

Ladies and gentlemen, do not forget that the peoples of nine European nations speak through your voice. It is therefore your responsibility and your inescapable duty to give expression to the solidarity and indignation of two-hundred-and-sixty million Europeans. Ladies and gentlemen, have faith in the moral strength of our Parliament, bring to bear all the weight of your ideals and convictions! Remember the influence you have, remember your international audience and think of the meaning your decision will hold for those who wait, blindfolded and wrists bound, somewhere deep inside an embassy turned prison! Tomorrow may be too late. So I ask you to speak out now and speak out loud, speak out for the community of man in this cold and dismal world!

President. — I call Mr Fergusson to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Fergusson. — I think we are all at one today. Our purpose is to harness the influence of the European Parliament and, speaking for the peoples of nine nations, to persuade the Iranian authorities of the primary importance of the international conventions of diplomacy to which, as we have just heard, the Iranian State is pledged. For immediate humanitarian

reasons, in view of the danger and distress now being caused to 98 hostages in the American Embassy in Teheran, we wish those authorities to honour that pledge without delay.

Yet we are hardly less concerned by the consideration that two fundamental principles of civilized international behaviour have been violently breached. For that reason, in presenting this composite motion, we call on the whole international community, irrespective of political persuasion or religious confession, to act in concert and join us in condemning what is happening in Iran today.

One of these principles, as we have just heard, concerns life and property in diplomatic missions. We are appalled, not simply at the failure of the Iranian authorities to prevent or to condemn the occupation of the American Embassy by a mob and the seizure of hostages, but at their wilful encouragement of this crime. We condemn the holding of hostages in any way, but holding the personnel of a diplomatic mission by agents of the state to which it is accredited in order to enforce a political demand is international anarchy at its most horrifying. When national authorities resort to terrorism, there can be no more diplomacy. Thus we ask for the instant release of the hostages, restitution for the damages and distress caused, and promise to ensure the future protection of all diplomatic personnel in premises in Iran.

The second principle, whose breaking is equally nightmarish, concerns the closing of diplomatic channels. For the first time in memorable history, a ruler has refused to receive any foreign representatives or any intercessions on behalf of a foreign government. Pietism — that complete psychological conviction of moral, political or religious rectitude, which from time to time in the history of the world has made absolute despots impossible to deal with reasonably — is one thing; combined with inaccessibility, it means that once more there can be no diplomacy. What lies behind it all we must attempt to understand, fearing that under present circumstances understanding may be a one-way street.

Those in Iran who do understand the West — and we have many friends there — appreciate that America has the same right to give sanctuary to one Iranian leader as France had to give it to another one. Those Iranians will know that this affair makes us more sorrowful than angry. They do not forget that the world is a pluralist one, much wider than Islam. The Ayatollah Khomeini himself can scarcely forget that, for only last Christmas Eve, of all times, when still an exile in our European Community, he felt able to appeal to all Christians to pray for the downfall of the Shah.

Thus, while asking the Ayatollah to maintain a realistic view of the outside world, we ask him to

Fergusson

remember that we can still voice our own respect — if that helps — for religious teaching which insists that money is not all, or even for one which characterizes non-Muslims as predominantly heathenist, materialistic and corrupt. But we can combine that respect with our own belief that no man, no system, has a monopoly of wisdom or truth or virtue, and we can pursue our own struggles for human freedom and prosperity, and for the rights of man — and, no less relevant in this situation, of woman. And we can express our distaste for the establishment in a political world of a theocracy with a mob as its policemen. Above all, we wish the Iranian authorities to recognize that they must live with the outside world, because we are mutually interdependent, to accept that we need human organizations to sustain our relationships and to see that the starting-point of those relationships is mutual respect for each other's representations and representatives.

President. — I call Mr Penders to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D).

Mr Penders. — *(NL)* Mr President, I will be very brief, because I know that, however brilliantly I might speak at this moment, a long speech would irritate this Assembly.

I am glad that we have one combined resolution. I feel that this is very much a subject in which we must try to produce one resolution. The great danger that this event conceals is that we are now dealing with a new kind of hostage-taking. We have witnessed the taking of hostages at embassies on frequent occasions, but the government of the country in which the embassy was located was always against the taking of hostages. The problem was solved peacefully in some cases, violently in others, but the general line was one of opposition to the taking of hostages, whereas the Iranian Government, if we can call it a government, now supports the taking of hostages. What we have now is an intolerable violation of conventions on diplomatic relations. And such conventions do not simply fall out of the sky. They are the codification of age-old rules and customs.

The EPP Group is afraid this incident will have a two-fold effect: firstly, what else can we expect of this Ayatollah régime if this kind of activity is not checked, and secondly, will other régimes not be tempted to use the hostages taken at embassies for blackmail purposes?

Let me say a few words on religious fanaticism. You will understand that as a member of the European People's Party I am a firm believer in the religious inspiration of political action. But this must result in principles such as solidarity and tolerance and never in the kind of phenomenon we are seeing in Iran today.

To conclude, I should like to say on behalf of my group that we naturally approve the resolution, but I find the amendment tabled by Mr Martin seeking to introduce a new paragraph completely unacceptable.

President. — I call Mr Martin.

Mr Martin. — *(F)* Mr President, speaking in this House two days ago on behalf of the French Communists and Allies, Mr Denis made very plain our position on the situation in Iran. I would just like to add a few brief remarks of my own.

Firstly, may I say that the joint resolution tabled by the Conservatives, Liberals, Christian Democrats, European Progressive Democrats and Socialists is, if nothing else, wanting in modesty and decency. 'The European Parliament', it reads, 'has on many occasions expressed its solidarity with the Iranian people in their defence of human rights in Iran'.

I would not be so cruel as to remind you that in September 1978, after thousands had been killed by the bullets of the Shah's hard-pressed army, every single group in Parliament, with the exception of ours, refused to take part in an urgent debate on the matter.

For you, solidarity is like a steak: you like it underdone.

Incidentally, your joint resolution has received support from a significant quarter, for it is coupled with an oral question tabled by Italian fascists, who are well known for their defence of democracy!

Furthermore, your resolution, under the pretence of humanitarian concern, seeks to hide the basic truth by concentrating on just one aspect namely, the seizure of hostages and the challenge to diplomatic immunity.

While we are ourselves categorically opposed to such methods, we also wish to remind you of the other side of the coin. The fact is that the Iranian people are demanding the extradition of the Shah, who is being protected by the United States, to stand trial for his monstrous crimes, which seem to trouble your conscience somewhat less. Likewise, you appear to be less concerned about the police operations and the racist attacks that have been mounted against Iranian residents in the United States. And you seem to be less concerned about what was nothing short of daylight robbery perpetrated by President Carter on Iranian assets in the United States, with the exception of the billions of dollars stolen by the Shah from the people of Iran. Those Carter has not touched.

The American President's decision is a new act of economic aggression. It is a serious and deplorable decision, and we condemn it. It may also have far-

Martin

reaching consequences, for the freeze ordered by Jimmy Carter does not reflect well on the credibility of the Wall Street banks. That bears some thinking about.

Finally, let me say that the Iranian people's demand is not exorbitant. May I remind you, for example, that France had demanded the extradition by Bolivia of the Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbi, and that this Parliament endorsed the demand in 1977? Let me also cast your mind back some years to when Israel snatched Eichmann from a country that had refused to extradite him. He was put on trial in Israel, sentenced to death and executed.

And so, as we see nothing abnormal in the Iranian demand, we have tabled an amendment to the motion for a resolution. If the House were to vote for this amendment, copies of which have been distributed among you, it would be proof of a non-selective attitude to the defence of human rights. If our amendment is approved, we will vote for the resolution. If it is rejected, however, we shall be obliged to vote against the text as it stands and to denounce the scandalous hypocrisy of the majority in this House and its contempt for people who are fighting for their independence and their development.

President. — I call Mr Bettiza to speak on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Bettiza. — (*I*) Mr President, I would like, especially after listening to Mr Martin, to outline the reasons why we support this motion for a resolution.

Motions for resolutions by urgent procedure are meant for taking urgent action on something, in this case, to aid the hostages held by a mutinous mob, clearly incited by an illegal government calling itself the Revolutionary Islamic Council; in acting as it has, this council has wilfully created an extremely serious international situation. I would say to my colleague, Mr Martin, that we are not here to go through the history of the last 25 years in Iran, but to intervene immediately for two reasons; first, to save the lives of American citizens of all races, black and white, who are still being held hostage inside the Embassy; second, to halt a most dangerous chain reaction process happening right on the border of the Soviet Union which has always proclaimed its concern for peaceful co-existence. This became particularly clear today when a highly prominent religious leader in Teheran, the Ayatollah Montazeri, deploring the attitude of the Arab States, exhorted them to wage a holy war against the United States, by blocking petrol exports for three or four days. At the time of the Crusades, holy wars did not spread uncontrollably in an irreversible process; today, a holy war in the name of oil, in the Middle East, could start off a Third World War. We should not, then, pass judgment on

the history of Iran during the last 25 years, but take immediate action in the cause of peace and to save the lives of over a hundred people. This is why we reject amendment 4A tabled by Mr Martin, because there is already in our joint motion for a resolution a clear indication of all the European Parliament did during the Shah's rule to defend human rights in Iran, and because raking over past history is not in keeping with the spirit of urgency of our motion for a resolution.

Another reason why we reject the amendment is that it is not so much a question of passing judgment on the domestic situation of Iran, past and present, but of giving a clear and unequivocal assessment on a matter of international law. Not even in the most chaotic phases of the February revolution nor after the Bolshevik coup in October was a foreign embassy treated in such a manner. There can be no question either of the Teheran embassy being a CIA hotbed because in that case, we could also talk about the KGB presence in Soviet Embassies all over the world. What we are talking about is an embassy recognized by law, an embassy of a great democratic country which has been seized not simply by a mob but by a mob incited by a government. This is why we fully associate ourselves with this motion for a resolution tabled jointly by the Socialists, the European Democrats, the European People's Party and the European Progressive Democrats. I would like to make a special point of this alliance between the political parties which is a reflection of the best European traditions: the secular tradition, the Christian tradition and the Socialist tradition. It does credit to this Parliament that those three great streams of European civilization should unite to produce a motion for a resolution from which the French Communist representative has sought to dissociate himself. I think, on the contrary — and I would like my French colleague to listen to this — that we should not see this Parliament as a place where we can blow up our divergences of opinion and our national differences, because here there are no governments to support or attack, here no one has a minority or a majority to defend; here what matters is not so much the vertical divisions as the horizontal lines of encounter that will help us, if we wish, to build a united Europe.

President. — I call Mrs Dienesch to speak on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mrs Dienesch. — (*F*) Mr President, it is quite obvious that Mr Martin, to whom Mr Bettiza has just replied, is out on his own today and certainly cannot claim to speak for the French Members here. For our part, we are only too delighted at this show of unity by the House in the face of such a serious I would even say, dramatic turn of events as this seizure of hostages.

Dienesch

I scarcely heard Mr Martin mention the seizure of hostages itself. People or groups of people who resort to this kind of act — whatever country they belong to, whatever their politics or religion — arouse in everyone a deep indignation, although under régimes of oppression this feeling is not always able to rise to the surface. We are sure that the high-handed action, the blackmail and the violence witnessed in connection with this seizure of hostages are offensive to the vast majority of human beings, the more so as there is something peculiarly inhuman in this harassment of the hostages and the parading mobs whose hatred grows in intensity day by day. This attitude marks a setback for civilization, a setback in the laborious march towards greater democracy, greater dignity and true respect among men, and it is all the more abhorrent that these despicable acts are today being perpetrated against diplomatic missions. For, as my honourable colleagues have said, these conventions between states, which enshrine the inviolability of diplomatic missions, are not just purely formal arrangements to open a channel of communication; they have been written into law, and this law is recognized by all nations. It is the last ditch established to safeguard dialogue up to the last minute before an irrevocable outbreak of conflict, before opening the floodgates of hatred and barbarity. This tradition implies in effect a faith in reason, even a faith in the basic generosity of human nature. Those who reject these rules do so at their peril.

That is why we need today as large a majority as possible. If our Communist colleagues could see their way to joining us without insisting on additions to a text that has been drawn up after long and careful deliberation, we should be grateful to them, for it would demonstrate that Europe is able to unite itself on these benches.

It is still not too late to prevent an irrevocable act which may endanger men's lives. Following the action taken by the nine governments when they met on 8, 9 and 13 November, we too, in the name of moral conscience, wish to bring our influence to bear by giving expression to what our Europe stands for: faith in man and the defence of his most fundamental right.

President. — I call Mrs Macciocchi.

Mrs Macciocchi. — (*I*) Mr President, we Radicals endorse the joint motion, just as we endorsed the request for urgent procedure. I seem to be fated to take up a stand to the left of the French Communists. After Mr Martin's speech, I cannot help commenting that the views he has expressed on what is happening in Iran, far from being openly critical or 'leftist', are 'middle of the road'.

I should explain that we support this motion for an original and independent reason.

First of all I would like to say that we are amongst those with a clear conscience, as we have always been active in the cause of freedom for the Iranian people. From 1975 onwards the Radical Party's headquarters in Rome played host to the organizations opposed to the Shah. In the year of Dr. Mossadeq's battle with the Anglo-Iranian Company, I was in Iran. The title of my first book was 'Persia in Lotta' ('The Struggle of Persia'). I supported Iranian refugees all over Europe, in France and in Italy and, after the Shah's coup d'état I tried, like many others, to save the lives of some of them as far as was in my power. I welcomed this curious 'revolution in the name of Allah' which put an end to a bloody dictatorship.

I would like to add, however, since someone has brought up the subject of women in Iran that the first to suffer 'theocratic' revolution — which has not been a revolution so much as an involution — have been those same women. I went to Teheran, with an international delegation of women, to express our solidarity as women and to reaffirm that when women's rights are trampled underfoot it was their sacred duty in Iran to rebel against Khomeini's order to return to the *chador* — the symbol of the loss of all hope of equal rights and women's liberation. The first victims, the first scapegoats of a new despotism — and I would like my French Communist colleagues to take note — were women, and other illegal acts have followed thick and fast, making a mockery of justice. I have been present at a trial conducted by one of the so-called Mollah tribunals which order executions the way offices order stationery. I refer you in this regard to the reports of Amnesty International.

The current occupation of the United States Embassy does not only, then, constitute a violation of the Vienna Convention but also breeds the kind of illegality we have not seen since Pinochet toppled the government of Allende.

To those who support in this Chamber — the 'demands of the Iranian people' I reply in no uncertain terms that it is not enough to speak in the name of the people in order to absolve oneself. People are not the embodiment of absolute good; they can be manipulated and whipped into frenzy, just as they were by Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. We in Europe know something about this! In Iran a fanatical theocracy is meting out torture and death. The inviolability of diplomatic missions is enshrined in the Vienna Convention of 1961, particularly in Articles 2, 7, 14, 16 and 17. This principle was also confirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly on 1 December 1948 and later incorporated, in March 1960, into the draft declaration of the United Nations.

Since the Shah can be accused of crimes against humanity, it is arguably understandable that Iran should call for his extradition. But what seems

Macciocchi

barbarous to us Radicals is that in Iran the conditions necessary for the holding of fair trials are non-existent and the accused does not even have minimal rights of defence. All this only plunges the country into the intimidation and the violence it knew before. Harassment, kidnapping, blackmail and torture are abhorrent to all those who believe that social progress should go hand in hand with respect for the rights of the individual. To make Iran an exception, as was done a few minutes ago, is to adopt a racist attitude, looking down on the Iranians as unsophisticated.

There was a contradiction, then, in Mr Martin's speech. One cannot at one and the same time condemn the occupation of the United States Embassy and advocate the extradition of the Shah. That is why I oppose Mr Martin's amendment. It would mean giving in to the Ayatollah's blackmail, thereby tacitly condoning the seizure of hostages as a way of obtaining the Shah's extradition. It would also mean taking sides with 'state terrorism' which is how I qualify the unprecedented assault and virtual act of war that we have witnessed. The position we Radicals take is, I repeat, original — it differs from and goes further than that expressed in the motion. There is another question of capital importance to us: the reasons for refusing to extradite the Shah. We are against capital punishment and, as is known, the Radical Party has supported French citizens who have taken refuge in Italy to escape the death sentence in their own country ...

President. — Mrs Macciocchi, may I ask you to conclude?

Mrs Macciocchi. — (I) The Shah, criminal or not, may be brought to justice or assassinated in Iran. You will recall that the Ayatollah Khomeini has said that any Muslim who assassinates the Shah will earn paradise. We would therefore ask that no one be extradited to a country where the death sentence is in force — and we feel most strongly about this. This is in line with one of our fundamental tenets: the condemnation of guillotines everywhere, of the old 'Terror' as well as the new, and faith in liberty and respect for the rights of the individual.

President. — Mrs Macciocchi, I had good reason for interrupting you. I appreciate that you would have liked to say more, but you are at an advantage in that you have written a whole book on the subject, which others cannot say of themselves.

I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — (F) I have asked for the floor just to say briefly that, like the Parliament, the Commission too is following the situation in Iran with very deep concern and fully supports every endeavour to ensure compliance with the rules which govern the proper functioning of international relations.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution, together with the amendment that has been tabled, will be put to the vote at the end of the sitting.

17. *Political kidnapping in Spain*

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Pintat and others, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, the Group of the European People's Party (C-D), the European Democratic Group, the Socialist Group and others, on a political kidnapping in Spain (Doc. 1-513/79/rev.). The motion for a resolution tabled on the same subject by Lord Douro, on behalf of the European Democratic Group (Doc. 1-511/79), has been withdrawn.

I call Mr Bettiza, who is deputizing for Mr Pintat.

Mr Bettiza. — (I) Mr President, I shall be brief because this is practically the same subject: violence, violation of human rights, attacks against individuals. The fact that this has happened in Spain surprises us for two specific reasons: first because the victim is a figure of the stature of Rupérez who, in the days of Franco was a Left-wing progressive Catholic, well-known for his opposition to Fascism and to Franco. Secondly, because there has recently been a referendum in the Basque country and Catalonia, thereby removing whatever justification there may previously — during Franco's rule — have been for a form of separatist terrorism. It was a peculiar referendum in which 53 % voted for autonomy, with abstentions reaching the 40 % mark. Even the Communist leader Carrillo had to admit that the fanatical wing of the military organization ETA, under Batussana, was left high and dry after this result. For these reasons we Liberals welcomed this resolution which, once again, has come from four major political groups in this Parliament, from the European Progressive Democrats to the Socialists, united in condemnation of a further violation of the rights of the individual.

President. — I call Mr Habsburg to speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (C-D).

Mr Habsburg. — (D) Mr President, the kidnapping of our Spanish friend Javier Rupérez is just one phase in the world-wide fight against the restoration of democracy and the fulfilment of Spain's hope to become a member of the European Communities.

It should be pointed out here that it is wrong to describe the criminal ETA organization as a Basque movement, just as the murderers of Aldo Moro should not be described as an Italian movement. In a free expression of their will the Basque people have declared themselves opposed to this gang of criminals. ETA is an important part of that international terrorist

Habsburg

organization which today extends from movements in Japan through so-called liberation movements of the Palestinians into Europe and is endeavouring to destroy the principles of freedom and democracy throughout the world. It is only too obvious for which hegemonic power this is being done, and its stooges have just defended the Ayatollah's regime in a fit of breathtaking hypocrisy by drawing attention to a personage who should belong to the past. It is, of course, easier to conduct mock battles with corpses than to resist today's Hitlers.

What we do or do not do here will have little direct effect on the ETA fanatics. But what we have to say should demonstrate to the Spanish people the deep affection felt by our Parliament. We want to say to all Spaniards that we stand by them particularly in their hour of need, in the knowledge that Spain is a European country and that Europe without Spain is not complete. The Rupérez case shows that terrorism is an undiminished threat to everyone and that there is a greater need than ever for our countries to cooperate untiringly so that an end may at last be put to this plague of our times.

The European People's Party would also like to express its solidarity with the family of our friend Rupérez. May he soon, with God's help, be returned to them unharmed.

President. — I call Lady Elles to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Lady Elles. — Mr President, as you rightly said, we have already heard this morning very moving speeches from all sides of the House — except the one opposite me — on the freedom of the individual and the inviolability of the human person, and it is with some emotion that I speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group on the kidnapping of a good friend, Javier Rupérez. He was head of the international office of the UCD and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of his party. We join with all those who have spoken and who have moved this resolution for his immediate release.

Not long ago, in this very House, we debated with common accord the determination of the Community to fight international terrorism in all its forms. This, therefore, strengthens our support for all measures which will be taken and are being taken by the Spanish government to suppress this violent, indiscriminate and cruel action perpetrated on an innocent and harmless individual. Rupérez himself has an outstanding record for protecting Spanish citizens of all parties and different parts of the world from violence. He has spoken out systematically on democratic Spain and has brought Spain back into the community of nations, after an oppressive régime, by speaking in international fora. He himself has indeed

been elected by the Spanish people to represent them in Congress. He has never ceased to speak out fearlessly on the cause of fundamental freedoms and human rights.

So it is all the more ironical, Mr President, that this illegal terrorist group, the ETA, has kidnapped this particular individual. How can they imagine that their cause can be helped by crime? At the referendum on 25 October, already referred to, the overwhelming majority of the Basque people voted for autonomy within Spain. We, Mr President, in this group demand his immediate release; we demand his safe return to his wife and to his child and we extend to his family our heartfelt wishes for his safe return.

President. — I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — (F) Mr President, here again, the Commission shares the Parliament's concern and, at the President's initiative, has just sent a telegram to the Spanish Prime Minister, Mr Adolfo Suarez, condemning the kidnapping of Mr Javier Rupérez.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the end of this sitting.

*18. Attack on the Israeli Ambassador
to Portugal*

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Prag, Mr Marshall, Mr Howell, Mr Tuckman, Mr Simmonds, Sir Fred Warner, Mr van Aerssen, Mrs Lenz, Sir Henry Plumb, Miss Brookes, Mr Curry, Mr Simpson, Mr R. Jackson, Mr Dalziel, Mr Provan, Mr Hopper, Miss Forster, Mr de Courcy Ling, Mr Battersby, Mr Patterson and Mr Forth on the attack on the Israeli Ambassador to Portugal (Doc. 1-520/79).

I call Mr Prag.

Mr Prag. — Mr President, it is difficult to speak on this motion without recalling that the example in terrorism was set by an organization which apparently is not responsible for the attack on the life of the Israeli Ambassador in Lisbon. It is difficult not to recall the attacks on the school at Mar Lot when 20 young girls were killed by the Palestine Liberation Organization, the murder of 11 athletes at the Munich Olympic Games, or the killing of a busload of small children, again by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

We have witnessed numerous attacks. We forget, when we see the conventions of international behaviour destroyed, that attacks have been made on Israeli diplomats for many years — ever since the murder of my friend Ami Shohori at the Israeli Embassy in London. Now what began with Israel is spreading, and we take rather more notice of it.

Prag

In many parts of the world terrorism and violence are in danger of becoming standard instruments of policy. But I believe that the terrorists would do well to reflect not only on whether peace can be built on such deeds but on whether terrorism can further their aims, as it did occasionally against colonial powers. And even there, we must remember that, in the case of my country at least, by far the majority of the colonies were relinquished voluntarily.

I believe, Mr President, that terrorism is already becoming counter-productive, that it cannot succeed against a major, powerful, legitimate, national or even sectional interest. We are seeing that today in Northern Ireland and in the Middle East. I believe that terrorism will not bring about solutions if it finds itself opposed to the wishes of a large number of the people concerned. Therefore I believe that terrorism in national and international relations is rapidly becoming an end in itself: violence for the sake of violence, bloodshed for the sake of bloodshed, linked with a cynical disregard for the sanctity of human life. Our hope must therefore be that we shall see a re-establishment of the rule of law in international relations. The Community, for all its faults, is a shining example of how the rule of law can succeed in solving problems and conflicts. But the danger, if we do not begin the return to the rule of law, is that we shall indeed descend once again into the dark ages. I hope we will make it clear that we in this Parliament believe that terrorism brings, not progress to peace, but a multiplication of the situations from which war can arise. I hope that by passing this resolution unanimously and by condemning violence and terrorism we may help to convince those responsible that there are better and speedier ways to achieve peace and justice.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the end of the sitting.

19. *Regulation on fishing off the coast of Senegal*

President. — The next item is a joint debate on

- the report by Mr Ligios (Doc. 1-474/79), on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the

'Community fishing' aspects of the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation approving the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Senegal and the European Economic Community concerning fishing off the coast of Senegal and two exchanges of letters referring thereto;

- the report by Mr Enright (Doc. 1-466/79), on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation approving the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Senegal and the European Economic Community concerning fishing off the coast of Senegal and two exchanges of letters referring thereto.

I call Mr Ligios.

Mr Ligios, rapporteur. — (I) Mr President, the Committee on Agriculture has been asked to give its opinion on the 'Community fishing' aspects of the agreement of last June between the Communities and Senegal; this agreement entered into force provisionally on 15 June of this year. I say 'provisionally' because Parliament had not been consulted; this prompts me to point out how, once again, the substantial, rather than formal, provisions of Article 43 of the Treaty have been disregarded.

Given the circumstances and pressure of time, I shall simply summarize the key points of this agreement between Senegal and the Community. First of all, it is an agreement valid for two years with a tacit renewal clause, subject to termination by one of the parties. It provides for fees to be charged for fishing licences, varying according to the quantity of fish landed in Senegal; also provided for is a contribution from the Community of 9 million EUA to be used to develop agriculture and the fishing industry in Senegal. This is where the originality of the agreement lies, and I would like to stress the point: this is not just compensation for the use and exploitation of the fishery resources of the country; this contribution should, in the years ahead, help the development of the Senegalese fishing industry with the technological and financial assistance of the Community.

In my opinion, this is the most important aspect of the agreement and the Committee on Agriculture has given its endorsement for exactly this reason, asking the Commission to draw up guidelines defining the legal status of these agreements and, at the same time, to look into everything that can be done both financially and in the way of cooperation, with the other ACP countries with which negotiations are in progress.

President. — I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright, rapporteur. — Yes, indeed, Mr President, I do wish to speak. I shall certainly not say all that I had intended to say at the beginning of this week, but I do intend to make a protest against this farce whereby something which we actually control, about which we as a Parliament can do something, is dealt with on a Friday afternoon. But then that is what we are used to where items relating to the Third World are concerned. The general system of tariff preferences was also put on Friday's agenda, and it shows the sort of importance that we attach to it. Had it been some grand motion on a subject over which we have no control whatsoever, then we could have had a long debate.

Enright

This is a very important agreement. If I can paraphrase something that a gentleman at the back of the House once said ... Where are you, Mr Pannella? These are practical considerations which affect hunger in the Third World, and Mr Pannella is not there.

(Applause)

He has left to catch his plane. I have missed my plane because I consider that it is the small things in the agreements with the Third World that really count. If the fact that less than a tenth of the Members are in the House and that the Bureau should organize business in this way is any indication of the contempt which Parliament shows for such matter then it is truly an indictment of everything that we are doing.

In this agreement there are some vitally important things which must be looked at by this Parliament. First of all, we should be looking to regional agreements. We are taking over, as Mr Ligios said, from bilateral agreements, but we must look to regional agreements. Secondly, we have to ensure that we monitor what is happening here. This is the first of these agreements, it is something which has immense potential, it is something which the ACP countries think has immense potential; that is why it is written into Lomé II, and that is why the ACP countries were extremely concerned about what was happening in this area. Therefore, since it is the first of these agreements, we must look at it very carefully and monitor what is happening. We must make sure that we do not have a situation in which we in Europe exploit the Third World. This can very easily happen, as we know full well from the way in which the middle industries are run. The money that we are allegedly paying over with one hand we are taking back with the other. We must ensure that the training given — and this has the full agreement of my committee — benefits more than just a few fishermen. They must be taught the more sophisticated techniques. Indeed, my predecessor, John Prescott, in conversations with Mr Cheysson and Mr Gundelach, was given an assurance that they would look at the institute of Higher Education as one of the areas in which they could put some of the funds for training fishermen and those in allied industries in the Third World. There is a whole lot of such issues that we ought to be looking at, which are small and, perhaps you might think, irrelevant in this great debate. They are the only practical way in which we can ensure that there is no starvation in the world, instead of just standing up there and saying, I am against starvation. Let us get down to the nitty-gritty and the work, Mr President.

(Applause)

President. — Mr Enright, I would remind you that is not the Bureau that decides the agenda, but the Parliament.

I call Mr Pearce on a point of order.

Mr Pearce. — Could you please tell us what actually happens to all these wonderful waffly motions that we waste our time adopting? Does anybody ever send them anywhere? Does anyone ever know what happens?

President. — That is not a point of order, sir. You will find the answer in the rules.

I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — *(F)* Mr President, I believe the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Development and Cooperation have taken an important step in commenting very favourably on the first fisheries agreement concluded between the Community and a developing country. I was particularly glad to note that both committees decided, after a detailed study of the agreement, that it would be equally advantageous to the Community and to Senegal.

Let me make clear that in the Commission's view the financial and other contributions that the Community and its fishermen will have to make under the terms of the agreement are not in the nature of aid but are offset by the advantages offered to the Community and its fishermen under the agreement.

The Commission shares the conviction expressed by Mr Enright in his excellent report that agreements of this kind between the Community and developing countries play an important rôle in strengthening cooperation between the Community and ACP countries and that they can make a significant contribution to the economic development of the countries concerned.

With reference to Mr Ligios's report and specifically to fisheries agreements with other developing countries, the Commission is able to inform Parliament that negotiations with Guinea-Bissau are expected to be concluded on 21 November in Brussels. The text of the agreement, which is broadly similar to that with Senegal, has been approved by both sides.

The text of an outline agreement with Mauritania was negotiated in December 1978. An agreement restricted to tunny-fishing will shortly be negotiated with the Republic of the Cape Verde Islands.

So far, Tunisia has resisted negotiating a fisheries agreement. She has, however, offered, on certain conditions, an autonomous temporary arrangement which will permit Sicilian fishermen to continue their activities.

Finally, the Community will in the near future be requesting that negotiations be opened with Mauritius and the Seychelles for access to these two zones by Community fishermen from the overseas department of Réunion.

Vouel

The Commission would certainly welcome regional fisheries agreements, but it is very difficult to persuade the coastal states, particularly in regions where the state of fish-stocks is only vaguely known. In fact, these countries want to make the best possible deal for themselves and at the same time want to retain full sovereignty, especially as regards their neighbours.

A current study of resources in the Gulf of Guinea on behalf of Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Congo, conducted and financed by the European Development Fund, may perhaps lead to some kind of regional approach; but no negotiations have yet been started, and in any case one could only expect more or less uniform agreements.

President. — The debate is closed. The motions for resolutions will be put to the vote at the end of this sitting.

I call Mr Enright on a point of order.

Mr Enright. — Is it possible, since we are unanimous about human rights, that we consider the human rights of the staff that we employ here and the disgraceful way in which we are abusing them at the moment?

President. — Mr Enright, you and the other Members here will surely agree with me that the best thing for us to do is to finish our work as quickly as possible. This now hardly seems possible before 2 p.m., but we are doing our best.

I call Mr Aigner.

Mr Aigner. — (D) Mr President, I am sorry to ask to speak again. You did promise that you would take the vote by 2 p.m. I would be grateful if you could take the vote now, as otherwise there is a danger that we will not be able to vote.

President. — Will you wait another five minutes, to see how far we get with the rest of the agenda? I think we shall manage to deal with the remaining items by about 2 p.m.

I see that Mr Aigner is allowing me these five minutes.

20. Regulation on certain fish-stocks occurring off the West Greenland coast

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Kirk, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-467/79), on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation laying down conservation and management measures for certain fish-stocks occurring in the waters off the West Greenland coast applicable in 1979 to vessels flying the flag of Member States of the Community.

I call Mr Kirk.

Mr Kirk, rapporteur. — (DK) Mr President, I shall be very brief. I agree with Mr Enright: it is intolerable that these important matters should be debated on a Friday afternoon, when the Chamber is virtually empty.

On the matter in hand, however, I would recommend Parliament to vote for this report, which reflects the fact that, despite the Commission's extremely difficult task of negotiating fishery agreements with third countries in the absence so far of a common fisheries policy, an agreement has been concluded with Canada on fisheries off the West Greenland coast for 1979. The report describes how quotas are distributed among the Member States and granted to the various non-Community countries with interests in the EEC zone. I would conclude by recommending Parliament to vote for this motion.

President. — I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — (F) I should like to thank the Committee on Agriculture for its unqualified endorsement of the Commission's proposal.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the end of this sitting.

21. Regulation on the North-West Atlantic fisheries

President. — The next item is the report by Miss Quin, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-477/79), on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation implementing Articles XVIII and XXIII of the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the North-West Atlantic fisheries as regards the scheme of joint international enforcement.

I note that no one wishes to speak.

The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the end of this sitting.

22. British decision on crawfish catches

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Pranchère, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-464/79), on the unilateral decision taken by the United Kingdom in the matter of crawfish catches.

I call Mrs Le Roux.

Mrs Le Roux, deputy rapporteur. — (F) Mr President, on behalf of Mr Pranchère, who was unable to take part in this debate, I would like to present the opinion of the Committee on Agriculture on the motion for a resolution relating to the British decision on crawfish catches.

Le Roux

This resolution, which had been tabled by the French Communists and Allies and of which I was the first signatory, has been adopted by the Committee on Agriculture. The unilateral decision taken by the United Kingdom has aroused strong feelings in Brittany, a region traditionally steeped in activities connected with the sea, especially fishing. Brittany lives off fishing and everything that goes with it. For every job at sea, there are ten jobs ashore. In pursuing their activities in accordance with the rules currently in force, Breton fishermen thought they were safe from this kind of economic warfare which can only add to the difficulties they are already experiencing owing to the crisis that has overtaken even French fisheries and which has been aggravated by the fact that, in an attempt to conserve this traditionally fished species, the industry itself has again tightened up on the regulations.

In fact, although they are entitled to catch crawfish down to 9 cm in length, the fishermen have imposed a voluntary limit of 11 cm. For their own benefit, the fishermen of the Pont l'Abbé district — those most involved in fishing for this species — have commissioned several studies on the conservation of crawfish stocks north and south of the 48th parallel and on the economic and biological effects of possible changes in mesh sizes. Four studies were thus conducted by highly respected French official scientific institutions, and from these, two things emerged. The first was that up to now these are the only such studies to have been published in the EEC. Secondly, the International Commission for the Exploitation of the Sea was so impressed that, when it last met in Warsaw, it called on the Community to conduct a new investigation based on the findings of this scientific study.

I would like to add, on a personal note, that the Commission in Brussels has so far failed to take into account these new factors. Let me give you a few of the scientific findings. Firstly, observations were made of the losses resulting from increasing the mesh-size of nets. It is a pity we could not have had the experts themselves here, because they would have explained their findings much better than I can. Anyway, they found that increasing the mesh-size led to losses of 20 % — 50 %, or 30 % expressed in terms of catch values.

Another study, dealing with the management of fish-stocks, concluded that to protect stocks it would be necessary to vary the length of the fishing year, not the mesh size; in other words, to use the same nets but make fewer trips. Finally, the studies proved that at present there was no threat to stocks north of the 48th parallel.

Two further studies were made on the economic impact of these measures. The reduced landings of crawfish would result in losses of 40 million francs in the distribution sector, with secondary losses of some 30 to 35 million francs in the areas of transport, deep-

freezing and so on. That means a direct loss of 70 million francs in this sector alone. It would also mean the loss of nearly one hundred jobs.

(Interruptions)

I'm sorry, gentlemen, but it is not my fault that a report of such immense importance to an entire region should have come up for debate at a Friday lunch-time.

When adopting this report, the Committee on Agriculture took in to consideration the decision handed down by the Court of Justice of the European Communities, which recently censured the United Kingdom for its arrest of the 'Cap Caval'. Two new cases of arrest are presently before the Court of Justice. These arrests must cease forthwith, as ruled by the Court of Justice. In fact, the British Government has failed in its obligations. The Committee on Agriculture considers that the Breton crawfish trawlermen should be compensated in full for the losses they have sustained as a result of the fines imposed on them and for the confiscation of their gear and their catches. The Committee on Agriculture, following this case, is calling on the Community to draw up common rules on mesh-sizes in order to define the legitimate rights of French trawlermen and protect them from being prosecuted by the British and so ensure the legitimacy of their catches.

I should add that the industry has made some very positive proposals of its own which take account of the vital needs of fishing and of conserving the species. The Commission should take these proposals into consideration when drawing up future regulations.

These are the conclusions of the Committee on Agriculture and, on behalf of the rapporteur, I ask you to give them your support.

President. — I call Mr Battersby to speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr Battersby. — In the Committee on Agriculture I proposed that the submission of this report be postponed. My proposal was defeated by 12 to 12. I then voted against the report, and I did so with very good reason, because we must get some proportion and reality into this subject. I am therefore going to put the facts before this House. With reference to the case, which involved two boats, the Cap de Gueil and Le Bret, the International Commission for the Exploitation of the Sea advised that to conserve crawfish stocks a mesh-size of 70 millimetres should be introduced on 1 January this year. The Commission of the EEC proposed that this measure be brought in on 1 September. The United Kingdom Government introduced this measure on a non-discriminatory basis on 1 July of this year, but it did not take action until after 1 September — which was the date proposed by our own Commission.

Battersby

Now let us look at the financial facts which are causing all this furore. The two vessels were fined £ 2-50 each: this is the equivalent of 114 kilos of crawfish, if you put it into fish terms, or 30 minutes fishing effort. The British authorities assure me that the catches were not confiscated. The gear, i.e., the ends of the net, 'cod ends', are valued at £150 each. These are being held pending appeal. In no way can the fines imposed be considered abnormal, excessive or heavy. British fishermen in violation of fishing regulations are fined at the same level or even higher, and there has been no discrimination. Furthermore, since the incident referred to, routine boardings have taken place on British and French vessels in these waters; no further infringements have been noted, which means that the fishermen are now working to the regulations.

The rapporteur says in paragraph 2 of his motion for a resolution that French crawfish production is 25 % of the total fish and shellfish production. This is a gross distortion of the facts. Total French fish and shellfish production in 1977 was 712 000 tonnes. Total French catches of crawfish in 1977 in all waters was 10 000 tonnes, or 1.5 %, not 25 %. The total they caught in British waters was 3 792 tonnes, or one-half of 1 %, again not 25 %.

I will now quote further OECD statistics for France: all French shellfish catches, i.e., oysters, mussels, crabs — everything, in all waters, 228 000 tonnes; crawfish in British waters were 1.5 % of the total French shellfish production. Coming to the other point, on increasing the mesh-size: if it did cause a 20 % drop in the nephrops catch or the crawfish catch, this would be 800 tonnes a year and the value of that would be about 6 million francs, not 40 million or more, as has been stated.

I therefore submit that this report is based on entirely wrong, misleading, inaccurate and distorted premises; and therefore, on the grounds that the information on which the report is based is incorrect and that the material facts have been inflated at least 50 times, I would submit that this is a good case for not rushing sensitive reports through before all the facts are known, in order to gain political mileage.

Furthermore, on the grounds that the non-discriminatory measures mentioned in the report are technically supported by scientific evidence and advice from the International Commission for the Exploitation of the Sea, and by the Commission — I refer again to the three dates: 1 January, 1 July and 1 September this year — and that it is for the fishing experts, who are non-political, to decide on mesh-sizes, and not for this Parliament; also, that it is not in the mandate of this Parliament to intervene in cases under appeal or *sub judice*, nor to endeavour to influence the European Court of Justice in its deliberations or do its job for it; and also, on the grounds that we must not allow emotional factors or presentations to confuse or

delay Europe's endeavours to create a common fishing policy based on scientific evidence and aimed at conserving our stocks and protecting the long-term interests of all our fishing communities and of our resources, I submit that this report should be rejected out of hand by this Parliament.

President. — I call Mr Josselin.

Mr Josselin. — (*F*) Mr President, the poor attendance in this House is indicative of the apathy so often shown towards fishermen, whom one will soon be regarding as an endangered species.

Leaving aside the matter of species, I would like to let Mr Battersby know that the matter is important all the same. I do not propose to argue with him over figures. Perhaps the discrepancies are due to the difficulties of converting into metric terms, but the figures in my possession have generally been confirmed by the industry. I could go into those that relate to the Breton fishermen, but unfortunately I do not have the time to deal with them at any length.

Neither will I dwell on the penalties imposed on the Breton trawlermen the arrests, seizures, confiscations, fines, and so on. I would like to move on quickly to give three reasons which to me seem to militate in favour of adopting this report, reasons that are based not only on law, but also on scientific and technical findings and economic considerations.

From the point of view of law, Mr President, I believe we must lay heavy emphasis on the fact that Article 3 of the Treaty of Rome, Articles 38 et seq. concerning agriculture and Article 102 of the Accession Treaty give the Community complete jurisdiction over fisheries matters. This covers everything to do with the protection of fishing grounds and the conservation of biological resources in the sea. This applies, of course, as much to relations inside the Community as to relations with third countries. The British order 448, while it no doubt follows the recommendations of the Convention on North-East Atlantic Fisheries, cannot be regarded simply as an implementing measure under that Convention. It is, in fact, a much broader measure which goes beyond its requirements. Unquestionably, the British measures are unilateral within the meaning of Article 6 of the Hague Resolution, which, I would remind you, stipulates that a measure is deemed unilateral when it is taken by a Member State without recourse to established Community procedures, even if the measure in other respects is taken in fulfilment of an international obligation. I trust, when the matter is referred to it again, that the Court of Justice will renew its condemnation of Britain's action on the basis of this argument, particularly since, to be serious, the United Kingdom could not possibly justify national measures on the grounds that there were no Community measures, because basically it is she who by her obstructive attitude is preventing the adoption of a common fisheries policy.

Josselin

My second reason is of a scientific and technical nature. It is something that Mrs Le Roux has already referred to, so I will not elaborate on it except to say that in the final analysis it is this very study, conducted in 1978 by the Scientific and Technical Institute of Fisheries, which has for the first time provided irrefutable scientific evidence in this matter. Experiments on the selectivity of the trawl have shown quite clearly that the adherents of the 70mm mesh were wrong. Researchers have calculated that the 55/60 mesh in fact lets through three times as much undersized fish as had at first been thought. The 70mm mesh is not justified because the smaller mesh does not endanger reproduction of the species.

The third set of reasons, Mr President, relates to economies. We can no longer accept the decisions of the British Government. If the mesh is increased to 70mm, Mr Battersby, our fishermen will suffer a 35 % drop in the weight of their catches. Now a drop of 2 000 tonnes means a total of 1.5 million for these fishermen. As to your figure of 6 million francs, there we are in agreement, except that this represents the losses of the vessels in my region alone.

Several hundred jobs would also be threatened in the canning industry. Moreover this has to be said, given the important rôle of crawfish — the dynamics of fishing along the French coasts is in danger of being smashed by virtue of a drag-down effect. The crawfish market would then be exposed to domination by international export groups based in the United Kingdom. I would like to believe that that is not where the reason for the British position lies. After all, unless deep-sea fishing is lucrative enough we shall see fishermen relying again on coastal waters, with the consequent exhaustion of stocks.

But there are other solutions available to us, such as the demarcation of specific zones in which suitable gear could be used, as suggested by the local Committee on Fishing in Guilvinec. Moreover, French fishermen, as Mrs Le Roux said just now, have demonstrated their sense of responsibility by voluntarily limiting themselves to 11.5 cm even though the Community rule allows 9 cm. Finally, we are talking here of the survival of hundreds of working people and their families. For all these reasons, I ask you to vote for the motion for a resolution.

President. — I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Mr President, I realize, of course, that this subject may be of regional importance. One of the speakers referred just now to a fair proportion. But could you establish what would be a fair proportion of the length of crawfish-tails to the length of speeches?

(Laughter)

President. — As Mr Bangemann is aware, there is no reference in the Rules of Procedure to the length of crawfish-tails.

I call Mr Harris.

Mr Harris. — Mr President, I shall be very brief, but I am afraid I shall have to be controversial on this question, because, in my opinion, this is an absolutely scandalous report before the Parliament today. In my opinion again, it is difficult to imagine a more blatantly biased document, and I really must object that a French Communist was given the job of being rapporteur on this issue, when Mrs Le Roux herself said, and rightly...

President. — I must interrupt you. The Committee on Agriculture is entitled to do so, and I do not think it appropriate to criticize its actions.

Mr Harris. — All right, Mr President, let me put it another way. It would have been quite wrong if my honourable friend Mr Battersby had been given the job of reporting on this particular issue. However, never mind; that has happened.

I must protest in particular about what I see as the really serious issue at stake here, and that is an attempt to turn this Parliament into a Court of Justice and that on the basis of one-sided evidence. I think this is quite wrong. As Mr Battersby says, the issue is before the European Court of Justice, and it is quite wrong for us as a Parliament to rush in on this subject. Let the European Court of Justice decide, and I, for my part, will support the rulings of the European Court of Justice — unlike France on another matter.

(Applause)

I think that needs to be said, Mr President.

To return to fishing, I would ask the French Members to realize and to remember that their fishermen have over-fished their own stocks and, that having happened, they really cannot blame Britain for taking conservation measures which are non-discriminatory: they apply to my fishermen just as much as to the Breton fishermen. They really cannot blame us for taking conservation measures. Mr President. I join, I am sure, with Mr Josselin and with Mrs Le Roux in hoping that we do get a common fisheries policy, because that is the answer. So let us all work towards that end, but let us, please, reject this report today.

President. — I call Miss Quin.

Miss Quin. — First of all, Mr President, on a different matter, I must apologize to the House in that I was not present a few minutes ago when my own

Quin

report came up on the agenda. The reason for this was that I had been here since 9 o'clock this morning, and this had turned out to be a very long morning indeed. I felt the need for something to eat, went down to the self-service restaurant, where, unfortunately, there is no television screen to say what is happening in the Chamber, and therefore, unfortunately, because of a few minutes' delay, I was unable to be here. I do hope — and I echo, I think, the remarks of one of my colleagues the other day — that facilities such as the siting of television screens can be reconsidered and can be improved upon before very long.

(Applause)

As far as Mr Pranchère's report is concerned, I would like to make a few very brief points. I would like to oppose the report, which I feel is very one-sided and very incomplete. Certain aspects are not included. What worries me about the report is the complete lack of concern about the necessary conservation measures: there is no recognition anywhere that conservation measures are sometimes urgently needed and cannot wait for interminable negotiations between European or international organizations. What concerns me, too, is that nowhere in the report is the non-discriminatory nature of the limitation on mesh-sizes mentioned. These limitations affect British fishermen quite as much as, if not more than, fishermen from other Community countries. Indeed, the figures show that British fishermen have been more adversely affected and that fishing communities, particularly in Scotland, have had a very rough time indeed as a result.

I share very much the concern of my French Socialist colleague, Mr Josselin, as I realize the effect on fishing communities; but what worries me is that, if measures like this cannot be taken quickly, there will be no fishing industry left at all for any of our European countries.

(Applause)

I do not think either that the report brings out sufficiently clearly that the Commission itself favours the size of mesh adopted by the UK: the dispute between the EEC and the UK was a technical one about the methods of proceeding, not about the merits of the actual mesh-sizes involved.

I feel, in conclusion, that this report is totally unhelpful at the present time. The matter is going to be considered by the European Court of Justice, and bringing it up at this point just harms the chances of constructive fishing negotiations between our countries.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — (F) Mr President, the Commission's position on this matter is sufficiently well-known; in view of the late hour I shall not return to the details again.

President. — The debate is closed. The vote will be taken at the end of the sitting.

23. *Regulation on the marketing of aubergines grown in the French Antilles*

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Cailavet, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-468/79), on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation establishing a system of aid for the marketing of aubergines grown in the French Antilles.

I call Mr Sablé.

Mr Sablé, deputy rapporteur. — (F) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the three committees of the European Parliament studied the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities for a regulation establishing a system of aid for the marketing of aubergines grown in the French Antilles immediately after hurricane David had ravaged Martinique and Guadeloupe.

Though the amount of the aid may be small 638 000 ECU — it is still much needed. therefore, on 3 and 4 October 1979, the Committee on Budgets adopted the proposal unanimously. On 30 October the Committee on Development and Cooperation, for which I am the rapporteur, did likewise. But on the same day, without enquiring after the favourable conclusions of the first two committees, the Committee on Agriculture called for the withdrawal of the proposal by a majority of 12 votes to 7 with 5 abstentions. Troubled by its conscience, however, it expressed the wish that other forms of aid to the afflicted regions might be studied.

In 1970 and 1971 the only aubergines on the French market were those from the South of France, the Antilles and Italy. But in 1975/76 producers in third countries accounted for 16 % of consumption and this rose to 44 % in 1977 and 1978. Taking account of the increase in consumption, the relative share of produce from the Antilles fell from 71 % in 1975/76 to 57 % in 1976/77 and 46 % in 1977/78.

As is well-known, aubergines from the Antilles are grown out of season — from October to June — so that they cannot compete with the produce from the Member States of the Community. The drop in prices from 1978 onwards is primarily the result of the steady increase in imports from Spain, which is so far only an applicant for membership of the Common Market, and from Israel, which has signed neither the

Sablé

Treaty of Rome nor the Lomé Convention. This was why the safeguard clause was applied; it would not have been necessary if the measure proposed now had been in force already.

Production in the Antilles totals 7 000 or 8 000 tonnes per year and is sold on the French market only, over a long period of eight months. Production from the Mediterranean areas, on the other hand, totalling 330 000 tonnes in Italy and 30 000 tonnes in France, may be marketed throughout the Common Market without restriction, but only from June to October.

This sudden competition from outside has very serious implications as it may prove a permanent obstacle to the plan being developed in the Antilles for diversifying agricultural output in order to eliminate the harmful effects of the sole production of the traditional crops: sugar cane and bananas. The analysis of the comparative production costs carried out by the experts in Brussels which is included in the written report gives ample justification for the amendment which I have proposed on behalf of my group and several colleagues in other groups. We are simply concerned with providing compensation for the costs incurred in sub-tropical regions in respect of plant health protection and packaging which amount to 10.69 ECU/100 kg.

My committee wishes to stress that the measure in question is not in any way protectionist. It does not involve any limit on imports from third countries or associated states. It is designed simply to allow the produce of a peripheral and deprived region of the European Economic Community to be marketed under normal conditions of competition and price. One cannot countenance the disappearance of the only agricultural crop which is able to survive the disaster of a hurricane and allow other countries which already have a developed and diversified economy to monopolise the market, even if for climatic reasons they can meet this demand for only 4 months of the year.

That there is a danger of creating a precedent in favour of the applicant states or the associated states is not a sound argument. If the applicant states do accede, it will not be for several years yet, after the long process of ratification by the national parliaments has been completed. Furthermore, since they are situated in the Mediterranean basin they will have no grounds for invoking a regulation dictated solely by the geographical position of the Antilles. The position of the associated states is already covered by the Lomé Convention which is binding upon the whole Community.

With your permission, Mr President, in order to keep the debate short I shall move on immediately to the defence of the amendment submitted by myself together with several colleagues from other groups in support of the proposal by the Commission of the European Communities. My defence is as follows, Mr

President. 40 % of pineapple plantations were destroyed by the disaster last August. Because of this the canning industry will lose a proportionally large part of the aid from the EAGGF.

Also, it was very recently announced that the sugar quota from the French overseas department is to be cut by as much as 30 %, simply to ensure that the ACP countries' total production of sugar at guaranteed prices is maintained at the level of 1 300 000 tonnes. A proposal for a resolution with a request that this vital issue be discussed urgently was unfortunately rejected yesterday morning. If this proposal for sugar is allowed to go through without amendment then all hope of expanding our traditional industry will be denied and the overseas departments can no longer benefit from the financial assistance to which they are entitled. This would be serious loss as far as their export earnings are concerned. This is why, Mr President, the adoption of my amendment for the establishment of systems of aid for the marketing of aubergines is of vital importance to the morale and the economy of the Antilles.

President. — I call Mr Vouel.

Mr Vouel, Member of the Commission. — (F) Mr President, the Commission made its proposal to the Council for a regulation establishing a system of aid for the marketing of aubergines grown in the French Antilles in order to provide compensation for certain differences between the production and packaging costs of aubergines grown in Martinique and Guadeloupe and those grown in the Mediterranean regions of the Community, and thereby to help maintain production of this crop which plays such an important part in the diversification of the agricultural output of these two French departments.

The Commission is therefore distressed at the conclusions reached by the Committee on Agriculture in its report presented by Mr Caillavet. It considers them all the more regrettable because the points listed in the preamble are most certainly the result of some misunderstanding. First, a misunderstanding as regards the imports of aubergines, which have not increased but have been falling since 1978/79 and are now down to 40.5 % of the French market. Also, the Community aid is not in fact intended to cover the greater part of the transport costs but to provide compensation for the difference in certain production and packaging costs applicable to aubergines from the overseas departments because of the climatic factors and long transportation periods which aubergines grown in the Mediterranean regions would not be able to withstand. Lastly, the production of aubergines in the overseas departments is highly efficient and shows no structural weaknesses requiring highly One possible alternative to the proposed regulation clearly might be the continued application of safeguard clauses, but this would naturally raise other problems.

Vouel

For this reason, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Commission does not agree with the conclusions of the report and urges you to support the amendment tabled by Mr Sablé on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

President. — The debate is closed. The vote will be taken at the end of this sitting.

24. Regulation suspending Common Customs Tariff duties on certain products originating in Malta

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Welsh, on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations (Doc. 1-456/79), on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation totally or partially suspending Common Customs Tariff duties on certain products falling within Chapters 1 to 24 of the CCT and originating in Malta (1980).

I call Mr Welsh.

Mr Welsh, rapporteur. — Mr President, in introducing this report I wish to associate myself with the remarks of my fellow rapporteurs. I think that the way in which our agenda has been arranged this week is a travesty. We have done our important business at a gallop on Friday morning, when we could well have done it earlier in the week. I would say to you, Mr President, if you would be good enough to listen to me, that it is not enough for you to abdicate responsibility on behalf of the Bureau, because the Bureau is supposed to give us a lead in these matters. I hope you will communicate to the Bureau that some of us here feel that Parliament is being ill-treated and abused.

Having said that, I would say to honourable Members that this report on Malta is an entirely technical report which is designed to restore Malta's position under the GSP *vis-à-vis* other countries, and that I commend it to the House for approval.

President. — Mr Welsh, I must say once more, in defence of the Bureau, that the adoption of the agenda is a matter for the Parliament, including yourself: you too bear part of the responsibility, so that there is little purpose in criticizing it now.

I call Mr Moreland on a point of order.

Mr Moreland. — I really must say that we elect a Bureau to organize the business of this Parliament. It is rubbish to pass the responsibility back to the House. It is your job to organize the business of this House.

President. — I call Mrs Macciocchi.

Mrs Macciocchi. — (*F*) It seems to me that having stifled the debate on Iran, a subject of great importance, and passed on to aubergines, crawfish and other

subjects of great interest to many people, we now find ourselves at the end of this debate in a fairly ridiculous situation, I ask you to convey my objections to all those responsible for drawing up the agenda of this debate which has ended, as I said earlier, in an atmosphere of bitterness and absurdity.

President. — In two years' time, you will have an opportunity of electing another Bureau!

I shall take the opportunity, at the next Bureau meeting, of expressing the complaints that have been made today. I would add that most Members can also approach the chairmen of their groups, who form part of the enlarged Bureau.

25. Membership of committees

President. — I have received

- from the Socialist Group, a request for the appointment of Mrs Gredal to the Political Affairs Committee; and
- from the Socialist Group and the Group of the European People's Party (C-D), requests for the appointment of Mr Pisani to the Committee on Energy and Research, to replace Mr d'Ormesson.

Are there any objections?

These appointments are ratified.

26. Composition of Parliament

President. — At its meeting of 15 November, the Bureau verified the credentials of Mr Pisani and Mr Fich. Pursuant to Rule 3 (1) of the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau has made sure that these appointments comply with the provisions of the Treaties.

It therefore asks the House to ratify these appointments.

Are there any objections?

These appointments are ratified.

27. Votes

President. — The next item comprises the votes on those documents on which the debate is closed. We begin with the three proposed decisions and two motions for resolutions contained in the *Aigner report (Doc 1-463/79): 1977 budget discharge*

I put proposed decision I to the vote.

The decision is adopted.

I put proposed decision II to the vote.

The decision is adopted.

I put proposed decision III to the vote.

The decision is adopted.

President

We now proceed to the motion for a resolution IV.

I put the preamble and paragraphs 1 to 7 to the vote.

The preamble and paragraphs 1 to 7 are adopted.

On paragraph 8, I have Amendment No 1, tabled by Mr Colla, Mr Balfe, Mr Key, Mr Wettig, Mr Orlandi and Mrs Fuillet and replacing this paragraph with the following text :

8. Asks the Commission to annex to the financial accounts a table setting out particulars — both quantities and values — of fixed assets and stocks of agricultural products held in public and private storage arising from the operation of the Community intervention system in the agricultural sphere ;

What is the rapporteur's view ?

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, I have to say that it was not possible for the Committee on Budgetary Control to discuss the four amendments. But I would ask Mr Colla, who is still here in the House, to withdraw amendment No 1, which merely seeks to add 'fixed assets', as I can assure him that we will be looking for a precise definition of this term at the Committee's next meeting and we will then ask the Commission to incorporate this. The instructions continued in decisions relating to controls in particular must be so clear that the Commission knows exactly what it has to do. Fixed assets can, for example, include pencils, and the author of the amendment did not want to go that far. I would therefore say that if he will withdraw the amendment, we will discuss the matter in full in committee.

As regards amendment No 2 we do not want — and I believe the vast majority will agree after the discussion in committee — an additional control but to intensify the existing controls as they stand. I would therefore reject amendment No 2,

As rapporteur I would agree with amendments Nos 3 and 4, but I would ask their author to omit the second half of the paragraph because it might be regarded as a criticism of the regional policy. I know what he means, of course. With this reservation, therefore, I would agree to these amendments.

President. — I call Mr Colla.

Mr Colla. — (NL) I should like to oblige Mr Aigner, but the first amendment, that to paragraph 8, stems from the original report by Lord Bruce I am sure that everyone realizes what is meant : it seems clear to me that it is not referring to pencils. I therefore wish to uphold this amendment.

With regards to the amendment to paragraph 9, this concerns controls based on trade statistics. As I said in my earlier speech, the representative of the Court of Auditors expressed the view in the Committee on

Budgets that this would raise problems. But he sympathized with our point of view. I intend to uphold this amendment as well.

The third amendment is no problem.

Mr Aigner agrees to the first part of the fourth amendment ; the latter part, I fear, is the logical extension of the first, and this, too, I should like to see upheld.

President. — I put Amendment No 1 to the vote.

Amendment No 1 is rejected.

I put paragraph 8 to the vote.

Paragraph 8 is adopted.

On paragraph 9, I have Amendment No 2, tabled by Mr Colla, Mr Balfe, Mr Key, Mr Wettig, Mr Orlandi and Mrs Fuillet and adding the following at the end of this paragraph :

- ... and calls for an enquiry, in cooperation with the Member States, into the possibility of instituting, on the one hand, supplementary Community control and, on the other hand, control based on statistical analyses of trade-flows ;

I put Amendment No 2 to the vote.

Amendment No 2 is rejected.

I put paragraph 9 to the vote.

Paragraph 9 is adopted.

I put paragraphs 10 to 24 to the vote.

Paragraphs 10 to 24 are adopted.

On paragraph 25, I have Amendment No 3, tabled by Mr Colla, Mr Balfe, Mr Key, Mr Wettig, Mr Orlandi and Mrs Fuillet and rewording this paragraph as follows :

25. Will satisfy itself as to the effectiveness of the controls carried out in the Member States and their harmonization as well as the effects, on a region-by-region basis, of Community financing in relation to the objectives of regional policy, using for this purpose, in particular, the statistical data to be forwarded by the Member States ;

I put Amendment No 3 to the vote.

Amendment No 3 is adopted.

I put paragraphs 26 to 29 to the vote.

Paragraphs 26 to 29 are adopted.

After paragraph 29, I have Amendment No 4, tabled by Mr Colla, Mr Balfe, Mr Key, Mr Wettig, Mr Orlandi and Mrs Fuillet and adding the following new paragraph :

- 29a. Notes that, despite the existence of the Regional Fund, the gap between the rich and poor regions in the Community has widened still further, and believes therefore that a critical analysis of the criteria underlying the Fund is essential ;

I call Mr Aigner.

Mr Aigner, rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, I would ask you to put the first sentence to the vote on its own, because I should like to have the first sentence in, but not the second half of the paragraph.

President. — I put the first part of Amendment No 4 to the vote.

The first part is adopted.

I put the second part to the vote.

The second part is rejected.

I put paragraphs 30 to 50 to the vote.

Paragraphs 30 to 50 are adopted.

I put to the vote the motion for a resolution as a whole, as modified by the amendments that have been adopted.

The resolution is adopted.¹

I put the motion for a resolution V to the vote. The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — I put to the vote the motion for a resolution contained in the *Pearce report (Doc. 1-469/79): Implementation in 1980 of the Community's generalized system of tariffs.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — I put to the vote the motion for a resolution contained in the *Hoffmann report (Doc. 1-475/79): International action in the field of air transport.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — I put to the vote the *Pedini motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-473/79/rev. 2): Meeting of the Council of Education Ministers.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — We now proceed to the *Schwartzberg et al. motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-527/79): Occupation of the US Embassy in Teheran.*

I put the preamble and paragraphs 1 to 4 to the vote.

The preamble and paragraphs 1 to 4 are adopted.

After paragraph 4, I have Amendment No 1, tabled by Mr Martin and adding the following new paragraph :

- 4a. Expresses, at the same time, its solidarity with the Iranian people, which is legitimately demanding the extradition of the Shah so that he can be tried for the crimes, acts of torture, murders and bloody oppression which he inflicted on his people for more than twenty-five years ;

What is Mr Schwartzberg's view ?

Mr Schwartzberg. — (F) I do not quite understand how one can vote against a text and then vote in favour of an amendment to it. Is this possible under the rules of procedure ?

I would also like to make a point of my own. I think that extradition as requested by our communist colleagues is possible only in the circumstances which Mrs Macciocchi defined earlier, that is to say there can be no question of extradition to a country whose current legal practice does not guarantee a fair trial, particularly if that country has the death penalty. For this reason I cannot vote in favour of the amendment.

President. — I put Amendment No 1 to the vote.

Amendment No 1 is rejected.

I put paragraph 5 to the vote.

Paragraph 5 is adopted.

I call Mr Bonaccini for an explanation of vote.

Mr Bonaccini. — (I) We voted for this motion to be dealt with by urgent procedure yesterday and this already is a demonstration of our attitude on certain issues it raises.

I must say that we agree with most if not all, of the ideas expressed by our colleagues and I shall therefore not repeat any of these except to say that there are two which concern us particularly.

The first concerns the serious risk involved for the whole of the international community if, due to some kind of pressure from somewhere, nerves should get frayed. We hope that this will not happen and our vote is, of course, given in this spirit.

Secondly, as has already been said, we are faced in Iran as in Spain — and Italy too is concerned — with a range of complex factors that tend to undermine democracy or hopes for democracy, and even when the texts do not please us at all, as is the case this time, we have no hesitation whatsoever as to which course to choose. For this reason we have voted in favour.

¹ OJ C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

President. — I put the motion for a resolution as a whole to the vote.

The resolution is adopted.¹

* * *

President. — We come to the *Pintat et al. motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-513/79/rev.): Political kidnapping in Spain.*

I call Mr Glinne for an explanation of vote.

Mr Glinne. — (F) Mr President, the Socialist Group refrained from speaking in the debate earlier in order to hurry things along, but we listened to Mr Habsburg's comments. I would like to say that the reasons which prompt us to vote in favour of this text are quite different from the reasons which Mr Habsburg gave for his or his group's approval. We are voting in favour of the text because it is a fitting condemnation of the kidnapping of a member of the Spanish Congress by a terrorist organization and because it demonstrates our Parliament's solidarity with the Spanish Congress — a democratic parliament shortly to become a Community partner.

President. — I put the motion for a resolution to the vote. The resolution is adopted.¹

President. — I put to the vote the *Prag et al. motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-520/79): Attack on the Israeli Ambassador to Portugal.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

President. — I put to the vote the motion for a resolution contained in the *Ligos report (Doc. 1-474/79): Fishing off the coast of Senegal.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

I put to the vote the motion for a resolution contained in the *Enright report (Doc. 1-466/79): Fishing off the coast of Senegal.* The resolution is adopted.¹

President. — I put to the vote the motion for a resolution contained in the *Kirk report (Doc. 1-467/79): Fish-stocks occurring off the West Greenland coast.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

President. — We proceed to the motion for a resolution contained in the *Quin report (Doc. 1-477/79) North-West Atlantic fisheries.*

I put the preamble and paragraphs 1 to 9 to the vote. The preamble and paragraphs 1 to 9 are adopted. On paragraph 10, I have Amendment No 1, tabled by Mr Kirk and deleting this paragraph.

What is the rapporteur's view?

Miss Quin, rapporteur. — I would like to ask for these amendments not to be accepted. I do not think that the motion for a resolution including paragraphs 10 and 11, is controversial. It was adopted unanimously by the committee concerned and all that paragraphs 10 and 11 do, if I can take them together, is to ask for a study on a licensing system. It does not express any views in favour of or against such a system; it only asks for it to be considered. I would like the amendments to be rejected.

President. — I put Amendment No 1 to the vote. Amendment No 1 is rejected.

I put paragraph 10 to the vote.

Paragraph 10 is adopted.

On paragraph 11, I have Amendment No 2, tabled by Mr Kirk and deleting this paragraph.

I put Amendment No 2 to the vote.

Amendment No 2 is rejected.

I put paragraph 11 to the vote.

Paragraph is adopted.

I put the motion for a resolution as a whole to the vote. The resolution is adopted.¹

President. — We proceed to the motion for a resolution contained in the *Pranchère report (Doc. 1-464/79): British decision on crawfish catches.*

I call Mrs Dienesch for an explanation of vote.

Mrs Dienesch. — (F) Mr President, it is clear that provisions of this sort have an extremely harmful effect on Brittany and all the French coastal regions. It is because of these adverse effects on the fishermen that we have decided to vote in favour of the motion for a resolution and cannot support the position adopted by our British friends.

President. — I call Mr Glinne for an explanation of vote.

Mr Glinne. — (F) I shall vote in favour, basing myself on the position taken by the Court of Justice.

¹ OJ C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

¹ OJ C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

President. — I put the motion for a resolution to the vote. The resolution is rejected.

President. — We proceed to the motion for a resolution contained in the *Caillavet report (Doc. 1-468/79): Marketing of aubergines grown in the French Antilles.*

I have Amendment No 1, tabled by Mr Sablé, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, Mrs Rabbethge, Mrs Moreau, Mr Michel and Mr d'Ormesson and replacing the whole of the motion by a new text.

I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann, deputy rapporteur. — (D) Mr President, I have to oppose this, since the rapporteur takes the completely opposite view.

President. — I put Amendment No 1 to the vote. This new resolution is adopted.¹

President. — I put to the vote the motion for a resolution contained in the *Welsh report (Doc. 1-456/79): Suspension of Common Customs Tariff duties on certain products originating in Malta.*

The resolution is adopted.¹

On Parliament's behalf, I wish to thank our staff, who have shown so much patience with us and have stood by us in our work until this late hour in the day.

(Applause)

I call Mr Enright on a point of order.

Mr Enright. — My point of order concerns the way that we treat our staff. The restaurant closed at 2.30 p.m.: many of the staff have been on continuous duty and therefore are unable to get a meal. Could we in future try to make arrangements to ensure that they are properly fed?

President. — I sincerely hope so.

28. Dates of the next part-session

President. — There are no other items on the agenda.

I thank the representatives of both Council and Commission for their contributions to our debates.

The enlarged Bureau proposes that our next sittings be held at Strasbourg during the week from 10 to 14 December. Are there any objections?

That is agreed.

29. Approval of the minutes

President. — Rule 17 (2) of the Rules of Procedure requires me to lay before Parliament, for its approval, the minutes of proceedings of this sitting, which were written during the debates.

Are there any comments?

The minutes of proceedings are approved.

30. Adjournment of the session

President. — I declare the session of the European Parliament adjourned. The sitting is closed.

(The sitting closed at 3.05 p.m.)

¹ OJ C 309 of 10. 12. 1979.

